



16th March 2020

To our St Mary's Community,

Update on Coronavirus (COVID – 19) Preparedness

I write to provide you with an update on how St Mary's is actively planning to manage the implications of the Coronavirus for our students and staff.

As you are aware, we are in an ever-changing situation and so we will continue to update you as circumstances change in line with the professional advice we receive.

For now, I wish to provide you with a brief summary of some of the steps we have taken (or are taking) in regard to the current situation.

Health and Hygiene

- The College has made available additional antiseptic hand wash dispensers at strategic locations around the College.
- We have increased resourcing allocated to the cleaning of our campus. Our school cleaners have increased their duties to prioritise human contact areas – benches, desks, chairs, handrails, door handles, toilets etc.
- We will continue to emphasise with student the importance of good hygiene practices including washing hands several times a day.
- The College will promote non-contact greeting in lieu of close contact greeting (handshakes and hugs etc).
- Consideration will be taken to minimise, where possible, student contact and distance – tuckshop lines, assemblies, high congestion areas etc.

Learning and Teaching

- The College is currently ensuring that work will be available on-line in the event of staff or student absence, and in the event of temporary school closure.
- Teachers are working hard to fast-track our transition to CANVAS, our new learning management system. We have instructed teachers to make this a high priority in their planning across the coming weeks.
- Students who are absent due to self-isolating processes should contact their teacher regarding instructions to access work.
- If your child is in Year 11 or 12, we strongly advise that they cancel international travel plans for the upcoming holidays, as per Federal Government direction, they will be required to spend fourteen days in isolation upon their return. In Year 11 and 12, this could significantly impact their overall academic outcomes.

Student presenting with flu-like symptoms

- Parents are strongly encouraged to exercise caution and keep your child home if they are sick.
- Parents need to be prepared to collect their child from the College if they are ill with cold or flu-like symptoms. These symptoms are:
 - ***Fever at or above 37.3 degrees Celsius***
 - ***Sore throat***
 - ***Continuous cough or sneezing***
 - ***Extreme nasal congestion***
- The College has a clear process for isolation and parent contact should a child show signs of a cold or flu-like symptoms.

Future School Events

- The College will continue to assess each activity/event against professional advice from CES, QCEC, State and Federal Governments and Queensland Health. Should an activity be cancelled, we will inform student and parents in a timely manner in relation to each event.
- The College is committed to a “business as usual” approach where possible. Where appropriate, we may need to modify an event to ensure its operation remains within the recommend or directed conditions.

Ongoing Communication

- Please continue to refer to the following page regarding updates affecting schools: <https://www.cns.catholic.edu.au/news-events/coronavirus-covid-19/>
- As this situation is changing daily, we will continue to provide updates ‘From the Principal’. This will be emailed and sent via SMS.

Pastoral care

- This is an unusual time; one that can be quite distressing for our young people. If your child expresses concern, reassure them that the College is well prepared, and that adolescents are not in the high-risk category of this virus.
- Please notify us if you have any concerns about the level of worry this is causing your child.

General Advice for the community

- We recommend all students have a flu shot this year.

Thank you for taking the time to read this letter. Please know your child’s safety and general wellbeing will continue to be our highest priority.

God Bless



Wayne Wood

Principal



ST MARY'S
Catholic College