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**St Paul's**  
Catholic College  
Booragul

12 May 2020

Dear Parents and Caregivers,

**Re: COVID – 19 Update No 29.**

Today we welcomed Year 9 back to some face-to-face teaching. It was terrific to have them back for their day. We had a sausage sizzle to welcome them and they have enjoyed being back with friends and engaging in their learning.

Yesterday we had the vast majority of Year 12 and Year 11 here. Today, Year 12 have continued their learning and seem very happy to be back at school working with their teachers to prepare for their HSC. At this point, there is still no word from NESA about any changes to the HSC exams. I suspect that they are waiting for the Government to make decisions about the full time return of students to the school environment.

Yesterday, I sent you a very long list of the mitigations that we are employing to make our place as safe as we can. I am pleased to report that our students are working well with our teachers to support those methods. Sanitizing hands on the way into class and wiping down desks at the end of the lessons is an important part of our mitigation and the students are actively supporting us with that. We must remember that such practices will need to continue for the foreseeable future. The media talk about a “post COVID world”. I suggest we are well and truly in that new world.

One area that the students seem to be struggling with is the concept of “**social distancing.**” I ask that you continue the conversation with your child about this. There is evidence that children can carry the virus but not have a strong symptomatic response to it. In saying that, if they can carry it, then people outside the school environment could be at risk, including members of their own families. I understand that there is a contradiction in all this. We can have 30+ students in a room which makes full social distancing problematic. What we are doing in this space is to work hard to keep the students separated as much as is possible and to lessen the likelihood of close contact.

The other aspect of this is the social lesson that is vital today. We need everyone in society to practice social distancing. That message has been consistent from the beginning of the crisis. We will continue to model the practice here at St Paul's so that our young men and women are clear about their own responsibility as they begin to emerge back into society as restrictions are slowly lifted.

Thank you again for your support.

Stay safe.

Go gently,

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

Mr Graeme Selmes  
**Principal**