



**ST HILDA'S SCHOOL
GOLD COAST**

From the Principal

19 June 2020

Dear Boarding Parents, Guardians and Agents,

I write to you this afternoon after another day of planning in response to the new AHPPC risk management statement for boarding schools.

Phone calls with Gold Coast Public Health, and David Robertson from ISQ who has made enquiries with the Queensland Chief Health Officer, have put forward our advocacy for a return to boarding which would accommodate the majority of our students whilst still working within the new guidelines. The ICPA I believe have also been advocating on our behalf.

With our preference for this position in mind, I am forwarding to you this afternoon the Memorandum of Understanding for Term 3 for your perusal.

It is our hope that our next communication will allow us to let you know the exact number of students we will be able to accommodate from the commencement of Term 3.

Please keep in mind as you read the MOU that whilst students will be able to resume many of the activities they have enjoyed in the past, and that there has been an easing of restrictions with leave, schools are required to have 'exit strategies' which ensure that if there is an identified case of COVID-19, families are able to collect their daughters.

I look forward to contacting you as soon as we hear any further developments on our proposal.

As ever, living in hope!

Yours sincerely

Wendy Lauman
MEd, BEd, GradCertTh, AACM(Td), AIMM, MACEL
Principal



ST HILDA'S SCHOOL
GOLD COAST

MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING

This memorandum of understanding is made on the date of the last signature below.

BETWEEN

St Hilda's School Gold Coast

- AND -

Boarding Families

The return of Boarders to Boarding at St Hilda's School is a shared risk between families and the School. This *Memorandum of Understanding* outlines some of the measures St Hilda's School is taking to reduce potential risk of COVID-19 transmission in the Boarding School.

Please read carefully so you are fully aware of the expectations regarding the management your daughter's health will require when she returns to Boarding.

Please note specifically, the following provisions:

Due to the current situation with coronavirus and the Boarding School wanting to accommodate as many Boarders in Boarding as we can safely, we will be very strict in our requirements of girls who are unwell. Families accepting the return to Boarding considerations during COVID-19 must have an **Individual Response Plan** to cover the requirement to collect their daughter if deemed necessary by the School. If she is unwell or is a confirmed case or a close contact of a confirmed case, then parents must come immediately to the School or identify an emergency contact within two hours' travel from the School who will support their daughter with accommodation and care. Parents outside of this two-hour zone need to make specific arrangements with the Boarding House.

If your daughter is unwell and she is not collected within a reasonable time frame, the School will source hotel accommodation for her and engage a nurse to care for her. These expenses will be borne by the parents.

Local Authority – Gold Coast Public Health

Boarding schools are required by the Chief Health Officer to work with their local health authority with respect to ongoing residency. The local health authority for St Hilda's is Gold Coast Public Health which has advised that the School's Duty of Care begins when students enter boarding.

Over the past weeks, the School has continued to work closely with GCPH and has appreciated the advice and assistance of its staff. School staff and GCPH have had helpful and open communication in order to facilitate the return of as many Boarders as possible whilst providing the best possible conditions for student and staff wellbeing and health.

St Hilda's School developed its Covid-19 Risk Management Plan, which was approved by GCPH and amendments have been made in accordance with GCPH advice and the *Roadmap to easing Queensland's restrictions*. St Hilda's is required to adhere to this plan, the *Roadmap* and requirements of other bodies such as the AHPPC.

TERMS AND UNDERSTANDING

This *Memorandum of Understanding* (MOU) sets out the terms and understanding between St Hilda's School and Boarding Families for residential Boarding during the period of Coronavirus (COVID-19).

This document aims to assist parents and students to understand the current information available on guidelines for residential boarding. Information from Queensland Health, Gold Coast Public Health Unit and Independent Schools Queensland continues to be updated regularly. To the best of our knowledge we continue to work with the following options:

Return to Boarding for a reduced number of Boarders on Sunday, 12 July from 11am

1. STUDENTS RESIDING IN QUEENSLAND:

Refer to [Border Restriction Direction No. 5](#).

2. STUDENTS RESIDING INTERSTATE:

Students from interstate need to refer to [Border Restriction Direction No. 5](#).

