

Subject: Important Update Regarding Covid Announcement: Maples Remains Open.

Dear families,

The Victorian Government recently announced metropolitan Melbourne will have current lockdown restrictions extended for another 7-days, until at least 11:59pm, Thursday 19<sup>th</sup> August 2021.

Premier Daniel Andrews has advised that **childcare and kinder will remain open for all families**.

We are still waiting to hear more information from the Victorian Government to understand how the latest restrictions will impact the operation of early learning services as they remain open.

At this stage, we have been informed there will be **no restrictions** on the attendance of children.

#### **Please let us know if your child will be absent**

As the government has made no provisions to waive the gap fee, Child Care Subsidy (CCS) rules will remain the same should families voluntarily keep children home.

Please notify us if you choose to keep your child at home. The best way to do this is to [mark your absences](#) in the XAP app. You can also notify your absences via email [mernda@maplesearlylearning.com.au](mailto:mernda@maplesearlylearning.com.au) or call us on 1300 000 335.

Please [click here](#) for a step-by-step guide on how to notify an absence in the Xap App.

#### **FAQs**

We expect families will have questions about how these latest restrictions will affect the provision of childcare, so we have put together the following FAQs.

#### **If I choose to keep my child at home, how does this impact my annual allowable absences?**

The Department of Education, Skills and Employment (DESE) has announced services in Victoria will receive additional allowable absences in recognition of the recent hotspot declaration.

Services in the following Local Government Areas (LGAs) will have additional allowable absences applied from 15 to 27 July.

Banyule, Bayside, Boroondara, Brimbank, Cardinia, Casey, Darebin, Frankston, Glen Eira, Greater Dandenong, Hobsons Bay, Hume, Kingston, Knox, Manningham, Maribyrnong, Maroondah, Melbourne, Melton, Monash, Moonee Valley, Moreland, Mornington Peninsula, Nillumbik, Port Phillip, Stonnington, Whitehorse, Whittlesea, Yarra, Yarra Ranges, Wyndham, Moorabool, Greater Geelong, Borough of Queenscliff, Queenscliff and Point Lonsdale and Surf Coast Shire.

The Child Care Subsidy System will automatically assess any absences claimed during the hotspot declaration period as emergency additional absences and backdate those absences as required.

#### **If I choose to keep my child at home, do I still need to pay full fees?**

At this stage, the government is not allowing us to “waive the gap fee”. Therefore, full fees will apply.

#### **Do I need to get a temperature check on entering the Centre?**

Yes, you will need to get a temperature check when you enter our Centre, using our temperature check kiosk. Please ensure you print the temperature check sticker and wear it through the Centre.

**Do I need to wear a mask in the Centre?**

Yes, all families must wear a mask at the Centre.

**Do children need to wear a mask in the Centre?**

Children under age 12 are not required to wear a mask.

**Will staff be wearing masks?**

Educators are not required to wear masks whilst caring for children, however, they are still required to wear masks outside the classroom. At this stage we are encouraging staff to wear masks in the classroom but not enforcing it.

We will continue to monitor the cases and may choose to enforce educators wear masks if the daily community transmission increases.

**What are we doing to protect our community?**

- We are bringing back the temperature check stickers. No-one is allowed to enter the Centre unless they are wearing a temperature check sticker.
- Families must wear masks at the Centre.
- Hand sanitiser is available through the Centre. We ask that families sanitise their hands before entering.
- As always, sick children or staff are not permitted to attend the Centre.

We will keep you updated once we hear more from the Victorian Government.

Thank you for your support. Please stay safe.

Yours sincerely,

Jarrold & Samantha Macdonald