



COVID-19 update

16th March 2020

Dear families,

As you are aware, the Australian Government has advised that all organised, non-essential static mass gatherings attended by more than 500 people must be cancelled from Monday 16 March 2020. While the announcement is very clear that schools will remain open, it would include activities such as concerts, formals, fairs, open days, assemblies etc. where they involve more than 500 people.

Although Wallaroo Primary school does not meet this criteria, with our students, staff and community health and wellbeing in mind we will adhere the following directive:

All preschools and schools, **regardless of student numbers** should:

- **critically examine the need to hold events and gatherings and consider postponing those that aren't necessary**
- *smaller events that are necessary should be complemented with extra attention to health and hygiene measures*
- *cancel all visits to nursing homes and care facilities*
- *review the need to host visitors for occasions, such as special person days and Harmony Day. The department is also reviewing arrangements for people visiting schools in normal support roles.*

As we have already seen across the world, this situation is expected to continue for some time and as such, our preparations must be for both the short and medium term.

Every effort is being made to minimise disruption to student learning.

In the coming days we will provide information on preparations for continuation of student learning in the event students or teachers are required to self-isolate, and staff leave arrangements.

These directions are about supporting the effort to contain and slow the spread of COVID-19. Preschools and schools play a vital role in assisting our communities to contain the virus.

Personal hygiene and the hygiene standards in all preschools and schools are critical to reducing the risk of infection.

All children and staff must be encouraged to:

- wash their hands regularly, particularly after using the toilet and before eating
- avoid spreading infections to others by staying home if they are unwell
- cover a cough or sneeze with a tissue or elbow

All children, students and staff who are unwell with fever and/or respiratory infection should remain at home until symptoms resolve. **Please read on to learn of the considerations and decisions made so far to support a proactive approach.**



From Tuesday 16 March, the following cancellations and social distancing measures will be actioned:

Date	Event	Cancelled/Postponed	Refund
Week 9: Mon 23 rd March	Students attending SAPSASA football and netball	To Be Advised	N/A
Week 9: Fri 27 th March	Assembly	Cancelled	N/A
Week 10: 30 th March to 1 st April	Year 6/7 camp	Cancelled	Full refund will be provided
Week 11: Mon 6 th April	Year 4/5 excursion to the Planetarium	Cancelled	Full refund will be provided
Week 11: April 7 th and 9 th April	Cross Country & Sports Day	Postponed at this stage	N/A

- Assemblies will be cancelled. Group activities will be reduced to class sizes or less.
- Where possible, classrooms will be re-organised to allow more space between desks. Staff will also be encouraged to take advantage of the outdoors.
- Student movement will be reviewed. All students will be asked to slow down and keep 1.5m distance where possible.
- Physical contact will be discouraged (including contact during play at recess and lunch). There will be no handshakes.
- Students will be asked to carry their own water bottle, and hand sanitiser if possible.

Social Distancing

Changing community habits takes time and reinforcement, particularly with children. Therefore, we have decided to begin implementing social distancing measures now to give students and families' time to adjust. We appreciate that there may be inconsistencies across activities in the first instance. However, this is a task that will require community cooperation, patience and time to implement.

Health and Hygiene

Please remember:

- Students and staff must not attend school if they or someone in their household is being tested for or has been diagnosed with COVID-19. Please alert our front office staff immediately in this situation.
- Those who have been in close contact with a confirmed case of COVID-19 must self-isolate for 14 days after last contact with the confirmed case.
- If your child is unwell, they should not come to school.

Other school events

We are currently reviewing the planning of trips, events and excursions beyond term 1. Details of further cancellations and scheduled events may follow. Our intention is to be completely transparent and inform our school community as soon as possible on receiving new information.

Conversation and reassurance

Given the extraordinary circumstances we find ourselves in, I ask you to speak to your child about COVID-19 and normalise discussion about the virus, high risk groups and the measures the government are putting in place. Please also talk to your child about the measures that our school will be implementing from tomorrow. I appreciate that this may be an anxious time for both parents and students, and as such our staff are here to provide any support we can as required.

Warm Regards,

Dominica Thomson

Fiona Piscioneri

Principal Wallaroo Primary School

Governing Council Chairperson