



20 March 2020

Dear Parents and Caregivers

The Executive Team is currently meeting daily and often more than once, to make sure we are all on task and to share what is happening across the campus, across Australia and indeed across the world (you may be interested to google what Singapore is doing and how effective they have been in containing the spread, without mass school closures. I am writing to update you on the current situation with regards to the College's management of the COVID-19 outbreak. I know it appears impersonal, but for ease of reading, I think it best that I continue to do these updates under headings so that you get a clear idea of what is happening.

Students in self-isolation

Close to 10% of our students are currently in self-isolation and taking part in online learning. This is the parents' decision which I fully support if you are concerned for your child's or family's wellbeing. If you have chosen to go this route please ensure that your child continues with their schooling as per the guidelines that were sent out on Tuesday.

I am aware that some students who are in 'self-isolation' have been out and about during the school day. Please understand this is not in line with self-isolation guidelines. Please monitor your child's activities and ensure that they are 'attending' school during school hours, as they would if they were on campus.

It is important that all students, whether they are learning at school or at home, keep up to date with their studies and do not fall behind. Teachers will not be in a position to catch up weeks of work with students on their return.

Off-campus Learning

Thank you to the many parents who have sent emails acknowledging how trying these times are for teachers and thanking for the work they are putting into ensuring that learning carries on in as normal a way as possible.

As you can appreciate, doubling up by doing online and face-to-face preparation is very time consuming for our dedicated teachers. Next week, you children may tell that even in the classroom, teachers are doing more teaching online – this is to give them some breathing space and ensure that they stay on top of their game during these trying times. This also is a great opportunity for us to test our skills and systems to teach in this manner. Obviously, the best scenario for students is that they are at school as, even with teachers doing a vast amount of teaching via an online platform, the face-to-face interaction and human contact is always best for robust learning.



Developing character, inspiring hope

NAPLAN

This afternoon we have been informed that NAPLAN exams scheduled for May have been cancelled by COAG Education Council which includes Commonwealth, State and Territory ministers. Ministers reiterated their support for the decision to keep schools open.

Extra-Curricular: Music and Drama

Recent changes to indoor gatherings and social distancing impacting our ability to rehearse and perform has resulted in having to suspend all choir and ensemble rehearsals until further notice. Students will still be able to work together in small group sectionals, and the times and days of these sectionals will be communicated by ensemble conductors and directors. While ensemble rehearsals are suspended, it is important that students take their instruments home to ensure they are playing as often as possible. Mr Troyahn is looking forward to seeing and hearing all of our groups when rehearsals resume.

Our instrumental, vocal and drama tutors are still working to their usual timetable of lessons throughout the week, and it has been great to hear so many lessons still taking place. For those parents who have already chosen to isolate their children and keep them at home, lessons are now able to take place online via Microsoft Teams.

If the College is directed to close, the Performing Arts Department is prepared for Off-campus Learning and our tutors will be able to continue their usual timetable of lessons remotely. Mr Troyahn has sent out communications to parents this morning to help you prepare for online lessons. Please remember that students must keep playing their instrument and rehearsing at home regularly to not only keep learning, but also provide plenty of enjoyment for them and your family (unless, of course they are beginner violinists 😊).

Online Code of Conduct

At times like this we need to ensure that our students remain focused on their studies and don't get caught up in behavioral issues. It is a good time to remind them of the College's expectation of online conduct. Teachers have directed them to the Online Code of Conduct and I have shared it with you as an attachment. I urge you to go through it with your child as they will be spending more time online in the coming weeks and, possibly, months.

For those experiencing financial challenges at this time

The Board and I are aware that many families will be suffering as people are losing jobs, being forced to take unpaid leave or even close businesses. We understand the huge financial burden that this places on you, and I know that some of you may be worrying about paying your school fees over the coming months. If you find yourself in this position, please contact Mrs Kirti Kumar in our Accounts Department, who will be handling the matter sensitively with the College's Commercial Manager, Mrs Dolores Santosa.

Parent Volunteers

It is with sadness that I inform you that from next week until otherwise advised we will not be having parents on campus as volunteers who interact with students. This would mainly apply in the Junior College. We are so grateful for the incredible job that you do in your own time to support our students, but at this stage we are trying to limit contact where possible in a bid to implement social distancing as best we can.

Drinking water for students

As a school we are expected to provide facilities for students to have access to drinking water. Our bubblers are being thoroughly cleaned and sanitised throughout the school day but I strongly encourage students to bring their own water and ask parents to remind them not to share drink bottles.

Senior College Update

Assessment

Next week is the Year 11 exam block. During this time, as is always the case, Year 11 students are only required to be on campus when they have scheduled assessment. Exam rooms will be organised so that strict social distancing can be maintained. A study room will be provided for those students who prefer to revise on campus. The College understands that not all Year 11 students will be able to attend their assessment if they are in mandatory quarantine. Arrangements will be made for these students later. Students in Years 7-12 who are working from home should be following their weekly timetable and can still work on assignments, submitting drafts and final scripts through drop boxes on D2L. We will follow all directives from the QCAA should there be any variation to Year 12 assessment (assignments and exams).

Senior Musical 2020 : *Grease*

Thursday afternoon was the last full cast rehearsal of *Grease* until further notice. The cast ran through as much of the show as possible for video recording. While this concept is not new to the cast, it was important to update our video records. Students will be expected to maintain their musical parts by rehearsing at home. The videos on D2L will also be useful to rehearse choreography and scene work.

Moving forward, rehearsals will be held in smaller numbers to help implement social distancing. The use of Teams will also be utilised for our principal cast to help maintain running of lines and character development. Further information on this will be communicated to the cast from the directing team.

Yours sincerely



Kim Cohen
Principal