



31 March 2020

Dear Parents & Carers,

I would like to thank the entire school community for their understanding at this difficult time. I am grateful that the vast majority of students, staff and parents have shown genuine empathy and care for each other - it is not an easy time for anyone.

Although many students have been learning online for seven days now, our Home-Based Learning (HBL) plan has only been implemented for 2 days. So far, we have received some very good feedback from the staff and a few students and parents. It appears that most students are engaging with the activities that have been set. It is important that all students continue their learning at this time by following the directions on Google classroom for every lesson throughout the school day. We appreciate that many parents are working, either at home or away from the home and do not have the time to ensure their children are doing school work throughout the day, our teachers who are parents are also experiencing this pressure. We suggest a simple check-in with your children twice a day, morning and evening would assist in encouraging students to continue their learning. Teachers will be checking that students are engaging with the activities regularly and will be contacting parents with a courtesy notification via compass to inform you if it appears your child is not engaging with the work. You will be able to see exactly which subjects might be an issue by looking at your child's compass record. At this early stage, this notification is for your information and does not necessarily need a reply to the teacher. Most teachers interact with 150-200 students and are extremely busy interacting with students from 9:10 am until 3:15 pm, then setting lessons and checking work after school finishes. We understand there will be all sorts of reasons why students are not engaging with work however we do need to monitor progress and keep communication channels open as a duty of care. **If your child can not engage in learning on a particular day we ask that you email the College ([studentservices@dbb.catholic.edu.au](mailto:studentservices@dbb.catholic.edu.au)) and we will pass this information onto your child's teachers.** If we're not informed otherwise we will assume that students are choosing to disengage with school work and will contact parents to discuss this when an issue becomes apparent.

We have received a few enquiries about our current HBL model and suggestions for what other schools are doing. All students, parents and teachers will receive a survey on Friday to provide feedback after the first week of the program. As mentioned in previous communications, this model will evolve over time. Changes will be made regularly however we will not make daily changes, as this would cause confusion at a time when control of student organisation, behaviour and engagement is significantly reduced compared to normal schooling. I strongly encourage everyone in our community to complete the survey and provide honest feedback from their perspective.

If your child is having any issues with learning, please encourage them to make contact with their teachers via email. Students need to stay connected with their teachers using the various methods we have currently put in place. Just like in the classroom, students should be asking questions that help them progress with the activity if they get stuck. It is generally against child protection policy for staff to call students on their mobile phones and we would prefer communication be through the tools we are currently using. If you have a concern as a parent, please make contact the teacher by email. If there are any other concerns with your child's wellbeing, access with technology or any other issues, please contact your child's Year Coordinator.



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Students in Years 11 & 12 have been trialling the use of zoom video conferencing. We ask that parents remind their children of the video conferencing protocols distributed at the beginning of the week. I have attached them for your convenience. It is important that students take this face-to-face lesson time seriously and make the most of the opportunity. Students who choose not to follow these protocols may lose the opportunity to join these classes. We still await information from NESA on how the HSC will be impacted and we can only encourage all students to make the most of having spare time to focus on their studies.

The Northern Beaches are a bit of hot spot for confirmed cases of COVID19, so I encourage everyone to take the Government advice seriously. We have a number of vulnerable people in our community and although we pray that we are all kept safe and healthy, we need to act responsibly for our benefit and for others more vulnerable.

As always, if there is anything we can do to support your family, please let me know.

Yours sincerely

Marc Reicher  
Principal  
Mater Maria Catholic College