

25<sup>th</sup> March 2020

Dear School Community

As mentioned in my update last week, our staff in your school have been working tirelessly to minimise the risks resulting from the spread of the COVID-19 pandemic. Again, I reassure all families that we will do everything practically possible to maintain the safety and security of our school community, and this includes confidential handling of family information. The virulence and impact of the COVID-19 spread is changing every day, and we must do all we can to slow it down so that our Health Department can continue to provide a high-quality service to those who may be affected.

I am asking for your partnership in keeping our school community as healthy and as safe as we can. Naturally, there will be a lot of confusion and questions. We welcome your questions and will direct you to the right place for more information, so if you're worried, please contact the school. We are happy to help... and so is your General Practitioner. If the question is about health of your child and family – go, there first. As of the time of writing this message, there remains no indication that our school will be shutdown either pre or post the coming holiday period.

Should you choose to self-isolate your children at any time, please contact the school.

Please note that it still the position of the school on direction from the Department of Education and the Teachers Union that no work will be sent home for students undertaking voluntary self-isolation however, some material is now available on our Website to assist families engage students.

Updates:

- Please do not send your children to school if they are sick. This is a Government directive and we will be asking parents to collect unwell children.
- The situation remains very fluid with updates daily from the Department of Education and Health as well as the Federal and State governments. We are doing our best to interpret this information into detail that impacts our school and our context in order to not overload you with information and provide you with the most relevant detail. We now have additional cleaning time allocated to cleaning of all higher risk surfaces several times during the day.

- Despite the closure scenarios being implemented by our private school colleagues, we have been given no indication at this time of any school closure scenarios or timelines. I must remind you that we can only implement closure on the instructions of the Minister for Education and the Director General of Education.
- Give careful thought to information you are hearing via online media sites and blogs that are nonmainstream. We recommend accessing reliable sources such as the ABS News site and similar.
- As expected, many parents are now choosing to keep students at home. As I am saying in my replies to emails requesting permission to keep students home, this remains a family decision which is now supported by the Governments, both state and federal and the Department of Education. In their absence, your child will be marked as Reasonable cause and will require no follow-up. Attendance rates are currently around 50% and falling.
- Our staff have done an amazing job in preparing for possible closure scenarios- whilst at the same undertaking the many other daily duties required of them. I am eternally grateful for their commitment and energy. We are well positioned to action any future scenarios in support of your child's education.
- Here are two sites you many want to have a look at in regards to how you talk to your children about COVID 19 and Cyber safety- given they may be accessing the internet more frequently at home

https

1. TALKING TO KIDS ABOUT COVID-19 – MAGGIE DENT

<https://www.abc.net.au/radio/programs/parental-as-anything-with-maggie-dent/how-to-talk-to-kidsabout-coronavirus/12081182>

2. ONLINE SAFETY KIT FOR PARENTS AND CARERS – ESAFETY COMMISSIONER:

<https://www.esafety.gov.au/about-us/blog/covid-19-online-safety-kit-parents-and-carers>

Regards



Beatrice Bouska  
Principal