

Shoalhaven High School - Newsletter

Respect, Responsibility, Safety and Participation



AIMING HIGHER

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2021 Term 4 Week 4

Friday 29 October 2021

COMING EVENTS

9 November – HSC begins

PRINCIPAL'S MESSAGE

As we began Week 4, we saw the return of our wonderful students after 8 long weeks learning from home. Our staff welcomed back all our students to school in a settled start to the return to face to face teaching and learning. The last 8 weeks of learning from home have been extremely difficult for staff, students and most importantly our parents and carers that helped support the continuity of our students' learning. Without the support of our wonderful wider school community, the return for our students would not have been a success as we look forward to preparing all our students for a positive 2022 school year.

As we begin our return to school, we ask that students who were working from hard copy work packs, please return these to your individual teachers. Our staff will go through the work and use this to determine evidence of learning and engagement during learning from home. Students who were working from these packs and do not return them or demonstrate evidence of learning, will have attendance at school changed from "flexible" to "unjustified". We thank you in advance for your anticipated support in ensuring your student returns completed work.

The return to school comes with operational restrictions. These operations are in line with the Department's Level 3 + school operational guidelines and are outlined below:

Minimising Cohort Mingling

- Years 7/8 will follow our normal timetable structure- 3-2-1 and be in their own blocks. Year 7 will

be in A block (see attached year information) and Year 8 in the bottom of C block.

Shoalhaven High School

Level 3 plus
Covid-safe school operation

Years:

- Most year 7 classes will be held in the bottom area of A block.

7K	A7
7L	A8
7R	A11
7S	A12
7M	A10
7O	C31

Masks:

- Masks are required for all staff and students in year 7 and above indoors (unless exempted or exempted).

Shoalhaven High School

Level 3 plus
Covid-safe school operation

Years:

- Most year 8 classes will be held in the bottom area of C block.

8K	C13
8L	C15
8R	C16
8S	C17
8O	C14

Masks:

- Masks are required for all staff and students in year 8 and above indoors (unless exempted or exempted).

- Years 9/10 will follow our old timetable structure- 2-2-2 (big break first) and be in their own blocks. Year 9 will be in the top of C block (see attached year information) and Year 10 will be in science labs.

Shoalhaven High School

Level 3 plus
Covid-safe school operation

Years:

- Most year 9 classes will be held in the bottom area of C block.

9K	C24
9L	C26
9O	C27
9S	C28
9R	C29

Masks:

- Masks are required for all staff and students in year 9 and above indoors (unless exempted or exempted).

Shoalhaven High School

Level 3 plus
Covid-safe school operation

Years:

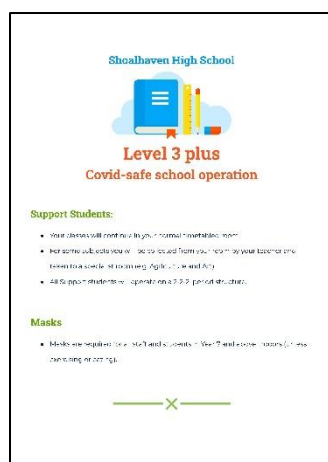
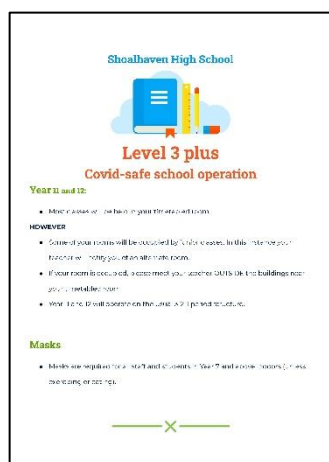
- Most year 10 classes will be held in the bottom area of C block.

10.1	Lab 6
10.2	Lab 1
10.3	Lab 2
10.4	Lab 3

Masks:

- Masks are required for all staff and students in year 10 and above indoors (unless exempted or exempted).

- Years 11/12 will follow our normal timetable and teachers will advise of room changes.
- Support follow 2-2-2 with no room changes.



Sport:

- We are not able to do sport under Level 3 +. Sport will be moved to Wednesday afternoon for all students commencing after short break at 1:05. Students in 7-10 will have the option to sign out and **“be picked up by a parent/carer or go home- not go to McDonalds/KFC and return to school for the bus home”**.
- Students who can do this are to bring a note each week and get it signed by the PE staff and then present to Ms Kumar in the front office to sign out. This process can be done before school or at big break. Students signing out exit through correct gate.
- 7-10 students who remain at school will participate in “extended PE activities within their own cohort” in certain areas of the school.
- 11 and 12 will remain at school and undertake supervised tutorial and study lesson in the Library and computer rooms.

Face Masks:

- Staff and students are always required to wear face mask in indoor settings.
- Exceptions to this include: when eating and drinking, when in a classroom or office alone, when a staff member is giving instructions and students are finding it hard to understand or a medical exemption is presented to the school.
- If students refuse to wear a face mask, they will report to the DP, parent/carer rung and asked to collect the student and take them home. If the

Respect, Responsibility, Safety & Participation

problem persists that student will learn from home under DoE for failing to abide by a public health order.

