



Changes to the previous version are highlighted in pink

PART A CONTEXT

1 RECOGNITION AND THANKS

After two years of COVID-disruption to our lives and our School community, the School acknowledges the extraordinary work of every member of staff in accommodating additional expectations and requirements and investing so heavily in our students and their families. So too, the School is thankful for our students and their families, who have been very accommodating and cooperative. Implementing these Plans requires teamwork and that is what we have seen so far and what we are confident of seeing throughout 2022.

2 INTRODUCTION

Whilst many individuals in our community are now vaccinated the fact remains that the youngest amongst us are not and some face the risk of serious illness from COVID-19. For this reason, schools have an obligation to take all reasonably practicable steps to protect the health and safety of all staff and students. Independent schools make decisions about these measures for themselves, using all available advice. At BMGS, these decisions are made on the basis of a risk assessment and after extensive risk management planning processes. The School's approach in deciding whether a safety measure is reasonably practicable depends on the likelihood of the risk eventuating, the severity of the risk, the state of knowledge on measures to address the risk, the suitability and availability of measures to address the risk, the School's capacity to implement those measures and the cost of doing so. The School's assessment of risks may change when new information arises or when new advice is provided. The School may change its mitigation strategies at any point at the Headmaster's absolute discretion. It should be noted that school leaders are not doctors and rely on the knowledge of a lay person with the advice of NSW Health to reasonably interpret Public Health Orders and other relevant information.

3 PURPOSE

This document outlines the approach our School will take in managing the ongoing risks associated with COVID-19. The approach outlined is compliant with all relevant current Public Health Orders and has been subject to a thorough process of risk assessment, informed by advice from NSW Health, the NSW Department of Education and Training and the Association of Independent Schools NSW.

4 CHANGING CONTEXT

There are very few externally imposed restrictions that currently apply to schools with the emphasis on each school to plan for business as usual in a COVID-safe way by implementing school-based risk assessment processes and risk mitigation to enable continuity of education and to support wellbeing. For this reason, this Plan does not address areas it once did. The measures we have selected comply with the Public Health Order and relevant Health advice, but have primarily been developed by the School after our own risk assessment processes. The School recognises that the approaches it has adopted will be too conservative for some and not conservative enough for others. It recognises that some will feel comfortable with the protections the selected measures afford and others will not. The School also acknowledges that our implementation of these measures will be imperfect, more so where the compliance of students is concerned. Nonetheless, the School is convinced that these measures will satisfactorily mitigate the widespread risks that we have identified and will develop individual COVID-19 Risk Management Plans to manage more specific risks. Nonetheless, staff, parents and students must accept that in coming on campus, commuting to School or attending any School event they, and/or members of their family, may be exposed to COVID-19.

5 DURATION

This version of the Public COVID-Safety Information will remain active until an update is issued, the document is completely replaced by a new version or the document is withdrawn and not replaced.

PART B VACCINATIONS

6 STAFF VACCINATIONS

Under the Public Health Act 2010 and the Public Health (COVID-19 Vaccination of Education and Care Workers) Order 2021 (23 September 2021) BMGS workers (unless medically exempted) must be fully vaccinated for COVID-19 or they may not carry out work on campus. This includes employees, contractors, peripatetic tutors and coaches. The Public Health Order also requires that the School take all reasonable steps to ensure that School employees comply with this law. It is important to note that there are no legal alternatives to vaccinations, not even Rapid Antigen Tests.



7 STUDENT VACCINATIONS

The School does not require its students to be vaccinated for COVID-19. NSW Health encourages, but has not mandated, the vaccination of young people.

Whilst parents cannot be required to provide vaccination status information about their children, schools may request it in the same way that they require information about other vaccinations. The School has elected not to do this unless required. Examples where this is required is where a student wishes to play ISA Sport. It may also be required where a student wishes to interact with other schools in any number of other ways or to attend certain excursion or sporting venues, or to attend certain campsites. In such cases, students (or parents on their behalf) who refrain from providing this information may not be granted access to the venue or program.

The School is unlikely to permit NSW Health, or any other provider, to operate a vaccination program on our campus. In the event that a vaccination program is implemented for children and/or young people on our School campus, informed consent will be sought from parents or carers before any vaccine is administered.

8 PARENT VACCINATIONS

Parents are now permitted on site for certain events with or without vaccination. The School does not collect information in relation to the vaccination status of parents.

9 VISITOR VACCINATIONS

The School does not exclude visitor, including parents, from campus on the basis of vaccination status.

10 VOLUNTEER VACCINATIONS

Volunteers, including parent volunteers, are classified as 'workers' and so must provide evidence of full COVID-19 vaccination. Individual volunteers will be advised how they might provide an appropriate type of evidence if relevant.

