



16 March 2020

Dear Parents / Carers,

As you are aware the World Health Organisation has declared COVID-19 a pandemic. The situation in regard to COVID-19 continues to evolve with an increasing number of countries having sustained community transmission. In Australia the majority of COVID-19 cases are returning travellers or close contacts of cases, but there is evidence of limited community transmission in some states including NSW.

Efforts are now focused on considered actions to slow the spread of COVID-19 in the community and protect those who are likely to experience more severe disease such as the elderly and those with underlying health conditions. These steps are also essential to reduce the demands on the health system so that it can function effectively.

The department has been planning and operating in accordance with its pandemic plan to support the safety and wellbeing of staff and students.

This is part of the government-wide strategy to 'flatten the curve' of confirmed cases so that our health services can meet the needs of those who require care when they need it.

The situation is evolving quickly and we will continue to respond to the advice from NSW Health and The Department of Education as we receive it. I will be in touch regularly to keep you updated on our plan.

In line with The Department of Education operational guidelines for all schools, the following has been put in place;

- Recess and Lunch Breaks – classrooms and foyer areas have been opened up for students to use at recess and lunch. This is to allow students to have more space to spread out around our school in small groups.
- Access to the Canteen – students are being given access to the canteen at staggered times throughout the day. Students wishing to use the canteen are leaving their class to purchase food and then returning to their class.
- Whole School Assemblies and Year Assemblies have been cancelled for the coming weeks.
- Year Group Roll Call on Friday mornings has been moved to classrooms, with each roll class being assigned a classroom.
- All bathrooms are stocked with toilet paper and soap. This is being monitored and supplies replenished daily.
- Posters have been displayed in the bathrooms providing guidance to students on correct hand washing techniques.
- Students have also been reminded to adopt good hygiene practices including:
  - Washing their hands regularly and thoroughly, using soap and water for 20 seconds
  - Covering their nose and mouth when coughing
  - Sneezing into their elbow or a tissue, disposing of the tissue straight away and then washing their hands.
  - Staying home if they are unwell.
- Students were also advised to avoid crowded areas, keeping groups at recess and lunch to small numbers and to avoid handshaking, hugging and touching of other students
- School events such as the Parent Teacher Night for Year 8, 9 and 10 will be reviewed.

- The following school events have been cancelled for this week
  - Open Boys Soccer game against Wyong Community School scheduled for Tuesday
  - Open Lawn Bowls game against TLSC on Friday
  - Catholic Scripture scheduled for Tuesday
- Changes have also been made to School Sport on Tuesday.
  - All sport at external venues has been cancelled. Students who usually attend sport at a venue external to Lisarow High School, will stay at school for sport.
  - Year 7 students have been divided into class groups and will participate in sport in these smaller class groups.
  - Some sport groups will rotate through completing 1 hour of practical sport and 1 hour of theory to allow students to spread out around our school grounds.
  - Year 11 and 12 students who attend study lessons in the library during sport, will be divided into smaller groups and allowed to work in classrooms.

To assist with proactive measures in relation to the COVID-19 virus, the following advice and operational guidelines have been put in place;

- Stay home if you are sick. The health and safety of our students and staff is paramount. If you are unwell with respiratory illness, you should remain at home until symptoms resolve and, where appropriate, seek advice from a medical practitioner (and call ahead first). Remember to also [clean your hands thoroughly](#) for at least 20-seconds with soap and water and cover your nose and mouth when you cough or sneeze.
- Support good hygiene in schools. Good hygiene is being reinforced at school. Any member of staff or student who shows signs of being unwell, will be sent home. Children with chronic medical conditions or immunosuppression may be at increased risk of disease. Please consider special arrangements for these children, such as home-based study where their learning can be done uncompromised. We suggest that a plan be developed in consultation with their healthcare provider.
- Report suspected and confirmed cases of COVID-19. If your child or any close contact of your child has contracted Coronavirus, please let me know immediately. I am required to notify the Department of Education and Public Health Unit of any confirmed cases at school.
- Updated international travel restrictions. On 15 March, the Government put in place new measures for people arriving in Australia. Individuals **must** self-isolate for a period of 14 days on arrival to Australia, including returning Australian citizens and residents. You are also required to self-isolate if you have been diagnosed with the COVID-19 or if you have had close contact with a confirmed case of COVID-19 infection. The Australian Government now advises all Australians reconsider their needs for overseas travel at this time. Regardless of the destination, your age or health, if overseas travel is not essential, you should consider carefully whether now is the right time to travel.

Thank you for your support and understanding. In the current climate I encourage kindness, support and for people to treat each other with respect. Please discuss with your child/ren the importance of hygiene. This message is being reiterated to children at school.

Any other changes to school routines will be communicated via our school newsletter, Facebook and the school website.

Yours sincerely



Nicole Hunt  
Principal