



POLICY STATEMENT:

Ballarat Grammar is committed to ensuring the physical health and wellbeing of our students and staff throughout the evolving COVID-19 (Coronavirus) situation.

To be most effective, the School understands that this involves a whole school approach by staff, parents, students and the broader school community.

The Federal and State Governments have now both advised that in certain locations it is safe for students to return to school.

The Australian Health Protection Principal Committee has advised that Boarding Schools are considered to be an environment of high risk for transmission of COVID-19 should a case arise within the school community. This is because of the high density, close and shared living arrangements and higher frequency of face-to-face contact.

The purpose of this policy is to outline the proactive measures the School is implementing in its boarding community to minimise the risk during the pandemic and provide a safe environment for its employees, students and authorised persons on the Ballarat Grammar campus.

The School has chosen to use the phrase 'Physical Distancing' as opposed to 'Social Distancing' as we wish to ensure our community remains socially connected during these unprecedented times.

This policy should be read in conjunction to the School's Pandemic - Return to School Policy.

DETAIL:

Definitions

COVID-19 (Coronavirus) – is an illness caused by a new virus that affects the respiratory system. Symptoms include but are not limited to fever, coughing, a sore throat and shortness of breath. The virus can spread from person to person, but good hygiene and physical distancing can prevent infection.

Physical Distancing – includes ways to stop or slow the spread of infectious diseases. It means less close contact between individuals.

Staff – includes any permanent, fixed-term or casual boarding house staff.

PPE – means Personal Protective Equipment.

Reasonably practicable – means that which is reasonably able to be done in relation to ensuring health and safety, considering, and weighing up all relevant matters including:

- The likelihood of the hazard or the risk concerned;
- The degree of harm that might result from the hazard or the risk;
- What the person concerned knows, or ought to reasonably know, about:
 - The hazard or the risk; and



- Ways of eliminating or minimising the risk;
 - The availability and suitability of ways to eliminate or minimise the risk; and
 - After assessing the extent of the risk and the available ways of eliminating or minimising the risk, including whether the cost is grossly disproportionate to the risk.

Part 1 – Quarantine Period Prior to Returning

1. Prior to returning to the Boarding House, at the discretion of the Director of Boarding, students may be asked to self-isolate for a period of 14 days in line with the Government's self-isolation recommendations, as reasonably practical as possible.
2. Prior to returning to the Boarding House, students and their parents and/or guardians should adhere to physical distancing advice from Government and avoid large urbanised areas such as Melbourne and Sydney.
3. Parents will be required to sign a declaration confirming the health of their child or children prior to their child returning to the Boarding House and that they have adhered to self-isolation (if required) and physical distancing requirements.

Part 2 – Term 3 Return

1. Initially, the School will provide accommodation for a limited number of students to return to campus. This will enable the boarding community to adhere to recommended physical distancing protocols.
2. Commencing Monday 13 July 2020, Year 7, 8, 11 and 12 students will be invited to reside on campus. Each student will be allocated a single or double room and spread across all five boarding houses. Only the student/s allocated to this room, along with duty staff for the purposes of supervision, are permitted to be in this space. Students must not congregate within other student's bedrooms.
3. Commencing Monday 13 July 2020, Year 9 and 10 students will be invited to reside at the School's Sovereign Hill Boarding Facility. Students will be spread across the accommodation facility, with the majority in a double room with an ensuite bathroom. These students will be transported to and from this campus as required and be catered for in the School's Dining Hall.
4. All gatherings should take place in the designated common rooms spaces. The common room spaces will have a maximum occupancy visually displayed.
5. Students will be reminded to be mindful of physical distancing when using hallway spaces and doors.

Part 3 – Daily Health Screening

1. Each morning at the discretion of the Director of Boarding and/or the Health Centre, boarders may undergo a health screening process prior to the commencement of the school day. This process may involve contactless thermometer checks carried out at the discretion of the Health Centre and/or students being asked to complete a survey regarding their health.
2. Students may be tested again at lunchtime and/or on their return from school at the conclusion of period 5 and prior to return to the boarding community, at the discretion of the Health Centre.
3. Students with cold- or flu-like symptoms will immediately be isolated and assessed by the Health Centre and the following procedure followed:
 - 3.1 If the Health Centre assessment concludes that there is any risk of infection, the Director of Boarding will be notified, and the student will be quarantined in the Health Centre or



