



From the Headmaster
Dr D P Nockles

6 March 2020

Dear Parent

I am sure you would agree that the only thing that can be said with any degree of certainty about COVID-19 is that it is unpredictable. As a school we have been managing the escalating and complex situation since the start of the School year and it appears as if the complexities and wide ranging impacts are not going to go away for some time.

Given the current uncertainty of the spread of the virus both domestically and overseas, I am writing to all parents to seek your support and understanding as the Easter holiday break draws closer.

If the speed and spread of COVID-19 continues as it has and random hotspots emerge around the world, it will be important for me to manage the return of students to school where overseas travel has been undertaken between now and the new term and/or where the family has hosted travellers from overseas during this time.

As a matter of administrative assistance it would be very helpful for the School to know if any families, not only students but other family members too, have overseas trips planned in the foreseeable future or are planning on hosting overseas guests. This would help the School in managing the risk associated with overseas travel and the broader school community. If parents could please inform the relevant Head of School of any such plans it would be most appreciated. Please contact them either by email or by telephone.

Further to this, it is highly likely that on return to Australia, students who have travelled, or indeed students living in households where visitors or other family members have travelled overseas, may well require a fourteen day self isolation period before returning to school. Please do not assume, because at this stage the area of travel is not affected, that this may not apply to your family circumstance. As I said, this is a highly unpredictable and dynamic situation.

Please be aware that it is not only the departure point when returning to Australia that is important but where else travel has taken place as well as any transit points. Even transiting through some locations may result in me imposing a fourteen day isolation period and/or insisting on a medical clearance prior to returning to school. At present most places in the Middle East, Asia and Italy will be treated this way and, as indicated, this includes transiting through any of these places.

It is important to understand that schools are communities where human contact is very close and so diseases such as COVID-19 can spread very quickly. I acknowledge that there have been almost no recorded infections of children and adolescents. However, emerging information is that children may well be carrying the virus but not overtly suffering from it, which of course puts my staff and the adult population of the School at risk.

I am not making any apologies for the possibility of imposing strict return to school isolation periods in certain circumstances and would appreciate your understanding and support. I would never suggest to you as parents that you change travel plans overseas, however, it is important to understand the consequences that overseas travel may have on return to school in the new term.

Again, thank you for your understanding and support of the School's actions in this regard.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'David Nockles', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the left.

David Nockles