



20<sup>th</sup> May 2020

To our St Mary's Community,

### **Years 7-10 Return to School**

I hope this letter finds you and your family well. I am writing to update you on our preparedness measures in place for next week's return to school for Years 7-10.

The return of Years 11 and 12 has certainly added some flavour to our campus; with noise and energy through our buildings. We now look forward with excitement to welcoming the younger year levels.

Before I go any further, I take this opportunity to also congratulate those students who have been attending due to both parents being essential workers. These students have been exceptional in these trying circumstances. Well done!

A return to school does not mean a return to normalcy. As a College community, we need to have in place a number of protective measures designed to minimise the risk of illness. Additionally, we have had to make decisions around the learning program amid the current context. I therefore share important information relevant to our entire St Mary's community as we prepare for all students to return to on-site learning:

1. **Return to school:** Year 7-10 will return to school on Monday 25<sup>th</sup> of May; joining their Year 11 and Year 12 peers.
2. **Unable to return:** There may be students who are unable to return. These students will still be able to access the curriculum via the CANVAS platform. However, please know that from the 25<sup>th</sup> of May, teachers will no longer run Zoom sessions as they will be required to provide face-to-face onsite instruction. We encourage all students to return to school to access the best learning outcomes.
3. **Students and staff with cold or flu-like symptoms should stay home.** Parents are strongly encouraged to keep their child home if they are sick. If students present to school unwell, parents will be contacted and asked to collect their child immediately.

4. **Uniform expectations:** Students are to follow normal uniform expectations. Personal grooming must follow College guidelines.
5. **Timetable for Weeks 6-10 (attached):** For the remainder of Term 2, we will move to a new modified version of our original timetable; the key feature being a 5-minute 'transition phase' each lesson. This allows students and staff time to travel to the next lesson via new restricted foot traffic rules. As part of our safety measures, we have had to control the direction of pathways and stairways in order to reduce face-to-face contact when moving around buildings.

Start and finish times to the school day will remain unchanged (*except for Years 11 and 12 on Wednesday*).

6. **Week 6 - Monday/ Tuesday Swap:** It is important that students are transitioned back into on-site routines. For this purpose, we will run Tuesday's timetable on Monday 25<sup>th</sup> of May. This will allow students and teachers to use their SEL lesson to reconnect and ensure new routines and changes are understood. SEL will be the first lesson on the Monday (the usual session 1 class will move to session 2). On Tuesday the 26<sup>th</sup> of May, we will run a Monday timetable. Thank you for your understanding.
7. **Wednesday Sport:** Due to the restrictions on school sport and excursions, only Years 7-10 will participate in Wednesday Sport. This will consist of a variety of small group options that extend beyond non-contact sport; including art, music, industrial arts etc.

Year 11 and 12 students will have the option to go home at 1:30pm or remain at school to study. Parent permissions that are currently in place will continue for the remainder of the Term. Should you wish to amend this, then please contact the College.

8. **Semester 1 Reporting:** The Federal Government has provided direction to schools regarding minimum reporting requirements. Naturally, the need for flexibility in reporting has been acknowledged in these instructions.

As a College, we have decided to go beyond the minimum requirements and have made the decision to report the following way:

- Every child will receive an **A-E overall academic result** for each subject.
  - Every child will receive an **effort rating** for each subject.
  - Every child will receive a **comment from their Pastoral Mentor**.
  - We will not provide comments for individual subjects.
9. **Parent Student Teacher Interviews:** We have cancelled PST Interviews that usually occur early in Term 3. As always, I encourage you to contact your child's teacher to discuss their progress.

10. **Safety and strict hygiene practices:** St Mary's has continued to prioritise the health and safety of students and staff. The following are some of the practices we currently employ:
- Enhanced school cleaning protocols; including extra cleaning of the College during the day and after hours.
  - Modifications of meeting spaces to improve physical distancing
  - Maintaining practical physical distancing for students
  - Promotion of strict hygiene practices – handwashing, use of sanitisers, sneezing protocols and non-contact greetings
  - All classrooms will maintain an exam-style desk configuration to support physical distancing
  - Managing student and staff movement: Various stairways and concourse pathways around classroom blocks have been designated as 'one-way' to improve physical distancing, particularly between lessons. This will take time to get used to.
11. **Parent access to school grounds:** Please observe usual 'Drop-off and Pick-up' protocols. Only parents with essential College business should be entering our grounds. **Parents are not to drop-off and pick-up students inside College grounds.**
12. **Fee relief:** Our response to financial hardship has been to extend relief to those most in need, and to encourage those who are relatively unaffected by the economic changes to continue to pay their fees. If your family is experiencing financial stress, please contact me or our Business Manager, Mr Hugh Bradridge.
13. **Fees:** The College is in the process of identifying specific events, year-level or subject specific activities or materials that have not occurred or been required due to COVID 19. Where possible, we will look to apply some financial discounts to fees at a time when we are more certain that these events will not occur. This may see Term 3 and/or Term 4 College Levy being reduced.

Thank you for taking the time to read this letter. I once again congratulate our St Mary's community for making our remote learning model such a great success. Our teachers and support staff have been very dedicated and creative, the students have embraced the model with enthusiasm and our families have been a great support along the way. We have made a real difference!

*Through **FAITH, HOPE and LOVE, we make a difference in our world.***

God Bless



**ST MARY'S**  
Catholic College

Wayne Wood

**Principal**