

Dear Parents

By now you would have heard via media the directive from our NSW premier re: school closures in NSW.

Basically it means schools are open but parents are asked to keep children at home unless you have no other alternative.

As our school will be open, on the whole, staff will be here according to their family needs.

I request that if you are planning to keep your child at home to go onto the Compass app and indicate their absence for tomorrow and the rest of the week. Choose **'other'** as the reason for absence and in the comment box put **HBL**.

If your child is at home for this week we ask them to complete the tasks in the weekly 'home learning grid' that is set each week by teachers for their class. Children could also complete home learning from past weeks that they did not access.

We will use this week as a transition to **'Home Based Learning' (HBL)**.

What is Home Based Learning (HBL)?

It will be a timetable of tasks- some online, some at home in a designated book. It will cover English, Maths, RE and some other subject areas.

Children at school today will bring home a **'Home Based Learning'** book. The 1st page of this book will have log ins and passwords for the learning platforms we will use.

In K-2 the main platform for HBL is *See Saw*.

In years 3-6 the main platform for HBL will be *Google classroom*.

These are platforms with which the children and teachers are already familiar.

If your child is already at home you can drop by the school and pick up your child's HBL book outside your child's classroom. Otherwise any exercise book will suffice to complete some tasks at home.

We envisage that we will be ready for HBL by next week. If your child still comes to school they will be doing the HBL tasks under the supervision of a teacher. The groupings and supervision will depend on numbers of children and teachers available.

This week, I encourage your family to take the time to set up some routines for HBL and generally all living at home together for what may be a significant period of time. Let your children know it is not holidays yet so there will be some routines for getting up, getting dressed and when work, meal and play times will happen. You may have to find a space for learning time and in some families sharing the online time. Check your child's website links and passwords work at your home. The teachers are here to answer emails re: connecting to platforms etc when they are not supervising a class this week.

On the front page of our website there is a link to [Coronavirus](#) and [HBL information](#). This will be a spot where you can access information which is a page under construction at the moment.

Lastly, in case you didn't hear last week and today -

- NAPLAN is officially cancelled for 2020
- Cross country is cancelled tomorrow
- Attached is a letter to parents from our Diocesan Bishop. (also on our website)

This is all very new and unprecedented for all of us and we will problem solve as issues arise and endeavour to help you as much as we can. We are a wonderful supportive community and I thank you all for understanding our position here at school and being a support for each other. I will email you as necessary and when directives change.

May you all stay safe and well.

Warm regards

Virginia Outred
Principal
St Joseph's Catholic Primary School



Letter to the Parents and Families of children at our Catholic Schools

Friday 20 March 2020

Dear Parents and Carers,

Greetings of peace to you and your families.

Following the summer trauma of drought and bushfire, we now face the anxiety and uncertainty of a health emergency with the emergence of the COVID-19 coronavirus.

Our national response to this new emergency is taking us to new places in the life of our society. As you are aware, for our part, I have already taken steps to ensure that people are kept as safe as possible within the life of our own Diocese of Broken Bay. However, as the health emergency unfolds, yet further steps will be required, based on the expert advice informing the decisions of the Australian Government.

As we negotiate each step one by one, I wish to assure you that I am mindful of you in a particular way. Our children are most precious. Their safety is paramount. You have entrusted them to the care of our Catholic schools, and I wish to assure you that every consideration is being given to their protection.

For the time being, at the request of the Government, our Catholic schools continue to remain open. For as long as they are, we will continue to collaborate with the Federal and State Governments, implementing all the guidelines by which we are advised. Many are the challenges. However, I know that our Principals, teachers and school staff are entirely committed to ensuring that our children can learn and grow in the safest environment possible. I want to thank them, on your behalf, for their continuing dedication and professionalism.

Throughout this time of uncertainty, let us never cease in our care for one another. We need to look out for one another, especially when we become aware of the difficulties that some of our families may face, particularly with the insecurity of employment and financial challenges. May our Catholic school communities be known for their quality of sensitivity and care. Let us also not forget that it is often the small, simple gesture of love and concern for one another that can have the greatest effect.

I hold you, your children and your families daily in my prayer.

With my heartfelt wishes in Christ Jesus,

MOST REVEREND ANTHONY RANDAZZO BISHOP OF BROKEN BAY

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