



Monday 16 March 2020

Dear members of the Blackfriars Community

Re: COVID-19 (coronavirus) update

I am writing to update you on the latest information and precautions surrounding COVID-19 (coronavirus) following on from my letter on Friday 13 March.

Until further notice and advice, we are open to all students who have not recently travelled overseas, who are not experiencing cold or flu symptoms and who have not been in contact with anyone in these categories.

Our current approach is informed by directives from both Federal and State Governments, as well as Catholic Education SA.

Current school precautions

Blackfriars is taking the following measures to comply with current directives from relevant authorities:

- Social distancing is encouraged at all times (1.5m between individuals) when moving around the school. For a simple explanation on the importance of social distancing, please read this article by Professor Thomas Perls from Boston University: <https://theconversation.com/social-distancing-what-it-is-and-why-its-the-best-tool-we-have-to-fight-the-coronavirus-133581>
- Where possible, classrooms have been reorganised to allow for more personal space. Students are not to have physical contact, including handshakes, and are not to share drink bottles or food.
- We have cancelled events, excursions, assemblies, retreats, co-curricular sports and activities (including training, matches and rehearsals) and camps until further notice. A comprehensive list for Term 1 is provided below.
- Staff and students are receiving regular communication and training on personal hygiene measures. Subject-specific hygiene practices are being consistently reinforced by all staff.
- Recess and lunch breaks will be staggered from Tuesday 17 March to minimise the number of students in the yard at any given time and designated play areas will be assigned.
- Whilst the school has provisions for hand sanitiser, including supplies in every classroom and common areas, students are encouraged to carry their own hand sanitiser and tissues.
- We ask that all parents / caregivers do not accompany their child to classrooms unless in exceptional circumstances.
- All upcoming Term 1 events have been cancelled. This includes:
 - Harmony Day gathering (Wednesday 18 March)
 - Secondary Athletics Carnival (Thursday 19 March)
 - Primary School Mass (Friday 20 March)

- Year 11 Retreat (Tuesday 24 March)
- Open Night (Wednesday 25 March)
- Year 10 Outdoor Education Camp (Thursday 26 to Friday 27 March)
- Parent / Teacher Interviews (Wednesday 1 April) – *These will be delivered electronically via a dedicated SEQTA Marksbook task. More information to follow.*
- Principal's Tour (Thursday 2 April)
- Dominican Feud (Thursday 2 April)
- Primary Sports Day (Friday 3 April)
- Gen Connection Concert (Sunday 5 April)
- Year 7 Retreat (Monday 6 April)
- Year 8 Retreat (Tuesday 7 April)
- RAA Street Smart (Tuesday 7 April)
- Year 9 Retreat (Wednesday 8 April)
- Easter Liturgy (Thursday 9 April)
- All Prefect-led community events and initiatives will be postponed
- Please note that normal school days / hours will be in place on all dates above and normal student attendance is expected.
 - Blackfriars afternoon school bus services will depart at 3.25pm on all days for the remainder of Term 1.
- Our Japan Study Tour has been cancelled. Families involved will receive separate communication about this.
- Please note that Year 8 Immunisations will still go ahead as planned on Tuesday 17 March.

If your child is unwell – or if you are unwell

- Students and staff must not attend school if they or someone in their household is being tested for or has been diagnosed with COVID-19. Please alert the school immediately in this situation as per the contact details at the end of this letter.
- If your child is unwell, they should not come to school. Please seek medical advice (call your usual GP or access the services listed at the end of this letter).
- Those who have been in close contact with a confirmed case of COVID-19 must self-isolate for 14 days after last contact with the confirmed case.
- If you are uncomfortable sending your child to school at any time, please notify their homegroup teacher as soon as possible so we can ensure they are well-equipped to work from home.

If there is a confirmed case at Blackfriars

If we are advised by authorities of a confirmed case of COVID-19, or of the necessity for a forced closure, then the school will be required to close as soon as practicable. Students will need to be collected immediately from school.

Our process of communication will be as follows:

- School closure SEQTA Direct Message and SMS sent to parents / caregivers.
- Normal end of day procedures take place with extra staff placed on yard duty.
- The school will close as quickly as possible and we ask that all students are picked up promptly.
- After school care will not be available.

During school closure it is imperative that students remain at home and continue to practise social distancing and personal hygiene procedures.

Continuity of Learning

Blackfriars will continue to focus on our core business of classroom-based learning and teaching, with online accessibility to ensure equitable and quality learning for all students.

Our Learning Management System (including SEQTA and Microsoft Teams) is well-equipped for remote access and is being regularly reviewed and updated by our ICT team.

Services available

The National Coronavirus Health Information Line on 1800 020 080.

The Australian Government also publishes a daily alert with latest medical advice and official reports, which can be accessed at:

<https://www.health.gov.au/news/health-alerts/novel-coronavirus-2019-ncov-health-alert>

If you or your child is experiencing anxiety or other mental health challenges regarding the coronavirus, Beyond Blue has set up a dedicated guide for this purpose:

<https://www.beyondblue.org.au/the-facts/looking-after-your-mental-health-during-the-coronavirus-outbreak>

As usual, our school psychologist and counsellor will be available to support students.

School contacts

If you have any questions, or are directly affected by COVID-19, please contact:

- David Ruggiero, Deputy Principal (Secondary): druggiero@bps.sa.edu.au
- Frank Ali, Head of Primary: fali@bps.sa.edu.au
- Karen McEntee, ELC Director: kmcentee@bps.sa.edu.au
- Rita Quaini, OSHC Director: rquaini@bps.sa.edu.au

As always, Blackfriars staff are here to support your children and families.

Please stay informed with updates via SEQTA, the school website and our social media channels.

Yours sincerely



Simon Cobiac
Principal