



16.3.20

CORONAVIRUS UPDATE

Dear parents/carers

The extract below comes from the latest advice given to schools around coronavirus. As new information feeds in to the school, we will continually review our practices and implement systems that are aligned with current thinking around the matter.

The Australian Health Protection Principal Committee has met to consider the issue of school closures in relation to the community transmission of COVID-19. The Committee's advice is that pre-emptive closures are not likely to be proportionate or effective as a public health intervention to prevent community transmission of COVID-19 at this time.

Previous work suggests that the potential reduction in community transmission from pre-emptive school closures may be offset by the care arrangements that are in place for children who are not at school. Children may require care from vulnerable grandparents or may continue to associate (and transmit infection) outside of school settings.

For pre-emptive school closures to be effective, prolonged closure is required and it would be unclear when they could be re-opened. If there were still a large pool of susceptible students when schools are re-opened, there would be likely to be re-emergence of transmission in the community.

School closures may still be considered late in the outbreak in anticipation of a peak in infection rates, for a shorter period of time. Short term reactive school closures may also be warranted to allow cleaning and contact tracing to occur.

At this stage, the spread of COVID-19 in the community is at quite low levels. It may be many months before the level of community infection is again as low as it is at the moment.

A decision to close campus operations now on the current level of community transmission may therefore see schools closed for many months.

Schools should implement a range of other strategies to reduce transmission, including the promotion of personal hygiene measures (handwashing, reducing face contact, cough etiquette), physical distancing, reducing mass gatherings (eg school assemblies), and reducing the mixing of students (eg reduced use of common areas, staggered lunchtimes, and reduced after school activities and inter-school activities).

Dr Kerry Chant PSM, Chief Health Officer, NSW Health, 15 March 2020

In response to the current advice, and to maintain a proactive approach to ensuring the safety of students and staff, the school will be implementing the following changes as of today:

- Whole school assemblies are cancelled for the remainder of the term
- Routines, such as morning assemblies and lunchtime routines, will be reviewed to minimise students gathering in large groups
- Good hygiene practices will be reviewed and reinforced with all students
- Families will be contacted to collect students who show signs of being unwell through the day
- All major whole school events will be ceased until further notice
- Parent / community attendance at school events will cease until further notice

Further updates will be provided in a timely manner via Skoolbag and the school's facebook page.

Regards,

Mark Scotton (Principal)