

Coronavirus Update – Thursday 16th April

Dear Parents, Carers and Staff,

I am writing with a more in-depth and broader update about term 2 arrangements in our College.

A. **TERM 2 ARRANGEMENTS**

As the Premier has advised, the arrangements for Term 2 will be that most students will learn at home for at least the first five weeks of the term. The situation for the second half of the term will depend on updated health advice.

Our College will be **open during Term 2 for children of essential workers where home supervision is not possible and for all vulnerable children in our community**. Students who attend the College will be supervised as they undertake the same program being undertaken by students at home.

Essential worker means any worker who must continue to attend their workplace for essential business during this time. We have also extended this definition to include parents who are considered essential workers and are working fulltime from home or shift workers who may need to sleep during the day.

It is important that any child who is sick does not attend school for the safety of other students, their families and our College staff.

I want to reassure you that our staff have been planning for this scenario and are here to support all students and families as we make the necessary changes to the way our students learn. There may be challenges as we adapt to these new ways of teaching and learning but we will work through them all to ensure our students stay engaged with their learning.

B. **WHAT DOES THIS MEAN FOR PARENTS/CARERS?**

I would like to clarify that parents/carers are not expected to “teach” your children at home. The College retain responsibility for teaching, albeit through a different medium, and we continue to be committed to student learning.

Where your child is learning at home, you are responsible for their safety and well-being.

To assist with our initial Term 2 planning, please advise the College by **no later than 6.00pm this Saturday** (18th April) if you anticipate that you will need to send your child/ren to school from week 1 of Term 2 by completing the [Student Attendance form](#). This will assist us to make appropriate arrangements to plan for students who may need to attend school.

C. **LEARNING@HOME@RYAN PORTAL**

This is our online teaching and learning environment. The portal will be accessible via a link on the College website and through the Student Intranet (Resources → Learning@Home@Ryan).

[Learning@Home@Ryan can be found here.](#)

While no logins are required to access the portal itself, the learning materials are delivered via Google Classroom. Students will need to log in with their College-issued Google Accounts.

We encourage families to familiarise themselves with the Learning@Home@Ryan portal after its launch to ensure that they are ready for the commencement of online learning next week.

D. YEAR 12 STUDENTS

As Colleges with senior secondary students would be aware, the QCAA Board has decided that one of the three internal assessments would be removed from the summative assessment requirements for all General and Applied subjects.

The QCAA will continue to monitor the impacts of COVID-19 on senior secondary schooling including any changes that might be required to external assessment.

It would be expected that students learning at home would be working toward their summative assessment program.

Subject-specific advice was provided to schools on 31 March 2020 by QCAA about the nature and timing of the next internal assessment to support teachers to review their assessment programs.

The QCAA website has responses to [frequently asked questions](#) for parents and students about the removal of an internal assessment and to clarify that this will not impact the calculation of students' ATARs.

Townsville Catholic Education Colleges will continue to take advice from QCAA regarding year 11 and 12 and communicate with families in relation to this.

We encourage students and parents/carers to have confidence in the system. All agencies across the state are working to ensure that no student is disadvantaged in their senior secondary studies and outcomes.

E. STUDENT WELLBEING AND PASTORAL CARE

We know this is an unsettling time for the whole community and it is important that as a College community and as families we provide reassurance for our students and keep their lives as normal as possible.

As such we will be supporting our students in the following ways during this period:

- Your child will have contact with the College on every College day
- "The Resilience Program" will continue to run and be a part of our regular weekly classes
- Pastoral Leaders (Secondary) and Classroom teachers will keep an eye on their engagement and interactions
- Inclusive Education, Indigenous and Defence Teams will also be checking in on these particular groups of children
- Our Counsellors will remain available for students

F. STUDENT ABSENCES AND ROLL MARKING

Students attending school-

Our College will be marking attendance rolls each morning for those students who are attending school. Please advise the College through the [form](#) (due Saturday at 6.00pm) if your child/ren will be attending the College so these attendance rolls can be developed.

If your child/ren are sick at any stage please advise the College office asap on the day.

Instructions for parents are:

1. Families are to formally advise the College if their child/ren will be physically attending by advising the College of:

Student name and year Level. The College is only open for those students who meet the guidelines as established by the Queensland Government as described above.

2. Families of students who are physically attending to be advised that if their child/ren is sick and absent from College, then they will need to notify the College using the Compass Parent Portal or absentee line.

If the College becomes aware that a student is absent from school, we will notify the student's parents using our established unexplained absences procedure.

Students learning at home-

For students who are learning at home, there will not be any absences recorded. Our College will be maintaining daily contact with students using several methods.

If staff have any concerns about a student's engagement, contact will be made with parents.

G. TUITION FEES

As the College will continue to operate and our staff will keep working to provide continuity of teaching and learning, including under learning at home arrangements, tuition fees for Term 2 will operate as they do normally.

We acknowledge the difficult economic circumstances many families now find themselves in and *we would encourage any family facing difficulty with tuition fees to discuss this with the College.* Families whose financial circumstances have changed as a result of COVID-19 are encouraged to apply for a fee concession. Please make contact with our College Business Manager, Lucy Royes (lroyes@ryan.catholic.edu.au or 47730100)

We understand that it can be confronting for families to apply for this assistance, however, our approach is always to be respectful and compassionate to support families through this process. Families are assured that any information provided to make application for a concession will remain confidential.

Invoices for Term 2 fees and levies will be issued in Week 4 of Term 2. This timing coincides with the commencement in May of some of the Federal Government's stimulus package that will provide support to those in our community experiencing financial hardship.

In accordance with the mission, values and ethos of our College, we remain committed to providing an education to all of students regardless of their financial circumstances.

H. BEYOND BLUE

This pandemic is having far reaching impacts for our community. Beyond Blue have just launched a new, dedicated Coronavirus Mental Wellbeing Support Service. Funded by the Australian Government, the **FREE** service is now available to support all people in Australia to manage the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on their mental health and wellbeing.

Dedicated COVID-19 Number: 1800 512 348

Website: <https://coronavirus.beyondblue.org.au/>

The website also has lots of helpful resources- *“No matter how the coronavirus pandemic is affecting you, we have developed a range of information, strategies and expert advice to help support your social and emotional wellbeing.”*

I. COLLEGE COMMUNICATIONS

As we start Term 2, we will continue to communicate with you through the normal College channels whenever new information is available. *Paula Duffy will be the Acting Principal in my absence for the entirety of Term Two and that communication will come Paula.*

You can contact the College by email or by phoning 47730100.

Our thoughts and prayers are with the sick and the vulnerable at this time and also with the frontline health and emergency services workers bringing care and healing to those affected by the virus.

I know this will be a challenging time for our whole community and thank you in advance for your support for our students and staff and your understanding as we go forward.

Take care,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'David McNeale', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

David McNeale (College Principal)

[Frequently Asked Questions for Parents](#)

[Learning at Home - Advice for Parents](#)

[Supporting our Families](#)

[Ryan Catholic College website](#)

[Learning @Home@Ryan](#)