



Wednesday 22 April 2020

Dear Families and Friends of Geelong Grammar School,

COVID-19 (Novel Coronavirus) – Update #22 as at 4.00pm on Wednesday 22 April

We are cautiously optimistic about the slowing spread of COVID-19 in Australia and continue to prioritise the health, safety and wellbeing of our students and staff as we strive to provide the most effective remote learning opportunities we can, whilst working purposefully and proactively towards the resumption of on campus learning. To reiterate:

- We continue to act on the advice of the World Health Organisation (WHO), Federal and State Government Health and Education Departments, GGS's Senior Medical Officer, WorkSafe and applicable Occupational Health and Safety legislation, and GGS's Policies and Procedures. Most recently:
 - [Victorian Government announcement](#) on Tuesday 7 April that in line with advice from Victoria's Chief Health Officer, all schools will move to remote learning at the commencement of Term 2, and that "all children who can learn at home must learn from home – with exceptions only in extremely limited circumstances".
 - This announcement is consistent with Victorian government restrictions relating to educational services set out in the [Stay at Home Direction \(No 4\)](#) issued by the Deputy Chief Health Officer (Communicable Disease) on 13 April 2020. This Stay at Home Direction requires that a person may leave their home to attend school if it is not reasonably practicable for that person to obtain educational services provided by the School at home. The School will continue to follow the requirements set out in the Stay at Home Direction (No 4) and any subsequent directions, which are aimed at helping slow the spread of COVID-19.
 - Boarding schools being identified as "a high-risk setting" by the [Victorian Government](#) and as a residential facility "with an elevated risk of community transmission" of COVID-19 by the [National Cabinet](#).
 - The extension of the [State of Emergency in Victoria](#) for an additional four weeks, until midnight 11 May 2020.
- As ever, the School will not knowingly place students or staff in a position of risk unless such risk may be reasonably mitigated.
 - This involves seeking the guidance and advice of medical experts, in conjunction with the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS), to develop plans which identify, manage and mitigate the risks unique to our context and relevant to our students, staff and wider School community. Such work is ongoing.

Parent Information Sessions and Parent-Teacher Meetings

We will be increasing and formalising interaction with parents beyond the current contact with classroom teachers, Heads of Unit, Heads of House and Heads of Campus. We will commence Parent Information Sessions, starting with our Year 12 families on Monday 4 May and Tuesday 5 May: specifically -

- VCE Units 3&4: Monday 4 May, 6.00pm and
- IB Diploma: Tuesday 5 May, 6.00pm

These sessions will be followed by a series of formal and informal Parent-Teacher meetings and Parent Information Sessions for Bostock House, Corio, Timbertop and Toorak Campus families. Heads of Campus will be writing to families with further information in the coming weeks. If you have any topics that you would like covered in these Information Sessions (e.g. learning environments, time management, student wellbeing, physical activity, etc.), please send suggestions to: C19questions@ggs.vic.edu.au.

Supervision of Remote Learning@GGS

To assist “parents who cannot work from home and vulnerable students without access to a suitable learning environment at home” during this difficult period, we continue to provide on campus supervision of our Remote Learning@GGS programmes at Bostock House, Corio and Toorak campuses, having commenced last Thursday, April 16. We value and respect our civic duty to assist Australia’s response to the COVID-19 pandemic and we appreciate the ongoing support of our community to help us balance competing medical and educational needs.

As per our current two-week planning cycle, if your family situation has changed and you meet the above requirements, as outlined by the [Victorian Government](#), please complete the [Registration Form](#) for Supervision of Remote Learning@GGS no later than 12 noon on Friday 24 April to register for the next intake of students on Monday 27 April. At this time, on campus supervision is not available at our Timbertop campus. Timbertop students who meet the above requirements are welcome to access our Corio and Toorak campuses.

Overseas Students

For all our families whose children are currently based overseas (whether students are Australian citizens, residents or foreign nationals), you may direct any queries or concerns to our Overseas Students’ Officer, Emily Scarlett. Emily may be contacted by telephone or by email +61 3 5273 9138 or by email to escarlett@ggs.vic.edu.au. Whilst Emily usually manages requirements for those students enrolled at our School pursuant to a student visa for which the School has specific regulatory obligations, at this time she is available as a point of contact for all overseas students (whether these students are Australian citizens, residents or foreign nationals).

We are actively working with the Victorian Registration and Qualifications Authority (VRQA) and other entities to safeguard the education of our students who are enrolled at the School pursuant to a student visa. Emily has recently emailed all these families regarding their child’s enrolment at GGS, and I remind those families of the specific [resources and support available](#).

I wish to reiterate strongly that all students living overseas are valued members of our School community and we look forward to the time when we can welcome them back to on campus learning.

ELC Fees

As noted in [Update #20](#), we continue to evolve our response to the impact of COVID-19 on our Early Learning Centres at Bostock House and Toorak Campus. It remains our intention to write separately to ELC families with further information about the expansion of our programmes and once we have the necessary clarity regarding government funding. In the meantime, families will only be charged usual fees if and when their child attends ELC, and only for the days that they attend. Billing will continue in a two-week cycle.

Thank you

The School understands the challenging and uncertain times that parents are currently facing and we appreciate the overwhelmingly positive response to our approach to deferring and discounting fees.

These are difficult times for all businesses, and Geelong Grammar School is no different in this regard. Our staff have been working tirelessly to review all aspects of our business operations and to enable our financial stability into the future.

Again, we thank our community for their loyalty, generosity and ongoing support.

Anzac Day

The COVID-19 pandemic has disrupted our world. One of those disruptions is that our GGS community will be unable to gather to remember and respect the 250 Old Geelong Grammarians killed in war, as well as the many other members of our Defence Forces who served and died for our country.

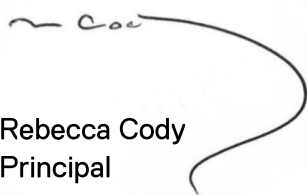
Our annual Anzac Day Services are some of the most moving and meaningful occasions on the School calendar as our students grow to understand the significance of service and the importance of honouring and remembering those who sacrificed their lives for our freedoms. Each section of the Service at Corio has a special reverence: the prayers and hymns, the long list of names read out from the School's Roll of Honour, the laying of wreaths at the base of our War Memorial (George Lambert's iconic sculpture of "the triumph of youthful heroism over evil"), and the sound of a lone bugler playing the Last Post. This year, I invite you to join myself and Reverend Gordon for a [live stream of our Anzac Day Service](#) at Corio, from 8.30am on Saturday 25 April.

Please also be aware that my [assembly messages for Term 2, week 2](#), were published today. I trust this series of communications is helpful to support community connection and belonging for our students and their families.

Throughout the Term, our [COVID-19 webpage](#) will continue to be updated regularly. Again, should you have any queries or concerns please utilise the following email addresses:

- RemoteLearning@ggs.vic.edu.au; and
- C19questions@ggs.vic.edu.au

Yours sincerely,



Rebecca Cody
Principal