We anticipate your support while we have to operated under these restrictions developed by the Department to ensure a safe return to school for all students.

We are all busy writing reports for our students. These reports will be distributed to students during Week 11 and published online via the Sentral parent portal. The reports will give parents/carers and insight to their child’s progress over the whole year. As always, parents are welcome to arrange interviews with staff to discuss their child’s report once it has been distributed.

I would like to take this opportunity to wish all our Year 12 students a successful start to their HSC exams. Due to COVID-19 the commencement of the HSC exams has been delayed until the 9 November. As we approach this date, I encourage all Year 12 to attend school, maintain contact with your teachers and develop strong study and revision techniques prior to the commencement of the HSC. Our Year 12 students this year have had to battle COVID-19 twice during their senior years of school. I congratulate each and every one of them on their ability to maintain the dedication, drive and resilience to keep on top of their studies and finally make it to the finish line.

As always, Shoalhaven High School would like to thank all our wonderful students, parents and carers for their continued support throughout a difficult year.

Damian Rees

Executive Principal

Connected Communities

Shoalhaven High School



COVID LEVEL 3+ DAY STRUCTURE

Year 9, 10, 11 and Support (2,2,2 period structure)		Year 7, 8 and 12 (3,2,1 period structure)	
Roll Call	8:30 - 8:40	Roll Call	8:30 - 8:40
Period 1	8:40 - 9:31	Period 1	8:40 - 9:31
Period 2	9:30 - 10:22	Period 2	9:30 - 10:22
Early Long Break	10:22 - 11:02	Period 3	10:22 - 11:13
Period 3	11:02 - 11:53	Late Long Break	11:13 - 11:53
Period 4	11:53 - 12:44	Period 4	11:53 - 12:44
Early Short Break	12:44 - 1:04	Period 5	12:44 - 1:35
Period 5	1:04 - 1:55	Late Short Break	1:35 - 1:55
Period 6	1:55 - 2:46	Period 6	1:55 - 2:46

