

Getting ready for next week!

Dear parents and carers,

Thank you for all your support during these past few weeks of remote and flexible learning. Following advice from the Chief Health Officer, the Victorian Government and the Catholic Education Commission of Victoria schools will begin a phased return to onsite schooling.

In the **first stage**, students in Foundation, Year 1 and Year 2 will return to school from Tuesday 26th May. To support all school staff to prepare for this transition, Monday 25th May will be a student-free day for all students.

In the **second stage** of our return to onsite schooling, all other year levels will return to school from Tuesday 9th June. For those students who cannot be supervised at home and vulnerable children, the existing model of onsite schooling will remain in place during the two-week period from Tuesday 26th May to Tuesday 9th June. The current process that we are using to enable parents and carers to indicate the days for which onsite schooling is required will continue for this two-week period. Children will not need temperatures taken and will sign their own name before entering the building. All other students in years 3 to 6 will continue learning from home until Tuesday 9th June.

Once a year level has returned, all students will be expected to attend school as normal. This means if you choose to keep your child/children home after their year level has returned to onsite schooling, we can no longer support their learning from home. This does not apply to children who need to be absent for health or medical reasons. This same approach is being taken by all Catholic and government schools in Victoria.

To support the health and wellbeing of all students and staff, our school will continue an enhanced cleaning routine and will encourage frequent handwashing and good hygiene. If your child is ill or is feeling unwell, **they must not attend school**.

While the Chief Health Officer has advised that students will not be required to maintain physical distancing at school, I have a responsibility to ensure I provide a safe workplace for our staff. Adults have the greatest risk of transmission and I need to ensure the school has done all it can to protect our staff. All parents and visitors must follow the rules of social distancing and are to only be on the school grounds if absolutely necessary.

Below are some Q and A that hopefully will inform you and assist us with a smooth transition back to Sacred Heart during both stages of the return to school commencing next week.

Can we (as parents) enter the school grounds?

No, parents and carers cannot enter the school grounds. If you need to contact the school during school hours please phone the school number.

Can we enter school buildings?

No. Parents are asked not to enter the front door. Please phone the Office if necessary and we will come to you. Parents cannot enter the classroom buildings for the safety and well-being of staff. Please do not be offended if the staff remind you not to enter the school buildings. If you wish to speak with your child's teacher, please make an appointment ahead of time by either telephone or email.

What is happening with drop-off?

Students can be dropped off at three locations in the morning. St Mary's Hall carpark, the Hogan St crossing or Hunter St between 8:30am-8:50am. **We cannot have any students onsite before 8:30am.** A staff member will be on duty at St Mary's Hall Carpark each morning to support students walking into school from the carpark. Please maintain social distancing with adults and leave as soon as you can (i.e. no mingling with parents etc).

What is happening with pick-up?

For the days when only F-2 students are onsite, classes will be dismissed at 3:10. A supervising teacher will take the children to where they are to be picked up. Children may be picked up between 3:10-3:20 from the St Mary's Hall carpark, Hogan St or Hunter St. **We ask that all children have left pick up zones before 3:30pm** to ensure safe supervision. During the second stage of return to school, pick-up arrangements may need to change. If so, will be communicated to families. If you are parking and collecting your child, please leave the area as soon as you can and avoid contact with others. It will be very important that parents have discussed with their child where they will meet them at the end of the day.

What extra hygiene practices are in place at Sacred Heart for when the students return to school?

- Increased cleaning schedules and resources onsite during the school day to wipe down and disinfect high-touch areas, including classrooms and common spaces, in addition to regular daily cleaning. Daily washing of playground equipment will occur.
- Provision of extra hand sanitiser at key entry and exit locations across the school and within each classroom.
- Provision of extra hand soap and so that students and staff can wash their hands frequently, particularly before and after recess and lunchtimes.
- Frequent announcements and increased signage around the school to ensure students are practising good personal hygiene.
- Communal bubblers will be turned off. Please ensure your child brings a suitable water bottle to school each day.

