

20 March 2020 – Update #5

Dear Parents/Carers,

The following information regards the College's position around the Coronavirus (COVID -19)

Symptoms of COVID-19 relate to a fever or respiratory symptoms - these can include a cough, shortness of breath, rapid breathing, a sore throat, or a runny nose. If you develop these symptoms, the advice is to see a doctor and provide the doctor with details of your travel history.

Please note, we are seeking your co-operation in that if your child is unwell, with symptoms associated with the virus, that you please seek medical advice and keep them at home. Please ensure they are fully well and cleared by a doctor before returning to the College.

The College will provide work during student absence from school during this outbreak.

St Norbert College continues to monitor the Coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak to ensure the safety of our school community. Our advice will continue to be in line with WA Government, Department of Health, and Catholic Education WA advice. The WA Department of Health has updated information including frequently asked questions about the COVID-19. To view this information visit; www.healthywa.wa.gov.au/coronavirus

International Travel

The Prime Minister has introduced measures including the mandatory 14 day self-isolation requirement for all international arrivals into Australia effective from 9pm (WST) on Sunday 15 March followed by recent advice for Australians not to travel overseas.

As with all Australian travellers, students and staff who return from international travel must self-isolate for 14 days. This includes all parents, contractors and school visitors. Ideally, students or staff members in the same house as a person self-isolating should make alternative residential arrangements to mitigate any possible spread of the virus. If this is not possible, staff and students residing in the same residence as a self-isolating person MUST ensure they do not have any contact with the individual.

Public Celebration of the Mass

The Archbishop of Perth, has advised of the temporary suspension of public Masses within the Archdiocese of Perth for an initial period of two weeks between **Wednesday 18 March until Wednesday 1 April**. Subsequent revisions and advice to this information will be given prior to this end date.

School Closure

At this stage, students are to continue to attend school each day, however staff and student health continues to be our highest priority.

In the event of school closure, parents would also be advised of the extent to which class work can be completed at home during this temporary closure and provided with details

of how this will be done. Our goal would be to sustain curriculum delivery to the best of our ability.

The decision to close schools is made by the WA Health Department's Chief Health Officer, as a member of the Australian Health Protection Principal Committee (AHPPC). This is not a school-based decision.

Online and Remote Learning

Our curriculum leaders and classroom teachers have been working tirelessly to ensure our students are well prepared and cared for in the event of school closure.

This includes the preparation of online lessons, documentation and advice for parents and students. We are also preparing information for parents to include the expectations of learning in the online environment, common understandings around how online learning is most effective in the home and some frequently asked questions. In the interim, I ask parents and carers to have a conversation with their children about the practicalities around what your house may look like if your children are asked by their school to stay at home to continue their learning.

Parent Choice to Isolate

Parents choosing to isolate their children before the College is directed to close do so with an understanding that the College can only provide continuance of learning through our current SEQTA means and structures. Teaching staff are not currently in a position to provide anything beyond this. We are doing our best to develop and facilitate an online learning environment for the possibility of school closure, but given we are currently still also teaching in a fulltime capacity in the classroom, our ability to provide other online tools has not been finalised at this point and these will be made available in the event of school closure.

Communicating with the College

I ask that we all maintain a level of respect and courtesy in any communications with the College and our staff. It is disappointing to hear recently, where parents and families requesting or sharing information have done so in a rude and disrespectful manner. Our staff are doing the best they can, thank you to those who have acknowledged this.

Pastoral Care and Wellbeing

It is only natural that students may experience feelings of vulnerability and anxiety, also shared by parents and staff. It is very important to remember that our College and the Catholic Education system in WA has appropriate support structures, systems and teams in place to assist students, families, staff and the wider community.

Attached with this letter is a document produced by Catholic Education WA and includes tips for navigating through these uncertain times, contact details for supportive agencies and links to some resources for parents and teachers.

Further, a reminder to all students and families, that our Student Diary includes a range of pastoral care and mental health information including contacts (*see page 98 of the Student Diary*).

NAPLAN 2020

Education Ministers from around Australia met today and decided that NAPLAN will not proceed in 2020. The NAPLAN test window was scheduled to be held from 12 – 22 May 2020, consequently the NAPLAN Coordinated Practice Test scheduled for Monday 23 March will no longer occur.

Monitoring

We will continue to monitor what seems to be a constantly changing environment and to make decisions focussing on the welfare of our students and staff, based on the most recent expert available information. Please be assured that we are being vigilant and keeping a constant watch on developments regarding this matter and that we will send out updates when and if we think they are required. ***Above all, our priority is the health and welfare of the students, staff and broader community.***

Should you require further clarification, please do not hesitate to contact the College or my office.

As a Catholic community we continue to extend our prayers for all those impacted.

Thank you for your ongoing support in this matter.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'S. Harvey', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Simon Harvey
PRINCIPAL