Chief Health Officer exemption to enter Queensland

Chief Health Officer exemption to quarantine if from:

- Northern Territory
- Rural or remote interstate property
- Community within 200km of the Queensland border

Others apply online to the Chief Health Officer for a [quarantine exemption](#)

- <https://www.qld.gov.au/border-pass>

Note: this information may change over time; parents/guardians should monitor updates and the "hotspot" status of your own area

3. STUDENTS RETURNING FROM OVERSEAS/INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS:

Students will need to ascertain and follow Australian Government guidelines and processes for entry into Australia and quarantine. Parents are responsible for these arrangements and the School is unable to provide facilities in which the girls can undertake the quarantine process.

Following the student meeting all requirements, she will be able to return to the Boarding House and attend Day School.

DUTY OF CARE CONSIDERATIONS

The following considerations must be acknowledged and understood for a return to boarding:

- **Entry and exit into site on the first day of Term 3:**

Boarders will enter the School via Gate 7. The girls will attend the Health Centre before entering Boarders Reception. They will be assessed by nursing staff through a health and wellbeing questionnaire. Once cleared they may unload the car and bring their belongings into Boarders Reception. Boarders and parents will need to follow social distancing practices on entry into the School grounds:

 - All must adhere to social distancing requirements of distance between persons in the School grounds
 - In order to assist the girls manage their entry into the Boarding House, there will be marquees on the front lawn and parents will be able to help their daughters unpack their cars; only the girls will be able to enter the Boarding House, and we will be required to record the presence of all onsite at the time (this is for contact tracing)
 - Girls who drive a car for return to School must hand in their keys and they will not be able to use their car until the holidays, except with the permission of the Head of Boarding and this will be reviewed on an individual basis

- **Accommodation and sleeping arrangements**
 - Girls will be accommodated in their own single room or cubicle, in the case of Whitby and McCulloch Houses; all girls in these houses will be living in larger spaces together
 - Girls will be allocated to a shared bathroom facility; girls must use the allocated basin, shower and toilet at all times
 - Girls and staff will be required to assist with maintaining the Boarding House and the cleanliness of the bathrooms, bedroom and common areas by wiping surfaces with materials provided and keeping areas tidy; this is a very important condition of return
 - Girls may not, at any time, for any purpose, enter another girl's room; they will be able to gather in larger spaces, observing social distancing
 - Girls will be allocated to use a specific Common Room and laundry and rosters will be developed to support social distancing and the health and wellbeing of all; they are expected to co-operate in the spirit of our community

- **Catering**
 - Social distancing and hygiene protocols will be practised in the Dining Room; girls will be required to follow staff instructions and will be allocated to tables with social distancing observed
 - The School will follow the standard ANZFA Guidelines
 - There will be increased surface cleaning before and after use of the dining room
 - Serving will be on an individual basis and there will be no self-serve arrangements
 - Common Rooms will be opened at specific times for the girls' (in groups) use to prepare snacks; this will ensure fairness in access to the Common Room facility
 - Girls must follow procedures in place for cleaning after they have prepared food (limited) in the Common Room

- **Cleaning regimens and Personal Hygiene**

Cleaning and personal hygiene are significant processes to be implemented in Boarding as girls and staff live together in the Boarding Houses:

 - The Boarding House bathrooms and Common Rooms and contact areas will have increased cleaning
 - A 2-in-1 Step Clean (using combined detergent/disinfectant products) will be used
 - The girls and staff will be required to assist with wiping regular touch points in between required primary cleans; this is essential in the mitigation of the risk of introducing the coronavirus into Boarding

