



3 April 2020

Dear Parents and Caregivers

I want to thank our Saint Stephen's College families for the cooperation and support we have received to date as we steer the College through these unprecedented and difficult times. Together with the College Board and all our staff, we are focused on ensuring that our students continue their learning and personal development journey as seamlessly as possible.

You will be aware that schools are introducing different methods of supporting the parents in their community during these trying times. Each school will be doing what is appropriate and possible in their own circumstances which obviously differ from school to school. At Saint Stephen's College, the Board has determined that our best course of action is to support families as they require it and as outlined further in this letter.

Our delivery of continuous learning at home requires a unified commitment from our educators, students, parents/carers and homestay families. The adoption of new methods of remote operation does have its challenges, however, with the goodwill, understanding and cooperation of everyone in our community, we are well placed to navigate a way through this pandemic and out the other side intact.

Saint Stephen's College is known for the holistic education that we provide catering to students at all academic levels, as well as supporting their emotional, spiritual, physical and creative wellbeing. As we necessarily transition to a new mode of delivery for the medium term, we intend to continue this holistic package to support our students. Our teams in academic welfare, diverse learning, chaplaincy, counselling, performing arts, physical education and activities are all rapidly preparing and delivering ongoing support for our students. At the same time our Childcare, Outside School Hours Care and other staff are supporting families who still need to send their students to school with on-campus student supervision until otherwise directed by the authorities.

Ultimately, achieving our outcomes successfully will rely on the ability of the College to continue to provide a quality education service. School fees are the College's main source of income and the College is simply unable to operate for prolonged periods without this income. We believe that our continuous learning programs will provide our students with quality education and our educators will continue to work full time educating our students in this way.

To continue the Saint Stephen's holistic educational experience, the College will continue to charge normal school fees during this period. However, we have cancelled all non-essential excursions, trips and Year 7 to 12 camps in a bid to cut down extra costs for parents.



Developing character, inspiring hope

I do appreciate that many families will be impacted in many ways by COVID-19. Maintaining both physical and mental good health will be a priority as COVID-19 continues to spread and the stresses of changes to daily life, with an economic downturn impact upon us. In terms of the payment of school fees, I ask that parents who are able - either by being fortunate enough to have maintained employment or business or who have suffered a reduction in income but can still afford to pay - please continue to pay school fees.

For parents who have suddenly found themselves in financial hardship, I am keen for my team to work with you to find a way for your children to continue as students of Saint Stephen's College. We have established a method for you to make confidential contact with the accounts staff, Mrs Kirti Kumar. You can reach her by emailing feesassistance@ssc.qld.edu.au. We will work with you in consideration of your changed circumstances. Mrs Kirti Kumar with the guidance and support of the Commercial Manager, Mrs Dolores Santosa, will assist you with alternative method/term of payment or fee concession that will be suitable for your changed financial circumstances during this difficult and unprecedented time.

As you probably already know a range of financial supports have been announced by the [Australian](#) and [Queensland Governments](#) for businesses and households that impacted families can access.

Our thoughts are with every member of our community and now, more than ever, is the time communities must support each other. As I have said, getting through this pandemic together will require us all to be understanding and supportive of each other, particularly with those in our community who may find themselves suffering sudden personal hardships through no fault of their own. We need to support these members of our community and provide the opportunity for people to recover wherever possible.

Support services such as [Beyond Blue](#) and [Lifeline](#) are also only a phone call away. Please reach out and connect over the phone with these services, or families and friends, if you need assistance.

Stay strong, stay safe, stay connected.

Yours sincerely



Kim Cohen
Principal