



Friday 18 September 2020

Dear Families and Friends of Geelong Grammar School,

COVID-19 (Novel Coronavirus) – Update #58 as at 7.00pm on Friday 18 September

We continue to update and evolve our scenario planning for the start of Term 4 in response to the positive progress of Victoria's [Coronavirus \(COVID-19\) roadmap to reopening](#) and [yesterday's announcement by the Victorian Education Minister, James Merlino](#), regarding the resumption of on-site, face-to-face learning for schools in regional Victoria in Term 4. The Minister outlined changes to Term 4 arrangements, including the different stages and approaches for schools in metropolitan Melbourne and schools in regional Victoria. He also confirmed that students and staff who live in metropolitan Melbourne and are enrolled in or work in a school in regional Victoria can attend on-site consistent with the Term 4 arrangements for regional schools. If you are in metropolitan Melbourne and require a letter from the School to assist your travel to and from one of our campuses, please email C19questions@ggs.vic.edu.au with the relevant details (student name, campus and name of person/s who will drive the student to school).

We are seeking further information regarding today's [Australian Health Protection Principal Committee \(AHPPC\) statement](#) on interstate travel for "boarding students and students living in border zones". We are hopeful that the AHPPC statement in support of "the safe return of students to their homes and families during school holidays" and Prime Minister Scott Morrison's comments earlier today indicate a willingness to prioritise freedom of movement for interstate students. We will continue to liaise with our interstate families and advocate strongly for the best outcomes for our students and their wellbeing.

Our Executive and Leadership Teams have completed significant and detailed planning to identify, manage and mitigate the risks posed by COVID-19 for Term 4; particularly those risks that are unique to our context as Australia's largest coeducational boarding school. We have benefitted from our experiences of coordinating student returns in Terms 2 and 3, and we plan with confidence in those measures that provided a stable, COVID-free environment. We also lean into the ongoing progression and flexibility of our Remote Learning@GGS 2.0 programme, which has been supported by the exceptional efforts of our staff, students and families.

Return to On-Campus Learning and Living – Term 4

We are progressing campus-specific planning to welcome students and staff back to on-campus learning and living in Term 4 with reference to the restrictions for metropolitan Melbourne and regional Victoria outlined in the [Coronavirus \(COVID-19\) roadmap](#) and the Department of Education and Training (DET) [return to school Term 4 plan](#):

- **Bostock House Prep-Year 4 students** will commence on-campus learning from the start of Term 4 on Tuesday 6 October;
- **Toorak Prep-Year 2 students** will commence Term 4 on Tuesday 6 October with our Remote Learning@GGS 2.0 programme before returning to on-campus learning from Monday 12 October;
- **Toorak Years 3-6 students** will commence Term 4 on Tuesday 6 October with our Remote Learning@GGS 2.0 programme before a scheduled return to on-campus learning from Monday 26 October as part of the [Third Step](#) of the roadmap for metropolitan Melbourne (subject to "trigger points" and public health advice);

- **Middle School Years 5-8 students** at Corio will commence Term 4 on Tuesday 6 October with our Remote Learning@GGS 2.0 programme, with boarding students returning to our Corio campus by Thursday 8 October, and on-campus learning scheduled to commence for all Middle School students on Monday 12 October;
- **Timbertop Year 9 students** will commence a staggered return to campus from Monday 5 October, allowing for a period of 'internal group isolation' before face-to-face classes can resume post the State sanctioned date of Monday 12 October; and
- **Senior School boarding students (Years 10-12)** will return to our Corio campus by Tuesday 6 October (with those travelling from interstate and rural/regional areas able to return from Sunday 4 October), with the General Achievement Test (GAT) to be held on Wednesday 7 October, before face-to-face classes can resume on Monday 12 October.

COVID-19 Testing and Risk Mitigation

As was implemented for students returning in Terms 2 and 3, we will employ a range of preventative strategies for the staged return to on-campus learning and living in Term 4. These measures will be campus-specific and will include an emphasis on spatial distancing, excellent hygiene practices, daily temperature checks, wearing of face coverings/masks and the completion of our [Daily COVID-19 Health Questionnaire](#), as appropriate. We will be extending weekend exeat/leave restrictions at Corio and cancelling the Term 4 exeat at Timbertop to reflect the high-risk residential setting at those campuses.

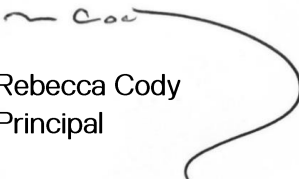
Students and staff at our Corio and Timbertop campuses will also be required to undertake a COVID-19 test and an initial period of 'internal group isolation' until the receipt of a negative test result (with test results anticipated within 48 hours). Testing will be conducted on-site through a private provider and the associated cost (\$110 inclusive of GST) will be included on the Student Fee Statement when issued. Testing is required on-site in order to provide the most up to date test results, particularly as some students will have travelled through transport hubs and arrived on campus from communities all over the country. In addition, this allows for asymptomatic testing, which is not currently accessible through public health services, coupled with the expedited turnaround of results, which is a significant protective factor for our staff and students.

School Holiday Mental Health Support

A range of resources to support the wellbeing of students and their families is available on the [COVID-19 page](#) of the School website, including links to Independent Schools Victoria (ISV) [The Parents Website](#) and the Victorian Government [Positive Parenting Program](#). [Headspace Geelong](#) is offering additional support to young people during the school holiday period (both inside and outside of the Geelong region). The Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) also provides a wide range of [child and adolescent mental health services](#). For those outside of Victoria, you can access the equivalent services from your local government website.

I'm excited for the return of on-campus learning and living in Term 4 and remain deeply grateful for the ongoing support and care of our community.

Yours sincerely,


Rebecca Cody
Principal