COVID-SAFE SCHOOL OPERATIONS

1 NSW Department of Education

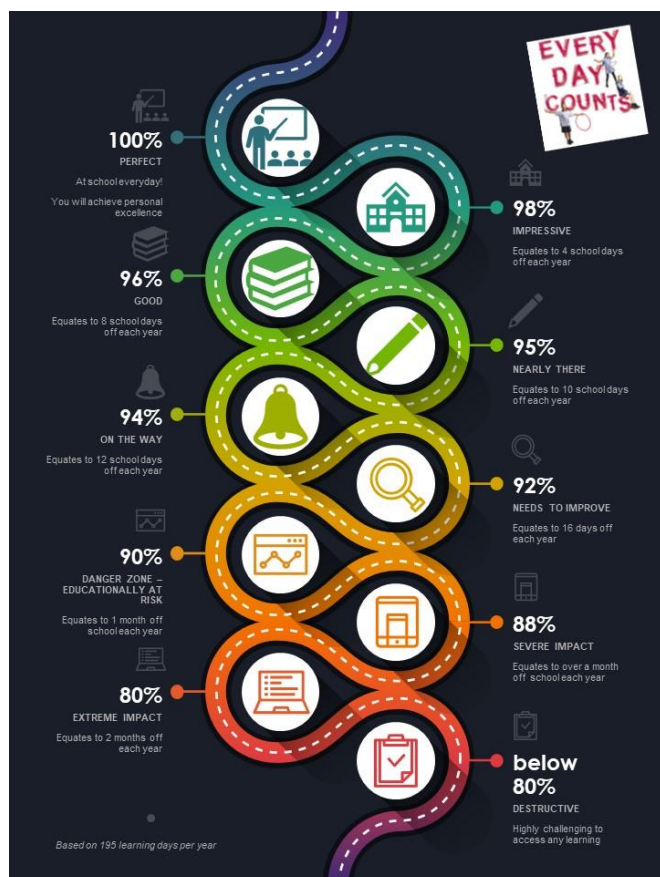
COVID-Safe School Operations

	Overview	Guidance on mask wearing
Level 1 School operating in a COVID-safe COVID-normal way	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Schools can operate as a COVID-normal way. Students and staff do not always attend if they have symptoms, negative COVID-19 test required after returning to school. Person, place and activity not elevated risk. Off work checks in and on-site required at all staff and visitors. COVID checks likely to require the use of PPE (staff and visitors) as well as physical distancing. Performance assessed in the school/cluster. High ratings. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mask use indicated in the with appropriate sport guidelines. Consistent use of face mask (breakable plastic) settings. Individuals judgement required on when and where covered, operation. Consistent face mask wearing for all staff and visitors. PPE: optional. Additional cleaning measures in place. Further detailed guidance available on the Department's website.
Level 2 COVID-safe conditions, some non-essential visitors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Not open to Level 1. Students and staff do not attend school (including parents and visitors). Mask wearing required for all. Staff identified as not suitable assessment to work from home. Activities not involving shopping, dining, music, sport and contact performance allowed in outdoor settings only. Assessment likely to be COVID Safe, with some visitors and no group contact. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Essential visitors (with Group 1) to be strictly limited and strongly recommended that the visitors are not the visiting teachers. Further detailed guidance available on the Department's website. Mask use: indoor settings in schools, optional for Level 2 and 3, but recommended for all staff and all visitors in Level 2 and 3.
Level 3 COVID-safe/Further restrictions on activities and non-essential visitors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Not open to Level 1. Mask wearing required for all. Restriction of all group activities and outdoor involvement of students. Activities such as shopping, dining, music, sport and contact performance not permitted. Activities such as shopping, dining, music, sport and contact performance not permitted. For non-essentials. For non-essentials. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mask use: indoor settings in schools and outdoors in schools and outdoors in schools. Mask use: indoor settings in schools, optional for Level 2 and 3, but recommended for all staff and all visitors in Level 2 and 3. Mask use: indoor settings in schools, optional for Level 2 and 3, but recommended for all staff and all visitors in Level 2 and 3. Mask use: indoor settings in schools, optional for Level 2 and 3, but recommended for all staff and all visitors in Level 2 and 3.
Level 4 Learning from home encouraged, schools not open for families who need it	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Parents are encouraged to keep their children at home, with the school to be the school. Schools are encouraged to support continuity of education for the children learning from home. Mask use: indoor settings in schools, optional for Level 2 and 3, but recommended for all staff and all visitors in Level 2 and 3. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mask use: indoor settings in schools, optional for Level 2 and 3, but recommended for all staff and all visitors in Level 2 and 3. Mask use: indoor settings in schools, optional for Level 2 and 3, but recommended for all staff and all visitors in Level 2 and 3. Mask use: indoor settings in schools, optional for Level 2 and 3, but recommended for all staff and all visitors in Level 2 and 3. Mask use: indoor settings in schools, optional for Level 2 and 3, but recommended for all staff and all visitors in Level 2 and 3.

education.nsw.gov.au

As at 17 July 2020

ATTENDANCE



SCHOOL UNIFORM

The school instituted changes to our Uniform Policy in 2020.

The new policy is on our SHS website (under About our school -> Rules and policies -> Uniform Policy) or from the following link:

School Uniform Policy

Please be aware that wearing school uniform is a Work, Health and Safety issue and part of our school rules.

Further information is available from the following link:

Uniform Guidelines

We encourage everyone to read the policy and guidelines and support our school by ensuring students wear school uniform every school day.

2021 CHECK IN ASSESSMENT

In the coming weeks, students will be taking part in the NSW Department of Education Check-in assessments. These assessments are administered online and are for students in Years 7 to 9. There are two assessments:

- Reading
- Numeracy

Each assessment is designed to be between 40 to 50 multiple choice questions. Students should be reminded to bring earphones from home and no smart phones or watches will be allowed during assessment times.

YEAR 7 PHOTO CHALLENGE

For Student Development Lessons last week, Year 7 students were given the opportunity to participate in a photo challenge. The challenge asked them to take a photo of something that made them feel calm.

There were some great entries that showed creativity. Miss Talbert and Shoalhaven High School would like to congratulate Brianna from 7L on winning the challenge with her beautiful photograph that reminded her of 'calm'.

Her prize can be collected when she returns to school.



WELLBEING NEWS

See the link below for some strategies with coping with pandemic fatigue.

[Coping with Pandemic Fatigue 2021](#)



LIBRARY NEWS

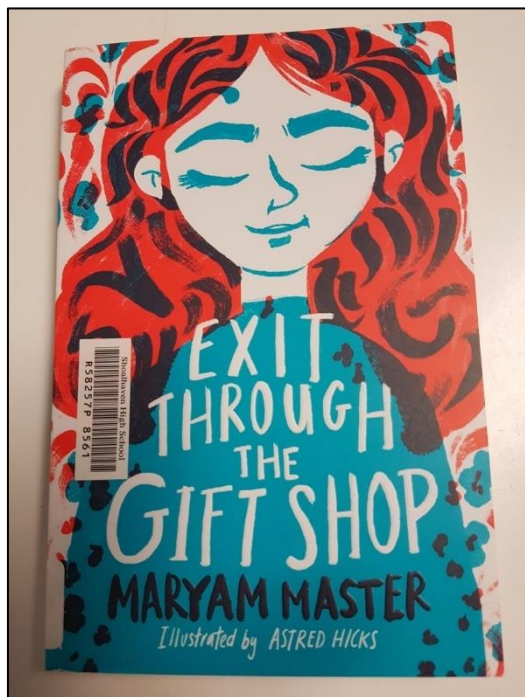
Did you know our school Library has an Instagram page?

Head on over [to https://instagram.com/shoalibrary/](https://instagram.com/shoalibrary/) , scan the QR code attached or search up shoalibrary and give it a follow.

Keep up to date with great reads and library events.



Welcome back to the Library! We are open again for borrowing. During Lockdown, books were still published, and our orders were filled. Have a look on school Library on your student portal for all the new titles. "Exit through the Giftshop" is a great read!



