



CATHOLIC EDUCATION  
WESTERN AUSTRALIA

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF CATHOLIC EDUCATION

**MEMO**

**To:** The Principal  
All Schools

**From:** Dr Debra Sayce

**Subject:** PRINCIPAL BRIEFING #7 – 2021

**Date:** AS AT 9AM - 5 February 2021

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At his press conference last night, Premier Mark McGowan advised that all schools in the Perth, Peel and South West lockdown regions will **open on Monday, 8 February** under the following conditions:

- South West schools may open in line with other regions of Western Australia. Students and staff in the South West are not required to wear masks and all restrictions imposed on 31 January are lifted. Schools in the South West region will be return to Phase 4 operations and should refer to the Phase 4 Operation Guidelines provided for the start of Term 1.
- All staff members and students in Perth and Peel regions in Years 7 to 12 will be required to wear masks at all times while at school. This applies to classrooms, all teaching areas and libraries, staffrooms, and in playgrounds/outside. It also includes travelling on public transport to and from school. Masks should also be worn in private vehicles if there is more than one passenger over the age of 12 years.
- Students in Kindergarten to Year 6 in the Perth and Peel regions are not required to wear a mask, but their teachers and support staff must wear masks.
- School balls and socials in the Perth and Peel region cannot take place until the restrictions are lifted.
- If there is no further community transmission, the restrictions will be lifted at 12:01am on Sunday 14 February.
- Principals in the Perth and Peel regions will be able to determine whether parents come onto schools grounds next week. However, given that many students will be starting school for the first time, while others will be anxious about restarting school, especially during the current restrictions, a pastoral and common sense approach is required. A blanket ban on all parents coming onto the school property could be counterproductive and cause unnecessary stress for children, parents and staff. Principals should work with their staff to develop protocols which reflect the uniqueness of this situation and which focuses on the welfare of the child.
- Common sense should apply regarding the colour and markings on masks. Obviously any masks which have inappropriate markings and designs should not be allowed.
- Unless a staff member or a student has a valid medical exemption from wearing a mask, the clear expectation is that all staff and all students from Years 7 to 12 will be

wearing masks. If a staff member or student who does not have a valid medical reason refuses to wear a mask, please contact your Employment Relations consultant.

- Large school gatherings such as assemblies and opening Masses, can take place if only attended by staff and students.

## **OPERATING GUIDELINES, WORKFORCE MANAGEMENT AND SCHOOL ACTIVITIES**

CEWA's Incident Management Team is working closely with the Department of Education to establish operating guidelines that consider the complexities of operating within the above guidelines. Further briefings with guidance regarding school operations, workforce management and school activities will be provided as they are developed.

Principals are encouraged to notify parents and staff that schools will be commencing Term 1 on 8 February and advising that more details will be available as soon as they become available. Subject to deliveries from the State Government today, parents and staff should be informed that masks will be available for staff as well as Year 7 – 12 students.

## **WEARING FACE MASKS AT SCHOOL IN THE PERTH AND PEEL REGIONS**

For students in Years 7 to 12 and staff in the Perth and Peel regions, masks can be brought from home, although the State Government will also provide a supply of masks to CEWA for distribution to schools.

Schools in non-lockdown regions, including the South West, are not affected by the requirement to wear masks.

If children from Kindergarten to Year 6 wish to wear masks they may do so; however, there is no expectation.

All staff members must wear their masks while they are at school. However, when teachers, educators and carers are teaching, interacting with or caring for children, they are permitted to remove their masks as they can interfere with their ability to clearly communicate with students. However, if teachers, educators and carers feel that they are able to be clearly understood they may choose to wear face masks at all times.

Parents, caregivers and visitors to schools in the Perth and Peel regions must wear a mask and adhere to COVID-safe guidelines while they are on a school site.

We expect a supply of masks to be delivered to the Newman Siena Centre for schools in the Perth and Peel regions on Friday morning, 5 February. Principals will be advised of arrangements for collecting masks as soon as these details are confirmed.

### *Mask collection for schools in Perth and Peel regions*

Assuming that the masks are delivered to the Newman Siena Centre on Friday morning, 5 February, Principals are asked to please arrange for a member of their staff to attend Newman Siena Centre (33 Williamstown Road, Doubleview) on **Friday 5 February during the timeframes outlined below**.

For schools in Mandurah, Pinjarra and Waroona, arrangements are being made for masks to be available at a central location in Mandurah, details of which will be provided directly to you by Bunbury Regional Officer Kerrie Merritt:

**Please note that the following times are provided on the assumption that the masks will arrive at the Newman Siena Centre on Friday morning.**

<b>11:45 am to 12:30 pm</b>	<b>Schools with names starting A to L</b>
<b>12:30 pm to 1:45 pm</b>	<b>Schools with names from M to Q</b>
<b>1:45 pm to 3:00 pm</b>	<b>Schools with names starting S</b>
<b>3:00pm to 3:45 pm</b>	<b>Schools with names from T to Z</b>

*Advice for staff collecting masks from Newman Siena Centre*

Staff attending face mask collection points will be required to wear a mask and observe COVID-safe guidelines regarding physical distancing, registering attendance upon arrival at the site and use of hand sanitiser.

As noted above, please be aware that CEWA expects that it will only receive face mask supplies on Friday morning. An email will be sent to all Principals once the masks have arrived with pick up times confirmed.

Be assured that Catholic Education Office staff will be doing everything to expedite mask distribution upon your staff member's arrival. However, we request patience as some delays may be experienced.

On arrival at Newman Siena Centre, please use the SafeWA app to scan the displayed QR code SafeWA, provide the school name to the receptionist and wait in the courtyard until the allocated parcel is ready for collection, at which time an attendant will call for you to collect your package. You may require a small trolley to transfer the parcel to your vehicle.

## **COMMUNICATIONS ABOUT WEARING MASKS**

It is important that you collaborate with your Senior Leadership Team to establish and appropriately communicate protocols regarding the distribution and wearing of masks by students and staff. As noted above, there is a requirement that everyone who is at a Catholic school in the Perth and Peel regions wears a mask and adheres to the State Government advice.

To assist schools in lockdown regions to communicate this important information to staff and members of your respective communities, the following resources will be provided:

- Letter for parents / caregivers
- FAQ's for staff, parents and students
- Poster demonstrating correct wearing of masks

Information for school communities will be updated on CEWA's website as well as on Facebook and Instagram.

## **AHPPC GUIDELINES**

The AHPPC has provided the following reminders for schools:

- Schools should continue to maintain good behaviours to prevent the spread of disease. This includes frequent handwashing, respiratory hygiene and physical distancing where possible.
- Children and staff should not attend school if unwell and should stay home and be tested. In circumstances where children have other medical reasons for recurrent

symptoms, a letter from the GP is sufficient to allow return to school without a negative test.

- Regular environmental cleaning and disinfection, especially of frequently touched surfaces, and promoting outdoor air ventilation where possible, also reduce the risk of transmission.
- Settings that enable frequent and close contact between individuals or groups pose a risk of transmission. Therefore, large events require COVIDSafe plans and there may be limits on the number of people who can attend.
- It is important that we continue to protect the health and wellbeing of students and staff. Students and staff may experience loneliness, confusion and see distressing scenes and stories from overseas. [Head to Health](#) provides online resources on mental health and COVID-19, including information for parents, which may also assist teachers.