17 March 2020

**COVID-19 Update – A special message from the Principal for Parents and Caregivers**

Dear Parents and Caregivers,

I am writing to you regarding the evolving situation with the coronavirus (COVID-19).

**Please be advised the Redland Bay State School has had zero reported cases to date.**

**Mass Gatherings**

As you would be aware, the Australian Government has announced that all organised, non-essential mass gatherings attended by more than 500 people must be cancelled from Monday 16 March 2020. While the announcement was very clear this does not apply to schools, and that there is no need for mass school closures, it does include activities such as school fetes, fairs, concerts and the like where they involve more than 500 people.

Following on from our Admin meeting this morning and after consideration of the current health concerns relating to Corona virus, we have reviewed upcoming school events where students, staff and families may be required to gather in large numbers.

**As result the following events have been postponed or cancelled.**

* Weekly assembly  - Cancelled until further notice – Student of the week awards to be presented by class teacher in class each week
* Year 6 Camp – Cancelled (will look for alternative activities later in the year)
* Parent Teacher interviews – Postponed until such time as it is safe to conduct
* Cross Country – Postponed until such time as it is safe to conduct
* Year 3 and 4 Swimming – Cancelled for this year
* Prep Teddy Bear picnic – Postponed until such time as it is safe to conduct
* Year 2 incursion – Postponed until such time as it is safe to conduct and a suitable time is able to be negotiated
* ANZAC parade – Cancelled
* Colour Run – Postponed until such time as it is safe to conduct and a suitable time is able to be negotiated
* NDIS services in school – Cancelled until further notice.
* Band and Strings ensemble  - Cancelled until further notice – Lessons to continue
* Guitar Club - Cancelled until further notice
* Staff meeting week 10 – Cancelled

As our response to COVID-19 is all about containment, I continue to ask all families to pay extra attention to health and hygiene measures employed at home with your children.

These directions are all about supporting a national effort to contain and slow the spread of COVID-19. Each one of us, and our school, play a vital role in this effort and I ask for your continued support in this containment effort. Students must not attend school if they are unwell.

**Student Absence from School**

The Department of Education have advised schools of the following protocols:

Students who do not meet Queensland Health's requirements for self-isolation but who are being kept at home as a precaution will be marked as ‘Unauthorised'. These absences are not considered a reasonable excuse based on current health advice.

As staff are continuing to provide the program at school, I am unable to ask teachers to provide a separate program of instruction for students when parents are keeping children home. We will however forward some suggestions for parents to consider in maintaining ongoing learning.

Students in self-isolation because they have had contact with a confirmed novel coronavirus case, or they are a returned traveller from overseas will be marked absent ‘Attendance not required'. This absence is considered a reasonable excuse and will not count as an absence on the student's report card nor impact the school's attendance data.

School staff are currently working on supporting families with ongoing learning along with offerings provided by the department and QCAA. Further information will be provided in the near future.

**International Travel**

I also draw your attention to the Australian Government’s announcement that all people arriving in Australia must now self-isolate for 14 days on their arrival back to Australia. The Department of Education banned all staff and student international school travel last week – this ban now also includes any travel to New Zealand.

**Ongoing Planning**

This situation is likely to continue for some time and is evolving very quickly. As such, as a school and as a community, we must all prepare over the short, medium and long term.

I ask that you continue to take all necessary local actions to support your child/ren, and the school’s, health and hygiene and act in a protective and preventative manner to help limit the spread of coronavirus.

I will continue to provide communication as Australia’s response to COVID-19 evolves. Thank you for your vigilance in helping us manage this public health issue.

Yours sincerely



Alan Bunce

Principal

Redland Bay State School

G:\Coredata\Curriculum\Events and Excursions\Forms for Events and Excursions\Excursion letter to parent - MASTER.doc 2/06/2016

G:\Coredata\Curriculum\Events and Excursions\Forms for Events and Excursions\Excursion letter to parent - MASTER.doc 2/06/2016