



ST LAURENCE'S COLLEGE

A Catholic School for boys in the Edmund Rice Tradition

18 March 2020

Dear Parents and Caregivers,

As you are aware, St Laurence's College has responded to the information and advice that has been received through government agencies and health professionals. Hygiene practices have been emphasized with staff and students and a range of activities have now been either postponed or cancelled in response to the changing nature of the COVID-19 pandemic.

We are currently preparing for the continuity of student learning under two broad scenarios:

1. A short-term closure of up to 5 days

In the current context, a short-term closure could be triggered by a confirmed case of COVID-19 at St Laurence's College. A short-term closure would be used to undertake contact tracing to identify staff, students and other members of the community who may be at risk of contracting the virus; and undertake specialized cleaning of the site.

2. A long-term closure

A longer term closure would only occur as part of a system wide shutdown directed by relevant government agencies. It is possible that a shutdown of this nature could be for a prolonged period of time.

Learning at Home

Students will be supported in their learning by their teachers predominantly through the Microsoft suite including (but not limited to): Outlook (email), OneNote and Teams. Different faculties will communicate to students via email the exact learning requirements during the period of the shutdown. It is likely that students will need to access a range of online learning platforms such as: STILE (Science), Education Perfect, Sloodle and online textbook resources depending on the combination of subjects studied.

In the case of a longer-term shutdown, teachers will provide a variety of materials (work schedules, checklists, flipped videos, worksheets, formative assessment activities etc) and may supplement this with scheduled regular contact ('live' collaboration sessions predominantly through Teams). In the event that 'live' sessions are conducted, the lesson will be recorded to allow students to playback the lesson to review key concepts. Note that we do not expect every teacher to conduct live lessons. Please also note that in specialist practical subjects there will be limitations on the work that can be set and the skills that can be developed.

Preparation:

In preparation for the possibility of a shutdown, students **should ensure** that they can:

- Log into their Office 365 account;
- Access the appropriate Sloodle courses;
- Access all relevant textbooks online through Box of Books. Students should also download the relevant textbooks to their 'offline' reader which should appear as an icon on their desktop;
- Regularly check their emails.

It is very important that students take their College laptop home each day and keep their chargers at home. Students should also take home any textbooks or workbooks that currently reside in their lockers. These may need to be accessed from home with limited warning that the school is closed.

Limitations

During a shutdown of the school, teachers may be required to work from home. The capacity of individual teachers to use additional online tools may be limited by the bandwidth available to them in the home environment. It is likely that only a skeleton staff would remain on site limiting the capacity to conduct 'live' lessons.

It is our intention that teachers would work as close as possible to the school timetable. In doing so they will prioritise the creation of additional course content and the correcting of submitted student work. However, it is important to remember that our staff may have particular needs of their own during a school closure. This could include caring for their own children, looking after elderly relatives and dealing with their own health. As such, there may be a number of reasons why a teacher cannot be available for every scheduled lesson. Our teaching staff will do everything they can to provide the best possible service for their students. Parents are asked to be mindful that it may not be possible for teachers to respond to every student query they may receive in any given day given the volume of emails they may receive.

Assessment

In the event of a prolonged school closure, the assessment requirements of students will be revised and communicated to students by the Head of Faculty. It is too early at this stage to communicate the exact assessment arrangements. Further communications during a prolonged school closure would seek to clarify the requirements for students.

Students in Years 11 & 12 will be prioritized in terms of modifying assessment requirements. Any decisions in relation to assessment in the Senior School will be guided by the advice and decisions made by the QCAA.

Absence from School prior to a closure

The College understands that many families will make the choice to keep their son(s) home from school due to particular family circumstances and current health status. Teachers will endeavor to support students through the use of the online tools mentioned previously. However, teachers cannot provide daily 'lessons' or 'live' lessons for students while they are still delivering in a face to face environment. Parents are asked to ensure that students access term or semester outlines that were previously issued to them and other online platforms that are regularly used in class to set work. Teachers will make PowerPoints and similar available to students either via email or through Sloodle, however teachers may not be able to respond to every individual request for student work.

Thank you for your continued support of the staff at St Laurence's College and the important role that you play in terms of maintaining a continuity of learning for your son(s). Your patience and understanding will assist our staff to provide the best possible support in these unprecedented circumstances.

We will continue to provide communications as developments occur.

Yours sincerely,



Mr Peter Cook
Dean of Studies