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**St Paul's**  
Catholic College  
Booragul

27 May 2020

Dear Parents and Caregivers,

***Re: COVID – 19 Update No 34.***

From Monday 1<sup>st</sup> June, all students are expected to be back at the College engaging in fulltime face to face learning. At this point, all online learning delivered by the teachers will cease.

I would like to thank all our parents and caregivers for their support during this time. The number on this newsletter reflects the ongoing nature of what we have all faced together as we have navigated the COVID Pandemic in Australia.

The return of students to face to face learning is a step in the return to some semblance of normality. What that new normal is remains to be seen. For the College, it means that we will need to be vigilant in how we look after all in our community. We will continue to have our students sanitize their hands as they enter the classroom. We will continue to clean desks after each lesson. Our cleaning staff will continue to deep clean our rooms at the end of each day and our ground staff will continue to sanitize the yard and lockers after each break.

For our staff, they will continue to socially distance from each other in the staff common areas and other areas of the campus. They will use techniques when offering feedback that keep in mind the social distancing protocols that have been suggested by the AHPPC (Australian Health Protection Principal Committee). We will not be gathering for assemblies and award ceremonies and we will not be able to have face to face meetings with parents and caregivers. As well, all non-essential adults will not be able to come on site.

These are all challenges for our community. However, we are not alone in these challenges. We are the same as all places of work. All aspects of our lives need to embrace this new normal for the good of all and, in particular, the good of the most vulnerable.

Sport is another area that we will need to modify. We are currently planning for a staged return to some type of sport program for our students in Year 7 -10. We will not be able to have any sports off site for the foreseeable future, but our sports coordinators are working on a school-based program for the remainder of the term.

The other big event that happens at the end of this term is St Paul's Day. This is the day that we celebrate our patron Saint and come together as a community. With the ban on assemblies and gatherings still in play, we are currently working on an alternative celebration. It is hoped that we will be able to keep the spirit of the day but it is clear that it will need to be very different.

**School Attendance Procedures:**

For parents who are still concerned about the safe return to school in the COVID environment, we will need a medical certificate to account for the absence. This is a NESAs (State Government) requirement. All schools in NSW are governed by the Education Act of 1990 and we are no different. The CSO and Catholic Schools NSW act as a conduit to the Minister for Education and their advice is as follows:



Once schools return to full-time face-to-face learning the following attendance and roll marking advice is to be used.

From 1 June, the expectation is that students are either:

- at school;
- at home because they are currently unwell or on leave;
- at home because they have a medical certificate which states that they are unable to return to school due to an ongoing medical issue.

If a student is absent for more than **three days without a medical certificate**, this will be recorded as an unauthorised absence and followed up by the school in line with normal practice.

In the event that students will **not** be returning to school during Term 2, an updated leave form will be required and/or a medical certificate if the reason for the absence relates to a medical issue. Leave forms are available via the College website – **Publications-Forms**.

Additionally, parents are asked to make contact with the school to discuss considerations for continuity of learning. Please be mindful that as we return to face-to-face learning at school, teachers will have reduced opportunity to communicate, connect and provide feedback to individual students at home.

As staff will be fully engaged in face to face teaching, they will not be able to send work home for students who remain at home.

I would remind you, it is vital **that you keep your child at home if they are displaying the slightest respiratory illness**. Runny noses, cough and itchy throats in the past might have meant that a student could possibly be okay at school, but in these testing times, students will need to stay home. Please do not be offended if your child presents at school and has any of these sorts of symptoms and you are contacted to take them home. It is critical that we work together and be over cautious in these matters while the pandemic is still part of our lives.

#### **Canteen:**

We have installed a *Tap and Go* device in the canteen for students to pay for food and drinks with their debit cards. It is a *tap and go* device (not to be used with pin numbers.) The minimum spend is \$2.00. We will be trialling this method of payment over the coming weeks. The first day of the trial will be this Friday.

#### **Year 7-10 Reporting for the Semester:**

Reporting of student performance in Years 7 to 10 will look somewhat different this semester. We have been in constant consultation with the Catholic Schools Office, Catholic Schools NSW and NESA so that we are able to appropriately report on student achievement taking into account the home learning environment that our students have been engaged in for over 8 weeks (almost a term). Mid-Course Reports for Year 11 will also have some modification but will be close to the style of report that we normally issue.

We acknowledge that our students have had variable experiences with remote learning and we want to recognise the efforts of students who demonstrated a proactive approach to that learning while also providing them with an opportunity to identify areas where they can improve on in the future. The changes to Year 7-10 Semester 1 Reports include:

- Grades will not be included in Semester 1 Reports. This reflects the changes we have made to assessment over the Home Learning time. Attendance will not be recorded on the reports.

- Students will have the opportunity to identify how **they** have approached their learning during the semester. The focus of these learning approaches is not about completed work, but that they engaged in their learning and sought assistance where needed. This is the student's assessment of their own approach to their learning. Teachers will also give their assessment of the efforts that students have made over this time. The inclusion of *a student self-assessment* is a significant step students can take in developing greater advocacy for their own learning and teachers will assist students in this process. It is important to also note that, if there is a difference between how a student has identified their approach to learning to that of their teacher, it is an opportunity for the teacher, student and parent/carer to discuss how the student can enhance their efforts and set goals for future achievement. As a result, the semester report is an opportunity for the **student's voice to be acknowledged in the learning process and will lead them to greater ownership that process.**
- Teachers will not be providing comments for Semester Reports for Years 7-10. Teachers have been providing on-going feedback to students throughout the semester as we have been working in an online environment.

#### **Year 11 Semester 1 Reports:**

Teachers will still be commenting on the Year 11 Reports as we recognise that our Year 11 students have not had a smooth transition into the rigours of senior studies. The purpose of the teacher comment will be to provide further feedback on specific strategies students can adopt to enhance their learning. Where possible we will facilitate a conference between the teacher, student and parent/carer to discuss how a student can further their learning.

#### **Parent/Teacher Interviews Early Term Three:**

We are currently exploring the possibility of video style conferences to replace face to face Parent/Teacher conferences. At this point, the current Health guidelines for schools still asks that parents and other adults not to come on site. With this in mind, it is clear that traditional Parent/Teacher meetings are not possible. We will be providing more information as soon as we can.

We are excited to have everyone back next week. The place will be fully alive and all our staff are keen to begin the real journey back for all our students. There are changes to the way that we do things now. There will be further adjustments as the environment changes for our state and our nation. As a community, we have been able to work so well together to be flexible, adaptable and most of all, generous in spirit as we have all come together for the good of all in our community.

Thank you for your wonderful support.

Go gently.



Mr Graeme Selmes  
**Principal**