

# Mary MacKillop Catholic Community Primary School

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## STATEMENT TO PARENTS / CAREGIVERS - COVID-19

23<sup>rd</sup> March 2020

Dear Parents

In line with the latest advice from Commonwealth and WA governments, Mary MacKillop Catholic Community Primary School is planning to remain open at least until the end of term to provide the best possible education to your children. **In line with Prime Minister's and the WA Minister for Education's advice, parents may choose to keep their children at home during this unprecedented time.**

State and territory Premiers and Chief Ministers have committed to the Australian Health Protection Principal Committee advice that says that it is safe to keep schools open.

In considering the potential risks associated with COVID-19, our school has been working with Catholic Education Western Australia in conjunction with the WA Department of Health and the Department of Education throughout the evolution of COVID-19 to ensure we have the best possible preparedness and response strategies in place.

We are working hard to ensure our teaching and learning continuity plan supports students to engage in remote learning should our school be required to close. Those students who are not attending school because parents have chosen not to send them will be able to engage with their learning by accessing set work from their teacher emailed to parents. If you are unable to access the email, hard copies will be available from the front office.

The delivery of curriculum for students in Kindergarten – Year 6 will be a combination of online and hardcopy delivery, depending on the age of the children, student/parent access to devices and connectivity capability. We are very aware of the concerns of parents, that have been brought to our attention, about solely using a device to maintain the learning while away from school. The children will have the opportunity to participate in a number of varying and different online platforms, according to their age and appropriateness, as well as their hard copy. Our school staff have decided that they will mainly be using a hard copy, at this stage.

Teachers will endeavour to provide students learning from home with a range of activities similar to what is happening in class, however, the learning at home may look different to what is happening in class (time spent on activities, level of differentiation and limited teaching points for example). By keeping the activities simple, it will hopefully alleviate any back and forth communication between school and home that could impact our teacher's ability to maintain learning both here at school and for those at home.

**PLEASE ENSURE THAT YOU CLOSELY MONITOR YOUR CHILD WHILE THEY ARE ON THEIR DEVICES BOTH SOCIALLY AND FOR THE COMPLETION OF WORK.**

Individual families should liaise directly with teachers, through email to determine the best way to communicate and provide work for the students. I take this opportunity of thanking our staff for their commitment to our students and school community and for the amazing effort they have put into ensuring the school functions to the best of our ability.

Please be assured that while the school remains open, social distancing will be enforced and so we ask parents to help us reduce the number of visitors to the school site by dropping their children off where possible (and age appropriate), collecting students via the lower and upper carparks reducing the number of visits to classrooms during the day. These include:

- No parent roster/help
- All parent meetings have been postponed
- Dance troupe is cancelled

Cleaning regimes will continue to be completed to the highest possible standards to mitigate risks associated with the spread of the COVID-19 virus. Please ensure your child has their own drink bottle and I ask that you also have conversations with your child about the importance of these measures. If your child is feeling unwell in any way, please keep them at home.

Please note, that if we experience an immediate shut down due to a positive test result, we will notify parents via email AND text message so please ensure your contact details are up to date. We will arrange to isolate and supervise any students who can't be picked up immediately, however, please ensure your emergency contact details are also up to date with the front office.

In acknowledging the far-reaching impact of COVID-19 for families in our school community, I also assure parents that we remain determined that no family seeking a Catholic education for their child be denied the opportunity due to financial difficulty. Catholic Education Western Australia is addressing potential concerns relating to fees and affordability that may arise as a result of COVID-19.

COVID-19 is a changing situation that is affecting many areas of our lives, and it is normal for all of us to feel anxious and worried, your child included.

Our teachers and other school staff are doing a wonderful job in providing pastoral support to students at this challenging time. It is important to remember that as parents, you can help your child process all the information they are receiving and the changes that are taking place around COVID-19. You can stay informed and provide factual, age appropriate information about COVID-19 that will help your child feel informed and empowered, rather than afraid.

Everyone in the community has a part to play in helping control the spread of COVID-19. We will continue to follow the latest advice of the Department of Health. I will keep you informed about any changes for our school as updates become available.

Thank you for your support at this time, and as a Catholic community I encourage all of you to pray for those coordinating our response in Australia, and for all of those in Australia and abroad affected by COVID-19.

As always, I ask that you contact your class teacher if you have any concern that may relate to your child.

Yours sincerely



Laurie Bechelli  
Principal