

13 July 2020

Dear St Patrick's Families and Carers,

Re: Return to Term Three Remote Learning.

I am writing to you today to provide an update about Remote Learning for Term 3. In this letter you will be provided information about:

- Current COVID-19 situation
- Applying for remote learning at school
- Accessing device and internet support for remote learning at home
- Wearing of face masks
- Temperature checking
- Not being at school if unwell

When we entered Remote Learning in Term 2, there were no active cases in the Mitchell Shire, overall case numbers were comparatively low, and there was a presumption that there was little chance of student-to-student transmission. As we enter Remote Learning for Term 3 the landscape is very different. The Mitchell Shire currently has 11 active cases, which is increasing at a rate of 10% per day, including cases in Kilmore. Case numbers are at the highest daily rates seen in Australia, with the largest number of cases on our doorstep in the Hume Council area. Based on the example of Al-Taqwa College, we now know that student-to-student transmission can and does occur. Of the current Victorian active cases, approximately a quarter are in school-aged children.

With all of that in mind, our starting point is that we ask all of our families to conduct Remote Learning at home. This may include utilising one of the four reasons to leave home, which is for the provision of care services, so that an extended family member can supervise the children in the home. For example a grandparent is allowed to travel for the purpose of providing care for a student at home. Where it is impossible for care to be provided at home, we have very prescriptive advice from Catholic Education Melbourne as to which children may attend school during remote learning.

Remote Learning at school may be an option for:

- children of parents who cannot work from home
- any student with a disability, and
- vulnerable children, which includes children:
 - in out-of-home care;
 - deemed by Child Protection and/or Family Services to be at risk of harm
 - identified by the school as vulnerable (including via referral from a family violence agency, homelessness or youth justice service or mental health or other health service)

If you believe that your family situation fits this criteria, please email our Business Operations Manager, Tracy Connors (tracy.connors@spkilmore.catholic.edu.au) **by 5:00pm tomorrow (Tuesday 14 July)** with the names of the parents/carers at home, the child/children and their classrooms, the work situation, the criteria under which you are applying, and if the criteria is due to inability to work from home, a letter from each parent's employer confirming your employment status (part time days, full time) and that the work cannot be performed at home, as well as whether your child/ren will need to utilise the bus service.

Assumption College has informed us today that a heavily reduced school bus service will be in operation for students who meet the criteria to be on site during the time of Remote Learning. However, in order to make bus arrangements, we must be notified **by 5:00pm tomorrow (Tuesday 14 July)** if you will access the bus if your child/ren will be at school. If there are late requests, ACK cannot guarantee that a place on the bus will be available due to the reduce bus service being provided.

If your family requires assistance with Remote Learning in the form of a laptop or internet dongle, St Patrick's will again provide access to these devices (one per family) free of charge for the period of Remote Learning. If you wish to access assistance, please click on this link ([St Patrick's Device Request Form](#)) and complete the form by 9:30 a.m. Thursday 16 July to make that request. The loaned devices can be collected from the school front office from Friday 17 July between 9:00am and 4:00pm. In order for the school to comply with the social distancing protocols can you please email Liz Darvell (Liz.darvell@spkilmore.catholic.edu.au) with an approximate time so we can space out the collection of devices.

The latest information about coronavirus (COVID-19) and schools is available on the Catholic Education Melbourne website: www.cem.edu.au/Coronavirus.aspx.

Victoria's Chief Health Officer has confirmed that the use of face masks or coverings by adults or children is not recommended in schools at this time. As has always been the case, students who wish to wear face masks in school and when going to and from school may do so.

Commencing today, all students who enter the school grounds will have their temperature checked. Any child that has a temperature reading of 37.5 or higher, will be moved to the first aid office, and the parents will be contacted to collect the child, and we strongly encourage the family to obtain a COVID-19 test for that family.

And, finally, a reminder that if you, your child or a family member develop symptoms of a fever, chills or sweats, cough, sore throat, shortness of breath, runny nose, or loss of smell or taste, you should get tested at a coronavirus (COVID-19) testing facility and stay home.

If you would like health information from the Department of Health and Human services, you can visit www.dhhs.vic.gov.au/coronavirus.

I will continue to communicate with you as soon as we receive further information. There will be a further update sent to all families on Friday 17 July.

Best Wishes

Michael Bourne - Principal