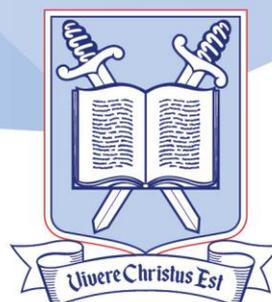


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St Paul's
Catholic College
Booragul

31 March 2020

Dear Parents and Caregivers,

COVID-19 Update No. 12.1

I was somewhat amused today when I heard reports about the push to have the HSC Exams cancelled for this year. The report has come out of Queensland and adapted for the NSW situation. Queensland have a different system to NSW. The only similarity could be that for the first time, they are joining with the ATAR system for University entrance. There is an inherent stress level with this change for students north of the border but it would seem that the media have decided that it is news-worthy so that students who are already quite stressed need to hear this message today! I hate to admit that Donald Trump might just have a point (sometimes) with fake news.

I have personally written today to our Year 12 students and have sent copies of that letter to their parents and caregivers. The purpose of that letter is to put some things into perspective. I hope that it goes some way to help with the stresses that our Year 12 students might be feeling in this changing educational landscape.

I would like to thank our parents and caregivers for all the wonderful support that you have been giving to our staff while they prepare and send work and give feedback to students over the past week. Here is a small sample of the many emails that we have received:

"I would like also to say a huge thank you to all of you, Mr Selmes, teachers and staff for the amazing work you do during that hard time. I am very impressed how you all have managed the new way how to teach lessons to our children. Our children are extremely lucky. Thank you so much to all of you."

"I would like to take this opportunity to thank all the staff at the school for all they are doing during this transition for students and families in this uncertain time."

"Thank you for all you have done, to assist in this time."

"Much appreciation for your efforts in establishing systems so promptly for enabling learning to occur from home. Stay safe everyone"

"Thank you for the constant correspondence and updates regarding this issue."

"I just wanted to say what a fantastic job you are all doing in this crazy time and putting all this work together for the children and all the work you all are doing in the office."

"We hope everyone in our school community stays safe & well during this difficult time - & thank you to all the teachers & staff who are working hard to make it as easy as possible for our kids to continue learning under trying circumstances."

"I would also like to thank all his teachers for the efforts taken recently to ensure his continued learning during the difficult time we are in. He has always loved going to St Paul's which is testament to the loving care you all show him and the engaging way each subject is taught."

"I would like to take this opportunity to thank everyone at the school for adapting to these challenging circumstances so quickly and efficiently and providing easy options for educating our kids, but keeping everyone (staff and children) as safe as possible."

"Thank you to all the staff for the amazing amount of work they are putting in to make this work as best as possible for the students."

"Thanks for the updates and an extra big thankyou to all our wonderful teachers for their commitment in continuing lessons online. Your dedication is appreciated and admired."

This is just a sample of the beautiful feedback that we have received. There is still much to do and as this situation develops, we will continue to do the best we can, given the issues that we all face. Keeping the education of our young people going is a vital part of the combined attack on this virus. At this point, I would like to acknowledge all our parents and caregivers who are at the frontline. The mums and dads who work in the health and allied industries, those working to keep supply lines open, those at the battlefield that we used to call the 'Toilet Paper Aisle'! As our Prime Minister has said, "We are all in this together." The key will be to continue to look after and respect one another and to particularly care for those in our society who have no one to turn to.

Continue to stay safe and stay connected to friends and families.

Yours sincerely



Mr Graeme Selmes
Principal