



Dear parent/caregiver,

Prime Minister Scott Morrison and Australia's Chief Medical Officer Professor Brendan Murphy addressed the nation today and explained why the decision has been taken to keep schools and early childhood facilities open at this time.

Current advice is that pre-emptive closures are not proportionate or effective as a public health intervention to prevent community transmission of COVID-19. This position is endorsed by state and federal chief public health officers and the national cabinet made up of the Prime Minister, state premiers and territory chief ministers.

We have followed and will continue to follow the advice of public health officials. If the advice changes we will update our approach and let you know.

### **COVID-19 protocol**

The Department for Education's current COVID-19 protocol is to close a site immediately for a minimum of 24 hours if a confirmed case is identified for someone at that site. If that happens parents and carers will be contacted to come and collect their child and/or agree how they can leave safely.

The closure allows public health officials to identify and contact people who need to self-isolate and for us to conduct a thorough, professional clean of the site. The site will only reopen once the agreed protocol steps have been completed.

### **Precautionary measures**

Our sites are taking precautionary steps, including increasing the frequency of cleaning and promoting good hygiene practices.

In addition, they are practicing social distancing, including limiting the number of people involved in indoor and outdoor gatherings, cancelling sporting events and excursions, reducing the movement of services providers in and around the site and restricting travel.

### **What you can do to help**

The community also has an important role to play, in particular in ensuring that children who are ill stay home. We also ask that you reinforce good hygiene practices by talking to your children about the need to:

- wash hands regularly and thoroughly, particularly after using the toilet and before eating
- avoid spreading infections to others by staying home if they are unwell
- cover a cough or sneeze with a tissue.

Please also ensure your contact details are up to date at your child's education or early childhood setting. It's essential they can contact you if the site has to close due to a confirmed case of COVID-19.

Yours sincerely



**Rick Persse**  
**Chief Executive**

18 March 2020



**Hon John Gardner MP**  
**Minister for Education**

18 March 2020