



13 January 2022

Dear Parents and Families

**Re: Start of the School Year and Remote Learning/Learning from Home
(COVID-19 Communication No#2)**

I hope that you are all keeping well since I last updated you on the recent COVID-19 developments, and that you are enjoying some time with family and friends.

As we start 2022, I would ask that we keep all members of our community in our thoughts and prayers, particularly those in the Maryborough and Wide Bay areas impacted by floods and those who have been impacted by the effects of COVID-19, either through illness or the need to isolate as a result of being close contacts of family or friends who have contracted the virus. We also pray for those frontline workers who are supporting our community and individuals throughout this difficult time.

I write today to provide some information regarding the commencement of the School year, following advice from the Queensland Government and yesterday's Executive Leadership Team meeting. While there are further decisions which need to be made in relation to the Premier's recent announcement, I wanted to make you aware of some important information that will define the successful start of our School year.

As part of our decision-making, we sought to uphold our established aims when dealing with this pandemic which are to:

- Protect the health and safety of students, staff, families, visitors and the wider community;
- Maintain, where possible, educational continuity; and
- Educate our School community as to the impacts of the spread of COVID-19.

Operating Arrangements from Monday 24 -28 January

From Monday 24-28 January, **Outside School Hours Care and Kindergarten will remain open and operate as normal**, which adheres to the advice from the Queensland Government Department of Education.

The Day School will remain open for children of [essential workers](#) and vulnerable children. This will be a limited program where children will be supervised. If you have any questions about your eligibility as an essential worker, please contact Mr Jamie Novosel, Deputy Principal/Head of Senior School, at jno@was.qld.edu.au or 07 4969 2032 or Mr Mick Martin, Head of Junior School, at mma@was.qld.edu.au or 07 4969 2038. Please note that an educational program will not be delivered during this time.

New Students to Whitsunday

Mr Mick Martin, Head of Junior School, or Mr Jamie Novosel, Deputy Principal/Head of Senior School will be in contact with you to advise of an induction program and IT laptop set up. This will be scheduled with you on one of the days from the 24-28 January. There will be an opportunity for you to attend the relevant sessions online or in person, subject to COVID-19 protocols.



Junior School Book Packs

Mr Mick Martin, Head of Junior School, will make contact with families in relation to collecting book packs and relevant materials for the start of the school year, that meet the COVID-19 protocols.

WASMart

WasMart will remain open; however, the number of people allowed inside will be limited and all people attending over the age of 12, must be wearing a mask, unless you have a medical exemption.

Operating Arrangements from Monday 31 January to Friday 4 February

From Monday 31 January to Friday 4 February all students from the Preparatory Year to Year 12 will be engaged with remote learning/learning from home. The Day School will remain open for children of [essential workers](#) and vulnerable children. If you have any questions about your eligibility as an essential worker, please contact Mr Jamie Novosel, Deputy Principal/Head of Senior School, at jno@was.qld.edu.au or 07 4969 2032 or Mr Mick Martin, Head of Junior School, at mma@was.qld.edu.au or 07 4969 2038.

Throughout the pandemic, the School has been preparing for a number of scenarios, one of which was the possibility of remote learning/learning from home. Given our success with remote learning/learning from home in 2020 when the School moved into lockdown, we are confident in being able to provide a high-quality education that maintains the continuity of learning for our students in a safe environment. Further to this, our last experience with remote learning/learning from home demonstrated that the School had a high majority of essential workers; therefore, it makes sense to continue to provide our high-quality learning and teaching to students at School and students who are learning at home.

Where possible, students who attend School will be able to attend classes with their normal classroom teacher for their timetabled subjects. Students who stay at home will be able to access their schooling through our remote learning program.

Confirming Remote Learning/Learning from Home Program

Mrs Sunner, Deputy Principal Teaching and Learning, Mr Novosel, Deputy Principal/Head of Senior School, and Mr Martin, Head of Junior School, will **provide further information on the remote learning program on Tuesday 25 January**. This ensures that we have had an opportunity to plan and refine our programs with our teaching staff and have the most up to date information. During the delivery of remote learning, the School's well-established high expectations in relation to uniform, learning behaviours, absenteeism and effort will all apply.

Outside School Hours Care and Kindergarten will be operating as normal during this time, which adheres to the advice from the Queensland Government Department of Education.

Boarding Students

In relation to the operation of Booth Boarding House, we are still awaiting confirmation from the Chief Health Officer to determine if boarding schools can remain open. As soon as we receive this information, we shall advise families. The School is committed to opening Booth Boarding House to support our boarding families; however, we will respect the advice of the Government and the Chief Health Officer. To assist in making an informed decision, we will need to know the number of Boarding students wishing to attend on-campus. **If you wish to attend Booth House Boarding from the 31 January**, can you please contact Mr Wayne Stewart, Head of Boarding at wse@was.qld.edu.au or on 07 4969 2044 to confirm, at your earliest convenience.



Operating Arrangements from Monday 7 February

All students will return to School for on campus learning on Monday 7 February.

Mask Mandate

All students in secondary schools must adhere to the mandatory mask direction.

There are a number of [exceptions](#) to wearing face masks, including for children under 12 (unless they are in Year 7) and people with particular medical conditions or disabilities.

All parents entering the School campus are required to wear a mask indoors and outdoors when they cannot maintain 1.5 metres for physical distancing.

Further information on masks can be found on the [Queensland Health website](#) .

Testing Positive for COVID-19 and Close Contacts

A separate letter will be provided confirming the School's arrangements for students testing positive for COVID-19 or who are close contacts.

COVID Symptoms

If you or your child have any [COVID-19 symptoms](#), no matter how mild, call your doctor or [13HEALTH \(13 43 25 84\)](#) and get tested.

I do understand that this is a very difficult time for our community. However, we can take great strength in knowing that we provided an excellent remote learning/learning from home program in 2020 and we have navigated the challenges of COVID-19 successfully for the past two years. Further to this, our students, teachers, staff and families have been simply outstanding in their ability to adapt to this ever-changing landscape.

Please know that the School is committed to providing a high-quality learning experience for your child and accept my sincere thanks for your continued support of the School. Rest assured that our Whitsunday students will continue to receive the high standard of education and quality teaching that defines our School.

We look forward to having our School community return as soon as possible.

Wishing you all the very best at this time and please do not hesitate to contact me or the School if we can support in any way.

Best wishes

Andrew Wheaton
Principal