



5 May 2020

Dear Parents and Caregivers

It was with great happiness and a certain amount of relief that I listened to the announcement yesterday by the Premier, Anastacia Palaszczuk. We are so excited that Prep, Year 1, 11 and 12 students will be returning to on-campus learning on Monday 11 May. The remainder of students will return on Monday 25 May, unless directives change before then for any reason.

I know that staff, students and parents share my enthusiasm with regards to the return to campus of our students over the next few weeks. Next week and the following week will certainly be strange with only some of the students at school, but we continue to be committed to adhering to the directives of the State Government and the Queensland Health Department. The return to school needs to be staged, hence only the return of four year levels at this time. In order to ensure that numbers are not overwhelming I urge parents of students in Years 2 to 10 to please keep your children at home unless it is impossible for them to be supervised. Students in these year levels will continue with the Off Campus Learning program and those who have to be on campus will be supervised by College staff. **For those who cannot supervise your children at home next week, due to being essential workers, please complete the survey by 12pm Thursday 7 May 2020 via the link: [Years 2 to 10 on campus supervision](#).** It is important that we have accurate numbers in order to be able to arrange sufficient supervision.

Students in Prep and Years 1, 11 and 12 will engage in classroom teaching with their relevant teachers. Please note that teachers will be unable to provide remote teaching and assessment for students in these year levels, as they will be working full-time with their students at school.

All students and staff will have their temperatures checked as they arrive on campus. Any member of the community who registers a high temperature will be asked to return home or visit a medical practitioner. Good quality masks are also available from the Health Centre for all those who wish to wear them.

Senior College

Years 11 and 12 students will be returning to campus on Monday and continuing to follow the same timetable they have been following this term. Students will be engaged in face-to-face learning with their classroom teacher, with the day commencing at 8.15am with Tutor Group. For students who are unwell, parents/guardians should notify the College via absences as is the standard procedure. These students will be able to access core content on D2L. As per usual, students are expected to arrive in day uniform (PE uniform on Friday) and to ensure they are adhering to all College expectations in terms of grooming, punctuality and preparedness to learn.

Junior College

For students in Prep and Year 1 it will be school as normal from Monday and we are sure they will enjoy the face to face, hands on learning again. The routine will resume with regular school hours, canteen orders and before and after school care operational. However, to maintain our adherence to the Premier's directives we will have some different procedures in place.



Developing character, inspiring hope

With the increase in student numbers there will be more parents coming to school. To ensure social distancing between adults is achieved, and congregation is avoided, we will be providing the drive through service at both drop off and pick up times, for both Prep and Year 1 students. This will be in the Eastern car park and will utilise the current lane for drive through. Parents can step out of their cars to arrange the seatbelts for their child and the staff members will supervise them into and out of school.

If, at other times, a parent must come on to campus, they will be temperature checked on entry. We request they do not enter classrooms or stand with other adults, but complete their errand promptly and leave the campus again. Please use phone or email if it is a query that can be dealt with in this manner.

Children in Years 2 to 6, who are on campus due to their parents being essential workers, will still be supervised as they continue the Off Campus Learning program. These students must be booked in through the survey (link above), so we are prepared for the number of students to be supervised.

For Years 2 and 3, the drive through service will be available again this Friday (and the following Friday) for collection of worksheet packs and swapping reading materials. The times are 7.30am to 8.30am and 2pm to 3pm.

What will happen in the event of a confirmed case of COVID-19 at Saint Stephen's College?

We would follow the advice and protocols of Queensland Health, 'If there is a confirmed case of COVID-19 in a school community, the school may need to temporarily close to allow time for public health authorities to conduct contact tracing and deep cleaning to be undertaken, to ensure the safety of staff and students prior to reopening'.

OCL Feedback from the community

We are dedicated to ensuring that our Off Campus Learning program is at the highest standard and we are also preparing for what post-COVID education should look like, using what we have learnt during this time to our best advantage. To this end you will receive information tomorrow about a survey that we will be sending out later this week asking for your feedback, as well as feedback from students and teachers. I apologise in advance for the flurry of emails, but urge you to read them because your input into what teaching and learning should look like at Saint Stephen's College will be greatly valued.

Best wishes to all of you as we continue to working hard on ensuring that all our families come out of this strange time healthy and resilient.

At this time, I would like to share a prayer for those working in the Health Services:

Father of mercies, we thank you for all who care for the sick.

When they diagnose, give them patience.

When they protect the vulnerable, give them your protection.

When they work to heal, give them strength.

When they comfort, give them consolation. When they are tired, give them rest.

