



Chronology of primary and secondary school closures in Victoria due to COVID-19

Research Note

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Introduction

This updated chronology provides an overview of key opening and closing dates for Victorian primary and secondary schools between March 2020 and June 2021 in response to the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. The school year was modified in an attempt to reduce in-person gatherings and movement into and across the state. Using predominantly government media releases, as well as information from the Department of Education, Skills and Employment, the chronology maps the changes to the school year—from the initial transition from face-to-face learning to remote learning, and then the resumption of face-to-face learning, in Victorian schools.

See also: [Chronology of Victorian border closures due to COVID-19](#).

2020

Date	Announcement	Source
28 January	Term 1 begins.	Department of Education, Skills and Employment (2020) ' Back to school dates 2020 (archived) ', DESE website, archived 19 February 2020.
22 February	Travel exemptions to be granted to senior high school students who cannot travel to Australia, due to restrictions on foreign nationals who have been in mainland China.	D. Andrews (Premier) (2020) Facilitating China-based students to attend Year 11 and 12 , media release, 22 February.
22 March	School holidays to be brought forward to 24 March.	D. Andrews (Premier) (2020) Statement from the Premier , media release, 22 March.
24 March	Term 1 concludes.	D. Andrews (Premier) (2020) Statement from the Premier , media release, 22 March.
27 March	Original Term 1 end date.	Department of Education, Skills and Employment (2020) ' Back to school dates 2020 (archived) ', DESE website, archived 19 February 2020.
7 April	During Term 2 'all children who can learn at home must learn from home'.	D. Andrews (Premier) & J. Merlino (Minister for Education) (2020) Victorian students to learn from home, as VCE timelines revised , media release, 7 April.

Date	Announcement	Source
14 April	Term 2 begins with a pupil-free day.	Department of Education, Skills and Employment (2020) ' Back to school dates 2020 ', DESE website.
15 April	Students begin Term 2 classes, remotely.	D. Andrews (Premier) & J. Merlino (Minister for Education) (2020) ' Victorian students to learn from home, as VCE timelines revised ', media release, 7 April.
12 May	A timeline for resuming on-site learning is released.	D. Andrews (Premier) (2020) ' Getting our kids back into the classroom ', media release, 12 May.
22 May	Details on how VCE and VCAL exams will be run are released.	J. Merlino (Minister for Education) (2020) ' Certainty for students with exams to start in November ', media release, 22 May.
25 May	Pupil-free day.	D. Andrews (Premier) (2020) ' Getting our kids back into the classroom ', media release, 12 May.
26 May	Prep, Grade 1 and 2, VCE and VCAL students, vulnerable students in Year 3 – 10 and those whose parents cannot work from home resume on-site learning.	J. Merlino (Minister for Education) (2020) ' First wave of students back in the classroom ', media release, 26 May.
9 June	Grades 3 – 10 return to on-site learning.	J. Merlino (Minister for Education) (2020) ' All students back in the classroom ', media release, 9 June.
26 June	Term 2 concludes.	Department of Education, Skills and Employment (2020) ' Back to school dates 2020 (archived) ', DESE website, archived 19 February 2020.
7 July	VCE students in metropolitan Melbourne and Mitchell Shire will return to on-site learning for Term 3 as planned on 13 July.	D. Andrews (Premier) (2020) ' Statement from the Premier ', media release, 7 July.

