



Our Lady of Mercy College

25 March 2020

Dear Parents and Guardians,

I am writing to keep you informed about how the College is responding during the current Pandemic situation.

In line with the Prime Minister's announcement, education in our Catholic schools will continue to be provided during the COVID-19 crisis. As parents, you have a choice to keep your child at home or send him or her to our physical school site. We will continue, whether your child is at school, or at home, to provide rich and engaging learning activities and strong pastoral support.

The College has observed an increase in student absenteeism from the College which is likely due to COVID-19 related matters. The College will continue to monitor this situation.

For the immediate future, Teaching & Learning activities will continue as normal. The College will continue to deliver face to face lessons with the students who are present. Students who are absent continue to have the ability to access any relevant learning materials via SEQTA (or other means made available by their teacher) in the usual manner.

Should the absentee rate rise significantly, then I will advise the community that the College will switch to implementing its Remote Learning procedures as set out below. It is possible that such a decision may be made in the near future.

I have endeavoured to summarise the information pertaining to Remote Learning into a simple set of points.

Remote Learning Understandings

1. The majority of students are not physically attending the College.
2. Some students may be physically attending the College.
3. It is not feasible or desirable, to ask teachers to simultaneously deliver valid learning experiences in a face to face manner to students who are present and via remote learning to those who are not present.
4. Teachers will plan and deliver all learning experiences for all students enrolled in their class in a manner that enables them to access the required and relevant materials.
5. To assist students to transition to remote learning, teachers may initially reduce the amount of content delivered and the expectation of student responses to the material presented.
6. SEQTA, Teams and OneNote are the main digital tools which will be used to deliver and conduct learning experiences. Students and teachers are familiar with these tools.
7. Whilst some time may be initially required to achieve transition, all relevant classes should have transitioned within a week of the decision to move to Remote Learning implementation.
8. Year 11 and 12 students will be the initial priority.

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9. Year 7 – 10 students will be provided with learning experiences in the core areas of Mathematics, English, Science, HASS and Religious Education.
10. Each week, teachers will deliver one interactive video session and four independent learning sessions in which students complete research, respond to learning stimulus (eg. video, website, readings, challenges, questions) either individually or within groups.
11. A schedule has been prepared to ensure that generally, no student need engage in more than two interactive video sessions with a teacher on any particular day.
12. Teachers remain available to interact with and assist students using digital tools via Teams messaging, emails and SEQTA direct messaging.
13. Students who physically attend the College will be supervised by teaching staff whilst they engage in the same remote learning experiences (as though they were not present at the College). The supervising teacher may not necessarily be a student's regular teacher.
14. To assist with maintaining student well-being, students who attend the College will be provided with opportunities (as practical and as available) to participate in physical education activities and access to other experiences as part of their normal curriculum plan at the College.
15. The Remote Learning Plan is a dynamic plan which will respond to situations and experiences as they present.

The College staff have been putting in a tremendous effort as they prepare to embrace school life in a significantly different manner. They are upskilling in new software, learning new remote learning teaching principles and creating online content and course structures whilst they continue to engage with their classes on a full-time basis.

I have been so impressed by their response and their commitment to provide a meaningful education response for your child in the current circumstances.

Parents will continue to be able to contact teachers in the usual manner (apart from physical interactions in most cases).

The College ICT Team is ready to assist students and parents with an increased ability and focus on delivering assistance in remote situations. The preferred options for contact are via email ithelpdesk@olmca.wa.edu.au, or via Microsoft Teams in OLMC-Helpdesk Team or by phoning the College on (08) 9720 3300.

Our commitment to "Work in Partnership" with students and parents becomes even more important in circumstances like these. In the long-term interests of your child, we all need to work together and to support each other.

I ask that you join me in keeping our community in your prayers.

Regards,



Rob Crothers
Principal

