

## SHOULD MY CHILD WITH RESPIRATORY DISEASE RETURN TO SCHOOL WHEN SCHOOLS REOPEN?

The global pandemic has indeed placed us in challenging times. The prospect of kids returning to on-site learning raises questions and concerns for every parent, particularly those of children with underlying health conditions such as lung diseases. The following advice applies to the majority of children under our care and has been formulated after careful consideration by respiratory specialists within the Department of Respiratory and Sleep Medicine.

**We recommend that children return to school when schools reopen for these reasons:**

1. Children benefit from school for many reasons. Attending school is not only good for learning, it is good for emotional and social development.
2. In many parts of the world schools have remained open during the pandemic
3. The government has undertaken many changes in response to scientific advice that will make schooling as safe as possible (see figure)
4. Children who get COVID-19 usually get very mild or no illness
5. Children with respiratory illness who get COVID-19 also usually get very mild or no illness.



### What can you do?

- Ensure that all people in the household that are eligible for vaccination (everyone 12 years and older) gets vaccinated
- For younger children (<12 years) who are currently ineligible for vaccination, do not wait for vaccination to return to school. There is a possibility that vaccines will not be available to younger children for some time and the recommendation for use are not yet clear.
- If possible, teach your child to wear a mask at school
- Ensure your child knows how to wash their hands and understands the school rules on social distancing
- Do not send your child to school if they have any symptoms of any infection
- If you have further questions about your individual child, please discuss these with your doctor