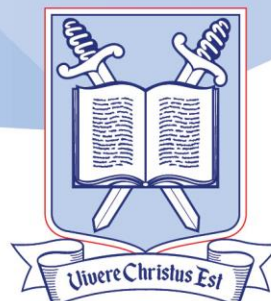


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**St Paul's**  
Catholic College  
Booragul

6 April 2020

Dear Parents and Caregivers,

***COVID-19 Update No. 16.***

Last Friday, I wrote to you with the news that school holidays for students officially begin today. Staff continue to work, preparing for next term, and the real possibility that schools across the nation will be using an online curriculum delivery model for all students as we continue to battle the virus.

The current news suggests that Australians are heeding the warnings of the experts and are staying at home except for essential travel and for work. The call to flatten the curve is critical in allowing our medical services to manage the outbreak in such a way that means that people who need critical care are able to receive it. The news out of the US and Europe is not good and if you have family and friends in those regions, it is rather worrying. I also note that there is little news coverage in the mainstream media about the many developing nations that are also in the grips of this virus. I can only imagine the devastation that is likely in those areas of our world that do not have access to top class medical facilities like we do here in Australia.

Over the holiday period, it is vital that we continue to act on the advice of the medical experts. We all need to stay at home, spend time with our family and loved ones and do our best to ensure that the dreaded curve continues to flatten. Talk with your children about the need to look after one another. Share time with them that you might not ordinarily have time to share. Play those games that we played as young people that didn't need internet access and screen time!

For our families who have students in Year 12, be mindful of disappointing media reports like the one that I heard this morning. Comments along the lines of "Year 12 students might have to repeat Year 12," do nothing to help students and families. The idea that we would expect Year 12 students to repeat is ridiculous and to put that commentary out there is irresponsible. NESA and all the state Ministers for Education will meet tomorrow and work out some of the details that need to happen over the coming months. To expect them to make total decisions is probably not wise. We are still at the early stages of the virus and I suspect the decisions that will be made will reflect that reality. Year 12 students are in the same boat as all of us. We all need to stay calm and trust that sensible decisions will be made for the good of all. So far, our respective governments are making measured decisions (except perhaps about the Ruby Princess.) At this point, I continue to trust that this will continue, including decisions about the future of Year 12 certifications across the country.

My only advice for Year 12 is continue to do work that is set. Continue to review completed work and continue to send work to your teachers for feedback. Many teachers will continue to send you work to do over the break. Use the time wisely and continue to make the most of the learning opportunities that you have.

I will update you with any further news that comes from the meetings of NESA and the Education Ministers. Thank you again for all your support during these challenging times. Two months ago we were in awe of our firefighters and SES volunteers. How quickly the world has changed. We are now in awe of our medical personnel who are, like our firefighters and volunteers, the true heroes during this unprecedented event.

One final item. We have noticed that some students haven't been using and checking their St Paul's email address inboxes. They can do this easily by accessing their MN Connect page and pressing the email logo.

Go gently.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'G. Selmes', written in a cursive style.

Mr Graeme Selmes  
***Principal***