

Prairiewood High School



Principal Ms B Giudice

203-215 Restwell Rd, Prairiewood NSW 2176

Postal Address Locked Bag 46, Wetherill Park BC NSW 1851

Phone 02 9725 5444 Email prairiewoo-h.school@det.nsw.edu.au

CRICOS NSW Department of Education CRICOS Provider Code 00588M www.deinternational.nsw.edu.au

20 October 2021

Dear parents and carers

I thank you all for your ongoing support and appreciate how difficult it has been during Learning from Home. However we are about to welcome all students back to school on Monday 25 October. Below are the key dates and details to help prepare you and your family for the return to school.

Return to school roadmap

During Term 4, students will return to school in a staged approach, with no mingling or on-site activities. The [Roadmap to Return Guidelines for families](#) contains more details. We have also attached a document [Return to School – Roadmap for parents and carers](#) which also provides more detailed information.

In schools like ours where we have been learning from home for extended periods of time, students will return to face-to-face learning with NSW Health-approved COVID-safe settings on school site on 25 October – for Years 7-11. The return to school roadmap is subject to change depending on advice from NSW Health. You can stay up to date with the most recent information on our [Advice for families page](#) which is also on the front page of our website.

Currently our school is operating under [Level 3 Plus restrictions](#). When the remaining students return on Monday 25 October we will be under [Level 3 restrictions](#). On line learning will cease for all students once face-to-face learning resumes on 25 October.

As per Department of Education and Health advice, we will be minimising interaction between students from different stages so start and finish times will be different for different groups. (Also see attached bell time changes)

Year groups	Start time	Finish time
Year 7 & 8	8.45am	2.20pm
Year 9 & 10	9.00am	2.30pm
Year 11	8.30am	2.10pm
Special Education	9am	2.20pm

(Rolls will be marked during period 1 class and SMS messages informing parents of absences will be sent as soon as possible)

The canteen will be open and staff are fully vaccinated. We encourage students to bring refillable water bottles rather than use bubblers. There will also be staggered recess and lunch breaks to minimise mingling at break time. Playground areas will change according to areas being used for PE and staff available for playground duty.

Students should wear sport uniform to school for all PE or sport lessons as change rooms are not being used. However students will need to bring full leather shoes for practical subjects such as TAS subjects if their sports shoes have mesh uppers.

Classrooms will have antibacterial spray and we will continue to ask students to wipe down their desks after each lesson. We also encourage students to bring their own hand sanitiser and use it many times a day.

Students will follow their normal timetable from Term 3, but some rooms may have changed in order to abide by ventilation requirements. Having open or well-ventilated spaces reduces the risk of transmission of COVID-19 because infectious particles are more quickly diffused in the open air. Windows will be open as per the building code requirements and classroom doors will be left open to allow for ventilation flow. The department will continue to work with NSW Health to provide us with advice and guidance on maintaining good ventilation in our school and we will make use of our outdoor spaces wherever practical.

There will be no assemblies, presentation days, graduations, excursions or external sports events. We will advise any changes to this situation when the NSW Health advice changes. As you know, our Assembly is on a Friday Week B. In lieu of these assemblies, students in Years 7 to 10 will be engaged in meaningful wellbeing lessons. Year 11 students will have a flexible start of 9.30am which is their first timetabled lesson but will only have a 30 min recess then Period 4 and finish school at 1pm. Every Friday Week B our Day 10 Program will continue and all students will finish school at 1pm with a staggered release.

New timetables will be issued on Monday 25 October due to room changes.

Also, as Scripture providers cannot attend onsite under Level 3 restrictions, students in Years 7 to 10 will finish on a Tuesday Week A at 1.30pm. We will stagger their release from class. Year 11 students will continue their timetabled lessons and finish at 2.30pm.

Please note: Minimum supervision will be provided for any student who needs to remain onsite during the school hours of 8.30am to 2.30pm. School buses will run as per their normal timetable.

Mask requirements

When students and staff return to school on 25 October masks are required for all staff and students in Year 7 and above only when indoors (unless exercising or eating). Students and teachers cannot be on site if they do not wear a mask. Students are encouraged to bring their own masks.

Masks are also mandatory on public transport. This applies to students aged 13 years and over, and staff when travelling to and from school and during school excursions by public transport or by chartered or private transport services.

Returning borrowed equipment

We ask that all students who have borrowed laptops, dongles, ipads and any other school equipment, please return it to the library so that classes will have adequate technology as required for their lessons.

Students aged 12 years and over eligible for the Pfizer and Moderna COVID-19 vaccines

All staff required on site supporting the return to school will need to be fully vaccinated from 18 October. Then from 8 November all staff, contractors, volunteers and students on student placement on a school site will need to be fully vaccinated. Students are not required to be vaccinated but NSW Health are urging all students 12 years old and over to get vaccinated with the Pfizer or Moderna COVID-19 vaccine as soon as possible before returning to school.

There is currently sufficient supply of the Moderna vaccine to community pharmacies and the Pfizer vaccine to General Practitioners. Bookings can be made via the [Vaccine Clinic Finder](#). Depending on location, bookings are available within the next few days.

COVID-19 vaccination is the best protection against severe illness and also reduces the risk of spreading COVID-19 to others. Getting vaccinated against COVID-19 now will help to protect both you, your family and our school community.

Wellbeing resources for students and families

Please take some time to check out the Department's [wellbeing resources for students and families](#) and our school [Wellbeing Page](#). You'll find useful tools for mental health and wellbeing. Please do not hesitate to reach

out if we can do anything to help you and your children to prepare for the return to face-to-face learning or if you have any concerns about the return to school.

The Wellbeing Hub will be closed when school returns as the priority is that all students be in class and mingling must be reduced. Students who need wellbeing support should fill out the wellbeing [Referral Form](#) on our website.

Orientation and transition to high school

Onsite orientations and transition programs are not currently allowed in person on school sites until we are advised differently by NSW Health. We will share more information in the coming weeks about our school's virtual orientation and transition program for current Year 6 students intending to attend PHS as Year 7 in 2022.

HSC student revision, support & exams

Year 12 students may continue to attend their tutorial program this week. Next week teachers of HSC subjects will be available for revision and support during their usual timetabled HSC classes. Year 12 students must sign in using the Service NSW App Check in and the PHS QR Code near the front door.

We are putting in place and preparing COVID-safe arrangements for exams to minimise mixing between students. These plans include appropriate spacing for students and that exams are conducted in well-ventilated rooms and spaces, mask wearing for students and staff onsite. We are also organising alternative venues in the event we need to relocate the exams.

Visitors to our school

Only essential visitors are allowed on school sites at this time. When dropping off or picking up your child, parents and carers need to stay outside school grounds, you will need to wear a mask and physically distance. Some exceptions may exist for:

- vulnerable students
- students with disability

In these instances, follow the vaccination and mask-wearing requirements and sign in using the Service NSW QR code when entering the school.

Communication with parents, carers and students

Parents and students will be notified if a decision is made to close the school due to a confirmed case of COVID-19. Notifications will be via the Skoolbag App, direct email to students, the school Facebook and Instagram pages. During this time we will continue to provide learning from home activities and we will let you know when we can return to face-to-face learning.

Thank you again for your continued support during what has already been a fast moving school term.

Kind regards



Ms Belinda Giudice