



Dear Parents,

These are really challenging times, but in the end we are all working to ensure the safety and well being of not only our students and staff, but our wider community.

Schools are receiving daily updates from the Department of Education to assist us in having an informed and co-ordinated approach.

The following matters are from the latest update;

#### ***Camps and Excursions***

As of tomorrow, schools will no be longer permitted to attend any excursions or activities outside of the school. This will include the following planned activities for our school;

Prep excursion to Bacchus Marsh Orchard- Tuesday 17 March

Footscray Market – Yr.3/4 –Thursday 19 March

Interschool sport – Yr.5/6 students – Friday 20 March

#### ***Organised Gatherings***

The Commonwealth Government has announced that mass gatherings of more than 500 people are now prohibited. This includes school assemblies and sporting events. Parents will not be permitted to attend school assemblies, when conducted, until further notice.

#### ***Good Hygiene Practices & keeping your unwell child away from school***

Again, all the above steps are part of our efforts to contain the spread of COVID-19. We are paying extra attention to the health and hygiene measures employed across our school and we ask parents to reinforce these measures at home.

We cannot stress strongly enough the importance of **not** sending unwell children to school. If your child is showing any signs of illness we request that they do not attend school until they are healthy and show no symptoms.

#### ***Self Isolation***

Many parents have decided to self isolate and not send their children to school as a precautionary measure. I can fully appreciate how parents may be feeling at this very difficult time and fully understand why they have withdrawn their child from a school setting at this time. Whilst school is still operational, it is not possible for teachers to send home individual lessons or activities for students whilst they are at home. The Department of Education is presently developing an online website, *Learning from Home*, that will be available in the event of a government school closure.

In the meantime I would recommend that the students keep up with their reading, keep a diary of their days at home, write letters to friends and family and play educational games such as Chess, Scrabble, Boggle, Snakes & Ladders etc. There are also resources (activity and study books) available from stores such as Officeworks that have activities that can assist the child with learning activities whilst they are at home.

### **School Closures**

On 13 March, the Prime Minister announced a number of measures that all Premiers agreed to, on the basis of the advice from Australia's Chief Medical Officer and Chief Health Officers of the states and territories.

These measures **do not include the closure of** early childhood services, **schools**.

If this changes, parents will be updated via Compass.

### **Notification**

If a staff member or student at a school is in one of the categories below, the school must contact DHHS on 1300 651 160 for advice on what to do next.

Categories for contacting DHHS:

The person is a confirmed case of COVID-19

The person is a close contact of a confirmed case of COVID-19 in the past 14 days 'Close contact' is defined by DHHS as someone who has had at least 15 minutes of face-to-face contact with a confirmed case, or shared a closed space with someone for more than two hours with a confirmed case.

The Department of Health and Human Services has information for the public about coronavirus : [Coronavirus disease \(COVID-19\)](#)