- designated room pending further assessment. The student will be provided and given directions by a Health Centre Nurse regarding proper use of PPE.
- 3.2 It is the responsibility of the Health Centre to contact the National Coronavirus Helpline (1800 020 080) for further advice including, but not limited to, whether the student needs to be tested prior to returning home.
 - 3.3 Parents will be contacted and advised that they can either stay in Ballarat in local accommodation or travel home (if able), to be tested in their local area. Contact with the National Coronavirus Helpline and any border restrictions (if applicable) will inform this decision. Should the student not be allowed to travel home due to border restrictions, the School will work collaboratively with the family to ensure suitable accommodation. Parents will also be provided with this number.
 - 3.4 Should the student need to be tested prior to the parents and/or guardian being able to travel to the School, the student will be required to wear a face mask and other PPE as advised by the Health Centre and a Health Centre Nurse wearing PPE will escort the student to be tested.
 - 3.5 Once the testing is complete, the student will return to quarantine in the Health Centre until their parent and/or guardian is able to collect them as soon as possible.
 - 3.6 Any student presenting with cold or flu like symptoms will be asked to return home or stay off site for a period of time pending test results and/ or medical clearance.
 - 3.7 Hand hygiene and physical distancing should be maintained.
 - 3.8 In consultation with the National Coronavirus Helpline, Health Centre Staff, the Director of Boarding and the Headmaster, the decision will be made as to whether students in the same zoned area of the Boarding House will be required to be quarantined. These quarantine requirements will be in line with Government recommendations and advice on a case by case basis.

Part 4 – Overnight management of identified flu-like presentations

1. If a student presents with flu-like symptoms overnight, the Boarding Head of House/Assistant Head of House will contact the Director of Boarding who will initiate the following overnight contamination procedure:
 - 1.1 The Health Centre on-call nurse will be notified and the student to remain in their room until the Health Centre on-call nurse arrives. The Health Centre on-call nurse will provide the student with PPE to put on in their room as directed by the Health Centre on-call nurse. The Health Centre on-call nurse will co-ordinate for the student to be moved to the Health Centre.
 - 1.2 The student will be assessed by the on-call Health Centre nurse, with parents and/or guardian notified and asked to collect the student immediately. Parents will be advised that they can either stay in Ballarat in local accommodation or travel home to be tested in their local area, if boarder restrictions allow. Contact with the National Coronavirus Helpline will inform this decision. Parents will also be provided with this number. Should the student and their family be unable to travel home due to border restrictions (if applicable), the School will assist the family find suitable accommodation.
 - 1.3 Should the Health Centre staff assessment conclude that there is any risk of infection, the following procedure will be followed:
 - 1.3.1 It is the responsibility of the Health Centre to contact the National Coronavirus Helpline (1800 020 080) for further advice including, but not limited to, whether the student needs to be tested prior to returning home and how often checks should be completed overnight.





- 1.3.2 If the parents and/or guardian is unable to collect the affected student overnight, or until the parents and/or guardian arrive at the School, the student will be accommodated in the upstairs bedroom of the Health Centre. If this space is not available, one of the Dare Street units will be made available.
 - 1.3.3 A staff member will be notified and asked to reside in the ground floor of the Health Centre or, if applicable, the second bedroom in the Dare Street unit. The designated staff member will be the same gender as the unwell student. Alternatively, the Health Centre on-call Nurse will remain with the student.
 - 1.3.4 The boarder and staff member/Health Centre on-call Nurse will adhere to contactless communication. The student will be checked at regular intervals as advised by the Health Centre on-call Nurse or National Coronavirus Helpline. Both the student and the staff member will be required to wear PPE as advised by the Health Centre.
 - 1.3.5 Hand hygiene and physical distancing should be maintained at all times.
2. In consultation with the National Coronavirus Helpline, Health Centre Staff, Director of Boarding and the Headmaster the decision will be made as to whether students in the same area of the boarding house will be required to be quarantined. These quarantine requirements will be in-line with Government recommendations and advice on a case-by-case basis.

Part 5 – Dining Hall

1. In order to adhere to government recommendations of physical distancing, the following procedure will apply to the Dining Hall:
 - 1.1 Students will be allocated a table space and seated with appropriate physical distancing of a maximum of four to a table.
 - 1.2 Students will be called up table by table to collect their meal and return to their area.
 - 1.3 All meals will be plated up and handed to students to avoid potential contamination of food service area, particularly via food service implements.
 - 1.4 Cups, water jugs and cutlery will be provided on tables.
 - 1.5 Once a student has finished their meal, they will return their empty plate and cup to the designated drop off point taking note of the entry and exit points.
 - 1.6 Students will be expected to complete a preliminary clean of their table prior to leaving the Dining Hall.
2. In relation to the entry and exit of the Dining Hall the following procedure will apply:
 - 2.1 Students will be required to enter via designated doorway (eastern side of the Dining Hall) and exit via western end.
 - 2.2 Students will be asked to wash their hands or be provided with hand sanitiser on entry and asked to move directly to their seat.
 - 2.3 Students will be asked to wash their hands or provided hand sanitiser prior to returning to the boarding house.
3. After each meal, the Dining Hall will be given a deep clean by a cleaning staff member.

Part 6 – Boarding House Facilities

1. In all common areas of the boarding house the following procedure will apply:
 - 1.1 Where reasonably practical, students will be confined to their designated areas within their allocated boarding houses.
 - 1.2 Common areas within these designated facilities will be deep cleaned by staff at least twice daily.
2. In all showers and bathroom facilities the following procedures will apply:





- 2.1 Hand sanitiser will be located at the entry points of all bathrooms. Students will be asked to sanitise prior to entry.
- 2.2 Students will be required to keep all of their toiletries in their room, in a container with a lid. This container should be used to carry toiletries to and from allocated bathroom spaces.
- 2.3 Spray bottles with disinfectant and paper towels will be located on all bathroom vanities. Students will be required to spray and wipe the sink and mirror area and dispose of the paper in the bins after use.
- 2.4 Showering rosters will be established to ensure that recommended cleaning can occur at several times throughout the day. Designated showering times will be established in blocks with student allocated to each block. Each shower would have a maximum of four (4) students allocated per showering unit.

