



Dear Parents and Carers,

18 March 2020

Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19) – Potential School Closures

As reported in the media, a very small number of schools have already decided to close as a result of the outbreak (12 out of 9000 schools). The Commonwealth and State/Territory Governments, acting on the advice of public health experts, are very clearly considering the issue of school closures. We know that it was discussed last Sunday and will be discussed again on Friday, 20 March. The advice to date has clearly been that schools should remain open, although this continues to be monitored.

The majority of schools which have closed are boarding schools. They have made this decision as a pre-emptive move to ensure infected boarders are not prevented from leaving the school. To not send home boarders now could end up as a “cruise ship” scenario with students and staff unable to leave once an outbreak occurs.

Whilst the decision on school closures isn't set to be reviewed until this Friday, given the active consideration being assigned to school closures, Parkes Christian School has begun planning for the possibility of mandatory closures and the provision of ongoing education during such a closure.

As such, I would encourage all parents and carers to start planning for the possibility of a school closure and consider what measures they will put in place if children cannot be accommodated at school for an extended period of time. Whilst we are hoping that PCS will be able to remain open, there is wisdom in us preparing for a decision that may be taken out of our hands.

Can I assure you that we are working hard behind the scenes to refine what our school will look like under a remote access model and will share details with you at the appropriate time if needed.

Danial Pampuch, the CEO of Christian schools Australia, recently reminded all of us that in the darkness, we have an opportunity to show God's love. Let us carry that theme forward through the coming months and look after each other. If you have a specific need, concern or just need to chat, please don't hesitate to contact me. Whatever happens moving forward, PCS will be here to support you and your children as best we can.

Kind regards,

Glen Westcott

Principal