PART C MONITORING FOR COVID

11 COVID-LIKE SYMPTOMS

Students with even the mildest cold or flu like symptoms are expected to stay home and be tested for COVID-19.

11.1 Underlying Conditions

Any person with an underlying illness that gives rise to COVID symptoms must provide the School with a doctor's certificate that describes the symptoms and assures the School the symptoms are not evidence of COVID-19 or any other transmissible infection.

11.2 Obvious Symptoms

Students presenting with any cold or flu like symptoms not related to a School-approved underlying condition will be immediately sent to sickbay and isolated in a separate room/space until they are able to go home. Parents are asked to ensure that someone is available to pick up their child at short notice to reduce the risk to BMGS First Aid staff.

11.3 Prior to Returning to School

Prior to returning to School after an illness with COVID symptoms, students are required to:

- provide a copy of their negative COVID-19 test result; and/or
- provide a medical certificate that states they do not present a risk to others; or
- isolate for 7 days and be symptom free upon return.

Copies of negative COVID-19 Test results are to be given to one of our receptionists. Alternatively, families may provide copies of negative COVID-19 Test results via email to the relevant campus.

- Junior School Springwood – absencejss@bmgs.nsw.edu.au
- Junior School Wentworth Falls – absencejs@bmgs.nsw.edu.au
- Senior School – absences@bmgs.nsw.edu.au
- The following information must be included in the email
 - Student Name
 - Student Year Group (eg Year 3)
 - Type of Test (RAHT or PCR)
 - Date of Test
 - Test Result

Where a student provides a copy of a negative COVID-19 Test but continues to present with symptoms (e.g. where an individual experiences hay fever), they may be required to provide a medical certificate that demonstrates a non-infectious underlying condition.

12 SURVEILLANCE TESTING

All NSW schools are to be provided a supply of Rapid Antigen Home Test (RAHT) kits and are asked to establish a home surveillance testing regime for staff and students to occur twice a week, on Mondays and Wednesdays. BMGS will encourage staff and students to participate in the state-wide program of surveillance.

12.1 Distribution

Parents that elect to participate in the program of surveillance will be asked to come to either campus to collect a supply of RAHT kits for each student under their care.

12.2 Administration of RAHTs

School staff will not administer RAHTs to students. Kits will be sent home and they will be administered there.

12.3 Requirement to Report

The Public Health Order requires that when an individual tests positive to COVID-19, whether through a PCR or RAH test, it is reported to Service NSW and their school. It should be noted that these notifications are particularly critical if they impact school operations. Responsibility for these notifications lies with the individual. There is no expectation that schools will ask or follow up.

12.4 Reporting a Positive Test to the School

Where a student returns a positive test, parents are expected to email the relevant campus with the result.

- Junior School Springwood – absencejss@bmgs.nsw.edu.au
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- Senior School – absencess@bmgs.nsw.edu.au
- The following information must be included in the email:
 - Student Name
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12.5 What About Negative Test Results

There is no obligation to report negative test results in NSW.

13 CONFIRMED CASE OF COVID-19

13.1 The Individual's Responsibilities

Any student who tests positive to COVID-19, using a RAHT or receiving a PCR, is required to follow NSW Health requirements under the Public Health Order for testing positive and self-isolation. Currently, the requirement is to:

- report positive RAHTs to Service NSW;
- report any positive COVID test (PCR or RAHT) to the School;
- isolate for 7 days following the positive test;
- leave isolation after 7 days unless they have symptoms, including a sore throat, runny nose, cough or shortness of breath (note: if a person continues to have symptoms, they are only able to leave isolation after 7 days with a medical clearance);
- if there are symptoms after 7 days, then remain in isolation until 24 hours after symptoms have resolved;
- after the isolation period they can immediately return to School following the protocols below.

• Prior to Returning to School

Prior to returning to School after COVID, students are required to:

- provide a copy of a negative COVID-19 test result; and/or
- provide a medical certificate that states they do not present a risk to others; or
- isolate for 7 days and be symptom free upon return.

Copies of negative COVID-19 Test results are to be given to one of our receptionists. Alternatively, families may provide copies of negative COVID-19 Test results via email to the relevant campus.

- Junior School Springwood – absencejss@bmgs.nsw.edu.au
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- The following information must be included in the email
 - Student Name
 - Student Year Group (eg Year 3)
 - Type of Test (RAHT or PCR)
 - Date of Test
 - Test Result

Where a student provides a copy of a negative COVID-19 Test but continues to present with symptoms (e.g. where an individual experiences hay fever), they may be required to provide a medical certificate that demonstrates a non-infectious underlying condition.

13.2 School Response to a Positive Case

Schools will no longer have to send cohorts home or undertake contact tracing. Instead, the School will send a communication to the relevant elements of their community alerting them that there has been a case and to monitor for symptoms and that they might have been exposed to the person in the two days prior to them becoming symptomatic or testing positive.