- Girls will be required to wash hands with soap and water on return to Boarding each day, and regularly throughout the day/evening. This is a known preventative measure and can be supplemented by the use of hand sanitiser
 - Girls will be required to change from their School uniform immediately on return to Boarding each day – before enjoying relaxation and afternoon tea – this is another preventative measure designed to minimise the risk of introducing the coronavirus into Boarding
 - Girls are not permitted to take their mobile phones into the Dining Room
 - If we were to have a suspected or confirmed COVID-19 case, the School would follow Queensland Health “Interim infection prevention and control guidelines for the management of COVID-19 in healthcare settings” (Queensland Health April 2020).
- **Class attendance –**
 - Boarders will attend classes from 8.20am-3.25pm in Day School
 - The only entry points from School into Boarding for the girls are Darragh Ground Floor East door, McCulloch to Quad door and Whitby to Quad door
- **Study Requirements –**
 - The Boarders may attend St Hilda’s After School Tutorials
 - The Senior Library will be open till 8pm Monday to Thursday and 4.15pm
 - Students will study in their individual rooms, or in the Library, unless under other arrangements made with duty staff
 - Students will be able to attend tutor sessions off-site at the Southport Library (once it is open to the public) under the usual arrangements, whereby the tutor accompanies the Boarder to and from the Southport Library, and COVID-19 plans are in place at the Library, and social distancing is followed
- **Recreational arrangements –**
 - The Boarding School will follow the *Roadmap to easing Queensland’s restrictions* when determining activities provided. From the beginning of Term 3, where gatherings of up to 100 people will be permitted, outings to the movies, public places, parks, shopping and theme parks and other venues may be offered
 - The girls will be able to run or walk for exercise within the School grounds and within the guidelines of social distancing
 - Girls in Years 11 and 12 will be able to run for exercise at the Broadwater in pairs with the usual permissions required; they will be expected to practise social distancing and to shower and wash clothing upon return
 - The girls will be able to enjoy exercising in the School gym according to opening hours, registration and guidelines in place; showering and washing clothing on return to the House will be required
 - The girls will be able to participate in School sport as organised by the School; they will be expected to shower and wash their clothing as soon as possible on return to Boarding
 - Tennis courts and other School facilities will be available for wellbeing support in accordance with the *Roadmap to easing Queensland’s restrictions*
 - The girls will be able to participate in community sports in accordance with the *Roadmap to easing Queensland’s restrictions*; showering and washing clothing on return to the House will be required
- **Leave arrangements –**
 - In order to contribute to the management of the COVID- Pandemic, it is highly recommended that each Boarder downloads the COVIDSafe App. This will also assist in managing a suspected or diagnosed case of COVID-19

- Boarders are able to take leave to Australia Fair or Ferry Road on two occasions per week: once during weekdays and once on the weekend. Permission to do so will be in line with usual Boarding permissions eg younger girls with a staff member
 - Boarders will be permitted to visit Pacific Fair in line with usual permissions
 - Boarders will be expected to follow social distancing, and hygiene practices on return from shopping
 - Girls with part-time jobs will need to discuss their personal COVID-19 plan with their Head of House
 - Parents are able to visit their daughters onsite, within the School grounds
 - Unfortunately, we are unable to allow visitors to enter the house
 - Girls may take leave on the Coast with:
 - Parents or extended family members
 - One other family friend/Day Girl family nominated at the beginning of Term 3
 - Or, travel home for weekend leave by car with a family member
 - These conditions may change during the term in accordance with any alterations made by authorities
 - Visits and Leave are subject to the approval of the School and the approval process will take into account transport arrangements, the origin of the host's travel, current hotspots and any other factor requiring consideration
 - Boarding will assist students with making any travel arrangements necessary to attend appointments, participate in sport etc
- **Laundry and other ancillary areas –**
 - Our commercial laundry will continue to operate with appropriate processes in place; Boarders will be expected to follow requirements of the Boarding House with respect to laundry.
- **Visitors, online ordering and package delivery -**
 - In order to preserve the health and wellbeing of all in the Boarding community, visitors will not be able to visit the girls in the Boarding House. This is also to assist in preventing the introduction of the COVID-19 virus into the Boarding House.
 - Girls may enjoy ordering food in on Friday and Saturday evenings between 6.00pm and 7.30pm and will arrange this with the staff member on duty; there will be processes to manage the entry of the food into the Boarding House
- **Illness and Medical**
 - Daily wellbeing checks will occur
 - In order to maintain the best possible health outcomes for the Boarding community and for individual members, it is highly recommended that each girl has a flu vaccination prior to entry; if this is not possible, the School will try to arrange this for the girls who would like to receive the vaccination
 - In order to contribute to the management of the COVID- Pandemic, it is highly recommended that each Boarder downloads the COVIDSafe App. This will also assist in managing a suspected or diagnosed case of COVID-19
 - Girls agree to be honest about any possible illness or feeling unwell and to advise staff immediately. They will be cared for, as always. This is a natural requirement of community living during this pandemic so that we all care for each other
 - We will be unable to assist with:
 - Non-urgent specialist appointments
 - Catch-up vaccinations
 - Routine dental checks and vision checks
 - Non-urgent medical appointments
 - Massage and/or physio for non-acute conditions
 - Additional overnight and weekend nursing cannot be arranged during this time.