The Library is open at break times for VERY quiet activities as often there will be Senior Lessons upstairs. The Seniors are using separate areas until the Level 3 Plus order is finished. Senior Laptops are to be used by Year 12 and the desktops by Year 11. Downstairs, the computers are still available with priority given to those who need to do their schoolwork. Games may be played for the first half of the Long Break only. As always, no volume on computers or devices and no food to be eaten in the Library.

Our Halloween display area upstairs has a range of horror books which are available to borrow as well. Come and check it out.



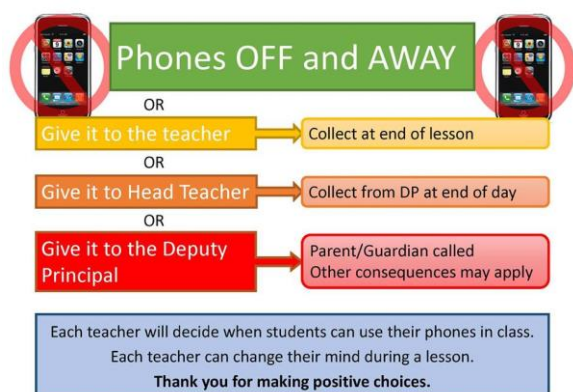
NEW BLUE SMILEY BOXES

Our new blue smiley boxes are in the library and are filling up quickly! At the moment it looks like Sharks are in the lead. Remember to keep popping your smileys in your house box to get that end of term reward!



PHONES OFF AND AWAY

Shoalhaven High School has updated its rules for student use of mobile phones. Students have been given several weeks of advance notice by the Principal Mr Rees and staff, so compliance is expected from students.



HOMEWORK CENTRE

Shoalhaven High School

Homework Centre



Our Homework Centre is back on for 2021!
All of our students are welcome.

What you need to know:

- It's on Monday and Wednesday
- From 3pm - 5pm
- It's in the Library
- \$1 for afternoon tea - cake and a juice or hot chocolate
- We have teachers here to help you with your study, homework and assignments
- You can use the computers and printer
- You can access our book collections for research

BREAKFAST CLUB

Breakfast Club is on Tuesday and Friday. It is held at the Uniform Shop. Come and say hi and grab a cheese toast and chocolate milk.



NEWS FROM CAREERS

Year 6 visits to Shoalhaven High School

Tuesday 16th November - SHS Information Night for Year 6 students and family

Tuesday 23rd November – Orientation Day for Year 6 students

These events are planned if the COVID situation allow.

The 2021 National Adolescent Vaccination Program

Unfortunately NSW Health have postponed the school vaccination program for this year. The program will continue in 2022 with addition visits for students in Years 7 and 10 who have incomplete vaccinations in 2021.

Parent/carers are to be aware of the missed vaccines and could have these at the doctors

Work Experience

Unfortunately work experience cannot recommence till further notice.

We are keen to support any student from Years 9 and 10 who wish to have a work experience opportunity in 2021.

We must be mindful that some employers may not be able to take a work experience student this year.

Upskill Activities

Why Upskill?

1. To learn new skills that can be useful in life
 2. To “have a GO” and gain more confidence in your abilities
 3. To gain a qualification or certificate for your portfolio
 4. To build your network... meet new people, go to new places and understand other organisations.
- We have some activity dates planned and hope the situation allow them to continue.

Dates for other activities cannot be confirmed at this stage.

Unfortunately Rural Fire Training had to be cancelled.

WHS Construction Induction (white card)

Workcover requirement for work or work experience on a construction site

Years 9-11 - Thursday 2 December \$80

Senior First Aid Certificate

Students from Years 9 to 12 - Tues & Wed 7 and 8 December \$65

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Money Smart (Cert 1 Financial Literacy) - date to be confirmed

Making Coffee@ School - date to be confirmed

School-based Traineeships (Year 10 Students)

Various positions from carers, admin lifestyle activity, kitchen and maintenance

Inasmuch Aged Care Centre - Sussex Inlet

Inasmuch will offer an opportunity for the students and any interested parents to come to an information session in early December which can be held off site to avoid issues relating to vaccines.

Resume and cover letter to be forwarded by the 26 November to

Scholarships For Any Student Working Or Studying In 2022

Shoalhaven Education Fund Scholarships

Shoalhaven Education Fund provides financial assistance up to \$3000 for young people requiring assistance to go to work, TAFE or university. If you require financial assistance, a smart move would be to make an application. It is not too difficult. Applications on line.

<http://engage.cef.org.au/directory/foundation/32/shoalhaven>

HSC updates from Careers

As exams are finishing, we continue to be available to assist with student's future planning and applications. Information will also be posted on Year 12 student's school emails and Google classroom

University Related Applications

EAS - Equity Access Scheme

Application for course consideration if you experienced difficulties during school years.

ES - Equity Scholarship

Financial assistance if you have experienced difficulties during school years including Job Seeker, Job Keeper

Apprenticeships and Traineeships

* Scaffolding Traineeship - South Nowra

As a Scaffolding trainee you will carry out basic and intermediate rigging, structural steel erection and erect scaffolding. You will also work towards completing a nationally recognised qualification in Certificate III Scaffolding.

