



15 April 2020

Dear Parents and Caregivers,

May we again offer our sincere thanks for your unwavering support as we navigated the course of Term 1. In challenging circumstances, it was wonderful to see the community of the Moreton Bay Colleges unite, adapt and maintain quality teaching and learning through our new Remote At Home Learning approach. We hope that you were able to enjoy a good break as a family over the Easter long weekend and found new and creative ways to keep connected to extended friends and family.

We write now to provide further information on recent COVID-19 announcements and to share some information regarding Term 2.

Term 2

The most recent advice from the Queensland Premier Anastacia Palaszczuk MP is that schools will remain open for business. The Moreton Bay Colleges will begin Term 2 on Tuesday 21 April. Monday 20 April will be a student-free day. The College has conducted a full review of the four-day trial of 'at home learning' conducted at the end of Term 1. As a result, we have a much better understanding of what worked well, where we could improve and the challenges presented for families in this new mode of learning. Thus, this student free day will provide staff with further professional development and planning time in preparation for the next 5 weeks of Remote At Home Learning. Please note that this student free day has been moved from the beginning of Term 3, which will now commence on Monday 13 July.

Thus, from the start of Term 2 until 22 May 2020 inclusive, all students will be learning from home, except for students in the following categories:

- Children of essential workers on days when they are not able to be supervised at home and no other arrangements can be made. Essential worker means any worker who must continue to attend their workplace for essential business during this time.
- Vulnerable children.

On-site supervision, with access to the Colleges' Remote At Home Learning materials, will be available for students in the categories listed above. Students who attend school on-site during this period will receive support to participate in the same remote learning program that is being delivered by their classroom teachers to students who are learning at home. To ensure equity, this on-site supervision will be conducted by our teacher aides and/or other support staff.

To register for on-site supervision, please use the links below:

[MBBC](#)

[MBC](#)

Our tuckshop services will remain closed until further notice.

The Moreton Bay Colleges' approach to Remote At Home Learning

Thank you to all families who engaged with our survey about their experience of Remote At Home Learning in the final week of Term 1. Based on the collated and analysed data, the Colleges have revised some of their expectations and guidelines for learning at home.

A consistent message in the data was a request for teacher videos and live conferencing with teachers. We recognise that videos are a valuable resource, enabling students to watch, pause and re-watch the explicit instructions from teachers, assisting students to learn well and at their own pace.

Teachers will participate in online chat with students and student groups, often in almost real-time. Teachers will also be checking on student progress and providing guidance as required.

Some classes have already met in live video sessions, and we will be asking teachers to increase their engagement with live video conferencing with students using the Zoom (Primary and Co-curricular Music) and Microsoft OfficeTeams (Secondary) platforms. However, live video calls will not be our 'all day, every day' approach, as this draws heavily on teacher and student time. In an online environment, it is advantageous for students to spend parts of their day working offline too, completing set work. In this way we can ensure the best possible outcomes for students. Our new revised guidelines will be shared by the respective Heads of School before the end of this week.

Furthermore, based on our survey feedback, we request that all students wear their College sports/house uniform when they engage with their lessons during these first 5 weeks of term. This will further affirm their commitment to their studies and foster their sense of connection to the College.

Fees

As a values based institution we wish to express our sincere desire to support and care for those families who are facing financial and other challenges created by COVID-19 situation.

Whilst there will not be any changes to our Prep – 12 fee structure in Term 2, we extend an invitation to work with families who find themselves in a genuine hardship position to ensure they remain a part of the Moreton Bay Colleges' community. Please be assured that all communications will be treated with the highest level of confidentiality.

We are offering both short-term and long-term financial assistance to our families in need:

Short-term

1. Extending the end date of the direct debit payment plans until later in the 2020 year. Please contact our Finance department at finance@mbc.qld.edu.au should you require this assistance.
2. Deferred payment of fees. For any short-term fee payment deferral requests, please contact our Finance department at finance@mbc.qld.edu.au.
3. Should you wish to take out an Edstart 'Extend' loan to pay your tuition fees, the College will pay for your first six months of interest charges for new loans taken out until 30 June 2020. The 'Edstart Extend' model enables you to extend your repayments for up to five years after your child graduates from the College and is better suited for families with a secondary student. For more information, please refer to <https://edstart.com.au/moretonbay>. Edstart takes a holistic approach to eligibility for both employed and

self-employed applicants, which can incorporate government benefits and insurance payments, as well as considering both historical and forward-looking income.

In providing information about Edstart, the College does not provide any recommendations, brokering or advice services. Please consider your individual circumstances to assess whether a loan is suitable for you. The College does not receive referral fees, commissions or other remuneration from Edstart.

We will continue to work with individual families and any family experiencing concern with respect to payment of tuition fees is invited to contact Ms Tania Molford at MolfordT@mbbc.qld.edu.au to have a confidential conversation regarding your situation.

Long-term

The Moreton Bay Colleges are committed to ensuring that the 2021 fee increase will be minimised to assist our families through this challenging time. This extends our long-term plan of minimal fee increases that has now been in place for several years.

We have had some families expressing a desire to assist other families in difficulty and if you are in this category we invite you to make contact with Anna Thompson, Chief Financial Officer, at thompsona@mbc.qld.edu.au with the amount that you would like us to transfer into an account set up specifically to support those who are struggling due to COVID-19. This could be a real way to express solidarity with those families in need. All donors and recipients of this money would remain in the highest confidence.

Moreover, given the uncertainty surrounding the COVID-19 situation, the College will, until further notice, pause any planned major capital work programs. During these initial five weeks of Term 2, the College will continue to progress and refurbish some of the learning spaces and facilities of the College that were committed to be undertaken this term.

Wellbeing

Regardless of whether we are learning in an online or face-to-face to environment, the Hearts and Minds and Five to Thrive Wellbeing Frameworks continue to drive our approach to student wellbeing. As the technological landscape has changed over the last few weeks and the uptake of web applications as a result of the pandemic have increased, there has been a corresponding spike in cybersafety concerns. Mindful of challenges faced in the online environment, and eager to provide the best possible support to students, parents and staff, last week the College sought advice from cybersafety expert Susan McLean and parenting expert Dr Justin Coulson.

Susan McLean has reviewed our updated processes and online guidelines and it is reassuring to know that one of Australia's leading cybersafety experts supports our approach in this area.

Likewise, our discussions with Dr Coulson focused on what we can do to optimise wellbeing and foster resilience within our community during this time of social distancing. We have engaged Dr Coulson's services to deliver webcasts to students, staff and parents, and provide strategies for managing the challenges that come with remote learning and speak to the importance of incorporating the five actions of the Hearts and Minds and Five to Thrive Wellbeing Frameworks into our routines as we navigate the pandemic.

In an ever-evolving situation, a few things remain constant – our commitment to your child/ren's learning, positive relationships and the values that underpin the existence of the Moreton Bay Colleges – Care, Teamwork, Engagement and Character. We thank you in advance for your continued support as we continue to explore and create optimum conditions for remote at home learning.



Please remember that wellbeing support for students and their families is available from our College Chaplains, pastoral leaders and College Counsellors. Our Access EAP service is also available for parents. We look forward to reuniting with all our College families when it is safe to do so, until then may we continue to work together to support our students to make the most of the educational opportunities in this new term ahead.

If you have any questions about the Colleges' response to this health situation, please do not hesitate to contact the respective Heads of College.

Kind regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Janet Stewart'.

Janet Stewart
Head of College – MBC

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads 'Andrew Holmes'.

Andrew Holmes
Head of College - MBBC