



St Francis de Sales Catholic Primary School
626 Pascoe Vale Road Oak Park 3046
Tel: (03) 9306 9444 Email:
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ABN: 87 246 330568



School Note

Information for Parents – Update number 7 on COVID-19

18 March 2020

Dear Parents and Carers

Further to previous communication, as you can appreciate, COVID-19 continues to be a rapid evolving situation and therefore advice to school communities will change quickly.

The current advice from Catholic Education Melbourne and the Victorian Chief Health Officer is that schools remain open. **There are no plans for the mass closure of schools in the immediate future.** This advice is constantly under review and we will update you if it changes.

We are aware that some people in our school communities have heightened levels of concern and anxiety regarding the many impacts of the coronavirus pandemic. These thoughts and feelings are normal and understandable.

We respect that you may choose to keep your child or children home during these uncertain times. As the school remains open as usual and we continue to teach the curriculum to our students, the school is not in a position to offer additional home learning if you choose to keep your child or children home.

In the event, the Victorian Chief Health Officer enforces the closure of all schools, I would like to reassure you that the school is currently working on a contingency plan to ensure that there is suitable home learning activities available to students in these circumstances. It is important for families to note that in Primary schools this presents a major challenge as learning and teaching in our setting is greatly reliant on teacher instruction and explanation.

A range of key resources, including videos and tips for young people, has been collated to help promote ongoing wellbeing and good health across our school community, please see attached list.

I would like to reiterate, the wellbeing of your child continues to be of paramount importance to me and our school staff will continue to provide a calm, normal environment to support all children at this time.

Thank you for your continued support as we work together to keep our students safe.

Kind regards

John Rudd | Principal | john.rudd@sfoakpark.catholic.edu.au



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Please notify the school immediately

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

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

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

Wellbeing Key Resources

- **Special Report: Coronavirus - Dr Michael Carr-Gregg developed this video for parents and school staff**
https://schooltv.me/wellbeing_news/special-report-coronavirus
- **ABC News article - How to talk to your children about coronavirus**
<https://www.abc.net.au/news/2020-03-04/how-to-talk-to-children-about-coronavirus/12020324>
- **Worried about your child getting coronavirus? Here's what you need to know – *The Conversation* article**
<https://theconversation.com/worried-about-your-child-getting-coronavirus-heres-what-you-need-to-know-131909>
- **Talking to children about natural disasters, traumatic events, or worries about the future** – This **Emerging Minds** video introduces ways for parents and carers to manage media coverage of traumatic events, and talk to their children about their worries and fears.
<https://vimeo.com/394049129>
- **Traumatic events, the media and your child** – This **Emerging Minds** fact sheet provides guidance on how to support and reassure children during ongoing media coverage of COVID-19.
<https://emergingminds.com.au/resources/traumatic-events-the-media-and-your-child/>



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Other Resources

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.

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

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://moqproducts.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/>