To be considered for this position you must be willing to travel and have reliable transport to worksites across the Southern NSW area (car and licence preferred), have a construction white card, be willing to learn, committed and reliable. Those with previous experience in the scaffolding industry will be highly regarded.

<https://sras.jobreadygateway.com.au>

*** Painting and Decorating Apprenticeship - Vincentia**

The apprentice will be trained to apply paint by brush and roller, apply texture coat paint finishes, apply clear stains, match specified paint colours, apply decorative finishes, apply wall paper and treat lead paint hazards. Certificate III Painting and Decorating.

To be considered for his position, you will need to be keen, reliable, have a great work ethic and committed to completing the Apprenticeship. Must have a car, licence and white card.

<https://sras.jobreadygateway.com.au>

*** Medical Reception Traineeship - Vincentia, Basin View and Culburra Beach Medical Centres.**

Full time role 38 hours per week traineeship - Certificate III Business Administration (Medical)

This is a frontline role and you will be working hand in hand with our reception and clinical teams to support our patients and the practice's requirements.

This Traineeship would suit someone passionate about healthcare administration, committed to their job, and enjoys working in a fast paced environment.

<https://sras.jobreadygateway.com.au>

*** Glazier with Window and Door Screen Manufacturer- Alpine Glass South Nowra**

<https://www.seek.com.au/job/54358409?savedSearchID=1e939b60-90d5-11ea-a73d-c30b951f1452&tracking=JMC-SAU-eDM-Lite2.05-4555>

*** Aircraft Maintenance Engineer (Mechanical) - Boeing Defence Nowra**

Work on the EC135 Mechanical systems

<https://www.adzuna.com.au/details/2504263966?nid=20508917>

*** Hospitality Traineeship - Holiday Haven Kangaroo Valley**

You will be completing Certificate III in Hospitality or a Certificate III in Holiday Parks and Resorts. Flexible working hours and conditions available and full training will be provided. No experience required.

- Providing a high level of customer service
- Answering calls and taking bookings
- Greeting Guest

- Using our booking system to complete bookings
- Advising guest of local attractions
- Assisting with our kayaking

<https://www.megt.com.au/jobs>

***Guest Relation/Reception Clerk Trainee - Holiday haven Huskisson.**

Cert III in Business or a Cert III in Holiday Parks and Resorts.

We are looking for someone that has an effervescent personality and can work closely as a team member and is self-motivated. The successful candidate must have a passion for holidays and the Shoalhaven region.

Limited relevant experience in business administration is needed as initially you will be working under close direction using established practices, procedures, and instructions.

<https://www.megt.com.au/jobs>

***Real Estate Traineeship Ulladulla**

This qualification reflects the role of administration staff within the real estate sector of the property services industry who apply knowledge of real estate procedures, forms and documents; knowledge of customer service standards and customer expectations; and knowledge of real estate services and technical processes to support real estate agency operational functions.

To be considered for this position you must be keen, reliable, well presented and committed to completing the Traineeship. Must have excellent customer service skills and competent computer skills. Would prefer you have a car and licence. Junior applicants are encouraged to apply.

<https://sras.jobreadygateway.com.au>

***Painter Apprentice Pacific Blue Contracting Pty Ltd · Huskisson**


Full time opportunity to join a motivated and busy team of painters in the Shoalhaven. Required are a White Card, Driver's Licence and own transport. To apply, send your resume via this page.

For more information phone 02 4441 754


BRING YOUR OWN TECHNOLOGY (BYOT)

Please have a read of the BYOT Policy/Guidelines on our website (Under Our school then BYOT) or click on the link below, for the expectations on how technology and mobile phones are used at our school, and the consequences for misuse of the technology.

[BYOT Policy](#)



Bring Your Own Technology




Positive Choices

- Students putting phones on silent and putting them away in bags or in the facility provided by teachers, if they are not required for the lesson. Other devices are also put away, if this is requested.
- Students following teacher instructions, so that they are using devices appropriately during the lesson.
- Students showing staff their work if they are using devices, whenever they are asked to do so during the course of the lesson.

The following are examples of positive uses for devices in lessons that your teachers may access in classes:

- research activities which involve the use of internet access.
- note taking, video making for projects and assessments.
- photographing notifications of tasks and work not completed on boards.
- recording the progress of work in practical classes.
- using the calendar to create homework / due date entries/ excursion/ test notifications – student diary/ organiser.
- timekeeping/ stop watch for speeches/ calculator.
- using SRN, One Note, Kahoot or other appropriate software to allow student responses/ organise tasks.
- teacher directed quizzes.
- dictionary/ thesaurus work.
- recording and storage for multimedia tasks.
- submission of tasks via email.
- accessing ABC i view, educational apps.
- recording information whilst on excursions.



Negative Choices

- Students not putting phones in bags, the facility which may be provided by staff in classes or in a place acceptable to staff, and not turning them off, if they are not being used for the lesson.
- Students not having "lids ajar" on laptops, or not removing earphones when requested to do so by staff.
- Students refusing to use technology in accordance with teacher instructions.

