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14 January 2022

Dear Parents and Caregivers,

Thank you for your patience as we have worked to provide clarity for the evolving COVID-19 situation in light of the Queensland Premier's recent announcement regarding the start of the school year for state schools.

Following this announcement, it was confirmed that this policy was not a Chief Health Officer directive and that Catholic and Independent schools were able to determine the best course of action for learning within their school communities.

As our priority remains to ensure that our students are able to access quality education in a safe and welcoming environment, in conjunction with Townsville Catholic Education, we have developed the following plan for our school communities to return to school.

#### **Attendance at School – Essential Worker children and Vulnerable Children**

From 24 January, supervision will be available at school for children of essential workers and vulnerable children.

An essential worker is currently defined as "someone who: provides essential services and who is unable to work from home due to having particular skills; must perform the role in person at the workplace; and must continue to perform the role to ensure the health and safety within the community. This includes but is not limited to doctors, nurses and other front-line medical staff, retail workers, haulage drivers and police officers."

Students of essential workers who attend school will be supervised by teachers, school officers and relief staff. Students in Years 5-12 are to bring their device for use, a book to read, as well as paper and pens to use. Students Prep to Year 4 can bring some writing materials and pencil case if they have one at home.

#### **Bookings Essential**

To assist with staffing levels, bookings for students of essential workers are imperative. The link asks you to register your child/ren's attendance between 24 January and February 4 on Campus. [Attendance Form 24/1/2022 to 4/2/2022 - Prep to Year 12](#). It is imperative that you complete a form for each child by **7.00 pm Tuesday 18 January 2022**.

We realise that circumstances may change after you complete this form. If this is the case, please just call the absentee line or email the office to alert us to any changes.

If after the due date, you require your child/ren to attend the College, please call and advise us of this, as we realise that your work hours as an essential worker may change.

### **On Campus Attendance rules**

- Please ensure students aged 12 and all secondary students attending school bring and wear their own masks as per government guidelines.
- All students attending school are to adhere to correct uniform guidelines.

### **Learning and Curriculum Associated Activities**

From 31 January, **Year 11 and 12** will commence with online, at home learning.

- In line with the Premier's announcement, Year 11 and 12 students will begin with formal online, at home learning. Subject teachers will communicate directly with students regarding the design and structure of learning and how it will happen.

In the week beginning 24 January.

- For **Years 4 to 10** students remaining at home, we will be posting on Google Classroom some curriculum associated activities that students could engage with. There is no expectation that parents/carers need to oversee or be involved in these activities. Not completing any activities will not disadvantage children on their return to school, however re-engaging in some form of learning may mean that they are more switched on and ready to re-engage on February 7, when, hopefully, face to face learning commences.
- An email will be sent to them with this information. We will also advise you when the Google Classrooms are up and running. This [Parents Guide to Google Classroom](#) is a great start to understanding this environment.
- Although no curriculum associated activities are required for students in **Prep to Year 3**, we may be in a position to provide age appropriate activities to do at home, once the week begins.

### **Resuming onsite, face-to-face schooling.**

As per the Premier's announcement on Sunday 9 January, we are anticipating returning to school on Monday, 7 February.

### **End of Year Date**

Please note, unless legislated by the Queensland Government, Townsville Catholic Education's systemic schools will end the school year on the current dates in the school calendar.

### **The Health and Safety of our school community**

- The health and safety of our school community is of the highest priority.
- Please do not send children to school if they are unwell or are a COVID-19 close contact. Children who arrive at school appearing unwell will be sent home.
- Families are asked to notify administration if a student is a COVID-19 close contact or tests positive to COVID-19.
- All staff within our school have met the Government vaccination requirements.

Attached is a list of Frequently Asked Questions with further information. We will continue to provide updated information as we have it.

Thank you for your continued support and cooperation. In these changing times, we will always seek to work with parents to provide quality education while prioritising the health and safety of our community.

Thank you for working with us as we all navigate these changed commencement procedures to the 2022 school year.

Yours sincerely,



Candi Dempster  
PRINCIPAL



## **COVID RETURN TO SCHOOL – Ryan Catholic College 14 January 2022**

### **Frequently Asked Questions**

#### **Can my child attend school from Monday 24 January?**

Yes, however, only students who are vulnerable or whose parents/carers are essential workers will be able to attend school. They will be provided supervision at school by school officers and school staff.

To assist with staffing, a booking form for students of essential workers who require supervision is contained in the Compass email, dated 14 January for completion by 7pm Tuesday 18 January.

#### **What is the definition of an essential worker?**

Essential workers are currently defined as “someone who: provides essential services and who is unable to work from home due to having particular skills; must perform the role in person at the workplace; and must continue to perform the role to ensure the health and safety within the community. This includes but is not limited to doctors, nurses and other front-line medical staff, retail workers, haulage drivers and police officers.”

