



**ST HILDA'S SCHOOL
GOLD COAST**

From the Interim Principal

24 March 2020

COVID-19 UPDATE – SCHOOL'S RESPONSE 24 MARCH 2020

Dear Parents and Caregivers,

The uncertainty generated since the Prime Minister's first address regarding school closures on Sunday 15 March, and the most recent announcements on state borders closing this week, has consolidated our view that endeavouring to maintain a 'business-as-usual' approach will not be sustainable until the term break for families or the School.

We appreciate the difficulty our governments and their advisors have in reaching a definitive position; however, the School Council's and Senior Leadership Team's concerns needs to be directed to the wellbeing and safety of our students, staff, and our parent community.

For this reason, today I announce that regular classes will not proceed at St Hilda's School, next week (Monday 30 March – Thursday 2 April). Instead, our decision is to convert these school days to Student Free Days for Prep to Year 12, to enable our staff to continue their preparation and planning for teaching and learning in an online environment in Term 2. The benefit of this decision is for staff to transition to providing the best possible online learning experiences for your daughter.

As indicated to our Boarding families, the Boarding House will remain open until such time as all Boarders have departed.

Pre-Prep will continue to operate uninterrupted until Thursday 2 April with Friday 3 April being the first day of Vacation Care.

At this point in time, we do not know what Term 2 will bring and at which stage of the pandemic curve Australian society will be experiencing by then, but it is likely that extended periods of online learning will be required during the term.

Support with a Supervision Environment

In order to support parents who need to stay in the workforce for the four days, we will run a supervision environment for students from 8.20am – 3.25pm. I ask any family who wishes to utilise this offer to register by [clicking here](#). Priority will of course be provided to medical, allied health and community services workers, though we expect to be able to cater adequately for all applications. This will not be a learning-intensive environment but will include activities that comply with social distancing guidelines. Our OSHC (Outside School Hours Care) is in a position to continue to accept bookings for this week (5577 7211 or 0428 639 706).

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In addition, and to enhance our current protocols of hygiene and personal care, we will be requesting that each student registering for the four days next week, is to have her temperature tested upon arrival and prior to departure. While we have no cases in our School, we believe this additional precaution to be prudent at the current time. Any student who presents with an elevated temperature or showing other cold or flu like symptoms will need to return home. We thank you in advance for your assistance with this precautionary measure.

Protocols for Examinations, Assessment and Online Learning

Any tests or examinations scheduled between 30 March and 2 April will be deferred until face-to-face teaching resumes. Assignments due this week or during Term 2 should be submitted electronically. This week, in preparation for the commencement of Term 2 work, Mr David Goodburn, Head of Learning and Teaching, will provide both students and parents with a copy of our protocols for establishing an effective learning environment. Mrs Amanda Shuttlewood, Head of Junior School will communicate to parents, further information on the Junior School's online approach. I am appreciative of the work our very committed staff have already engaged in with students to 'test' working in the online space.

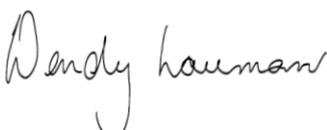
Daily News Updates

It may be the case of course that State or Federal Government decisions render St Hilda's local decision redundant or may contradict our position. We believe though that this decision is the right one under the current circumstances. If social isolation and online learning is going to be a feature of our educational landscape in the months to come, I want St Hilda's to be in a position to deliver an education that prioritises deep engagement with the curriculum and keeps our students learning, beyond superficial 'busy work'.

There will obviously be much more information to communicate with parents and with students this week. Please be assured that our staff are determined to deliver an outstanding age-appropriate online/home learning experience from Tuesday 21 April, the first school day of Term 2, if such a situation is required. In the meantime, please note that in planning for future terms we have identified how more face-to-face teaching can be timetabled when school resumes with its traditional delivery for learning and teaching.

We know at this time, and in coming months, challenges will be presented that are somewhat unknown and unique to all in making decisions. You have our firm commitment that we will continue to support your daughter and our St Hilda's community through the strong bonds we have formed with each other.

Yours sincerely



Wendy Lauman

MEd, BEd, CertTh, AACM(Td), A IMM, MACEL
Interim Principal