

# PHYSICAL DISTANCING IN SCHOOLS

## POLICY



### PURPOSE & OBJECTIVE

On the recommendation of the Australian Health Protection Principal Committee (AHPPC), the National Cabinet determined that schools remain open for children of parents who cannot work from home and vulnerable children and are required to provide adequate supervision as follows, based on physical distancing measures between Staff and Students during Pandemic Covid-19.

Seaholme primary School's objective is to provide a safe working environment for Staff that may be required to teach students at school.

### SCOPE

This Policy applies to Staff that may/will be required to work at school to facilitate the education of students that attend school.

### POLICY IMPLEMENTATION

The following steps must be, as per the AHPPC recommendations, be adhered to while working on school premises:

#### Social Distancing Standards and Practises

- a. Maximum number of 10 children in a room.
- b. A minimum teacher-to-student ratio of 1:8 to ensure staff can assist their colleagues with breaks, relief and other support where required. This staffing ratio can include the use of relevant support staff.
- c. Where possible, staff and students should endeavour to keep 1.5 metres distance from each other.
- d. Based on a room size of 40 square meters, a room should have no more than 10 occupants at any given time.  
Note: Occupancy rates may be adjusted for larger room sizes, as long as there is no more than one occupant per four square meters of floor space.
- e. Schools supporting students with complex health needs may need to adapt these requirements to meet individual student and equipment requirements.
- f. Students should be spaced out as much as possible. For example, a minimum of two desk spaces between each child or young person.
- g. Fixed seating arrangements and/or exam style seating should also be considered where practical and appropriate.
- h. Windows should be open during the day to promote air flow.
- i. Hand sanitisers and tissues should be made available in all learning and office spaces.
- j. Office space should have one staff member per four square meters of office floor space.
- k. Staff should use separate offices where possible.
- l. Mixing of staff and students between rooms should be avoided where possible. It is acknowledged that staff may need to move between rooms to support breaks.
- m. Staff in schools supporting students with complex health needs will need to regularly assist different groups across the course of the day. In these situations, staff should use best practice hand hygiene.

#### Teaching practice

- a. Where possible, classroom furniture should be rearranged to provide maximum space between tables.

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- b. Seating arrangements should also be changed to maximise distance between students. For example, students can be seated along the short edges and well as long edges of tables, and tables can be moved to the full front, back and side walls of the classroom.
- c. Student group work should be suspended, except where students are collaborating using digital technologies. Except for very young students, student work can be handed to a teacher for feedback rather than feedback being provided immediately by the teacher in close proximity to the student

### Start and finish of day, lunchtime, recess and breaks

- a. In order to reduce the gathering of large groups at any one time, schools should consider staggering the start and finish of the school day (where this does not extend the school day to an unreasonable degree).
- b. Breaks and time outside should be staggered to limit contact between groups.
- c. Where students line up to enter class, they should be encouraged to keep 1.5 metres between each other where possible.
- d. Where students usually enter and leave class in an unstructured manner, this practice can be changed so students enter in a more structured way so a distance of 1.5 metres is maintained.
- e. Students, especially in secondary schools, should be encouraged to keep a distance of 1.5 metres between each other and between themselves and staff.
- f. Greetings should take the form of non-contact greetings.
- g. The highest standards of hygiene should be practiced in staffrooms, including washing drink and food containers with hot water and detergent and regularly wiping down surfaces with disinfectant.

### Assemblies, gatherings and meetings

Schools should suspend any large gatherings of staff and students at one time, such as whole school or sub-school assemblies and large information evenings. Schools must not hold any outdoor events that involve over 500 people, or indoor events of more than 100 people.

## FURTHER INFORMATION AND RESOURCES

[COVID 19 Advice for Schools](#)

## EVALUATION AND REVIEW

This policy will apply until Seaholme Primary School advises staff of changes to, or termination of, these working arrangements.