

Friday, 6 August 2021

Dear Parents and Carers,

Assisting families during COVID

Catholic schools across Australia will celebrate Family Week from 8-14 August. This annual event recognises the tremendous support that parents, carers, and families provide in choosing a Catholic education for their children. Now, more than ever, this COVID pandemic has highlighted the importance of working in partnership with families to ensure continuity of learning and formation for our students.

Recent weeks have been an unpredictable and anxious time for our staff, students and families and we would like to thank you for your patience and support as we navigate through the constantly changing landscape of COVID. We can only imagine the challenges you are facing and stress the critical role parents and carers play in supporting your children's learning.

Thank you to all the parents who have provided feedback, expressed their appreciation for the hard work of our teachers or shared their concerns. We are happy to have been able to support those that have needed to send children to school, entrusting us with the care of your children. Equally we have supported the families that have managed home-based learning and its unique challenges. We express our sincere thanks to you all.

Earlier today, CSNSW issued a statement *Safety, Certainty and Learning* for Term 3 and 4 in NSW Catholic Schools. With regard to Health and Government advice, the following guidelines detail the approach Catholic Schools Broken Bay will adopt for the balance of term 3 and term 4.

HSC Students

- Year 12 students will not return for onsite learning in Term 3 until it is safe for all students, however schools will remain open for students who need to be there.
- All year 12 students will participate in Home-Based Learning until the end of term 3. In place of the HSC Trial Examinations, schools use alternative assessment tasks. Your school Principal will provide details particular to your school.

Kindergarten to Year 11 Students

- We are anticipating, expecting and preparing for the very real possibility that all students will be required to continue in Home-Based Learning for the remainder of term 3.
- Consistent with health advice, families should keep children at home to reduce mobility around our communities. Schools will remain open for children that need to attend.

- It is our hope that students will return to onsite learning in term 4. This, of course, is dependent on advice from Government, with the safety of all students and staff being our key concern.
- Further updates will be provided by your school Principal.

Extra Support for Teaching and Learning: HBL+

We are conscious that HBL has continued for far longer than initially anticipated and no clear end date is yet in sight. We are well aware of the demands that places on our students and our staff. We are delivering a new initiative HBL+, to enhance teaching and learning and to support the wellbeing of families across our system. This program will respond to the issues raised by parents and staff in their local context. For example, schools will have access to resources created for use across our System and some that have been created especially for their local community.

The wellbeing of our students, families and staff remains our primary concern. As a community of faith, we encourage you to stay connected with other families within your school community and support each other through this difficult period. If you are feeling overwhelmed and require additional support, please reach out to your school principal, school counsellor or School/Parish Priest for assistance. [CatholicCare](#), the social care and support agency of the Catholic Church in the Diocese of Broken Bay, is also available to assist during this challenging time.

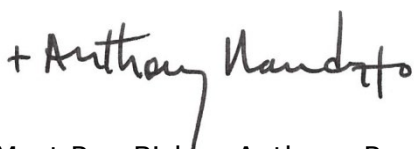
[Broken Bay Catholic Schools Parents](#) is a wonderful resource that represents our families as a group, who have been advocating on your behalf and keeping us connected during COVID. Representatives of this group are parents and families from your school, and they are available to hear your feedback and provide help.

Fee Relief

If you need financial help to get through this difficult time, please contact our Fee Liaison Team on 9847 0728 or email schoolfees@dbb.catholic.edu.au. It's easy to apply and all applications are treated with complete privacy.

We will keep you all in our prayers as we encourage you to remain positive during this difficult time, support your children to remain connected with their classmates while focusing on their learning and development, and above all take time as a family to reconnect as we move through these challenges together.

Stay well and stay safe.



Most Rev Bishop Anthony Randazzo
Bishop of Broken Bay



Danny Casey
Director of Schools