



PLAN STATEMENT:

Ballarat Grammar is committed to taking a proactive approach to supporting 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 Australian Health Protection Principal Committee has advised that Boarding Schools are considered to be an environment of high risk for transmission of COVID-19. This is because of the high density, close and shared living arrangements and higher frequency of face-to-face contact.

The purpose of this COVIDSafe Plan for the boarding community is to outline the proactive measures and risk mitigation strategies 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 COVIDSafe Plan which outlines the Schools primary principles and practices.

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.

The Helpline – means the National Coronavirus Helpline.

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 – Rapid Antigen Testing Prior to Returning

1. Prior to returning to the Boarding House after holidays or on exeunt weekends, students will be requested to undertake a Rapid Antigen Test. **Rapid Antigen Tests will be provided by staff and any further can be requested from the Compliance Department as required.**
2. Should a student test positive they will be required to adhere to all government recommendations and return or remain home with their parents and/or carers to complete their 7 days isolation period or as otherwise advised by the Department of Health.

Part 2 – Returning to campus

1. Each student will be allocated a bedroom which adheres to Government recommendations regarding distancing, 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. **Parents and/or carers are permitted for the purposes of assisting with luggage but should not congregate inside.**
2. A staggered drop off time will be encouraged.
3. All students **and any other individuals entering the Boarding House** will be required to sanitise their hands prior to entering their Boarding House.
4. All gatherings should take place in the designated common room spaces and students **are encouraged to** reside in these spaces for a maximum of two hours.
5. Students will be reminded to be mindful of physical distancing when using hallway spaces and doors.
6. Limited visitors will be allowed in Boarding areas as advised by the **Director of Boarding.**

Part 3 – Health and Testing

1. Twice a week students will be requested to undertake Rapid Antigen Testing, Days and times will vary dependent on the house the student is allocated to but decided in conjunction with the Health Centre.
2. In line with Government approval students 12 to 17 years will be provided training in how to test themselves if willing.
3. In line with Government approval students 12 to 17 years of age may perform their own Rapid Antigen Test under supervision if willing.
4. Students who test positive will immediately be isolated **in line with the School's procedure drafted in collaboration with Grampians Health.**
5. At times, boarders may undergo a health screening as recommended by the Health Centre and/or in line with government requirements. This process may involve contactless thermometer checks carried out at the discretion of the Health Centre, Rapid Antigen Tests and/or students being asked to complete a survey regarding their health.
6. Students with cold- or flu-like symptoms will immediately be isolated and assessed by the Health Centre or designated member of staff and the following procedure followed:
 - 6.1 If permission has been provided take a Rapid Antigen Test **or PCR Test.** If the Rapid Antigen Test **or PCR Test** is positive relevant members of the Outbreak Management Team is to be notified and the **student isolated and their parents and/or carers contacted to collect them.**
 - 6.2 If negative or permission has not been provided for a Rapid Antigen Test **or PCR Test,** and the Health Centre assessment concludes that there is any risk of infection the student will be quarantined in the Health Centre or designated room pending further assessment. The student will be provided and given directions by the designed member of staff regarding proper use of PPE **and isolation strategies.**



6.3 Parents **and/or carers** 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 or no longer have symptoms. Contact with the Helpline will inform this decision.

Part 4 – Overnight management of identified flu-like presentations

1. If a student presents with flu-like symptoms overnight or has a positive Rapid Antigen Test, the Boarding Head of House/Assistant Head of House will initiate the following overnight contamination procedure:
 - 1.1 If not already completed a Rapid Antigen Test will be completed. If positive, the designated overnight MOD will be notified and the student to remain in their room until they arrive. They will provide the student with PPE, as required to put on in their room. The designated overnight MOD will liaise with the **Director of Boarding** regarding whether the student should remain in their room, move to the Health Centre **or other isolation room**.
 - 1.2 Students in the zoned area will be required to be tested, **at the discretion of the Health Centre**.
 - 1.3 The student's parents and/or carers will be notified and asked to collect the student immediately.
 - 1.4 Close contacts may be provided the option to isolate in the boarding community. Should this occur the student and/or parent and/or carer will need to agree to the Isolation Agreement.
 - 1.5 Should the preliminary assessment conclude that there is any risk of infection, the following procedure will be followed:
 - 1.5.1 If the parents and/or carers are unable to collect the affected student overnight, or until the parents and/or carers arrive at the School, the student will be accommodated in the upstairs bedroom of the Health Centre **or relevant isolation room**.
 - 1.5.2 **If required, an** overnight MOD or Health Centre Nurse will be notified and asked to reside in the ground floor of the Health Centre.
 - 1.5.3 The boarder and staff member will adhere to contactless communication. The student will be checked at regular intervals as advised by the Helpline. Both the student and the staff member will be required to wear PPE as advised by the Helpline.
 - 1.5.4 Hand hygiene and physical distancing should be maintained at all times.
2. Based on advice from Grampians Health and the Outbreak Management Team the decision will be made as to whether students in the same area or zone of the boarding house will be classified as house like contacts. These isolation requirements will be in-line with Government recommendations and advice on a case-by-case basis.

