



Pittwater House

From the Principal and Deputy Principal

17 August 2020

Dear Parents and Guardians,

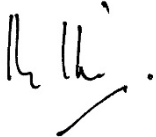
As you are aware, with the recent spike in COVID-19 cases in recent weeks, Schools have been at the centre of a number of the cases. Therefore, the Department of Health has issued schools with a number of updates aimed at reducing the risk of COVID-19 transmission amongst school communities. Many of the guidelines are already being followed by the School, however, there are a couple of areas where activities that were originally allowed by NSW Health, have now been banned in order to further stem school and community transmission of the virus. I have attached the summary letter from NSW Health for those seeking further clarification. However, for Pittwater House included in these changes are:

1. All activities that involve mixing of students from different regions (outside Northern Beaches Council) will cease before Wednesday 19 August. We are currently reviewing all of the co-curricular activities that are currently taking place to ensure that all Schools and students within these activities comply with this direction. Amongst other things, this will affect all co-curricular sport, more details will follow on what can and can't go ahead.
2. All group singing and use of wind instruments in groups must cease. This will impact on all choirs and bands. Although we have already reduced some of these activities, all remaining ones will cease immediately.
3. School related social activities, such as School Formals, Dinners, Dances and Graduation Ceremonies or Parent Functions must not take place. This will have immediate consequences on:
 - a. Annual Cadet Mess Dinner (Year 12) – this event will be cancelled.
 - b. Year 12 Graduation Dinner – this event will be postponed from its current date of 16 September and we will be assessing the viability of options for an alternate event later in the year.
 - c. Year 12 Graduation Assembly – this will not take place in the current format. We are looking at ways of celebrating this event in a manner that will comply with the NSW Health orders and still allow us to suitably acknowledge our Year 12 leavers.
4. School related overnight events must not take place. Although these instructions from NSW Health may change later in the year, due to the Year 6 Canberra Camp being scheduled in Week 1 of Term 4, this camp will unfortunately need to be cancelled. The Years 3, 4, 5, 8, 9 and 10 camps that are scheduled for later in Term 4 are still being assessed.
5. In other correspondence we have received today from the Department of Education, there has been strong instructions for schools to cease any cross-grade activities. Therefore, this will affect a number of activities, such as the secondary school House Games that have been taking place on Wednesdays during Form time this term.
6. Year 7 Orientation Days are to be moved out of Term 3 and rescheduled during Term 4.

A really important key message was the need for schools to be vigilant in not allowing students or staff on campus with even mild cold or flu symptoms and for us to encourage testing for symptomatic staff or children. Therefore, we thank in advance our parents in assisting us in following these directions.

Further updates will follow as more information is released from NSW Health and the Department of Education. We thank our school community for the support they have shown us and the flexibility you have had in the face of the continual changes that have been required to take place this year. If you have any questions, please email james.walmsley@tphs.nsw.edu.au.

Yours sincerely,



Dr Nancy Hillier
Principal



James Walmsley
Deputy Principal

MINIMISING RISK OF COVID-19 TRANSMISSION IN NSW SCHOOL COMMUNITIES

14 August 2020

In response to the recent cases of COVID-19 in school staff and students in NSW, I write to advise you of further measures to minimise the risk of COVID-19 transmission in school communities. These measures will be effective Wednesday 19 August 2020.

NSW Health requires schools to:

- exclude students and staff with even mild symptoms of COVID-19
- encourage immediate testing for any symptomatic child(ren) or staff
- prohibit return to school for anyone with symptoms of COVID-19 until a negative COVID test result has been reported
- ensure that adults maintain physical distancing at all times
- ensure good hand hygiene at all times (e.g. upon entry to the school, entry to the classroom and upon exit of the classroom)
- for activities that result in the mixing of students and staff from schools from the local area (e.g. local inter-school sports competitions), develop and ensure compliance with a COVID safety plan based on the COVID safety plan template for community sport activities
- for local activities, limit spectators to one parent only, where parental supervision is required
- carefully consider face-to-face professional learning for staff and, if proceeding, ensure COVID safety through physical distancing and limiting group numbers, and
- avoid professional learning activities that require staff to mix across schools.

For absolute clarity, professional development for staff should not be conducted face-to-face unless absolutely necessary. Staff gatherings should be minimised and, where they must occur, limited to the minimum amount of people required to achieve educational outcomes. Staff should also be required to maintain social distancing at all times and, where they must gather, their names should be recorded to assist in identifying who attended the gathering and for how long.

Furthermore, certain practices must cease altogether. These include:

- activities that result in the mixing of students from schools in different regions¹, such as sporting-related activities, drama and debating
- school-related group singing or chanting activities and use of wind instruments in groups
- school-related social activities (e.g. school formals, dinners or dances; graduation ceremonies; or parent engagement functions)
- school-related overnight events (e.g. retreats, camps, excursions) as there is increased risk of transmission of the virus in a residential type setting with shared facilities

These updated measures will assist us to achieve the NSW Government's aim of eliminating community transmission in NSW, and will support schools to continue to deliver onsite learning. I thank you and your school communities for your support and ongoing attention to providing a COVID safe environment for all students and staff.

Please refer to the NSW Department of Education or NSW Health websites for further information.

Yours sincerely



Dr Kerry Chant
Chief Health Officer
NSW Ministry of Health

Our ref: H20/87522

¹ Regional mixing include activities which bring together students or staff from schools in different regions of Sydney, from a rural area into a metropolitan area and vice versa, and movement between different rural areas