



MERREDIN COLLEGE

A Wheatbelt Independent Public School

COVID Update 4

18 February 2022

Dear parent/carer,

I wanted to update you on the arrangements at Merredin College now the high caseload settings are in place due to COVID outbreaks unfortunately increasing across schools in the metropolitan area.

Whilst our area is fortunate enough to have not been impacted as of yet, the new high caseload environment, when applied to a school like Merredin College, significantly reduces the chances of a student or teacher being deemed a close contact. The close contact definitions in schools are now:

1. *Face-to-face*: At least 15 minutes face to-face contact where a mask was not worn by the exposed person and the person with COVID-19.
2. *Small indoor space/classroom/no mask*: Greater than two hours within a small indoor space or classroom environment, where masks have been removed for this period by the exposed person and the person with COVID-19 (note: others wearing masks in this scenario would not be a contact).
3. *Advised by WA Health*: Someone who is directed by WA Health that they are a close contact.

This means the wearing of masks is central in reducing the likelihood of being deemed a close contact. The majority of secondary students are wearing their masks correctly, and staff are continually remind the students of the need to do this. Please emphasise with your child the need to wear their mask correctly when at school and on the bus.

If you are advised that there is a positive case in your family and it is confirmed by a PCR test, please also advise Merredin College by emailing: Merredin.College@education.wa.edu.au or telephoning the College on 9041 7520 (School hours). The Department of Health will also advise the Merredin College of a positive case.

Merredin College is well prepared to support our students and families both academically and with their health and well-being. In the event of an outbreak, the Merredin College will inform our community as soon as we are able along with actions we are taking. To assist us, please ensure your contact details remain correct and current. Please let the College know if there are any changes.

Maintaining as close to a normal program as possible is central to your child's wellbeing and the teaching and learning program is continuing with as few changes as possible. If your child is anxious or concerned about the potential impact of COVID on their learning, please reassure that experience has shown there will not be a long-term impact on their learning. The Executive Team is available to discuss any issues with students or their families.

Thank you for your ongoing understanding as we continue to navigate this evolving situation.

If you have any queries, please do not hesitate to contact the College on 9041 7520.

Tracy Pickering

Principal