Maximising ventilation and COVID-safe school operations

The NSW Department of Education's ventilation and asset use recommendations are informed by:

- NSW Health advice
- Independent expert advice from Steensen Varming
- Research from the Doherty Institute
- Research from the World Health Organisation



NATURAL VENTILATION

Maximising natural ventilation in our learning spaces is the most effective method for minimising the spread of COVID-19. This can be best achieved by opening doors and windows

We are confident that the vast majority of spaces in schools can be adequately ventilated through fresh air.

Each school will receive an individualised ventilation audit report identifying how spaces should be used relative to their availability of natural ventilation.



MECHANICALLY VENTILATED



MAINTAIN
1 PERSON PER
4 SQUARE METRES



AIR PURIFICATION

Mechanically ventilated schools are limited. These schools are considered according to their individual audit reports. E.g some new schools and sealed schools are fully air conditioned and cannot open windows. Frequency of filter servicing and cleaning increases.

There will be spaces where 1 person per 4 sqm will be applied to ensure fresh air volumes are suitable for the safe use of the space such as administration and support spaces. Individual audit reports detail the number of people who can be accommodated safely in spaces within a school.

There will be times where maximising natural ventilation may not be a suitable option in some teaching spaces, for example due to bushfire smoke. The department is purchasing a stock of air purifiers to ensure we can mobilise support and improve air quality in teaching spaces impacted by local conditions as they arise.

COVID-safe school operations use a range of infection and control measures.

These apply for all settings and work alongside ventilation, air circulation and asset use recommendations:



vaccinations



use of masks



how teaching might be conducted in smaller groups



maintain 1 person per 4 square metres



outdoor teaching



additional hygiene supplies



continuation of enhanced cleaning



servicing and cleaning of air conditioning systems