Part 5- Close Contacts

1. In consultation with advice received from Grampian Health on a case-by-case basis boarders will be provided with the option to remain in the boarding house provided the student and their parent and/or carer agree to the following:
 - 1.1 Close/ Household contacts will be limited to rooms only;
 - 1.2 Students will be zoned in shower and toilet cubicles as a risk mitigation strategy, but these zones will not necessarily fall within the close contact definition;
 - 1.3 Increased cleaning will occur in shared spaces;
 - 1.4 If a student tests positive, they will be moved to the Health Center or designated space and their parents and/or carers will be required to collect them immediately;
 - 1.5 Students will be required to continue their schooling in their rooms **or designated area** for the duration of their 7-day isolation period;



- 1.6 Each house will be provided with an outdoor, backyard space to spend as much time as possible and eat meals (whilst not crossing over with other rooms);
- 1.7 Be provided with a designated toilet and shower for close contacts, whilst being aware that they will at times share corridors and transitional spaces to move to outdoor areas and toilets/ showers. Students will wear masks and have increased hand hygiene practices before entering these spaces;
- 1.8 Parents and/or carers will return a signed Isolation Agreement ensuring the risks of the isolation period;
- 1.9 Students will be provided with as much time outside as possible;
- 1.10 Daily RAT tests will be completed or as otherwise recommended by the Health Centre.

Part 6 – Dining Hall

1. In order to adhere to government recommendations of physical distancing, the following procedure will apply to the Dining Hall:
 - 1.1 All meals will be plated up and handed to students to avoid potential contamination of food service area, particularly via food service implements.
 - 1.2 Students will be encouraged to eat meals outside, weather permitting.
 - 1.3 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.
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
3. After each meal, the Dining Hall and tables will be cleaned.

Part 7 – 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 cleaned by staff daily.
 - 1.3 Common rooms and spaces will have a 2-hour limit.
 - 1.4 Hand sanitiser will be made available at all entry and exit points and in common areas.
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 Toilets and showering will occur in zoned areas for each student.

Part 8 – Access and Entry to Boarding Houses

1. On campus boarding houses will be locked electronically between 8:50am-3:25pm for cleaning by the cleaning staff. Students will not have access to the boarding houses during this time, with the exception of Year 12s on a Wednesday afternoon.
2. Students are not permitted to enter other boarding house.
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. Any parents or carers wanting to visit their child on campus should organise to meet them outside of school grounds to minimise risk of potential spread.



5. 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 9 – 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.
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. If public transport is to be used, a face mask must be worn.

Part 10 – 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. 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.
3. All staff are requested to monitor their own health carefully and notify the Boarding Head of House if they are unwell for a shift.
4. All staff will be required to wear a face mask in accordance with Government requirements. However, if staff and students are only interacting with other students and staff whom they share residential quarters with, they do not need to wear a face mask (although strongly recommended) while inside their boarding house, in recognition that this is their home away from home.
5. All staff are required to have received their booster vaccination.
6. The School will work with vulnerable members of staff and if required, their health professional to decide on whether it is safe for them to be working in the Boarding House.

Part 11 – General

1. Students will be required and encouraged to maintain physical distance from each other at all times.
2. Until further notice, no visitors will be permitted in Boarding House areas without permission from the **Director of Boarding**.
3. All boarding students will be provided with a reusable face mask which will be washed every weekday.
4. Staff and students will be required to adhere to Government requirements regarding the use of face masks.
5. Each Boarding house has surgical masks available to staff and students.
6. Clear signage will be displayed throughout the Boarding House about transmission reduction strategies.
7. Students will be required to wash their hands and/or use sanitiser upon entry to the Boarding House.
8. Students will be strongly encouraged to not share belongings, such as mobile phones, to limit contact with surfaces as is reasonably practical.
9. 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.
10. Students will be required to strip their beds and place bed linen in wash bags to be collected weekly by Henderson's Laundry.



11. 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.
12. **The School will use air purifiers in line with Government recommendations in high-risk areas.**
13. As far as reasonably practical, the amount of Ventolin will be increased.
14. As far as reasonably practical and weather permitting, the students will be encouraged to spend time outside.
15. The School will continue to encourage open communication and communicate key messages with students and parents and/or carers on an ongoing basis as further advice and recommendations are received.

Part 12 – 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.