What if my child has cold or flu-like symptoms?

No students are to attend school if they are showing any cold or flu-like symptoms. They must remain at home and stay away from school until they are no longer showing symptoms or have attended a GP who has instructed that they are fit and safe to return.

My child has a medical condition that places him/her at greater risk for return. What should I do?

If your child has a medical condition that places him / her at greater risk from a return to face-to-face teaching at this time, please contact your classroom teacher as soon as possible, so that we can discuss their needs in greater detail and develop an appropriate plan for these circumstances.

What if my child becomes unwell during the school day?

Our usual first aid/sickbay procedures apply and you will be contacted to collect your child should he or she become unwell at school. We ask that if you are contacted to collect your child, that you do so as soon as possible so we can limit the number of students waiting in our sickbay. Our front office staff are first aid trained and have access to appropriate Personal Protective Equipment. (PPE)

Will there be large gatherings such as assemblies this Term?

There will be no assemblies or large gatherings of cohorts of students for the remainder of this term. An exception to this is an evacuation or emergency procedure that may be required. (Fire alarm etc.)

My child is not sick and does not have any medical conditions. Am I able to choose to keep him/her at home?

As a parent, you may choose to keep your child at home during this time. However, please be aware that teachers will only be providing face-to-face lessons from the 26th of May [F-2] and 9th June [3-6] and will not be providing separate online, remote learning. If you intend to keep your child at home please contact your classroom teacher to discuss this in detail.

What's happening during recess and lunch periods- are children socialising all together in the playground or separated per year group?

Health advice tells us we can maintain practices and we want to keep this as 'normal' as we can for our students. Staff will remind students to maintain social distancing habits as much as possible. There will be no staggered recess or lunch breaks as we fortunately enjoy a large outdoor area. However, we will rotate and monitor carefully high traffic areas such as the playground and sandpit. Sacred Heart will ensure sports equipment and play areas are cleaned and disinfected so we ask that children do not bring any sports equipment, toys etc from home.

What uniform is to be worn?

School winter uniform (Terms 2 and 3) must be worn by all students on site. Sports days for individual year levels for Term 2 are the same as Term 1.

Is Before and After School Care running as normal?

Some changes have been made to the normal procedures of Before and After School Care. The 2-stage return will apply.

Commencing May 26th children attending school [F-2] and those students attending on-site learning, can enrol in Before School or After School Care.

From June 9th all year levels may enrol in the program. Hours for the program will be reduced for the remainder of Term 2. Before School Care 8-8:30, After School Care 3:20 –5pm. There will be no After School or Before School Care Monday 25^h May.

The normal booking system will be in place. All children will be following hygiene/sanitisation measures, high touch areas will be frequently cleaned and regular cleaning will be conducted.

To ensure a safe workplace for our staff all parents/ carers must follow the rules of social distancing when dropping off/picking up children and are asked not to enter the buildings. Please leave the grounds as soon as you can and avoid contact with others.

No students are to attend Before School or After School Care if they are showing any cold or flu-like symptoms.

Please contact Tracy Marshall directly if you have any questions.

What if the situation arises that students will not be able to attend onsite schooling again?

As per all our decisions, we continue to be informed by relevant health authorities in response to circumstances that may exist at that time. If a situation arises where it is deemed not safe by health authorities for students or staff to be onsite, we will follow that advice and do what is required. Should any changes occur they will be communicated to parents as quickly as possible.

If I wish to discuss the transition back to face-to-face learning at Sacred Heart, whom should I contact?

It is important to remember that the COVID-19 pandemic is not over; rather, it is now entering a new phase of response. It is essential that all members of the Sacred Heart community are fully committed to practising the infection mitigation strategies that we outline to ensure a safe return to school.

Please contact me: principal@shtatura.catholic.edu.au. Alternatively, for specific matters involving your child, please contact your child's teacher.

Regards,

Pauline
Principal

Hindson