An essential worker is someone who provides essential services and meets the following criteria:

- requires a person with particular skills; and
- must be performed in person at the workplace; and
- must continue to be performed to:
- prevent an immediate risk of death or serious injury to a person; or
- prevent serious harm (social, economic or physical) in the community.

The following industries are considered critical in the context of essential workers:

- Health
- Emergency services, including Police, the Queensland State Emergency Service, Maritime Rescue, the Coast Guard and the Rural Fire Service
- Power and utilities
- Stores in remote locations or communities
- Essential retail (including supermarkets)
- Freight and Logistics, including freight transported by air, rail, road or sea
- Public Transport
- Education – Secondary, Primary and Kindergarten school teachers
- Agriculture and Fisheries production
- Resources
- Major manufacturing, distribution and critical supply chains (food, pharmaceuticals and petrol).

#### **What does supervision entail?**

For Year 4 to Year 10 students attending school, they will undertake the same engagement activities that will be provided for students remaining at home. Prep to Year 3 will engage in some curriculum associated activities.

#### **Will parents be able to enter school sites during these two weeks?**

Yes. Although there are no limitations on parent/carer access to schools, only parents/carers of vulnerable students or those who are essential workers should need to come to school to drop off and collect their students.

To assist in limiting the spread of COVID-19, we ask that you use the stop, drop and go areas. Anyone entering the school over the age of 12 will be required to wear a mask.

### **Will Kindergarten / OHSC be available during this period?**

Sessional kindergartens and kindergartens on school sites will remain open from 24 January to 7 February 2022 for vulnerable children and children of essential workers.

Long day care and Outside School Hours Care will be open as normal, subject to workforce capacity and Queensland Health advice.

### **Will vacation care be offered during these two weeks?**

No. There will be no vacation care.

For information on the operation of Outside School Hours Care, please contact Ryan OSHC and Catherine Manolis and Megan Hannah *OSHC Coordinators* Ph 4755 9955

### **Will school staff continue to work during these two weeks?**

Yes. From 24 January, school staff will ensure adequate supervision of students of essential workers and vulnerable students on site and will prepare for formal and organisation of curriculum associated activities. They will be rostered on and off site duties.

### **Are all staff and volunteers at the school vaccinated?**

Yes, all staff within Townsville Catholic Education schools have met the Government vaccination requirements.

### **What does online learning entail for students in Year 11 and 12?**

- Online learning for Year 11 and 12 will be conducted via Google Classroom, with at least one Google Meet session.
- Students are expected to follow their class schedule via EDVAL and complete all set tasks including Google Meet sessions.
- Year 11 and 12 will have to sign in via the Pastoral Leader's Google Form question by 9:00 am each day.

### **What will my child require for remote learning?**

Your child will need a quiet space at a desk or table where they can work, with room for their school books, laptop and access to the internet.

### **Can students attending school during these two weeks still access guidance counsellors?**

Yes. Guidance counsellors will be available for students during this time either in person, or via Zoom.

### **Do students need to wear masks?**

Children under 12 years old do not have to wear a mask, unless the child is in high school, regardless of their age.

High school students must carry and wear a mask at all times unless they can maintain physical distancing of 1.5m.

### **Do students have to be vaccinated to attend school?**

No. Students are able to attend school regardless of their vaccination status.

**What uniform do Year 11 and 12 need to wear during online learning?**

Casual attire is acceptable. No revealing or offensive clothing please.

**What will happen in the event of confirmed cases of COVID-19 in a school?**

The school will follow the advice and requirements from Queensland Health, and will work with the school community to ensure the health, safety and wellbeing of staff, students and visitors are prioritised.

**If a student tests positive or is a close contact with COVID-19, does the whole class need to isolate?**

We will take Queensland Health advice and inform parents.

**Will families be made aware of students who test positive or are close contact of a COVID-19 case?**

Yes. Families will be made aware if there is a positive case and advise them to engage in any close contact testing and isolation requirements.

**If my child is positive or a close contact, do I need to prove my child has a negative test result after a positive case?**

No. We need to respect and trust that this will be done before recommencing schooling, as the process is a Qld Health directive and not the schools.

**Are there cleaning requirements for schools if there is a positive case?**

Yes. We will engage in Queensland Health protocols and processes.

**Can Students attend Work Experience or TAFE?**

If a placement can be arranged and the student's parent consents for them to attend, this placement can proceed. Each individual work placement location will have its own requirements regarding COVID and the student will be expected to adhere to these. It is likely that this will include being vaccinated.

**Will school tuckshops / canteens be running as normal in the first two weeks?**

There will be limited options for the Snack Shack, however it will be running. The google form for attendance asks families to indicate whether tuckshop will be required and on what days.

**Will school bus services be running as normal during this period?**

Yes, for students who usually use the bus service and have bookings.