Date	Announcement	Source
	Prep – Year 10 students will have an additional week of school holidays.	
9 July	Daily temperature checks to be introduced in schools across metropolitan Melbourne and Mitchell Shire.	D. Andrews (Premier) (2020) Temperature checks to be introduced in Term 3 , media release, 9 July.
12 July	Prep – Year 10 students in metropolitan Melbourne and Mitchell Shire will begin Term 3 with remote learning from Monday 20 July until at least 19 August.	D. Andrews (Premier) & J. Merlino (Minister for Education) (2020) Return to flexible and remote learning , media release, 12 July.
13 July	<p>Term 3 begins.</p> <p>Only VCE, VCAL and students whose parents and carers cannot work from home, and those attending local specialist schools, return on-site.</p> <p>Schools in regional and rural Victoria return to on-site learning.</p>	<p>Department of Education, Skills and Employment (2020) ‘Back to school dates 2020 (archived)’, DESE website, archived 19 February 2020.</p> <p>D. Andrews (Premier) (2020) Temperature checks to be introduced in Term 3, media release, 9 July.</p>
20 July	<p>Most Prep – Year 10 students begin Term 3 remote learning.</p> <p>Face masks to be required in schools from 23 July.</p>	D. Andrews (Premier) & J. Merlino (Minister for Education) (2020) Face coverings and masks for metro schools , media release, 20 July.
2 August	<p>Melbourne moves to Stage 4 restrictions.</p> <p>All school children (including in regional and rural Victoria) to return to remote learning from 5 August. Children of permitted workers and vulnerable children may attend on-site learning.</p>	D. Andrews (Premier) (2020) Statement on changes to regional restrictions , media release, 2 August.
4 August	Pupil-free day for those who attend on-site learning.	D. Andrews (Premier) (2020) Statement on changes to Melbourne’s restrictions , media release, 2 August.

Date	Announcement	Source
5 August	All students return to remote learning.	D. Andrews (Premier) (2020) Statement on changes to Melbourne's restrictions , media release, 2 August.
18 September	Term 3 concludes.	Department of Education, Skills and Employment (2020) ' Back to school dates 2020 (archived) ', DESE website, archived 19 February 2020.
21 September	A timeline for the return to face-to-face learning in regional and rural Victoria is announced.	J. Merlino (Minister for Education) (2020) School camps to return for regional and rural Victoria , media release, 21 September.
5 October	<p>Term 4 begins.</p> <p>All students in metropolitan Melbourne and Mitchell Shire continue to learn remotely.</p> <p>Prep – Grade 6 students in standalone schools in regional and rural Victoria return to on-site learning. Year 7 – 10, VCE and VCAL students in regional and rural Victoria continue to learn remotely.</p>	D. Andrews (Premier) & J. Merlino (Minister for Education) (2020) Roadmap for all students return to the classroom , media release, 5 October.
8 October	Prep to Grade 6 students in P – 12 rural and regional schools return to on-site learning.	J. Merlino (Minister for Education) (2020) School camps to return for regional and rural Victoria , media release, 21 September.
12 October	<p>Primary school, Year 7, VCE and VCAL students return to on-site learning in metropolitan Melbourne and Mitchell Shire.</p> <p>Years 7 – 10, VCE and VCAL students in rural and regional Victoria return to on-site learning.</p>	<p>D. Andrews (Premier) & J. Merlino (Minister for Education) (2020) Metro students head back to the classroom, media release, 12 October.</p> <p>J. Merlino (Minister for Education) (2020) School camps to return for regional and rural Victoria, media release, 21 September.</p>
26 October	Year 8 – 10 students in metropolitan Melbourne and	J. Merlino (Minister for Education) (2020) Every student

Date	Announcement	Source
	Mitchell Shire return to on-site learning.	returns to the classroom , media release, 26 October.
18 December	Term 4 concludes.	Department of Education, Skills and Employment (2020) ' Back to school dates 2020 (archived) ', DESE website, archived 19 February 2020.

2021

Date	Announcement	Source
27 January	Term 1 begins. All students return to learning on-site.	Department of Education and Training (2021) ' School term dates and holidays in Victoria (archived) ', DET website, archived 4 March 2021.
12 February	As part of the circuit-breaker lockdown, students will not return to school on 15 February.	D. Andrews (Premier) (2021) Statement from the Premier , media release, 12 February.
15–17 February	All students work remotely.	D. Andrews (Premier) (2021) Statement from the Premier , media release, 12 February.
18 February	All students return to on-site learning.	D. Andrews (Premier) (2021) Statement from the Premier , media release, 17 February.
28 May	As part of the circuit-breaker lockdown, students will return to remote learning until at least 3 June.	J. Merlino (Acting Premier) (2021) Statement from the Acting Premier , media release, 27 May.
3 June	In metropolitan Melbourne, Year 11 and 12 students return to face-to-face learning. All students in regional Victoria return to face-to-face learning.	J. Merlino (Acting Premier) (2021) Statement from the Acting Premier , media release, 2 June.
11 June	All students return to face-to-face learning.	J. Merlino (Acting Premier) (2021) Statement from the Acting Premier , media release, 3 June.

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