Dear parents and carers

We are continuing to see a high number of coronavirus cases across Victoria.

I want to reassure you, that [school] is doing everything we can to contain and slow the spread of the virus and ensure the health and safety of our whole school community.

To keep our school safe and reduce students catching and spreading COVID-19, we have put a range of measures put in place based on health advice from the Australian and Victorian governments.

These measures include encouraging vaccination for eligible cohorts, ventilation of indoor spaces, and a range of COVIDSafe measures including cleaning, the regular use of hand sanitiser, increased use of outdoor spaces and the wearing of masks.

It is important that schools and the school community adhere to all of these COVIDSafe measures, not just the introduction of masks.

I am aware that some parents have concerns regarding mask wearing.

When worn properly, masks can play an important role in reducing the transmission risks of COVID-19 that could happen from common activities in school.

We know COVID-19 can be transmitted amongst children, and between children and adults. When teachers, staff, and students consistently and correctly wear a mask, they help protect themselves and their friends, teachers and classmates from COVID-19.

[school] is required to follow the directions of the Victorian Chief Health Officer and our teachers and staff will be doing their utmost to ensure that masks are worn in schools for Grade 3 and above, and to encourage mask-wearing for younger students.

The lawful exceptions for not wearing a mask are listed on the Victorian Government’s [coronavirus.vic.gov.au](http://coronavirus.vic.gov.au) website.

Thank you for supporting us to implement COVIDSafe measures at [school] to keep your children safe.

Yours sincerely

**General mask speaking points for principals**

* Thank you for raising your concerns with me.
* First and foremost, our goal is to support all students to return to onsite schooling as quickly and as safely as possible, as we believe this in the best interests of all of our students.
* To keep our school safe and reduce students catching and spreading COVID-19, we have put a range of measures put in place based on health advice from the Australian and Victorian governments. These include vaccination for eligible cohorts, ventilation of indoor spaces, and a range of COVIDSafe measures including cleaning, the regular use of hand sanitiser, increased use of outdoor spaces and the wearing of masks.
* Victoria’s Chief Health Officer has mandated the wearing of masks in schools for all students in Grade 3 and up.
* As with all such requirements, these decisions are not made lightly, and are made on the basis of the best available evidence and in the interests of keeping students as safe as possible.
* We are seeing a high number of cases across Victoria. It is important that schools and the school community adhere to all the COVIDSafe measures, not just the introduction of masks.
* Our school is required to follow the directions of the Chief Health Officer and our teachers and staff will be doing their utmost to ensure that masks are worn in schools for Grade 3 and above, and to encourage mask-wearing for younger students.
* I also encourage you to consider the information on the Coronavirus Victoria webpage regarding masks.