14 HOUSEHOLD CONTACTS

A household contact is a person who has not tested positive for COVID-19, but lives with someone who has. Unless exempted, household contacts are required by NSW Health to isolate for 7 days unless the person has previously tested positive to COVID and ended their isolation for this in the past 28 days.

PART D COMING ON CAMPUS

15 PARENTS

Whilst parents are asked to remain in or with their vehicle when dropping children off or picking up children, under certain circumstances parents (whether vaccinated or not) are now permitted on Campus. Up to two visitors per student are permitted on campus, in corridors and foyers, however not in classrooms to assist staff in settling students at the start of the school year. Please attend to the instructions of Heads of School for further information.

16 VISITORS

Visitors on campus will be kept to a minimum other than to support essential school activities or student needs.

16.1 Volunteers

As workers, external providers and volunteers, including parent volunteers, are required to be fully vaccinated to support school operations or fulfil specific roles, such as helping with activities or conducting reading groups.

16.2 Other Visitors

All visitors will be required to sign both in and out at one of our receptions and are required to adhere to all COVID-19 Safety requirements.

16.3 Uniform Shop

Students and parents / carers can visit the uniform shop during normal operating hours or order by email or phone.

When visiting the uniform shop in person:

- masks are to be worn inside the shop by any person 12 years of age and over and recommended for children under 12 years of age;
- Parents and carers must sign in via the School's Uniform Shop QR Code

Uniform shop orders can be placed by email and phone as follows.

- Orders may be placed by:
 - calling the Uniform Shop Manager on (02) 4757 9004, or
 - emailing uniformshop@bmgs.nsw.edu.au
- Orders will be processed when the shop is open.
- Orders can be collected from any one of our Reception Areas.

PART E PERSONAL HYGIENE

17 SOCIAL DISTANCING

There are no restrictions to the number or density of people occupying a space or at gatherings. Nonetheless, all persons on campus are expected to:

- 17.1 avoid close personal contact (such as hugging and shaking hands);
- 17.2 ensure they provide a social distance of 1.5m between all adults and Senior School students;

Junior School students are to provide as much social distancing as possible.

18 FACE MASKS

18.1 Senior School Students and Adults

All Senior School students (even if still 12 years old) and adults on campus are expected to:

- have a mask or face covering with them at all times.
- wear a mask or face covering whilst indoors whether alone or with other people.
- refit their mask immediately after the reason for its removal no longer applies.
- remove their mask only when required for safety, extreme physical exertion or eating and drinking.

Where a student is found not wearing a mask by a member of staff (even after eating or exercising) a reminder will be provided and the student supervised in fitting their mask. If this cannot be achieved, the student will be sent to the office and sent home.

18.2 Junior School Students

Appropriate face masks or face coverings are strongly recommended by NSW Government. Parents are asked to have a conversation with their child in relation to their expectations of their children whilst they are at School. Teachers and educators will suggest students wear masks and remind them to do so but will not insist.

18.3 Exemptions

The Headmaster may grant an employee or Senior School student an exemption to the requirement to wear a mask or face covering where that person has a formal medical exemption.

- Generally, evidence must be provided prior to coming on campus. For staff, this must be arranged the previous working day at the latest.
- Evidence must be in the form of:
 - a medical certificate or other written evidence signed by a registered health practitioner or a registered NDIS provider, or
 - a statutory declaration by one of the student's parents.
- Evidence must demonstrate:
 - that the person has an illness, condition or disability, and
 - the illness, condition or disability makes wearing a fitted face covering unsuitable, and
 - the person's name and place of residence.
- The School may impose conditions on the person's entry to the campus or their engagement with others whilst on campus.

19 PERSONAL HYGIENE

At the beginning of each lesson, students will be expected to publicly sanitise their hands. The School will continue to supply hand sanitiser in all learning spaces. Students are welcome to bring their own should they prefer to do so. In addition, all persons on campus are expected to:

- 19.1 wash their hands regularly and/or use hand sanitiser throughout the day;
- 19.2 cough or sneeze into their elbow; and
- 19.3 dispose of tissues and other personal use items immediately into the bin.

20 EATING AND DRINKING

20.1 Students on campus are required to:

- not share food and drinks;
- eat and drink outdoors wherever possible;
- only eat with other people when outdoors.

20.2 Students are recommended to avoid using School bubblers but to bring their own water bottle with their name clearly marked and re-fill it at various locations around the School.