This includes:

- Students texting or calling others on mobiles during class time.
- Students refusing to show staff their work on the technology.
- Students failing to make a reasonable effort with the technology to complete work.
- Students passing mobiles to others for inappropriate use or not handing phones to staff before going to the toilet.
- Students playing games on their device during lessons.
- Students using technology to bully, harass, offend or threaten others – includes illegal filming/ photography = serious offence!

Being able to use technology in class is the teacher's choice, not the student's choice! There are consequences for any student who breaks the rules.

UNIFORM POLICY

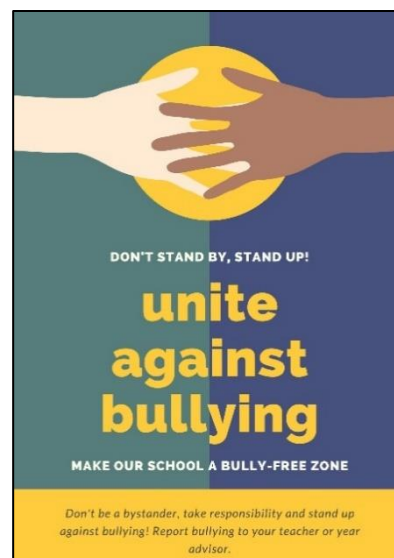
The Shoalhaven High School Uniform Policy is found on our School website under 'Our School' or click on the link

[2020 Uniform Policy](#)

ANTI-BULLYING PLAN

The Shoalhaven High School Anti-bullying Plan is found on our School website under 'Our School' or click on the link

[Anti-bullying Plan](#)




STUDENT TIMETABLES

Students now have access to view their timetable for 2021 online via the Student/Parent Sentral Portal.

To access, please visit

<https://shoalhavenhs.sentral.com.au/portal/> then log in with your DoE username and password.



Shoalhaven High School

Student and Parent Portal

Please enter your username and password below

[Forgot Password?](#)



Health

NSW Health is offering school vaccination again as school-based learning returns

- Information for parents/guardians

NSW Health has been working with education authorities so that school vaccination can be offered as school-based learning returns.

Program background

In 2021 NSW Health is offering the following vaccines:

YEAR	VACCINE	NUMBER OF DOSES
Year 7	Human papillomavirus (HPV)	2 doses at least 6 months apart
	Diphtheria, Tetanus and Pertussis (dTpa)	1 dose
Year 10	Meningococcal ACWY (MenACWY)	1 dose

While the school vaccination program has been disrupted due to remote learning in some areas, vaccination clinics are being rescheduled as students return to school.

COVID-19 safety measures

NSW Health has implemented additional measures based on expert clinical advice to reduce the likelihood of COVID-19 transmission in school clinics, including:

- nurses vaccinated against COVID-19
- health screening of nurses before clinics
- pre-vaccination screening of students
- physical distancing restrictions at the clinic entrance & observation area
- ensuring the number of students and nurses at the clinic does not exceed the maximum space allowed
- enhanced hand hygiene & environmental cleaning of all surfaces

What parents/guardians should do

There is no need for parents/guardians who have given consent for their child to receive vaccinations at school to take any action, except to:

- contact the school to withdraw consent for HPV, dTpa or MenACWY vaccination if any of these vaccines have been given at the GP
- ensure that students with influenza-like symptoms do not attend school and are tested as soon as possible (www.nsw.gov.au/covid-19/symptoms-and-testing)
- note that there is a minimum dosing interval of 7 days between any routine school vaccinations (HPV, dTpa and Meningococcal ACWY) and any dose of a COVID-19 vaccine

When students will be vaccinated

Vaccinations will be offered to consented students as soon as possible as clinics are rescheduled at your child's school, noting that catch-up vaccination can be offered at school at any time in 2021 or 2022 if necessary. You will be advised if your child cannot be vaccinated at school and recommended to arrange vaccination with your GP or another immunisation provider.

More information

Information about school vaccination during COVID-19 is available at www.health.nsw.gov.au/schoolvaccination

NSW Ministry of Health

ABN 92 697 899 630
100 Christie Street, St Leonards NSW 2065
Locked Mail Bag 961, North Sydney NSW 2059
Tel (02) 9391 9000 Fax (02) 9391 9101
Website: www.health.nsw.gov.au



Education &
Communities

Public Schools NSW

Compulsory School Attendance

Information for parents

Education for your child is important and regular attendance at school is essential for your child to achieve their educational best and increase their career and life options. NSW public schools work in partnership with parents to encourage and support regular attendance of children and young people. When your child attends school every day, learning becomes easier and your child will build and maintain friendships with other children.

What are my legal responsibilities?

Education in New South Wales is compulsory for all children between the ages of six years and below the minimum school leaving age. The *Education Act 1990* requires that parents ensure their children of compulsory school age are enrolled at, and regularly attend school, or, are registered with the Board of Studies, Teaching and Educational Standards for homeschooling.

Once enrolled, children are required to attend school each day it is open for students.

