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An Independent Public School

Dear Parent/Guardian

**RE: Coronavirus (COVID-19)**

Over the past week, an increasing number of parent's have chosen to keep their students at home; however, as of Tuesday 24 March, we still had 50% of our students attending Ashdale Secondary College. I continue to remind parents that at this difficult time, it is your choice and one that the College respects you are making in the best interests of your family.

As an educational provider for the community, we are continuing to focus on the education that is taking place in the classrooms and have made significant moves towards ensuring education continues outside of the actual College buildings. I have asked Heads of Learning Areas today to release some staff to focus on our online learning content and enact plans we put in place over a week ago. If you have decided to keep your child at home, you should, over the next few days, start seeing more content becoming available. Also, there are further resources available on the Department of Education's Learning at Home website, which can help to supplement ASC information and a wide range of resources and information related to the impact of COVID-19 on students' health and wellbeing and the impact on families;

<https://www.education.wa.edu.au/learning-at-home>. Parents are advised that, if they need mental health advice and support for themselves or their child, there is a 24-hour crisis support line 1800 048 636. Parents and guardians need to understand if your child is sick regardless of symptoms or reasons that you keep your child at home. If you are self-isolating as a family or your child is away ill, I ask that you do not send them to the College for individual sessions or part of the day for assessments or other purposes. It is crucial for the continuing health of our staff and students that we do not have large numbers of students signing into or out the College for part days which could potentially pose an increased risk.

For students currently attending the College, classes will continue, at times small numbers may be combined where this does not impact on curriculum delivery. For example, three Year 7 Sciences with a total of 16 students will be combined as the classwork and curriculum are the same. Students who remain at the College will continue to have the curriculum delivered by staff and feedback on progress provided.

As outlined in previous communications, staff will continue to use CONNECT and other online learning platforms. CONNECT is your first point of call; therefore, please ensure your email contact details are up to date. You should be able to work with your child to navigate to other platforms with the information provided in CONNECT by staff if required.

As per advice received from the Public Health Emergency Operations Centre (PHEOC), students should bring refillable water bottles to school. Water bottles can be refilled from the fountain as necessary, reducing the need for students to drink directly from fountains. I encourage you to talk to your child about safe usage of water fountains, e.g. not putting their mouth onto them.

Please remember that we now effectively have staff working in two delivery styles of curriculum and that we are not able to provide individual work packages. The focus of the College is on the continuity of curriculum.

As more students and families choose to self-isolate and practice social distancing, it is vital to focus on the health and wellbeing of not only our students but family units. It is essential to make decisions about what you can manage in the online learning space without increasing the anxiety of all involved. If you are choosing to self-isolate, please ensure that your child is at home and not moving around the community. We are making every effort to enable students to continue to be successful, even though many other aspects of life are being disrupted. We will continue to provide updates to stay connected during this time.

Kind regards

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Kylie Bottcher'.

Kylie Bottcher  
Principal

25 March 2020