



COVID-19 update – 29 June 2021

Dear services and providers,

The department is committed to continuing to provide updated information and assistance as we work together to respond to the health advice particularly across the Greater Sydney region.

Further to advice already issued, the following information provides an update on some of the frequently asked questions that we are hearing from services. We hope that these updates continue to be helpful in your service.

If you have a question, please do not hesitate to make contact with our team:

ececd@det.nsw.edu.au.

Operational Status

Education and care services are considered an essential service and remain open, unless otherwise directed by NSW Health. Vacation care services on school sites should contact their site managers to determine if their sites are open.

Frequently asked questions

Can parents/carers enter school grounds to drop off/pick up children from services on school sites?

If it is not possible for services to organise drop off/pick ups at the school gate (due to staffing and other practical or safety issues), then parents may enter school grounds and drop off/pick up at the service entrance. Health and safety precautions should be taken including physical distancing and wearing masks.

Can incursions continue in services at the current time, including for Vacation Care services?

Incursions should not be held in the Greater Sydney region while the Public Health Order is in place in order to limit the number of people on site in a service. The department suggests exploring ways to hold virtual incursions as an alternative at this time.

We are directing families to have children tested who are presenting with symptoms, however, not all clinics will test children under five. Where should we send them?

[NSW Health has launched a page](#) to help you find your nearest COVID-19 testing clinic. Once you have entered your location, you can see available clinics and it will list whether there are any restrictions on testing children prior to attending.

If a child has been tested for COVID-19 but is yet to receive their results, can they attend the service?

No, once swabbed, you must self-isolate until a negative result is returned per the [NSW Health self-isolation guidelines](#).

Can we hold an after hours staff meeting in our service?

Services should refer to their COVID safe plans to determine the best way to manage staff meetings at this time. Staff should wear masks if they are engaging with other adults and not caring for children, for instance, in the office or staff room. They should also observe the limit of one person per four square metres in shared workspaces (including staff rooms and administration areas).

Are QR codes mandatory in services?

Electronic check-in methods are mandatory for many businesses in NSW however this requirement does not apply to ECEC services. It is recommended that ECEC services implement electronic methods where possible (e.g. QR codes) to collect details for all visitors that attend the premises. [The Service NSW COVID Safe Check-in](#) is strongly recommended as a free, secure and convenient system and is the NSW Government's preferred method.

Can student placements proceed (for example with TAFE or University students)?

There are currently no restrictions on student placements in NSW ECE services. However, services may want to consider placements in line with:

- Restrictions of movement or operations under current health orders
- The level of community transmission of COVID-19 in the local area
- The student's ability to comply with your COVID-safe policies and procedures
- The ability to complete the placement and ensure a continuity of learning for both the student and children.

Students are encouraged to seek guidance from their education provider and the individual service provider in the first instance, based on their COVID safe plan.

COVID-safe practices

- Services and providers should ensure they have up-to-date emergency contact details in the National Quality Agenda IT System (NQA ITS). These details will be used if NSW Health need to contact your service after hours.
- Services are encouraged to complete and implement a [COVID-19 Safety Plan](#) as part of their risk assessment. Please note this does not have to be submitted.

Hygiene and health

- Services should continue to consider a variety of risk-mitigation strategies, such as physical distancing, cleaning, hand hygiene and

outdoor air ventilation, to reduce the risk of COVID-19 transmission in early childhood settings.

- To help slow the spread of COVID-19 in the community, staff and children should stay at home if experiencing any COVID-19 symptoms or if unwell, no matter how mild, and get tested immediately.

For more information

The department regularly updates the [COVID-19 Guidelines for ECEC services](#) based on advice from NSW Health.

Educators are encouraged to regularly check the [NSW Health website](#) regarding up to date restrictions in NSW. If you have recently travelled, please also check health information from other state departments.

If you have any questions about your service operation you can contact the Information and Enquiries team on 1800 619 113 or by emailing ececd@det.nsw.edu.au.



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