The importance of arriving on time

Arriving at school and class on time

- ensures that students do not miss out on important learning activities scheduled early in the day
- helps students learn the importance of punctuality and routine
- gives students time to greet their friends before class
- reduces classroom disruption.

Lateness is recorded as a partial absence and must be explained by parents.

What if my child has to be away from school?

On occasion, your child may need to be absent from school. Justified reasons for student absences may include

- being sick, or having an infectious disease
- having an unavoidable medical appointment
- being required to attend a recognised religious holiday
- exceptional or urgent family circumstance e.g. attending a funeral.

Following an absence from school you must ensure that within **7** days you provide your child's school with a verbal or written explanation for the absence. However, if the school has not received an explanation from you within **2** days, the school may contact you to discuss the absence.

Principals may decline to accept an explanation that you have provided if they do not believe the absence is in the best interest of your child. In these circumstances your child's absence would be recorded as unjustified. When this happens the principal will discuss their decision with you and the reasons why.

Principals may request medical certificates or other documentation when frequent or long term absences are explained as being due to illness. Principals may also seek parental permission to speak with medical specialists to obtain information to collaboratively develop a health care plan to support your child. If the request is denied, the principal can record the absences as unjustified.

Travel

Families are encouraged to travel during school holidays. If travel during school term is necessary, discuss this with your child's school principal. An *Application for Extended Leave* may need to be completed. Absences relating to travel will be marked as leave on the roll and therefore contribute to your child's total absences for the year.

In some circumstances students may be eligible to enrol in distance education for travel periods over 50 school days. This should be discussed with your child's school principal.





If a student misses as little as 8 days in a school term, by the end of primary school they'll have missed over a year of school.

My child won't go to school. What should I do?

You should contact the principal as soon as possible to discuss the issue and ask for help. Strategies to help improve attendance may include a referral to the school's learning and support team or linking your child with appropriate support networks. The principal may seek further support from the Home School Liaison Program to develop an Attendance Improvement Plan.

What might happen if my child continues to have unacceptable absences?

It is important to understand that the Department of Education and may be required to take further action where children of compulsory school age have recurring numbers of unexplained or unjustified absences from school.

Some of the following actions may be undertaken:

- Compulsory Schooling Conferences

You may be asked, along with your child, to attend a Compulsory Schooling Conference. The conference will help to identify the supports your child may need to have in place so they attend school regularly. The school, parents and agencies will work together to develop an agreed plan (known as Undertakings) to support your child's attendance at school.

- Application to the Children's Court
- Compulsory Schooling Order

If your child's attendance at school remains unsatisfactory the Department may apply to the Children's Court for a *Compulsory Schooling Order*.

The Children's Court magistrate may order a Compulsory Schooling Conference to be convened.

- Prosecution in the Local Court

School and Department staff remain committed to working in partnership with you to address the issues which are preventing your child's full participation at school. In circumstances where a breach of compulsory schooling orders occurs further action may be taken against a parent in the Local Court. The result of court action can be the imposition of a community service order or a fine.

What age can my child leave school?

All New South Wales students must complete Year 10 or its equivalent. After Year 10, and up until they reach 17 years of age, there are a range of flexible options for students to complete their schooling.

Working in Partnership

The Department of Education recognises that working collaboratively with students and their families is the best way to support the regular attendance of students at school.

We look forward to working in partnership with you to support your child to fulfil their life opportunities.

Further information regarding school attendance can be obtained from the following websites

Policy, information and brochures

<http://www.schools.nsw.edu.au/studentsupport/programs/attendance.php>

The school leaving age

<http://www.schools.nsw.edu.au/leaving-school/index.php>

For further advice contact

Educational services

T 131 536

Learning and Engagement

Student Engagement and
Interagency Partnerships

T 9244 5356

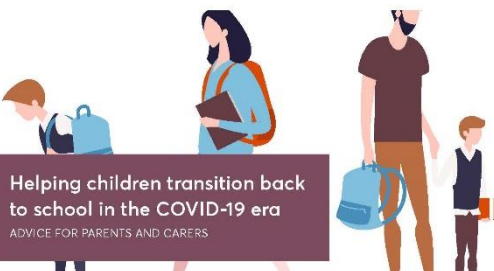
www.dec.nsw.gov.au


Do you need an interpreter?

If you need help with English and would like further information please call the Telephone Interpreter Service on **131 450** and ask for an interpreter in your language. The operator will get an interpreter on the line to assist you with your conversation. You will not be charged for this service.

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NSW Department of Education





Helping children transition back to school in the COVID-19 era

ADVICE FOR PARENTS AND CARERS

Transitioning back to school in the COVID-19 era can present many challenges for parents and children. Many parents have reported that learning from home has given their child the opportunity to work at their own pace. Many children have also benefitted from the 1:1 support which has helped with learning.

The shorter school day and flexibility for rest breaks has also meant that fatigue has been less of an issue. In addition, anxiety has improved for some children as a result of these factors. Given this, it is no wonder that returning to school comes with a mix of relief and excitement along with a new set of stresses for children and parents.


