



15<sup>th</sup> April 2020

To our St Mary's Community,

## **Update on Coronavirus (COVID – 19): Continuity of Learning**

Dear parents and caregivers

I hope you all had a restful and enjoyable Easter break with family. I also hope the Easter message of *hope* and *new life* shone through all the confines that COVID 19 has brought us. The unusual circumstances will make this Easter period one we will remember for many years to come.

### **1. Weeks 1-5 of Term 2**

Premier Anastacia Palaszczuk's announcement this week confirmed that Queensland schools will move to a home-based learning model for the first five weeks of Term 2. During this period, **all students who are able to be supervised at home and learn from home are to stay home.**

As was the case for the student-free days prior to school break, there will be exceptions for some students who will continue to be able to attend school:

- a) Children of essential workers
- b) Vulnerable children
- c) Children from designated indigenous communities

Essential worker means **any worker who must continue to attend their workplace for essential business during this time.** However, children of essential workers can only attend school on the days when they are not able to be supervised at home and no other arrangements can be made for the care of the children.

**Vulnerable Children** include students identified by the school or, who are currently receiving services from Child Safety, including children who are subject to a child protection order and/or are subject to a youth justice order.

### **2. Student Supervision at St Mary's**

As per State Government directions, St Mary's will provide supervision for students of families who require this support. Supervision will be from 8:30am to 3:15pm (except for Thursdays - 8:30am-1:45pm). Students are to report to Student Reception in the morning. Please be aware that the Tuckshop will be closed.

It is important that families are aware that there will be no lessons scheduled at school. Students will be supervised to access the same learning program that is being delivered to students who are learning from home.

**Families who require supervision are asked to complete the EdSmart slip that will be sent shortly.**

### **3. Absentee/ Attendance Notification**

The following processes are in place for student absence notification:

- **Attending – remote learning:** Attendance will be taken at the beginning of each lesson. Parents will be notified of absences.
- **Absent – remote learning:** Parents are to notify the College as per normal absentee procedures for both full day and part day absences.
- **Attending – At School:** Students must report to Student Reception between 8:00am - 8:30am.

### **4. New Timetable for Remote Learning**

Moving to a model for remote learning has given us an opportunity to adjust lesson times so that it is easier for students. We don't have the luxury of the school bell to remind us anymore! I have attached a copy of the new lesson times we will employ for Weeks 1-5. A copy will also be emailed to students and will be available on the student and parent portals. A summary for start and finish times for home-based learning is listed below:

- **Monday, Tuesday and Friday:** Students finish at 3:00pm.
- **Wednesday:** Students will be encouraged to complete a Sport challenge for House points, however this will not be a supervised (by staff) activity, and so students are technically offline from supervised lessons from 12.30pm.
- **Thursday:** Students finish at 1:15pm.

**Please note that on-site supervision times will remain as previously advised in *Section 2*.**

### **5. Preparing for Home-Based Learning**

As I have previously communicated, St Mary's has prepared a model for remote learning via the CANVAS platform. You would have already received the following key documents; however I attach a copy for your convenience:

- 'ADVICE FOR **PARENTS** IN THE EVENT OF SCHOOL CLOSURE BEGINNING OF TERM TWO'
- 'ADVICE FOR **STUDENTS** IN THE EVENT OF SCHOOL CLOSURE BEGINNING OF TERM TWO'

Please know that we are here to support you and your child. With our preparation and guidance and your support, I am confident all St Mary's students will continue to grow and learn throughout term two.

To support parents and carers, some tips have been put together to make the transition easier:

- Treat the first week as a 'starting school' or orientation type of week. Not everything will go to plan, and it might take a while to work out how to find and use the right resources and

understand what's best for you and your child. The 'how to' will come first, and then the learning.

- Remember that your child's teacher usually divides their attention between up to 28 students who all work at different paces and need different levels of support.
- Routines and consistency can be a source of comfort for parents and children alike.
- This situation presents an opportunity for students to find out more about themselves as learners and to become more confident in self-directing their learning. Encourage your child to take responsibility for not only learning but also for staying in touch with their teacher, their class and their friends and community.
- If your child is finding a task difficult, make suggestions and answer questions, but try to let them figure things out for themselves as much as possible. Give them opportunities, where appropriate, to take control of their own learning.
- Remember this is new for us, too. You can help us succeed by letting us know if you're unsure about something.

Further information on supporting your child, maintaining healthy learning routines and setting up a learning space at home can be found at <https://education.qld.gov.au/curriculum/learning-at-home/wellbeing-of-students>

## **6. Thank you**

Thank you for the support you are providing both your child and College staff during these challenging times. You would have seen that all over Australia and the world, schooling systems are experiencing the same challenges with many countries also moving to home-based learning in response to COVID-19.

Our dedicated staff at St Mary's continue to be here to teach and support your child. Together we will be learning and doing all we can to support you in this new mode of remote learning. I assure you we will continue to maintain close contact with you over the next few weeks to provide learning for your child and together we will support each other and see all our students continue to grow.

God Bless



Wayne Wood

**Principal**