St. Joseph's Primary School
Remote School Preparation

March 16, 2020

Dear Families,

We write to advise of the latest developments regarding the COVID-19 (Coronavirus) and the measures that we will put in place at St. Joseph's in the event of virus exposure in our community, or imposed forced closure for an indefinite period.

If, and it is important to note that this plan is based on the keyword of '**if**', the school was to close for an extended period of time during the school term, teachers would provide appropriate activities for students to complete via digital platforms and hard copies. These plans would be introduced over a **24hr** period and **staged** across the school e.g. Prep-Yr.2 may receive work packs to be collected from the school on a set day and Yr. 3- 6 would have access to a digital platform from 9:30am, from the commencement date of the closure.

We wish to emphasize that this is an unprecedented event and teachers will be doing their best to provide remotely for our students. We respect that it will be challenging having students and parents working from home so we will set work tasks that require minimal parent supervision. The main goal of the teaching and learning activities that will be provided is to create opportunities for the students to review, revisit and practice concepts and skills that have been previously taught. We will establish clear procedures whereby students can communicate and check-in with their teacher about the work. We request that students, where practical, not parents, manage the work tasks and communication with the teacher, especially students from Years 3 to Years 6.

Whilst we believe we are well-prepared for the impact of COVID-19 (Coronavirus), due to the nature of these potential remote arrangements we ask our families to be patient and understand the implications/considerations and potential challenges rolling out such a large scale remote schedule/program. Current weekly meeting agendas have been amended to cater for staff to plan and prepare work, activities and possible schedules in the event of actioning a remote learning program. In addition, trials using online platforms will be conducted in the coming days in the senior aspects of the school.

While there are many digital tools that schools can utilize, we will focus on the tools that are both readily available to schools now and where the level of onboarding is minimal. It makes sense here that St. Joseph's utilize the Google platform as this is where teachers and students already work and have a level of familiarity.

These are:

- Google Classroom
- Google Hangouts

Google Hangouts is used for video calls that can be one to many, just like real time conversations and get togethers. It can also be used to screen share. With just a few minutes of learning time, users are ready to use. It can be locked down to just the members of our school community as well. Importantly, while Google Hangouts are also private, tracking history is also there in the same way it is for other Google apps.

How it will impact you, should the School close for an extended period of time:

- We expect to continue our Prep to Year 6 program (Literacy, Maths, Topic and RE) via:
  - Google Classroom
  - Video clips
  - Various online learning applications (e.g. Bug Club, Essential Assessment)
  - Emails
  - Hard copies of resources

This delivery will require 'some' parent involvement and supervision, especially students in the junior levels.

- We will train all classroom teachers in the use of **Google Hangouts** that may allow for video conferencing each day between teachers and their class. However, our Child Safety Policy does not allow for conferencing with individual students.
- Home WIFI access
- Device needed: Chromebook, PC, Tablet - anything with a web browser.
- Schools may need to send home a device should a student not be able to readily access a device (Upon parental request) Strict parameters will apply.
- Moira, Kerry and other staff are able to work remotely and be contacted via email.
- Students who take guitar or keyboard will miss lessons due to the closure.
- OSHClub Before/Aftercare and Holiday Program would be cancelled until school officially re-opens.
- A set time will be established when Google Hangouts (3-6) will happen so that there is consistency. E.g. a half hour or one hour block each day. Use the Hangout to discuss progress or deliver some targeted learning based on the set work
- Some learning tasks will be delivered via email or Google Classroom or take home packs.

Our normal teaching and learning program, like that of most schools, is not designed for remote learning. We will put in place the contingencies outlined above only as a last resort in order to maintain continuity in your child/children's learning and to ensure the health and safety of the whole community.

We share this news with a proactive mindset with no intention of worrying our school community. We are also mindful that certain families may not have access to the internet or a computer/device at home to support the proposed learning platforms above. If this is the case, we politely request that you make the school aware of this, so alternative arrangements can be made.

This is an evolving situation, but we will keep you updated as things change. We ask that you continue to work closely with the school and to contact the office should you have any concerns. In the meantime, the education of our students will continue.

Thank you for your support as we work to keep our students safe and engaged with their learning journey.

Warm regards,

Simon Collis