When they are discouraged, bring them your hope.

May we welcome and respect them as we support one another in this time of trial.

Amen

kind regards



Kim Cohen
Principal

Novel coronavirus

Chief Health Officer advice for parents and carers on returning to schools

Dear parents, guardians and care-givers

Queensland's current COVID-19 response measures have helped to flatten the curve of coronavirus spread and have contributed to our State's continued success in limiting the number of cases and transmission in the community. Queensland is now seeing very low rates of COVID-19 infection. I know that in recent weeks many of you have been making some big sacrifices to ensure that your children can keep learning from home, often while juggling many other commitments. Your efforts have not gone unnoticed. Thank you.

On 2 May 2020 we eased some of the restrictions in Queensland. I am proud that our efforts now see us in a position to consider students returning to school over the coming weeks. Queensland Health has worked closely with the Department of Education to plan for this transition and the safety of staff, students and school communities has been at the forefront of all our considerations.

The first stage of resumption, commencing on 11 May 2020 will be for students at the essential early years and critical senior years: community kindergarten, Prep, Year 1, Year 11 and Year 12. Children of essential workers, vulnerable children and children in designated Indigenous communities will also be able to attend school. If COVID-19 transmission rates remain low, a full return to school for all students is then planned for 25 May 2020 and this will be confirmed by 15 May 2020.

Significant consideration has been given to the first stage of resumption. We want to give all our children a great start to life, and this must include access to early years education. I am confident that the hygiene habits young Queenslanders are learning at home with your help will be reinforced in the educational setting. The senior secondary years of grade 11 and 12 are also important, and I believe that as our senior students transition to adulthood, they are old enough to understand and recognise the need for good health and hygiene and that if they are unwell, they should stay home. Schools should encourage students to take responsibility for staying at home in those instances.

I understand that sending your students back to school at this time can be difficult, particularly when you see the impact that COVID-19 has had on many other countries around the world. I want to assure you that we would not be recommending a return to school unless we were confident that it was safe for everyone. The Australian Health Protection Principal Committee (AHPPC), which comprises the Chief Health Officers of all Australian jurisdictions, continues to note that there is very limited evidence of transmission between children in the school environment. In Australia, only a very small percentage of COVID-19 cases have been in children.

Implementing a return to school in a staged way will provide critical time for schools to develop and implement arrangements to ensure that the transition can be made safely for everyone. The Department of Education, on advice from Queensland Health, will work with schools, staff and parents to ensure that the return to school can be done in a way that is safe. The biggest risk of transmission of COVID-19 in schools is between adults, and many of the arrangements put in place will be to enable appropriate distancing between the adults that are on school grounds.

This approach is informed by advice from the AHPPC at <https://www.health.gov.au/news/australian-health-protection-principal-committee-ahppc-advice-on-reducing-the-potential-risk-of-covid-19-transmission-in-schools>. It will include adapting staff arrangements, communication, physical distancing of adults at key points and times in the school day such as drop-off and pick-up, and routines for hygiene and cleaning.

Activities such as assemblies, camps, interschool activities, sporting and arts events will not be allowed to take place at this time. The situation will continually be reviewed to determine when it will be safe to recommence these additional activities.

The most important ways to help stop the spread of COVID-19 in the school environment are the same as in the broader community. Please encourage and support the children in your care to do the following, and remember you are their role model:

- Clean your hands regularly with soap and water or alcohol-based sanitiser.
- Cover your nose and mouth with a tissue or bent elbow when coughing or sneezing.
- Avoid touching your face, nose and mouth, and avoid shaking hands.
- Stay home if you are sick. This is the most important thing you can do. If you have any respiratory symptoms, please get tested for COVID-19.
- Practice social distancing outside your household, including staying 1.5 metres away from others as much as you can.

In the unlikely event that there were to be an outbreak of COVID-19 at a school, be assured that Queensland Health has the ability to respond rapidly and thoroughly to limit any transmission.

I am confident that with these measures in place, neither students, staff or members of the school community will be at any increased risk of COVID-19 by attending school. If you require any additional information in relation to Queensland's response to COVID-19, please visit the Queensland Health website at <https://www.qld.gov.au/health/conditions/health-alerts/coronavirus-covid-19>.

Finally, I want to thank you again for the critical work that you have done to educate, entertain and reassure your kids in this difficult time. Everyone has a role to play in getting through this pandemic, and ensuring the wellbeing of our children is an absolute priority. With your help, we can look forward to a time in the near future where we can see a return to the Queensland lifestyle that we know and love.

Dr Jeannette Young PSM

Chief Health Officer