Reassure your child that it is safe to go to school

Many parents had conversations with their children about the importance of learning from home to keep them healthy and safe. Some children may now worry about the safety of returning to school.

To help your child feel safe, have a conversation with them explaining that:

- the decision to return to school is based on medical advice
- children do not usually get sick from COVID-19
- everyone at school is working hard to make sure that children are safe
- anyone who is unwell will stay at home
- the government is keeping an eye on things – if it starts to be unsafe, decisions about what to do will be made
- reassure your child that it is normal to have mixed emotions such as excitement, relief, worry and anger
- discuss what they are looking forward to and what they are worrying about
- reinforce good hygiene practices.

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Helping children transition back to school in the COVID-19 era

ADVICE FOR PARENTS AND CARERS

After school, it will be important to:

- talk to your child about their day, including what they enjoyed, what they felt worried about and what they are looking forward to tomorrow
- schedule extra family time as your child is likely to have missed being at home with you
- your child may feel more fatigued and will benefit from quiet activities to recharge.

Prepare your child for changes to usual school processes

Your school may have made changes to their normal processes. Your school will communicate these changes with you – these may vary across schools. To help prepare your child:

- talk to your child about upcoming changes – the more they understand the changes, the more comfortable they are likely to feel about them
- write social stories with your child about changes to routine
- ask to have an extra online 1:1 session between the teacher and/or learning support worker and your child before going back to school
- see if there are any strategies that home learning enabled that you might be able to take to the classroom
- ask your child what will make their transition back to school easier and see if this can be accommodated by your child's teacher, for example, knowing the class seating plan or the first activity of the day may help.

Re-establish normal routines in the lead up to school

- The week before:** Return children to their usual wake up and bedtime routines, as well as breakfast and morning snack/lunch.
- The day before:** Involve your child in packing their bag and preparing their uniform - this leaves you plenty of time to notice if anything is forgotten.
- The morning of:** Allow more time than usual to get ready.

Some schools may not allow parents to walk children to their classroom. This may make it harder for some children to separate from parents. Prepare your child for this by:

- discussing what might be different about the drop off and pick up procedures and how you will manage it as a family
- talk through the new procedure and role play or write social stories
- reassure your child that there will be plenty of staff to help take them to their classrooms
- ask your child if there is anything that will make this easier for them, such as arriving to school with a buddy or taking a special item that helps them feel 'brave'.

Returning to school before siblings

Younger children returning to school earlier than other family members may feel disappointed that their siblings are continuing with home learning or may feel disconnected from the family. You can help your child by:

- reassuring them that it is ok to feel disappointed
- explaining that all children will be returning to school soon
- allowing your child to pick a fun activity to complete when they get home from school so that they have something to look forward to
- avoid scheduling any 'fun' activities with other family members or friends whilst your child is at school.

Tips for children with cognitive and behavioural challenges

As children adjust to the new routine, cognitive and/or behavioural difficulties may seem more challenging. The following strategies can help children with an acquired brain injury (ABI) or other neurodevelopmental difficulties to avoid these issues as they transition back to school:

- Fatigue may be more problematic for these children either as a direct consequence of their difficulties or due to the extra effort it takes for them to readjust to change. Consider slowly increasing your child's attendance at school to help combat fatigue – you may consider shorter days or rest days.
- Speak to the school about incorporating more rest breaks throughout the day for your child.
- Speak to your school about reducing or eliminating homework until your child has settled back into a routine.

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Helping children transition back to school in the COVID-19 era

ADVICE FOR PARENTS AND CARERS

Ensure that your child is linked in with the learning support and wellbeing team.

Educate staff who are either new or unfamiliar with your child about their brain injury or neurodevelopmental disorder – For example, ABI is often the 'invisible' injury and those working with your child should be made aware of their needs, as well as strengths and weaknesses.

As children readjust to the pleasures and challenges associated with school, they may show greater difficulties with emotional regulation and challenging behaviour – remember, this is likely to be part of the readjustment phase and should improve with time.

Your child may need your help to regulate. You may find it helpful to create a calm corner with a 'tool box' of calming and distracting items, as well as adding some relaxation strategies into the daily routine. Exercise can also assist.

Finding extra support

If you need extra support or clarity in regards to your child's needs and learning challenges, referral to an appropriate psychologist for a detailed assessment and advice may be warranted. For example, a paediatric neuropsychologist can provide a differential diagnosis and strategies, and direct you to an appropriate special education tutor or any other healthcare specialist that may be required.

There are number of ways to access a psychologist. You can:

- use the Australia-wide Find a Psychologist™ service. Go to findapychologist.org.au or call 1800 333 497
- ask your GP or another health professional to refer you.

Acknowledgments

This resource was prepared by the:



Experts in Brain Psychology

A clinical neuropsychologist is a psychologist who is trained to understand brain-behaviour relationships (see the 'What is' page).

- To assess thinking/brain abilities and difficulties to clarify diagnosis and identify the client's care needs and priorities
- To provide targeted intervention or rehabilitation for people with thinking/brain-related difficulties or disorders
- To adapt or modify treatments to take into account the effects of thinking/brain difficulties

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