



St. Joseph's Catholic Primary School

PO Box 340
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Telephone: (08) 9796 8100
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Dear Parents/Guardians

We are aware that there are concerns amongst the St Joseph's community at the moment regarding the COVID-19 virus and the health of students.

Please let us reassure you that the safety and wellbeing of every one of our students is our highest priority.

We are working closely with CEWA support staff and following the advice of the Department of Health in dealing with risks posed by COVID-19. Our school is taking all reasonable measures to prevent the spread of the virus at school.

We are mindful that as leaders of our school communities, we have an important part to play in promoting good hygiene and public health messages with our students and families that will help contain the spread of this virus and protect those in the community who are at the greatest risk. To this end, we would like to clarify some terms or instructions that may be ambiguous:

Close contact: While the WA Department of Health does not define this, the NSW Health Department website states: *A close contact is someone who has been face to face for at least 15 minutes, or been in the same closed space for at least 2 hours, as someone who has tested positive for the COVID-19 when that person was infectious.*

Self-isolation: 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.

We strongly recommend you seek medical advice regarding self-isolation if you or a family member are immune-compromised.

Our response to events and gatherings is updated daily. At this stage:

- Both the St Joseph's and interschool swimming carnivals have been cancelled.
- Our Year Three First Reconciliation will now be held on Thursday morning, 26 March with Catholic students being prepared to go to Fr Noe for individual reconciliation at school.
- St Joseph's Day Mass is cancelled.
- Fun Run will be held later in the year.
- Joey's Play Café is cancelled until further notice.



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In consultation with CEWA, we are also devising a response plan should it be necessary to close the school. Parents and guardians will be notified immediately of any disruption to normal schooling and provided with a copy of the plan to reduce the impact of these disruptions.

As a Catholic community, we can extend our prayers for all of those impacted in Australia and abroad, and show care and support for all members of our community. Much like the flu that affects many people each year, it is not out of the question that people we know may be ill with symptoms caused by COVID-19, and if so, it is important that we offer them our support, while we follow advice from health authorities.

If you would like to talk to your children about the virus, here are some useful resources:

- **How to talk to your kids about coronavirus**

<https://www.nbcnews.com/better/lifestyle/how-talk-your-kids-about-coronavirus-ease-their-fears-ncna1129851>

- **This is a comic for children explaining the coronavirus**

<https://www.npr.org/sections/goatsandsoda/2020/02/28/809580453/just-for-kids-a-comic-exploring-the-new-coronavirus>

- **A 4-minute animated clip for children on coronavirus**

<https://www.brainpop.com/health/diseasesinjuriesandconditions/coronavirus/>

For the latest information on the virus, preventative measures, or what to do if you or your child become sick, please visit:

https://www.healthywa.wa.gov.au/Articles/A_E/Coronavirus

For information on who should or shouldn't attend school, please refer to:

<https://www.cewa.edu.au/novel-coronavirus-update/>

Take care and God bless

Melanie Stapleton and Jane Olsen
Acting Principals