Important Health Information for all Families

As previously identified, due to the current situation with coronavirus and the Boarding School wanting to accommodate as many Boarders in Boarding as we can, safely, we will be very strict in our requirements of girls who are unwell. Families accepting the return to Boarding considerations during COVID-19 must have an **Individual Response Plan** to cover the requirement to collect their daughter if deemed necessary by the School. If she is unwell or is a confirmed case or a close contact of a confirmed case, then parents must come immediately to the School or identify an emergency contact within two hours' travel from the School who will support their daughter with accommodation and care. Parents outside of this two-hour zone need to make specific arrangements with the Boarding House.

If your daughter is unwell and she is not collected within a reasonable time frame, the School will source hotel accommodation for her and engage a nurse to care for her. These expenses will be borne by the parents.

The following scenarios may assist your planning:

- **Case Identification or suspected case of COVID – 19**
 - Should a Boarder present with coronavirus symptoms, we will be asked to take her to the Gold Coast Fever Clinic to take a test for COVID-19. This is usually a swab test and parents, by signing this MOU, agree to their daughter having this test if advised by a medical professional. Parents will be kept informed
 - The School will be advised by GCPH as to the process to be followed in the event of a suspected or identified case of COVID-19:
 - In the event of a suspected case, the girl would most likely be isolated whilst waiting test results
 - In the event of a confirmed COVID-19 case, GCPH will issue notices with respect to isolating of the confirmed case and any quarantining of any close contacts, (close contacts would be students and staff who would be required to quarantine)
 - please note that another possibility is that the Boarding School is closed for the quarantining period, which could be 14 days or more, or, for 48 hours to allow deep cleaning, in which case parents will need to source accommodation for their daughters
 - It will be up to GCPH to approve a location for a Boarder isolating or quarantining with a parent or emergency contact on the Coast or elsewhere; there may be difficulties for a Boarder in isolation or quarantine wishing to return to rural and remote areas or communities ie. the GCPH will dictate where the isolation/quarantine needs to be held
 - Isolation and quarantining require an individual room and bathroom for the confirmed case and for each close contact
 - The School is unable to provide facilities for isolating a confirmed case or quarantining close contacts and parents or the emergency contact will be required to collect the Boarder promptly
 - Should a suspected or confirmed case occur in Day School, Boarders may need to remain in House whilst deep cleaning of the Day School occurs. Should a Boarder be deemed a close contact of a confirmed Day School case, then the Boarder will need to be collected by a parent or emergency contact
 - Again, parents and girls should be aware that whilst the School has strategies in place to minimise the number of close contacts, those students and staff will be determined by GCPH. All students and staff in Whitby House and McCulloch House would likely be regarded as close contacts due to the nature of the accommodation

Parents and their daughter are asked to read the MOU in its entirety and detail, and acknowledge their understanding of the responsibilities and expectations of the School, students and parents in following the guidance and direction provided by Health authorities to maintain the health and safety of students at St Hilda's School.

Living in a residential community during a pandemic, requires the full co-operation of all and a cheerful and trustworthy approach.

If students do not follow the guidelines and expectations in Boarding, they may be asked to return home as their behaviour may place other members of our community at risk.

Boarder's Individual Response Plan (in the case of illness or the need to self-isolate or quarantine)

Boarder's name: _____

Parent/Guardian name(s): _____

Emergency contact name: _____

Emergency contact address: _____

Emergency contact phone: _____

Method of travel to Emergency contact address: _____

Parent/Guardian signature: _____

Date: _____

Nominated (one) family friend/Day Girl family with whom daughter may request leave during Term 3. (Person must be over 21 years of age and normal Boarding School permission expectations and processes will apply).

Boarder's name: _____

Nominated person's name: _____

Nominated person's address: _____

Nominated person's phone: _____

Parents and students are thanked for their understanding of the unprecedented circumstances and conditions required to manage residential care in Boarding. Your signatures below acknowledge your understanding and acceptance of this *Memorandum of Understanding*.

Parent/s' signatures: _____

Student's signature: _____

Date: _____