

## Letter to parents and carers regarding third dose eligibility for 16- to 17- year old children

Dear Parents and Carers

This week's return to face-to-face learning has been a fantastic milestone for children, families, and schools. Our school community has been remarkable in their care for one another throughout the global pandemic.

Everyone in our Catholic schools has been working hard to ensure that our school is as safe as it can be for students and staff.

This includes improving classroom ventilation with air-purifiers and supporting vital COVIDSafe steps, including the use of regular rapid antigen testing, mask wearing and physical distancing.

Thank you to parents and carers for supporting your children with these steps – they are not always easy, but are essential to help keep our schools safe and open, and to avoid the disruptions of home learning.

Helping your child to get vaccinated is one of the most important steps we can all take to give young people direct protection against COVID-19.

Almost 97% of all 12- to 18-year-olds have now had their first dose of a COVID-19 vaccine, and more than 93% are fully vaccinated.

This is a phenomenal rate of protection for our older students, who couldn't have done it without the support of their families.

COVID-19 third-dose vaccinations are now available for 16 and 17-year-olds who had their second dose of a COVID-19 vaccine 3 or more months ago. We encourage students 16 and older to get their third vaccination, if they haven't already done so.

A third dose will help maintain their protection against COVID-19, ensuring that we can help slow the spread of COVID-19, so your child can spend more time in school with their teachers and friends at this important part of their schooling life.

### **Consent**

Your child has also been provided with a letter about receiving their COVID-19 third dose.

Many secondary school aged young people may provide their own consent, if deemed to be a mature minor by a senior and experienced immuniser. That means a health professional assesses whether someone in this age group understands the information relevant to the decision to be vaccinated and the effect of that decision. Where this is not possible, consent can be provided by a parent/guardian attending the appointment, providing consent over the phone or via a pre-signed consent form.

**How to book an appointment**

There are lots of convenient options to get your child vaccinated, including state-wide vaccination clinics, your local GP or pharmacy, and pop-up clinics at some primary schools.

You can book your appointment in a few different ways, including:

- online: [coronavirus.vic.gov.au/vaccine](https://coronavirus.vic.gov.au/vaccine)
- by phone: [1800 675 398](tel:1800675398) (Coronavirus Hotline)
- In person: talk to your local pharmacy, doctor, or a [family-friendly vaccination centre](#)

**Need help?**

Call the [Coronavirus Hotline](tel:1800675398) 1800 675 398: booking or vaccination questions

Need a translation? Refer to the [Information about COVID-19 vaccines in languages other than English](#)

**Extra support for children with disability or special requirements**

Dedicated vaccination centres (pop-up clinics) are available to for parents and carers who need help for their child to get vaccinated.

For more information, refer to the [Vaccine information for people with a disability or special requirements.](#)

Thank you again for your support in ensuring children and our schools are as safe as possible.

Yours sincerely