

20 March 2020

Re: Update on for parents on COVID-19

Dear Parents/Caregivers

Please be assured that we are open and operating as a school. While we have made some changes to our routines, teaching and learning remains our core business.

ATTENDANCE

Students are expected to be in attendance unless they have been advised by a doctor that they must self-isolate. The other acceptable reason for absence is the usual situation, where students who are unwell (with any medical condition), are expected to stay at home until their symptoms have passed and they are feeling well enough to attend school. The words 'advised by a doctor' don't mean you must supply us with a medical certificate; this could refer to cases where the family is isolating themselves because a doctor has directed them to do this regarding an immuno-compromised family member. It is highly likely that these decisions will need to be in place for the next 6 months and the family will need to have a plan around how to sustain this isolation.

If you, or a member of your household, are diagnosed with Coronavirus, then you must contact the school. You will be advised by your medical professional regarding who will need home isolation and if anyone will need hospital admission.

If students are unable to attend school they can access their learning materials on their Class One-Note. Teachers cannot be expected to be full time classroom teachers and prepare additional online courses of learning. The resources are available on the Class One-Note and students can access these on any device - laptop, phone, home computer. Please check your child knows how to access their class notebook and the textbooks on Readcloud.

COVID-19 SYMPTOMS

At this time we have no cases of a student attending our school testing positive for COVID-19. For those who are unsure about symptoms, the best advice we have at the moment is:

- if you are feeling unwell with symptoms such as fever, sore throat, cough or shortness of breath
- **and**
- you have had close contact with someone who has a confirmed case of COVID-19,
- **where**
- the close contact was face-to-face contact for more than 15 minutes, or having shared an enclosed space for more than two hours,
- **then you should**
- see a doctor immediately. Call ahead to your GP or emergency department and tell them you've been in contact with someone with COVID-19 coronavirus infection so they can prepare for your visit.

The advice goes on to say

- if you are **feeling unwell** with symptoms such as fever, sore throat, cough or shortness of breath
- but have had **no contact** with someone who has a confirmed case of COVID-19,
- then you should **monitor your symptoms and stay home**. ...It is unlikely you have COVID-19 Coronavirus. If you have not travelled or had contact with someone who has COVID-19 it is more likely you have another virus like a cold or influenza. We are encouraging all people who are unwell to stay home to prevent the spread of germs.

CONSTANTLY CHANGING SITUATION

The Premier, Annastacia Palaszczuk, provided an update earlier in the week where there is clear recognition that whilst this is a constantly changing situation, there are key things we must all do. In part, her statement includes:

But this will take at least six months for us to get through. It is absolutely paramount that we cooperate with each other so we can respond to this crisis and so we can ensure that our country continues to run as smoothly as possible.

Rumour and speculation have no place in this current situation. I urge all Queenslanders to ignore it – on the internet, on social media and even to an extent sometimes in the mainstream media. Rumour and speculation should be treated with scepticism and, in the meantime, I encourage all Queenslanders to listen to state and federal leaders and to Chief Health Officers for accurate, precise, up-to-date information.

The measures agreed to by the National Cabinet are fundamentally and rightly about containment and limiting the spread of this virus. And there will be further discussions about this over the coming days and I ask for people's patience as we work through these incredibly complex issues.

Schools will remain open based on the best possible health advice. The advice tells us that this virus operates differently in children. But if your child appears to be ill, keep them at home. Don't send them to school. We cannot disrupt our schools for what will be at least six months – that would be catastrophic – and, as I said, the decision is based on the best possible health advice.

COMPLETING ASSESSMENTS

While we remain open, the expectation is that students are at school engaged in learning and completing their assessment. For those who are unable to attend school for medical reasons, we have existing processes in place that take missed assessment into consideration.

As per our assessment policy, for Years 7-11 parents will need to communicate with us about the reason for absence by emailing the relevant Head of Department. For students with an unknown length of confinement, upon their return to school, they can apply for an extension of the due date or for the requirement to complete the assessment to be waived. For these year levels we can use alternative evidence to the formal assessment regime to make determinations for report card grades.

For Year 12 students, parents/caregivers must contact the Deputy Principal for 11 & 12 (Mrs Herlihy) or the Head of Department for Senior Schooling (Mrs Teng) prior to the assessment due date or the test sitting time. In consultation with parents the school will be able to determine if a course of action is available to ensure equitable completion of assessment for Senior Certification purposes. This contact is imperative to ensure students do not miss assessment and become ineligible for a rating in a subject and therefore ineligible for their Qld Certificate of Education.

PERSONAL HYGIENE

Can you please remind your children that the key messages at school regarding their personal hygiene habits are:

- Avoid close contact with others such as touching, kissing, hugging, handshakes
- Wash your hands regularly with soap and water, particularly before and after eating, and after going to the toilet
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth
- Don't share food or drink bottles
- Fill your water bottle from the drink bubblers rather than drink from them
- Use hand sanitiser if soap is unavailable
- Cover coughs and sneezes with a tissue or the inside of your elbow
- Dispose of tissues in the bin immediately

We all can do our part by practising good hygiene and staying home if we're sick.

CHANGES

To date the following measures have come into effect in our school:

- All excursions have been cancelled or postponed from 21 March onwards
- All weekly Year Parades and whole school Assemblies have been cancelled
- We have increased the number of hours cleaners are employed
- We have spread our cleaners' hours of operation to include more ongoing cleaning and disinfecting throughout the day
- Both the ovals are now open at both breaks to ensure the students can be well spread throughout our campus during meal breaks
- All inter-school cluster sport is cancelled until further notice
- A decision has been made to cancel the representative school sport program including district, regional, state, national, interstate and international competitions
- NAPLAN tests have been cancelled for 2020 to help focus on the wellbeing of students

Regards



Scott Ison
Principal