

Media Release

March 13 2020



Catholic Education SA response to COVID-19

Catholic Education SA has confirmed that a Sacred Heart College student is the first school student in the state to have contracted COVID-19.

The school is working closely with SA Health and families were notified this afternoon. The school will be cleaned over the weekend. Students from two classes will be placed in self-isolation. SA Health will notify parents when students are able to return to the school.

Sacred Heart sports teams will not compete in events this weekend. In addition, the SA Catholic Secondary School Girls Sports Association competitions – including basketball, volleyball, tennis and touch football – planned for this weekend have been cancelled.

An ArchD Radio Awards Night – also planned to occur at the school this evening – has been postponed.

Earlier today, Catholic Education SA sent letters to schools for distribution to parents and caregivers of students in Catholic schools as part of a comprehensive strategy to reduce the spread of COVID-19.

Dr Neil McGoran, Director of Catholic Education SA, said that our thoughts are with the student, their family and wider school community.

“The welfare of our students and staff is our number one priority,” he said.

“A team has been set up to develop a range of initiatives to support all schools and students. The response team has been meeting regularly to prepare for the impact that coronavirus might have on Catholic schools.

“As with Department of Education schools, any impacted school would close for at least 24 hours while it is cleaned, and health authorities trace virus contact between individuals,.

“Health authorities will declare that the school has followed all expected protocols and allow the school to reopen.”

Following discussions with government and health authorities, schools have also been informed of the following:

- If a child is unwell or displays flu like symptoms, parents/caregivers should seek medical advice and not send their child to school. If it is confirmed that a child or a member of their family has coronavirus (COVID-19) the school must be notified as soon as this is known. The child will need to be picked up immediately if he/she is at school.
- Students from families who have recently travelled or transited through mainland China, Iran, South Korea or Italy must self-isolate for 14 days after leaving the high risk country. (This list is subject to updates from the Federal Government)
- Close contacts of a confirmed case of COVID-19 must self-isolate for 14 days since last contact with the confirmed case.
- All returned travellers who develop symptoms (especially fever and cough) within 14 days of returning from anywhere overseas should seek testing for COVID-19, and self-isolate while awaiting test results.
- Any confirmed case of COVID-19 will be excluded from school/childcare/the workplace until they are medically cleared to return.
- Students and staff who have returned to Australia from anywhere else overseas and have no symptoms are able to return to school or work.

Catholic Education SA is also exploring options to minimise the impact on student learning during a school closure.

More information is on the Catholic Education SA website www.cesa.catholic.edu.au/alerts

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