

Department of Education

OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY

GPO Box 169, HOBART TAS 7001 Australia

OfficeoftheSecretary@education.tas.gov.au

Ph (03) 6165 5757



File no: DOC/20/55545

25 March 2020

Dear parents and carers

The advice from national Public Health officials remains clear: schools are safe to remain open. However COVID-19 is an unprecedented challenge, the like of which has never been experienced in living memory.

Schools are still open

Tasmanian Government schools will remain open for the rest of this week and next week if you would like to continue sending your child/ren to school.

School holiday date change – holidays will now begin on 6 April 2020

We are mindful that there is the possibility a new way of delivering teaching and learning may be ongoing for some time. Our schools need time to plan for this.

To support teachers develop their skills and capabilities, there will be four professional learning days between 6-9 April 2020. This time will enable staff to become familiar with the learning at home materials and delivery methods, and preparing take home materials for students as appropriate. This professional learning is important to make sure our schools are prepared.

Schedule for Government Schools

Date	Education provision
25/03 - 03/04	Learning will be delivered predominantly on school sites. Parents may choose to keep their child at home should they wish and, so far as is practicable, learning at home opportunities will be provided. Parents and carers who cannot support their child's learning at home, may continue to send their children to their school.
06/04 - 09/04	School holidays commence for students. School based staff plan and prepare for learning at home in Term 2, predominantly on school sites but some at home using online platforms.
27/4	At this stage it is planned that school sites will open at the commencement of Term 2, following review of the most recent public health advice available at the time.

Learning at home

From today you may choose to support your children to learn at home, due to COVID-19. The Department of Education has created a website for parents/carers to use called Learning at Home, which you can access at <https://www.education.tas.gov.au/parents-carers/learning-at-home/> This website has resources, ideas and learning activities you might like to use.

Thank you for the overwhelming community support we've seen directed towards our teachers during this challenging time. Because schools remain open, teachers still need to prepare work for their classes as usual. Take home work for students is often different to the work students do in the classroom.

Until the end of Term 1, some teachers will have capacity to offer take home work, but others will not. We ask you to please continue to support our teachers, as they are doing their very best in this unprecedented situation.

We are planning and preparing for a range of options from Term 2 onwards, and will keep you informed as this work progresses.

Some of you might feel a bit nervous at the thought of supporting your child to learn at home. As parents and carers, you are your child's first and most important teacher. We encourage you to trust your judgement, and help your children to keep questioning and remain curious.

What about school levies and charges at this time?

We have asked schools to be flexible and compassionate about school levies and charges at this time. Please talk to your school about how we can support you if your circumstances have recently changed.

In closing, we would like to thank you – all parents and carers of our Tasmanian learners – for being flexible and understanding as we navigate this new world together. Please be assured that there is an enormous amount of work going on behind the scenes to support our Tasmanian community through this difficult time. We are all in this together.

If you need any more information, we encourage you to talk to your child's school, or to visit the Department of Education's website at <https://www.education.tas.gov.au/>

Yours sincerely



Tim Bullard
Secretary



Hon Jeremy Rockliff MP
Minister for Education and Training