

23 April, 2020

Dear parents and caregivers,

Term 2 will commence on Monday 27th April with a majority of students undertaking their learning in the home environment for weeks 1 and 2. During these first two weeks of Term 2, schools are officially open to the children of essential frontline workers only. However, no student will be turned away from any Catholic school in the Diocese of Armidale. Students who attend school will undertake the same learning experiences as those students who continue their learning from home. All of the information represented in this communication is based on our ongoing focus of the safety and wellbeing of students, staff, parents and caregivers of our school communities.

As you would be aware, the Government has issued a directive for the managed return to school from week three of Term 2, Monday May 11. When we have more information about the requirements for this gradual return to school, we will send further communications to keep you informed.

Information in this letter applies to all schools in the Armidale Diocese; however, each of those 24 schools has a unique school context and as such, additional detailed information from your child's school will follow no later than week 2. [Please see the attached document](#) for more information related to the managed return to school.

The CSO is committed to supporting students and their parents/caregivers, and trusts principals and staff to ensure that we meet the ongoing wellbeing needs and continuity of learning for students throughout their attendance at school. However, this must occur in a manner that is safe for all involved. Any person who meets the [NSW Health definition](#) of 'higher risk' must not attend school for any reason. We ask parents to understand that just as the Government directive is that higher-risk students must not attend school, this applies equally to all higher-risk school staff members.

Therefore, some teachers will continue to work from home and this, together with a range of other factors, will impact the number of staff available at individual schools on any given day. Students who attend school will undertake the same learning experiences as those students who continue their learning from home; however, the learning environment at school may not be the same as a regular school day.

The world is currently facing difficulties not experienced before in our lifetimes. We acknowledge that parents all have a lot on their plate and we urge you to slow down and focus on connections with your children, and to consider your own wellbeing and that of your family unit. Please remember that parents, too, can access the free and confidential counselling services offered to our students through Centacare. Please call Centacare Armidale on 6738 7200 to access this support.

We are extremely confident that our talented and dedicated professional educators will continue to work as highly-effective teams to provide ongoing learning for our students. Please be assured that our dedication to the safety, pastoral care and wellbeing of your children remains our highest priority. Your child's school is here to support you as you work through these changes. Please contact your principal to discuss any urgent or specific issues affecting your family.

Sincerely,



Chris Smyth
Director of Schools
Diocese of Armidale