



Wednesday 19 January 2022

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

COVID-19 (Novel Coronavirus) – Update #2 as at 5.00pm on Wednesday 19 January

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

We are excited and well prepared for the start of the 2022 school year. Whilst we welcome the certainty provided by Victoria's Deputy Premier and Minister for Education, James Merlino, that schools will "absolutely" return for Term 1 as planned, we are also conscious that amongst the excitement there can be feelings of uncertainty and anxiety associated with the high case numbers linked to the spread of the Omicron variant, particularly for our primary school families not yet fully vaccinated.

Risk Mitigation

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 COVID-19. These measures will be campus-specific and will include an emphasis on spatial distancing and excellent hygiene practices. Whilst we are still awaiting the updated School Operations Guide from the Department of Education (DoE), we actively review our COVIDSafe protocols in consultation with our Senior Medical Officer, Professor Fergus Cameron. We continue to take a highly precautionary approach, exceeding Department of Health (DoH) guidelines where appropriate for our context, including:

- **Masks** – wearing of face masks will continue to be mandatory indoors for both primary school and secondary school students (with the exception being in boarding house bubbles);
- **Testing** – COVID-19 testing will be conducted at both Corio and Timbertop – we are currently mapping RAT testing protocols for students and staff at Corio, whilst PCR testing will be conducted at Timbertop at the beginning of Term 1 (with students remaining in Unit bubbles until receiving test results);
- **Monitoring for symptoms** – if students present COVID-19 symptoms, they will be tested and, if positive, they must go home or into the care of their COVID Emergency Contact for the required period before returning to campus;
- **Vaccination Status** – in order that we may respond appropriately, our Heads of Campus will be shortly requesting that if your child has received one or more vaccinations, that you please provide their Vaccination Certificate or Immunisation History Statement;
- **COVID Emergency Contact** – all boarding students must have an appropriate COVID Emergency Contact (who is an alternative to a parent). COVID Emergency Contacts must live in Victoria, be able to have your child to quarantine for the required period, not have underlying vulnerabilities which would exclude them from providing such care and be able to collect your child at short notice. Heads of Campus will be contacting families of boarding students shortly to ensure that this information is accurate and up to date;
- **Ventilation** – we have conducted room ventilation audits using the National Construction Code for naturally ventilated spaces and Australian Standard AS 1688 for mechanically ventilated spaces to ensure learning spaces are meeting appropriate standards; and
- **QR Code Check-in** – all visitors to campus, including parents, are required to check-in using the Service Victoria app upon entry, regardless of the duration of the visit.

Heads of Campus will provide timely and specific information regarding Start of Term arrangements.

Please be aware, we are also planning a series of Parent Webinars for all families to support the Start of Term. Heads of Campus will provide further information as soon as practicable.

Please note that we will continue to carefully manage weekend exeat/leave restrictions at our Corio Campus and, at this point in time, are planning for the mid-Term Exeat at Corio and Timbertop to proceed as scheduled (March 11-14). Given the closed nature of our Timbertop campus and the ability to have greater control of movement on and off campus, we will confirm details of the mid-Term Exeat at Timbertop by Friday 18 February.

Events

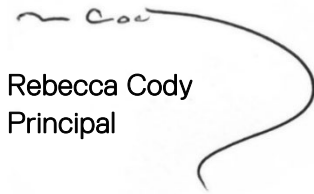
Please also note that we continue to refine and adapt details for COVIDSafe planning of Term 1 events. We have moved our Staff Conference, which will be held next Thursday-Friday, January 27-28, from in person to online. We have also shifted our Family Day at Corio and Year 10 Parents' Connect to the published alternate dates (which are Sunday 1 May for Family Day and Friday 18 March for Year 10 Parents' Connect). We will provide further information about other Term 1 events as soon as practicable.

Next Steps

Thank you for continuing to direct any COVID-19 related queries to C19questions@ggs.vic.edu.au

Thank you also to all families who have offered their support, including assistance with the supply of RATs. The kindness and generosity of our community continues to be appreciated greatly.

Yours sincerely,



Rebecca Cody
Principal