

COVID-19 INFORMATION FOR PARENTS 5 (April 3 2020)

Dear Parents and Carers,

Today is the final day of Term One schooling for your children, with next week scheduled to be pupil free days for all schools across the NT to provide staff the opportunity to prepare for continuous delivery of your children's education in Term Two.

We appreciate just how challenging it has been for families to manage the unfolding developments regarding the Coronavirus pandemic, and the responses we need to have together across the nation to protect our community.

Please know that we are looking to facilitate as many ways as possible to serve you and provide care during this time. We recognise that this new normal is expected to last for quite a while. The Prime Minister, Scott Morrison, has regularly referred to this response lasting for months and so we are preparing for this as well.

In line with what both our Prime Minister and Chief Minister are saying, we encourage you and your children in every possible circumstance to **stay home, if you can** in response to this pandemic.^[1] We are here to support your children and your family during this, and are thankful for the choice you are making to support the necessary measures we all need to take to reduce the spread of the virus.

Please be assured that as we move into Term Two we are prepared to ensure **all** our students receive the same high quality Christian education, training and care – whether they are at home, or if they have to be at school. Children are understood to have to be at school in circumstances where they are vulnerable, or where their parents/carers are essential workers and unable to make any alternate arrangements. Regardless of your family's situation we are here to support you and your children, as we deliver continuous education for our precious students and continually explore new ways to relate as a community together. We know that it is also important for your children and family's wellbeing for us to continue to seek ways of connecting and being together as a community in these unprecedented times.

We expect and are preparing to deliver one streamlined model of education next Term, where teachers and students (whether they are at school or home) will have a set learning program and touch points with teachers / pastoral care staff during the day. This model is being designed with the understanding that the majority of students will remain at home in self-isolation. Students who are required to be at school will be supervised by a teacher and / or Teaching Assistant. Students at school will access the same online and hardcopy learning opportunities delivered by the classroom teacher with support. Students remaining at home will be supported by their parents and / or other family members.

The plans we are making need to be continually responsive both to the national and Northern Territory imperatives and guidelines as they evolve, and also responsive to each local situation. Your schools will be in contact with you as the situation continues to unfold. We thank you for continuing to graciously partner in close communication with us as we seek to both flexibly adapt to the changing situation, and also provide information for you and your children as best we can in each circumstance about what we can expect together.

We know that there is nothing quite so good as being together, but in these times when we cannot be together in the same way, we continue to be excited about the creative ways we can foster connection and learning amongst our students. We look forward to partnering with you in this. You can expect correspondence next week from your children's school directly about the first day of Term Two.

As we pray during this time, we pray for the world, our nation and our community, we pray for our students and for you as families, we pray for our schools and all the staff. We seek wisdom and compassion and extra portions of peace. May you know God's comfort and His faithfulness during this time.

"Rejoice in hope, be patient in tribulation, be constant in prayer." (**Romans 12:12**)

Sincerely,
Phoebe van Bentum
CEO
NT Christian Schools

^[i] <https://www.health.gov.au/news/health-alerts/novel-coronavirus-2019-ncov-health-alert/how-to-protect-yourself-and-others-from-coronavirus-covid-19/limits-on-public-gatherings-for-coronavirus-covid-19>