

CORONAVIRUS UPDATE: 22/03/20 09.22

Dear Parents/Guardians,

As we are now all aware, the challenges associated with COVID-19 (Coronavirus) evolve daily.  At Sacred Heart we continue to discern the best practicable processes and advice to ensure the physical and psychological safety of our community and continued learning of our students.

Late last night we received more correspondence in regards to a number of items outlined below but please take note of our **school closure this Friday 27th March.**

**NAPLAN**The Australian and state governments have decided that NAPLAN testing will not proceed for 2020.  The disruption caused to schools by COVID-19 has created additional work as schools prepare for a possible move to more flexible learning programs, including remote learning.

**Additional student-free days**Schools and teachers are working hard to prepare for a possible move to more flexible learning arrangements, including remote learning.

The Minister for Education has approved an additional two student-free days for Victorian schools. The first will be on the last day of this term – **Friday 27th March** – and the second will be on the first day of Term 2 after the coming school holidays, **Tuesday 14th April**.  Schools are encouraged to use the first day of Term 2 as an additional pupil-free day to prepare a response to the evolving situation.  **Therefore we will be closed to students this Friday 27th March and Tuesday 14th April. Staff will be onsite preparing for virtual learning on these days.**

**Education continuity**While our schools and teachers are prepared to commence remote learning, it won’t always be perfect, and we will learn as we go.

Any family that would like to keep their child/ren home has our support to do so but we ask that you follow normal School Protocols with regard to student absences. In this circumstance, the school teaching staff will not provide further resources than what is available on line to students.  Teaching staff will not be in a position to provide *additional* materials to students who voluntarily stay away from school. This is due to the continued resourcing demands required to maintain delivery of classroom lessons.  However in previous correspondence there were many options given for each level to continue working at home and the Department’s [*Learning from Home*](https://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/teachers/teachingresources/Pages/coronavirus-home-learning.aspx) website is available for students and parents to use at home.  Resources are also available on the [FUSE website](https://fuse.education.vic.gov.au/pages/learningfromhome).

**Australian government announcements**This National Cabinet has announced new social-distancing measures, among a range of other measures to support our communities as we continue to deal with the challenges of COVID-19.  On the recommendation of the Australian Health Protection Principal Committee (AHPPC), the National Cabinet also determined that early childhood settings, schools and higher education institutions remain exempt from these requirements.

We will continue to follow the recommendations of the Victorian Chief Health Officer, and if the advice changes, we will communicate that new advice as quickly as possible.  Based on this advice, schools will continue to be open next week (except for the Friday).

Keeping schools open ensures that our children continue to gain the full benefits – both learning and social development – that schools provide.

I want to thank you for your understanding and support that you continue to provide in a very challenging circumstances.  The great news is that our new learning spaces are looking amazing.

Yours sincerely

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