



# Department of Education and Training

Office of the Secretary

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Dear parents and carers,

Term 2 in 2020 has been like no other school term in Victoria's history, and so I am writing to thank you for your support.

As you know, this week Grade 3 to Year 10 students joined Prep to Grade 2, VCE and specialist school students in face to face learning. It is great to see our school communities come together again.

In responding to the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic over the past few months, the Department of Education and Training has asked a lot of our teachers and schools, and we have also required your support as parents and carers.

I want to acknowledge the extraordinary effort you have all made in working in partnership with your teachers and schools to support your children while they have been learning from home.

When I wrote to you a few months ago as we transitioned to remote and flexible learning, I acknowledged that it would be a challenging time for everyone, but that it was important to work closely together to provide the best possible support for students.

Many of you have since told me that there have been difficult, rewarding and challenging experiences during this unique and uncertain time that we have been through together. I thank you for your support, commitment, patience and perseverance.

But despite difficulties, I've been impressed to hear inspiring stories of education innovation. The innovative and creative approaches adopted during remote and flexible learning have been outstanding, and many schools will bring new approaches with them to on-site schooling.

Many school communities have forged even stronger relationships and partnerships — with families and teachers gaining a greater mutual appreciation of their shared contributions to school education.

Our schools now have a range of precautionary measures to protect the health and safety of your children, your family, teachers and staff, and your local community.

I hope these measures, along with the knowledge that the Victorian Chief Health Officer and Victorian Government have approached the return to on-site schooling with the utmost precaution and careful planning, have helped ease any anxiety about the return to on-site schooling.

The changes at your school are consistent with health advice, including enhanced cleaning in schools and frequent handwashing. Your school has also asked you to practice physical distancing during drop-off and pick-up times.

Your children may be feeling anxious about returning to school. Reassure your child that it's safe for them to go back to school and reinforce what they've been practicing at home around hand hygiene

and coughing and sneezing. Reassure them that extensive cleaning is being carried out in schools and public transport to keep them safe.

Please remember the health advice: if you or your child is unwell, please stay at home. This is vital to ensuring the effective management of the pandemic.

Information about how to speak to your child about coronavirus (COVID-19) can be found here:  
<https://www.education.vic.gov.au/parents/Pages/talkingtoyourchildaboutcoronavirus.aspx>

Visit the Department's website for the latest information about coronavirus (COVID-19) at:  
<https://www.education.vic.gov.au/about/department/Pages/coronavirus.aspx>

Thank you once again for working with your schools to support your children while they were learning at home and for your patience during the staged return to on-site schooling.

Yours sincerely,



**Jenny Atta**  
Secretary  
Department of Education and Training