Part 7 – Access and Entry to Boarding Houses

1. On campus boarding houses will be locked electronically between 8:50am-3:25pm for deep cleaning by cleaning staff. The Sovereign Hill boarding house will be locked between 8:00am-4:00pm for deep cleaning by cleaning staff. Students will not have access to the boarding houses during this time.
2. Students are only permitted to enter their own boarding house. Should a boarder wish to socialise with a boarder from another boarding house it will need to be organised outside of these spaces.
3. Physical distancing stickers will be visible at the entry and exit points of each boarding house to increase awareness of maintaining a 1.5 meter distance from other individuals.
4. Parents will be informed, both via signs in boarding areas as well as via written communication, that they are not permitted to enter boarding facilities. Any parents or guardians wanting to visit their child on campus should organise to meet them outside of school grounds to minimise risk of potential spread.
5. Other than students and rostered staff, all other individuals will require permission of the Director of Boarding or the Head of House to enter the boarding house.
6. Every entry and exit point of each boarding house, will contain a hand sanitising station that must be used by each individual who enter and exits these buildings.

Part 8 – Student Leave

1. Students will be encouraged to maintain an active lifestyle throughout their time on campus. Regular exercise will be a key part of this. Students will be able to exercise with other students in groups of what current Victorian Government recommendations allow.
2. All students will be allowed local leave throughout Term 3. Whilst students will be permitted to sign out to the Howitt Street shopping precinct and McDonalds Wendouree for short periods, as directed by the Master On Duty (MOD), they will be discouraged from seeking sign in sign out leave to Stockland Wendouree or Sturt Street, due to the increased risk associated with leave to these areas. Exceptions to individual stores may apply on a case by case basis.
3. Students will not be permitted to use public transport whilst residing in the Boarding House, unless no other option is available, and approval is obtained from the Head of House.
4. Students will not be permitted to travel to Metropolitan Melbourne, Mitchell Shire, or any other location within a Stage 3 Lockdown zone. Exceptions may apply in certain circumstances, on a case-by-case basis.
5. Students will be encouraged per the Australian Government recommendations to download and use the COVIDSafe App when offsite.



Part 9 – Staff

1. All staff working in the Boarding house will receive an induction into the new policy and procedures prior to their first shift. This will be completed by the Director of Boarding, or their delegate, at least 48 hours prior to commencing duties in the Boarding House.
2. A record of this induction will be maintained in the Pandemic Boarding Induction Register on Nexus.
3. Staff will be provided guidance by the School's Wellbeing Staff on how to best support and communicate with students during what can be a stressful and unknown time for them.
4. Vulnerable members of staff will not be working in the Boarding House.

Part 10 – General

1. Students will be required and encouraged to maintain physical distance from each other at all times.
2. Students will be required to wash their hands and/or use sanitiser upon entry to the Boarding House.
3. When catching buses to be transported between campus, students are required to sanitise their hands prior to loading the bus and adhere to all physical distancing directions of the bus drivers.
4. Students will be strongly encouraged to not share belongings, such as mobile phones, to limit contact with surfaces as is reasonably practical.
5. Prior to departure for school, student areas must be kept clean and presentable, with dirty clothes and washing secured in laundry baskets or bags. Desks must be clean and all scraps, tissues etc. secured in the allocated bin in each room.
6. Students will be required to strip their beds and place bed linen in wash bags to be collected weekly by Henderson's Laundry.
7. To reduce the spread of viruses or germs, the School will ensure regular environmental cleaning of high touch surfaces and frequently used objects such as photocopiers.
8. Game controllers, pool cues, table tennis bats and other recreational equipment, will be cleaned regularly as a part of the scheduled cleaning that will take place. Regardless of this, students should use the allocated paper towels and spray to disinfect equipment prior to and after use. Used paper towels will then be disposed of in allocated bins in each space. Students should only use their own bikes, and these should be kept in their rooms.
9. As far as reasonably practical, the amount of fresh air will be increased.
10. As far as is reasonably practical and weather permitting, the students will be encouraged to spend time outside.
11. Until further notice, parents will be responsible for making all travel arrangements between the School and home on exeunt weekends and at the conclusion and commencement of term.
12. The School will continue to encourage open communication and communicate key messages with students and parents on an ongoing basis as further advice and recommendations are received.

Part 11 – Review

1. This Policy will be reviewed on a monthly basis or when circumstances change.
2. Given the unprecedented and evolving nature of the pandemic and its impact on the School community and given that government advice and restrictions are changing frequently the School will review the control measures on a regular basis to ensure that they are working as planned.

