



From the Headmaster
Dr D P Nockles

12 March 2020

Dear Parent

No doubt you are aware that the impacts of COVID-19 continue to grow and will do so for the foreseeable future. There have been several school closures for a variety of timeframes in NSW and across the country. I am sure we will see this continue. Earlier today the World Health Organisation declared COVID-19 as a pandemic and, while that is simply a naming protocol, it confirms that this virus is not something that is going to go away and will continue to impact us on a daily basis.

At Macarthur the health, safety and welfare of our students and staff are the greatest priority, closely followed by our continuity of educational service to the students. With these two priorities in mind I am implementing a number of protocols that will impact on some of the usual activities across the School. The overall intention of these protocols is to keep the School operational on a day-to-day basis so that students learning can continue. In addition, I am cognisant of not increasing the risk of a significant number of parents having to take time off work to look after their children if Macarthur were forced to close.

As such, from tomorrow until further notice, any non-essential gathering of non-Macarthur students and staff that involves large groups of over thirty people will no longer take place either on site or off site. Unfortunately, this includes the attendance at events by parents and grandparents such as the regular Chapel services and assemblies. Parents are asked not to attend these gatherings. The daily drop off and pick up of students is not impacted nor is the daily one-on-one interactions with teachers.

A significant and immediate impact in the secondary years is the upcoming Parent Teacher evenings which I am postponing with the exception of Year 12. In the case of Year 12, parents will be invited to make an appointment as usual, however, the interview will be conducted by phone with the teacher calling the parents.

Hosting so many parents in the one place is not considered wise 'social distancing' in the current environment. As I have stated, I am keen to try, as much as it is within my power, to avoid Macarthur closing with the resultant disruption to teaching and learning and impacts on parents.

This protocol will have impacts on, but not restricted to, excursions, gala days and at school gatherings where non-Macarthur students and staff would have been involved. Where the event is one that our students and staff are not in contact with others from the community the event will most likely continue. This is also having an impact on my staff attending Professional Learning activities as well as a number of school trips.

Competitive weekly sport and carnivals at this point will continue but with competitors only. Some of the recreational sport options where students and staff from other schools are involved will be impacted. Involvement at the upcoming Camden Show and Royal Easter Show will at present continue with competitors only attending but in a significantly curtailed way.

This protocol will be in place until further notice. I appreciate the disappointment and inconvenience of this action, but I am sure you can appreciate the reasons behind it. These 'social distancing' measures will provide a heightened level of protection for our students and staff and will reduce the potential of Macarthur having to be closed for an extended period.

for an extended period. I am sure, like me, you are praying that our planning is not needed, and the School is not affected in this way.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "David Nockles". The signature is stylized with a large, sweeping initial 'D' and a long horizontal line extending to the right.

David Nockles