



Sunday 26 July 2020

Dear Families and Friends of Geelong Grammar School (GGS),

COVID-19 (Novel Coronavirus) – Update #41 as at 1.00pm on Sunday 26 July

We continue to closely monitor the daily updates on the “incredibly stubborn” outbreak of COVID-19 in Victoria and any changes to public health advice in consultation with our Senior Medical Officer, Professor Fergus Cameron. As ever, we will prioritise the health, safety and wellbeing of our students and staff as we evolve our wide-reaching risk mitigation steps in response to this pandemic.

Interstate Travel – South Australia border restrictions

The School is aware of the South Australian government announcement that from midnight on Wednesday 29 July 2020, only those South Australian residents who are “essential travellers” will be able to enter South Australia from Victoria.

Since the announcement, the School has been in communication with the South Australian Police COVID-19 Border Control Taskforce (SAPOL COVID Border Control). We are seeking confirmation that South Australian students attending both the Corio and Timbertop campuses may be classified as “essential travellers” and therefore be exempt from the travel restrictions thereby allowing their entry to South Australia at the commencement of the school holiday period.

We have provided SAPOL COVID Border Control with details of the significant risk mitigation measures that the School has implemented as part of our campus-specific COVID-19 Action Plans, including:

- all staff and students undertaking COVID-19 testing both as a base line test on arrival and in the event of displaying any symptoms (at both campuses);
- all staff and students completing a Daily Health Questionnaire since 24 May (at both campuses);
- all staff and students completing daily temperature checks since 24 May (at both campuses);
- implementing and reiterating spatial distancing measures (at both campuses);
- emphasising and providing ongoing education about appropriate hygiene practices within a COVID-19 context (at both campuses);
- all staff and students wearing N95 surgical face masks in enclosed indoor spaces since 8 June (at Corio);
- all staff and students wearing N95 surgical face masks if off campus since 8 June (at Timbertop); and
- frequent community engagement by regular Updates to set strict controls on safe conduct.

In addition, we have noted that if required, our South Australian students can be tested again for COVID-19 prior to the end of Term 3 and, upon receipt of negative tests, students can be transported by bus from their respective campus (Timbertop on 8 September and Corio on 18 September) to the South Australian border at Bordertown. Upon arrival at the border, it is proposed students would walk across the border to be met by parents and guardians who will remain in South Australia to meet them. This will ensure that when travelling home, students will not interact with any other person except the bus driver, who will be required to wear a mask on the journey and be spatially distanced from travelling students.

We have asked SAPOL COVID Border Control to provide urgent confirmation that following the above detailed planning, our South Australian students will receive the appropriate official exemption in order to allow their safe travel to South Australia at the commencement of the school holidays.

There is also some commentary that similar border restrictions may also be announced for travel from Victoria to Queensland, Tasmania and Western Australia; however, presently this only applies for South Australian residents. Should this situation change, GGS will advocate strongly to obtain exemptions for our students.

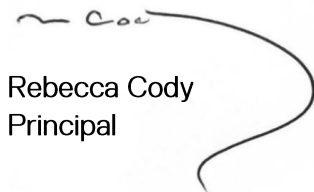
Corio Leave Arrangements

With the cases of community transmission in Victoria remaining high, we are extending weekend exeat/leave restrictions to metropolitan Melbourne and Mitchell Shire until Victoria's Chief Health Officer (CHO) reviews the Stage 3 'Stay at Home' orders in those areas. Stage 3 restrictions will be in place across metropolitan Melbourne and Mitchell Shire until Wednesday 19 August 2020, whilst the State of Emergency in Victoria is currently scheduled to conclude on Sunday 16 August 2020. As per our two-week planning cycle, we will be reviewing weekend exeats/leave arrangements for regional Victoria at the conclusion of Week 4, with reference to case numbers in Geelong and the neighbouring local government areas. These measures reflect our School's high-risk setting, thereby requiring commitment to a proactive and rigorous response from all within our community.

Thank you

Thank you again to our families for working within the ongoing constraints of COVID-19. Whilst it was energising for our Corio students to return to Saturday sport yesterday, we acknowledge the frustrations this represented for some; for our students from metropolitan Melbourne and the Mitchell Shire who are unable yet to participate in "community sport" and "physical recreation activity" beyond their principle place of residence due to Victorian Government restrictions; and for our families who are currently unable to spectate on campus. We also remind families that all parcels and packages for boarding students at Corio need to be left with security at the boom gate so they can be disinfected before distribution to the Head of House. Our extensive risk mitigation measures are necessary steps in fighting this pernicious virus. The gift of learning and living on campus can only be secured if we all remain committed to such practices.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Rebecca Cody', with a large, sweeping flourish extending to the right.

Rebecca Cody
Principal