

Forrest Primary School

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**Responding to a Pandemic – Covid-19 Procedures**

**Infection control during a pandemic**

The intent of this procedure is to ensure best practice is implemented to protect the centre/service community during a pandemic. It is based on current ACT Health advice and aims to ensure the safety and protection of all stakeholders accessing or using an education and care facility or a school age care service during the COVID - 19 pandemic. The procedures address the key protection strategies that must be in place, communication that must be maintained, and actions required should a case of COVID-19 infection occur.

Government planning to meet the changing circumstances posed by the COVID - 19 pandemic can happen rapidly. In order to remain aware of changes and to adapt procedures to meet changes all services should check ACT Health Directorate daily. Useful links include: -

[Australia Health Protection Principal Committee](https://www.health.gov.au/news/australian-health-protection-principal-committee-ahppc-coronavirus-covid-19-statement-on-3-april-2020)

[Safe Work Australia](https://www.safeworkaustralia.gov.au/covid-19-information-workplaces/industry-information/early-childhood-education)

[ACT Health Directorate](https://health.act.gov.au/about-our-health-system/novel-coronavirus-covid-19#healthadviceforschoolsandchildcarecentres)

[Australian Government Department of Health](https://www.health.gov.au/)

[ACT Education Directorate](https://www.education.act.gov.au/early-childhood)

[Australian Government Department of Education Skills and Employment](https://www.dese.gov.au/news/coronavirus-covid-19)

[ACECQA](https://www.acecqa.gov.au/latest-news/coronavirus-covid-19-information-australian-government)

Services should note they **must not** discriminate against or exclude families from accessing the centre, based on a parent or guardian’s occupation*.*

### ****If your child tests positive to COVID-19****

You **must tell the school if your child is diagnosed with COVID-19**. This is a requirement under the ACT Education Directorate procedures for management of infectious diseases. Telling us when your child has COVID-19 will also help us track if there is an increase in COVID-19 transmission at your school and manage any high-risk exposures for more vulnerable school community members.

Students with COVID-19 symptoms should get tested and **must not attend school while they are unwell**.

We strongly recommend parents and carers keep their child home for at least five days if they have COVID-19.

Parents and carers must report a positive RAT to [ACT Health](https://www.covid19.act.gov.au/stay-safe-and-healthy/rapid-antigen-test-rat-positive-result-registration-form) and follow their advice about isolation arrangements.

### ****If your child is a household contact****

If your child is a household contact, they may still attend school.

You are at higher risk of getting COVID-19 if you live with someone who has COVID-19. ACT Health recommends some simple steps you can take to reduce the risk to others, including monitoring for symptoms, wearing a mask indoors and regular testing.

### ****Exposure advice in ACT public schools****

Families will no longer be notified by text message or email when there are COVID-19 cases reported to school, unless under exceptional circumstances or on advice from ACT Health.

### ****Masks in schools****

Students, staff, and visitors are not required to wear a face mask at school.

Mask wearing is encouraged when indoors and physical distancing cannot be maintained. This decision is a personal choice.

Some education settings may continue to require masks in certain contexts. These include high-risk settings and where a risk assessment has identified an ongoing need for this control (e.g., when feeding a medically vulnerable child in a specialist school).

### ****Rapid Antigen Tests (RATs)****

Rapid Antigen Tests (RATs) continue to be available from schools and will be provided to staff and students as needed.