



12 January 2022

Dear Parents and Caregivers

Thank you for your patience while we have planned a course of action for the start of the school year.

It is hard to believe that two years on we are still beset by COVID challenges in all that we do. Thank you for the trust that you have shown in Saint Stephen's College during this time and your continued trust and support as we face yet another period of upheaval. Luckily, we are experienced now and well equipped to handle the challenges that continue to come our way.

To the new members of the Saint Stephen's family, I am so sorry that we will not be able to welcome you in our normal warm, face-to-face fashion. However, as soon as we feel it is appropriate to do so we will invite all parents, new and old, to join the staff for a catch up, low-key, social event.

I know that you are all anxious to hear what our plans are with regards to the start of the year, given the Premier's announcement on Sunday. The Senior Leadership Team has spent this week researching, consulting with other schools and determining what is in the best interests of our students. We took a number of factors into consideration including:

- The plans of other independent schools in Brisbane and the Gold Coast, particularly APS schools: these range from following the state measures all the way to go straight to remote teaching for all students on 24 January 2022
- Most importantly, what is in the best interests of our students both educationally and from a wellbeing perspective
- How much preparation and support new students, younger students and students with new laptops need to be ready for Off Campus Learning (OCL)
- The ability and experience of our teachers to go to OCL at the very start of the year without previous face-to-face time with their students

Taking all these factors into account, and the fact that we have quickly and effectively moved to, and delivered, OCL in the past we have decided on the following:

- **Year 11 and Year 12 to start Off Campus Learning (OCL) on Thursday 27 January 2022**
- **Year 5 to Year 10 to start OCL on Monday 31 January 2022**
- **Prep to Year 4 to start home activities in preparation for the year ahead on Monday 31 January 2022**

We have decided to end the school year at a similar time as most other APS schools, which means that we will now be finishing the year on Wednesday 30 November 2022 instead of Friday 25 November 2022. In this way students will lose minimal learning time.



Developing character, inspiring hope

Students on campus from 24 January 2022

Vulnerable children and children of [essential workers](#) will be welcomed at school from **Monday 24 January 2022**. They will be supervised by staff during the school day from 8.20am until 3.05pm. We will send out a survey closer to the start of term so that we are aware of numbers. Please be aware that our own teaching staff are encouraged to work from home at this time, so it is imperative that you inform us, via the survey, if your child will be on campus so that our staff can be informed with sufficient notice if they are required on campus to supervise.

Students who are unwell or are expected to be in isolation during this time due to being a close contact, are not to come on campus.

New Students

Unfortunately, the planned Orientation Day for new students will be cancelled, but all the information normally provided on that day will be disseminated by other means and students may be withdrawn briefly from a regular class on their return to on-campus learning to clarify any aspects that may have been missed. However, it is important that all new students feel part of the community from their very first day, so Junior College teachers and Senior College Tutors or Heads of Year will make contact prior to the start of OCL to check in on how they are, provide information and answer any questions.

Students will also have the opportunity to have their laptops set up for OCL as appropriate. Details are below.

Junior College

Whilst this is not an ideal start to the year, particularly for our students in the Junior College, we believe it is important to get students engaged and learning sooner rather than later. The first week of term for junior students is used to build up knowledge of fellow classmates, reflect on the holidays and make goals for the year. The activities for OCL for these students are designed to develop these areas which can be shared when we are back in class together.

Year 5 and Year 6 students will access OCL via their laptops. Included in this letter are the details of how all Year 5 students and new Year 6 students will have their devices loaded with the required software.

Prep to Year 4 students will have packs of activities to take home. These will be collected from the Junior College on Thursday 27 and Friday 28 January 2022. Further details of collection times will be emailed closer to the date.

For all Junior College classes there will be daily class meetings with their teacher online. These interactions will help to build the class atmosphere. Each teacher will email families with the times and instructions, closer to the date.

Senior College

Students will start their OCL period (either Thursday 27 January or Monday 31 January 2022) with a welcome assembly, information sessions and year level meetings prior to going to Tutor Group. In this way we hope to have them settled and ready for the first lesson, slightly later in the day.

Apart from these altered arrangements, students will follow their timetables by joining their lesson via MS Teams.

All students in the Senior College will be contacted prior to their respective starting date with regards to how the first day (or two) will run, including links to meetings such as assemblies, year level meetings and Tutor Group.

Year 11 and Year 12 students

We ask that Year 11 and Year 12 connect online, promptly and ready to learn for assembly at the start of the school day on Thursday 27 January 2022. As mentioned, they will receive more information via email prior to this time.

Uniform during OCL

Students in Year 5 to Year 12 are expected to wear their HPE uniform when attending online classes.

Device setup

All students with new devices will need to have them set up, this will ensure the device is ready to support learning at Saint Stephen's College. Due to the current restrictions, this will be done in small groups; we have set up a booking system for students to have their devices set up. Please see below and select a specific time if you need to bring your device in and have it set up:

Friday 21 January 2022

- **New students in Year 5 to Year 12**, book a 60-minute appointment for laptop setup and induction.
https://www.supersaas.com/schedule/SSCUniforms/New_Student_IT_Orientation
- **Existing students Year 5, 2022**, book a 30-minute appointment for laptop set up.
https://www.supersaas.com/schedule/SSCUniforms/Year_5_Laptop_setups

Monday 24 January 2022

- **Existing students in Year 7 to Year 12**, who have a new laptop, book a 30-minute appointment for laptop set up.
https://www.supersaas.com/schedule/SSCUniforms/New_Laptop_Setups

All inductions and setups will occur in the Connections Classrooms, located between the GFA and the Main Administration building. Please meet in the courtyard outside the Connections Classrooms, behind the GFA. For new students who do not know where this is please report to Reception.

Please be aware that adults and all students from Year 7 to Year 12 are expected to wear masks at all times when on campus.

Please note, all student passwords for students in Year 5 to Year 12, will be reset on Thursday 20 January 2022, new passwords will be sent to the primary parent's email address. If you have any issues, please contact the IT Help Desk, it@ssc.qld.edu.au

Sport

Our Year 4 to Year 6 and Year 7 to Year 12 swimming carnivals were scheduled in the first three weeks of the term. These, and Year 4 to Year 6 swimming trials, will be postponed.

In discussion with the other APS Principals, it seems likely that all competition will be delayed depending on the situation in which we find ourselves at the start of the season.

More information in regards to the swimming carnivals and APS sport will come out from the Sports Department closer to the resumption of face to face schooling.

If the Government issues a further directive extending the delay of returning to school, we will review and adapt the OCL provision for the longer period for all students.

My sincere thanks to all members of the Senior Leadership Team who were available at very short notice to meet on Sunday and again this week during their holidays.

Our prayers and best wishes are with all our families at this time, particularly those who have members affected by COVID. Please stay safe and lets all look out for each other.

Wishing you all a wonderful last few days of holiday and best wishes to all as we do this again.

At this time of pandemic,

Let us foster respect and solidarity with others, especially those who are weak or ill.

Let us remain calm and supportive of each other.

Let us take advantage of living together as a family.

Let us attend to moments of prayer.

Let us cultivate responsibility, patience and hope.

Amen

Yours sincerely



Ms Kim Cohen
Principal