



## St Francis de Sales Catholic Primary School

626 Pascoe Vale Road Oak Park 3046

Tel: (03) 9306 9444 Email: principal@sfoakpark.catholic.edu.au

ABN: 87 246 330568



# School Note

## Information for Parents – Update number 5 on Novel Coronavirus

12 March 2020

Dear Parents and Carers

Our first priority at St Francis de Sales is the health and safety of our school community. I want to reassure you that the school is well-prepared for the impact of COVID-19 (coronavirus).

As you can appreciate, this is a rapidly evolving situation and therefore advice to school communities will change quickly and I will continue to keep you updated as developments come to hand.

We are being provided the latest advice from the Australian and Victorian Chief Medical Officers by the Catholic Education Commission of Victoria Ltd to ensure that our school practices are helping to keep our school community safe from the outbreak.

### **Please notify the school immediately**

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Please notify the school immediately:

- if your child has a **CONFIRMED** case of COVID-19; or
- 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.

### **Critical Role**

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As parents, you have a critical role in helping the school manage this situation:

- Exercise good judgment by keeping children home if they are feeling unwell for any reason
- Talk to children about the situation, as they may be feeling anxious or stressed. You have a key role in helping students feel prepared and safe
- Encourage children to be proactive and committed to their schoolwork, and to stay connected with the school and their teachers.

### **Good Hygiene Practices**

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Good hygiene practices are the most effective means of minimising the spread of COVID-19. Please encourage your child to:

- cover mouth and nose when coughing and sneezing with a tissue, or cough into their elbow
- dispose of the tissue into a bin and then wash their hands afterwards
- wash their hands regularly, using soap and water, including after using the toilet and before eating. Hands should be washed for at least 20 seconds



Bloom where you are planted



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### Catholic Education Week

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Catholic Education have made the decision to cancel or postpone all events planned for next week's Catholic Education Week. These events include:

- 16–21 March – Creative Arts Exhibition
- 17 March – Mass of St Patrick for Schools
- 17 March – Concert in Treasury Gardens
- 17 March – Young Speakers Colloquium
- 18 March – Graduate Teacher Celebration
- 19 March – Creative Arts Exhibition Evening Awards Presentation
- 20 March – St Patrick's Day Dinner and the Patrick Oration.

As you would appreciate, the decision to cancel or postpone these events was not made lightly by Catholic Education and was made after consultation with the Archdiocese and state government authorities. It was agreed that it would not be wise to bring together large numbers of students, teachers and the public on multiple occasions when the risks associated with the coronavirus are significant.

It is expected that some events, including the Mass, can be accommodated later in the year when the threat of COVID-19 subsides.

### Resources

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The Department of Health and Human Services has a number of resources on its website, which explain the virus, detail risk-reduction practices and behaviours, and answer frequently asked questions. These are available at [www.dhhs.vic.gov.au/coronavirus](http://www.dhhs.vic.gov.au/coronavirus).

You can also find information about Catholic education's response at <http://www.cecv.catholic.edu.au/Coronavirus-information-for-parents>.

You can also access further information and updates from the following websites:

- For Victorian updates to the current incident, go to: <https://www.dhhs.vic.gov.au/novelcoronavirus>
- For national updates: <https://www.health.gov.au/news/latest-information-about-novel-coronavirus>
- For international updates: <https://www.who.int/westernpacific/emergencies/novel-coronavirus>
- WHO resources: <https://www.who.int/health-topics/coronavirus>

### Communication

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May I take this opportunity to remind our families, the primary means of communication is through our SkoolBag App. The SkoolBag App is used to successfully communicate to parents and families within the school of all important news, events, newsletters, notes, e-forms and other important information about your child's education. It is recommended that all families have access to the SkoolBag App.

Link to SkoolBag <https://mogproducts.com.au/skoolbag/installation-instructions>

Updates on the Coronavirus can also be found on our website, <https://www.sfoakpark.catholic.edu.au/news-events/newsletters/>

In circumstances like these, there can understandably be a lot of concern and uncertainty about the safety of your child. Please know that I am available to discuss your concerns with you, and will provide any revised advice to you as soon as it becomes available.

I ask that you continue to work closely with the school and to contact my office should you have any concerns. Thank you for your support as we work together to keep our students safe.

Kind regards

**John Rudd** | Principal | [john.rudd@sfoakpark.catholic.edu.au](mailto:john.rudd@sfoakpark.catholic.edu.au)

