



Friday 27 March 2020

Dear Families and Friends of Geelong Grammar School,

COVID-19 (Novel Coronavirus) – Update #19, Concluding Term 1, 2020, on Friday 27 March

Through these unusual days we're living, humanity's kindness is uplifting. Thank you for the extraordinary notes of gratitude in relation the School's striving towards an effective transition to remote, off campus learning in such difficult times. Thank you also to those who completed our feedback surveys; we're grateful for your advice as we evolve what is possible across Geelong Grammar's four campuses.

On 2 April, I will celebrate two years at Geelong Grammar School as your Principal. In many ways it has been a deeply challenging experience thus far; the time has also brought great joy through new learnings, understandings and relationships. I have come to appreciate, perhaps more than ever before, that moral courage matters; it can and does effect positive change.

Right now, across the globe, we need to find the courage within to physically distance ourselves from each other: it won't be forever, yet the impact of doing what is right will be long lasting. Although many of us will not have to change our behaviour as the result of infection with COVID-19, we will still need to change our behaviour for the benefit of others. The inconveniences and frustrations we experience are nothing compared to those who have lost loved ones.

Again, to all those serving our community selflessly, we extend our heartfelt appreciation. I have always marvelled at the care and expertise of our health care and emergency services professionals; I do so now with an even greater sense of indebtedness. Those who cater, clean and care on the frontline are remarkable too. The choices these people are making on behalf of us all are both inspiring and humbling.

I also pay tribute to our Geelong Grammar team of generous and creative professionals who have striven to new heights these past few weeks. We've experienced intense collegiality through unprecedented collaboration. As our Chair, Paddy Handbury, recently wrote to our staff: "To think that you were all able to move into action so seamlessly and quickly is testament to your capabilities as educators and 'doers'. Our students can continue to expand their minds and souls even when there is uncertainty about what lies ahead."

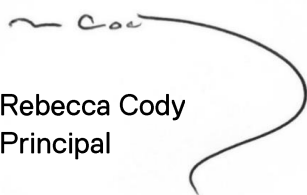
In the coming weeks please continue to refer to our dedicated [COVID-19 web page](#). We will communicate as transparently and expediently as possible via this new page with Fact Sheets and FAQs, wellbeing and health resources, as well as plans as to how we can reopen our campuses safely. I have also released an [end of Term 1 video statement](#) this afternoon for all GGS Learners. This can be accessed via Firefly for our primary and Timbertop students; Years 7, 8, 10, 11 and 12 have received an email with the link. My message has been designed to support their thinking and choices across the Easter break.

A decade ago, I discovered the wisdom of poet Rainer Maria Rilke. I share this with you now in the hope that these sentiments may resonate for those of us learning to live with profound uncertainty:

“Be patient toward all that is unsolved in your heart and try to love the questions themselves, like locked rooms and like books that are now written in a very foreign tongue. Do not now seek the answers, which cannot be given you because you would not be able to live them. And the point is, to live everything. Live the questions now. Perhaps you will then gradually, without noticing it, live along some distant day into the answer.”

Until the next Update, on behalf of our exceptional team at Geelong Grammar School, I wish you fine health and deep connection with loved ones. I also hope that as our world is enduring great hardship, we can find the space to prioritise courage, compassion and optimism.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Rebecca Cody". The signature is written in a cursive style and is enclosed within a large, hand-drawn, teardrop-shaped outline.

Rebecca Cody
Principal

Principal's Study

50 Biddlecombe Avenue, Corio, Victoria, Australia 3214
T +61 3 5273 9247 E Principal@ggs.vic.edu.au

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CRICOS 00143G ABN 92 004 971 500 www.ggs.vic.edu.au