



March 16, 2020

Dear Parents and Carers,

This update contains information that will be important over the coming days and weeks. It is lengthy but please read it carefully. It is important that people do not panic but it is also important to know what Kennington Primary School is planning and what advice we have. Advice about upcoming school events is contained under item 7 of this message.

Firstly, some definitions we all need to be familiar with;

**Self-isolate** – remain at home and restrict contact with others for 14 days because you've either been confirmed with the virus or you have come into contact with someone who has tested positive for COVID-19.

**Social distancing** – maintaining a distance between yourself and others to minimise the risk of contracting the virus, with a suggested distance of 1.5 metres. This includes limiting physical contact with others.

**Close contact** – having, within the last 14 days, at least 15 minutes of face-to-face contact or the sharing of a closed space for more than 2 hours with someone who has been tested and confirmed as having COVID-19.

## 1. Hygiene

An important step all of us should be taking to help stop the spread of any disease is to practice good hygiene: cover your mouth or nose when coughing or sneezing, wash your hands thoroughly with soap and water on a regular basis (particularly before eating and after using the toilet), avoid close contact with people who are sick and avoid touching your nose, eyes and mouth. Self-distancing is also good practice, particularly if there are confirmed cases of the COVID-19 in the community.

**A Poster that we have put into all toilets and throughout the school (link**

**here):** [https://www.dhhs.vic.gov.au/sites/default/files/documents/202003/Reduce%20your%20risk%20of%20coronavirus%20Poster.pdf?utm\\_source=email+marketing+Mailigen&utm\\_campaign=Direct+Send+-+Emergency&utm\\_medium=email](https://www.dhhs.vic.gov.au/sites/default/files/documents/202003/Reduce%20your%20risk%20of%20coronavirus%20Poster.pdf?utm_source=email+marketing+Mailigen&utm_campaign=Direct+Send+-+Emergency&utm_medium=email)

The symptoms of the coronavirus include fever, breathing difficulties, cough, sore throat, fatigue or tiredness. Having a cough or snuffle does not mean that you have the coronavirus. One of the distinguishing features of the virus in comparison with a common cold or flu is breathing difficulties. However if you are unwell with the symptoms above you should stay at home and not attend school. We are a school, not a medical service and we are not equipped to provide support to students who develop illness during the day. If you are not well enough to be in class, you should not be at school.

If students present with these symptoms we will do what we do with any illness: we will call parents or emergency contacts and we expect the student to be collected from school as soon as possible.

Please respect members of our community and do not engage in unsafe behaviour, try to scare others or make a joke of the risks we all face. We have students and staff who have medical conditions that compromise their immunity, placing them at great risk if they contract the coronavirus.

There seems to be some confusion and concern about the need for people to self-isolate if they perceive a risk through contact with someone who is being tested for the coronavirus. The government advice on this is clear: you only need to self-isolate if you have been in close contact with someone who has been confirmed as having the coronavirus.

## 2. Camps and Excursions

All camps scheduled to commence from and including Tuesday 17 March will be postponed and rescheduled, or, if there is no other option, cancelled.



### 3. International Arrivals

Everyone arriving into Australia from overseas from midnight 15 March will be required to self-isolate for 14 days. This obviously includes students and staff who may be returning from overseas excursions or other travel.

Importantly, it also includes parents and carers and any other relatives or friends of your students who are returning from overseas travel. As they are required to self-isolate, they must not visit the school to pick up children or for any other reason.

I'm aware we have members of our school community planning international travel in the coming holidays. For these people in particular it is important to follow government advice about travel and information from health authorities, including the required self-isolation for 14 days on your return to Australia.

### 4. Swimming

Swimming lessons that are held at a local swimming pool can continue.

### 5. School Closure

No government school is currently closed or in the process of being closed. You will be informed directly if there is any prospect that Kennington Primary School will be closed, either as a stand-alone school closure or as part of a local or area-based closure.

It is possible that at some stage the Kennington Primary School may be forced to close. If this is because of a confirmed coronavirus case within the Kennington Primary School then a closure would possibly be very short; just long enough to identify others who came into close contact with the person who has tested positive to the coronavirus, so that those people can self-isolate and be tested.

It is possible that there may be a longer closure of schools as part of a broader campaign to prevent spread of the virus.

**In the case of a closure of Kennington Primary School – this does not mean that students or staff need to go into self-isolation** (unless they are known to have been in close contact with a confirmed coronavirus case). Students and staff would be free to involve themselves in normal activities at home or in the community, and they should practice safe behaviours in doing so.

If a decision is made to close Kennington Primary School, we are unlikely to have much notice of the closure. It could happen with an hour's notice at the end of a school day or it could occur overnight. If this does occur, we will advise students and parents via our usual means of communication – Kennington Primary School Sentral, text message, email, website and Facebook. Please be monitoring these closely over the coming days and weeks.

### 6. Learning Plan

The Kennington Primary School staff are developing a plan to support continuation of learning in the event of any closure. It may include learning being provided online via Sentral, Mathletics and Literacy Pro. I expect many of our teachers will be quite creative!

Obviously practical activities will be impossible but there is a great deal that can be done and we expect students will engage in this diligently.

There will be adjustments to assessment arrangements as needed. Further details will be provided at the time of any closure.

If Kennington Primary School closes and students are working from home, they should try to maintain their learning at the normal times shown on the timetable where possible to help maintain a routine. Families can expect that teachers will be available to be contacted during those times via email or other means that the teacher advises.



**7. Kennington Primary School Events**

Due to the current concerns we have assessed all of our upcoming Kennington Primary School events and we can advise you that;

**Grade 3-6 Athletics** – postponed until further notice.

**Grade 6 Camp** – we are currently discussing other available dates with the camp venue. If you would like a refund, please contact the office. I will keep you updated as more information becomes available.

**Grade 1 excursion to 'The Gruffalo's Child'** – cancelled. Please contact the office for a full refund of any money paid.

**Harmony Week** – events for the week commencing Monday March 24 have been cancelled.

**The Twilight Fair** – a new date has not been selected yet. If you would like to be reimbursed for your wristband, please contact the office. Please do not send along your donations until further notice.

**Assemblies** – will be held over our speaker system.

There will no doubt be more information we need to share in the coming days. In the meantime, I encourage everyone to remain alert to the risks, to monitor advice through the media and from Kennington Primary School and to practice safe behaviours to prevent the spread of the virus.

Regards,

Travis Eddy  
Principal,  
**Kennington Primary School**