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St Joseph's
College
TOOWOOMBA

16th March 2020

Dear Parents, Caregivers and Students

Update on Coronavirus (COVID-19) Preparedness

The coronavirus (COVID-19) is continuing to be a growing concern for health authorities worldwide and we are seeing examples in a number of countries of its health, social and economic impacts. As we actively plan to manage the implications of this virus for our College, we hope to be spared the worst aspects of this health emergency. We must nevertheless be prepared for the challenges ahead.

In addition to the advice of our State and Commonwealth Health Authorities we would like to advise of the measures we will implement for our College as part of our duty of care and commitment to the safety of all members of our community. We will update this information as circumstances change in line with the professional advice we receive. Updates will be provided through the usual communication methods (SMS, website, etc.).

The most important thing for us, what we're trying to focus on as educators, is that we're not the health experts here. It's critical that we are relying on the information from the health experts in the community. We are education experts and we are about ensuring that we are doing the best thing for students in our school, and part of that is heeding the advice of health professionals. Schools are challenged to respond to this situation sensibly and safely while continuing to operate as normally as possible.

Our response to any situation is always student-centred. We understand the importance of preparation for the academic impacts in crisis situations, but that's not the sole focus. We also have to be cognizant of the mental health needs of our students and their overall wellbeing. Also the importance of teaching the "why" and providing context around responses to situations. We have to be diligent about explaining to students why we are responding to certain situations in certain ways. There's no reason not to tell our community that the reason a measure is being put in place is so that they are safe.

Planning is currently taking place to deal with any situation that may unfold, including school closure and the continuity of student learning. To support this planning, we would appreciate it if our parents could confirm / notify us if your child is in the high-risk category should they contract the virus. This includes any students with serious chronic medical conditions including those with compromised immune systems. Please notify by emailing office@sjc.qld.edu.au

We hope that the information below is beneficial and we look forward to working with our community as we endeavour to work through this situation.

Kind regards


Kort Goodman
Principal



Access to Learning

Our teachers will be working to upload lesson content, activities and resources to our CANVAS learning management system so that student learning can continue. We are a one-to-one device community and we will be encouraging all students and teachers to take home their devices, chargers and any relevant textbooks every afternoon. **We ask our parents to contact us if they do not have a working Internet connection so that we can provide hard copy resources for these families.**

Student Assessment and Reporting

If the College is **required to close** please be aware that the following procedures will be put into place.

- Assessment policy procedures are to be adhered to.
- Year 7 – 10 assignment tasks will be completed as normal submitted via CANVAS. Year 7 – 10 exam assessment tasks will be completed as learning activities. Year 7 – 10 report cards will have a mark if possible, otherwise learning behaviour ratings will be completed and marks will be OA (ongoing assessment).
- Year 11 – assessment exam block to continue as planned. Any assignments to be submitted as normal via CANVAS.
- Year 12 - assessment tasks to be completed as per planned.
- Year 11/12 Assessment not able to occur the College will follow the QCAA guidelines for **Illness and Misadventure** - <https://www.qcaa.qld.edu.au/senior/certificates-and-qualifications/qce-qcia-handbook-2019/6-aara/6.5-illness-misadventure>
- Year 11 and 12 report cards will have a mark if possible, otherwise learning behaviour ratings will be completed and marks will be OA (ongoing assessment).

College Events

In order to meet the suggested guidelines around reducing the chance of contamination the following procedures are being put into place.

- Full College assemblies and house meetings have been ceased.
- Future full College events are being cancelled / postponed.
- We are endeavouring to split our lunch break into smaller groups.
- All excursions are cancelled until further notice.
- All sport, cultural or mission participation is ceased until further notice – eg band practice, footy training, Rosies, breakfast club.
- You Never Walk Alone (options) – students will be not leaving the College to participate in recreational activities.
- All professional development participation is ceased.
- Non-essential face to face meetings are to be postponed. Alternative methods are to be explored.

Hygiene Practices

We are aware of the importance of hygiene in managing this situation. As such we have taken the following measures:

- Increasing access to hand sanitiser for everyone, to be used regularly especially before and after breaks.
- Giving particular attention to cleaning high contact areas such as doorknobs, handrails and touch screens.
- Asking students and staff to cough and sneeze into their elbows, rather than hands.
- Encouraging students to bring their own water bottle to school which can be filled at the bubblers rather than drinking from the bubblers.
- Following the advice of Queensland Health as it comes to hand.

We are sharing this information with families to encourage matching behaviour at home. Please talk to your children about the importance of the recommended hygiene practices, especially hand washing, covering the face when sneezing and coughing and so on.



Like Symptoms

As you would be aware the symptoms of COVID-19 are very similar to the symptoms of influenza. The Queensland Health Time Out sheet provides information on the recommended minimum exclusion periods for infectious conditions. The Time Out sheet also confirms that students displaying influenza-like symptoms are to be excluded until the symptoms have resolved. In the current climate it is important that students who are unwell and displaying influenza-like symptoms do not attend school. Please keep your child at home if they are unwell. **As a College if we identify a student who is exhibiting flu like symptoms, we will be asking parents to come and collect the student. If you are contacted to collect an unwell child, a timely response would be appreciated.**

Children or Family Members being Tested for COVID-19

Testing for COVID-19 is managed and initiated by health authorities. All students who are being tested will be quarantined by Queensland Health. Students who may have been in close contact with symptomatic family members who are undergoing testing, based on Queensland Health advice, may be asked to self-isolate until testing is undertaken and test results are known.

Overseas Excursions

As some community members would be aware, we have a European trip planned for later in the year. We are working through a range of contractual and insurance issues but our duty of care for the safety of our students and staff will be our first priority. Mr Fellenberg and Mr Keighran are doing a wonderful job of keeping those families involved informed with up to date information.

Family Travel

Families of staff and students will make their own arrangements for private overseas travel in the Term 1 school holidays, but please be aware – changing circumstances mean periods of quarantine in an overseas or Australian location, or self-isolation when returning home.

Communication

Please look out for further communication from us and accept that this communication is an important part of keeping our school communities healthy and safe. We will update information provided as required. If you have any concerns, please feel free to make contact with the College.

Further information can be found at;

www.health.qld.gov.au

www.health.gov.au

Let us continue to hold all who may be unwell at this time and all involved in responding to the COVID 19 situation in our thoughts and prayers. Thank you for your understanding and support.