21 EQUIPMENT HYGIENE

- 21.1 The School will sanitise all high touch surfaces each evening, after the school day concludes.
- 21.2 All frequently touched surfaces, door handles, light switches, handrails, School equipment used, desks and the tops of chairs will be disinfected:
- at the beginning and at the conclusion of all Senior School lessons (students to clean with the resources placed in each space); and
 - if students move classrooms (teacher/educators to clean, with the assistance of students where possible, using the resources placed in each space).

22 ROOM VENTILATION

Where possible, the School will take measures to maximise ventilation and airflow in rooms. This will make it more difficult and, in some cases, impossible to cool and heat classrooms. All students should dress appropriately based on the temperature. Where this will require a departure from the student dress code, permission will be provided by the Head of School.

PART F ACTIVITIES ON CAMPUS

23 FACE-TO-FACE LEARNING AND COCURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

Classroom learning activities will be designed to reduce physical interactions and enable appropriate social distancing. Higher risk activities, such as singing, will be undertaken subject to formal risk assessment processes that include a consideration of COVID-19 risk mitigation and the ratio of risk to 'reward'.

24 ONLINE TEACHING AND LEARNING

Throughout the first few months of 2022 there may be students temporarily kept at home for COVID-related reasons. Where sick, such students are encouraged to rest and recuperate. For those seeking to engage in learning the School will provide some content suitable for at-home learning.

24.1 Junior School

The nature of the provision of online learning for Junior School students temporarily learning from home for reasons relating to COVID will be determined by the age and capability of the students concerned. Teachers will consult with the Head of JS as necessary. As a general rule, teachers will provide work for students at home via Google Classroom or Class Dojo. They will ensure work provided for at-home learners is meaningful and reflects some of the content covered in class, though not the exact same content as being covered in class as on-line learning and face-to-face learning are very different for Junior School students.

24.2 Senior School

Senior School students temporarily learning from home for reasons relating to COVID will access all lesson content and resources via Google Classroom.

25 EXAMINATIONS AND ASSESSMENTS

All aspects of the School's academic calendar will operate as normal, including Senior School examinations and other assessments. Should individual assessment tasks be modified to accommodate COVID-safe guidelines, students and parents will be notified well in advance and a 'no-disadvantage' test applied.

26 PERIPATETIC MUSIC LESSONS

Private Music lessons are permitted on campus after a COVID-19 risk mitigation lens has been applied to existing risk assessments.

- 26.1 Tutors will follow all COVID-Safety procedures that apply to staff and adults on site.
- 26.2 Tutors will take care in wiping down shared surfaces/instruments.
- 26.3 Students will sanitise their hands before and after using shared instruments.
- 26.4 Parents dropping off and collecting students will wait outside in their cars and not enter the PAC.

27 EXCURSIONS

27.1 Orientation Activities

On-site transition, orientation and induction programs will take place. Parents and carers are able to attend but will be asked to comply with strict COVID-Safety requirements.

27.2 Inter-School Gatherings

Schools are permitted to interact with each other as long as mingling between students is well managed.

27.3 Out-of-school activities

Excursions, carnivals, field trips and camps are all permitted.

PART G PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

28 PHYSICAL EDUCATION

Physical activity is permitted within existing PDHPE classes according to the following guidelines.

- 28.1 Activities must be designed to keep students separated and facilitate social distancing.
- Focus on individual practice and personal fitness
 - Promote the development of movement, interpersonal and self-management skills
 - Modify game activities.
- 28.2 Encourage students to bring a special 'exercising mask'.

29 SCHOOL SPORT

School sport may proceed within BMGS defined cohorts in line with community settings.

29.1 Internal Sport

School sport may proceed under the following protocols:

- Third party providers are allowed to support school sport if they are fully vaccinated.
- Where transport is required, mixing between cohorts will be minimised.
- We may make use of school and community facilities but must minimise contact with those outside of the school community. Note: public indoor recreation facilities will require staff and students aged 16 and older to provide evidence of being fully vaccinated to enter.
- Students in Year 7 and above (and staff) must wear masks indoors at all times when not exercising, including in change room and bathroom facilities.

29.2 External Sport

Community sport and inter-school (including ISA) sport will proceed with additional expectations. The protocols associated with this will be imposed upon the School as a condition of participation. These are not yet known.

PART H TRANSPORT

30 TRANSPORT

All students are encouraged to use private transport rather than buses or trains to reduce the probability of introducing the Coronavirus to their family or our School community.

30.1 Cars

In relation to transport in cars, the School asks that students only travel in vehicles with other students in accordance with the Public Health Order. We also request that families not introduce students from other families into their vehicle where it would cause the mixing of BMGS cohorts.

30.2 Buses and Trains

In relation to communal transport:

- Senior School students must wear masks on buses and trains;
- Junior School students will be encouraged to wear masks on buses and trains;
- all students are asked to be conscious of social distancing and personal hygiene while using communal transport and should sanitise their hands upon entry and exit.