



Monday, 16 March 2020

Dear College families,

Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19) – New Government Measures

Thank you for all that each of you are doing to ensure that you are making measured decisions for your family and our broader community at this time. I write to you today to provide a further update regarding the proactive and protective measures that Norwest Christian College is taking. Please be assured that the College is receiving and responding to daily updates from the following governing bodies who are each committed to providing comprehensive advice to school leaders:

- NSW Health;
- NESA (formerly known as the NSW Education Department);
- AIS NSW – Association of Independent Schools;
- CSA - Christian Schools Australia; and,
- AHISA – Association of Heads of Independent Schools Australia.

As advice is received from these organisations it is reviewed and actioned by the College Critical Incident Response team. College staff and parents are then advised about any new measures that are to be incorporated into our action plan. This letter will summarise our most recent advice and the actions the College intends on taking in response to this advice.

School Holiday Planning

School Holidays commence on Friday, 10 April. Those considering travelling overseas need to consider the Prime Minister's advice as we **continue to expect that all parents and carers within the College community will ensure that they are aware of and comply with these Government requirements.**

The Prime Minister announced Sunday afternoon, following a meeting with all Premiers and Chief Ministers, that all those arriving from overseas from midnight on 15 March will be required to self-isolate for two weeks. Updated information on travel restrictions and isolation requirements are available on the Australian Government's website [here](#).

If your family is planning on travelling overseas, during the remainder of this term, the school holidays or throughout next term, please inform the College of the start and end dates of your self-isolation period. Please do this by notifying your children's relevant Head of Years;

ELC – sscott@nwcc.nsw.edu.au

Primary – twaller@nwcc.nsw.edu.au

Secondary – dhinton@nwcc.nsw.edu.au

Should you choose to not send your child to school because of COVID-19 please also use these emails to communicate with your child's relevant Head of Years about the reason for their absence from the College.

Updated Isolation Requirements

Isolation is also required for those who have had contact with somebody with COVID-19. A contact is spending more than 15 minutes face-to-face with someone who has been diagnosed with COVID-19 or sharing a closed space for more than 2 hours with someone diagnosed with COVID-19. This includes having this type of contact with the person 24 hours before they became ill. This [symptom checker tool](#) will be helpful in making decisions for your family.

College Gatherings, Events and Excursions

School closures were considered by the recent meeting of the Prime Minister, Premiers and Chief Ministers but, at this stage, not considered to be prudent. The Government has advised, however, in the light of the development of the outbreak, that organised, non-essential gatherings should be limited to 500 people.



The College leadership team have taken the view that it is appropriate, in the light of this revised guidance, to minimise larger gatherings within the College community. The College has therefore taken the following measures:

- Cancellation of assemblies and Chapel;
- Rescheduling key events such as 40th birthday celebrations; and,
- Reworking key events in order to apply social distancing principles. Key events to be reworked include:
 - Easter Services;
 - Imago Day (formerly known as Harmony day);
 - Mothers' Day celebrations; and,
 - College Cross Country.

Additionally, the College leadership team have adopted social distancing measures as advised by NSW Government which include the cancellation of excursions, some events and conferences. All major arts, sports and initiative activities and events will therefore also be temporarily ceased until further notice. This includes:

- CIS and CSSA sport carnivals;
- Inter-school sports events;
- Some external secondary interest electives; and,
- Primary Gala days.

Other activities, including smaller group excursions, may continue, subject to a specific risk assessment for each event. We understand, however, that some parents may wish to withdraw their children from these activities and you are certainly free to do so. Of course, if your child is unwell, we would expect that they are excluded as normal. Please use this [link](#) to obtain more information is about social distancing measures.

College Closure

On Sunday 15 March, the Australian Health Protection Principal Committee met to consider the issue of school closures in relation to community transmission of COVID-19. Their advice is that pre-emptive closures are not likely to be proportionate or effective as a public health intervention to prevent community transmission of COVID-19 at this time. I encourage you to [read the update](#) provided to me from this committee, in order to understand why they, together with the Prime Minister, have made this decision regarding school closures.

However, I want to reassure you that if we receive advice from NSW Health to close the College we will not hesitate to do so. Throughout the last week we have been preparing to provide for continuity of learning if such an event were to take place.

Keeping Updated

In the interest of ensuring that our community has ready access to updated information on COVID-19 we have established a page on our website. You can access this page by using this [link](#).

We will continue to keep you updated if there are significant changes or new developments, but I do encourage all parents and carers to remain personally informed themselves of the latest Government advice.

Routines

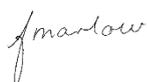
During this time of upheaval and understandable nervous tension it is important that we pay attention to those routines that instil a sense of calm. Family dinners, school schedules, home learning patterns and family activities can, for the most part safely continue. I encourage you to take this opportunity to prioritise these routines so that as much as possible, our young people accept that they can confidently rest in our care.

Conclusion

Finally, I would like to acknowledge that for some families this circumstance is having a stressful impact. If you feel that there is a way that the College can assist during this time please contact the College to discuss your needs.

My prayer for each of you is Romans 15:13; "I pray that God, the source of hope, will fill you completely with joy and peace because you trust in him. Then you will overflow with confident hope through the power of the Holy Spirit".

Yours in Christ,



Felicity Marlow
Principal