



ST. JOSEPH'S PRIMARY SCHOOL

Principal: Mrs Marie Dodson

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Wednesday, 22nd July 2020

Dear parents and carers,

I wanted to write to you to reassure you at what I know is a concerning time.

The Victorian Chief Health Officer's advice is that schools continue to be safe places to learn and work and that schools across rural and regional Victoria – including ours – are able to continue on-site schooling. I also want to assure you that there have been no confirmed cases of coronavirus (COVID-19) at our school.

Schools in metropolitan Melbourne and Mitchell Shire have moved to remote learning for years Prep-10. This is to avoid more than 700,000 students and their families moving around that area, rather than because schools are unsafe.

The health advice for rural and regional Victoria remains that unless otherwise directed, schools can continue to operate while observing health measures recommended by the Victorian Chief Health Officer.

This includes implementing a range of measures to reduce the risk of transmission of coronavirus (COVID-19) in school settings, including social distancing for adults, increased cleaning and practising good hand hygiene.

During this time, it is important that we all continue to monitor our own health and the health of our children daily. If you or your child develops any symptoms such as a fever, cough, sore throat or shortness of breath:

- stay at home and do not attend school
- seek medical advice – call ahead to alert your doctor about any symptoms before visiting, and take this letter with you
- call the school to let us know.

The Diocese of Sale Catholic Education Limited (DOSCEL) have comprehensive procedures to manage suspected or confirmed cases in schools. Where there is any risk to the health of students or staff they act quickly to manage it, including closing the school to allow for contact tracing or cleaning if required.

As part of contact tracing, DHHS identifies people who have potentially come into close contact with people who have tested positive for coronavirus (COVID-19). It provides direct and specific advice to these individuals and their families about quarantine and looking after themselves.

If DHHS has not contacted you to advise that you or your child is a close contact of a coronavirus (COVID-19) case, you are not required to quarantine.

I'm pleased to see students back at school after the holidays and continuing face-to-face learning will help to ensure that, as much as possible, we minimise disruption for students in what has already been a difficult year.

I understand this is a time of heightened anxiety, but please rest assured our school is taking all necessary precautions to ensure a safe on-site learning and working environment for our students and staff.

If you would like health information from the Department of Health and Human Services, you can visit dhhs.vic.gov.au/coronavirus

If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to contact me through the school's front office.

Thank you again for your continuing support.

Kind regards,

Marie Dodson
Principal
St Joseph's, Orbost