



Friday, 31 July 2020

Dear Park Ridge State High School Parents and Guardians,

I am sorry that it has been a while since you have heard from me personally. A difficult family situation meant that I needed to take some unexpected leave at the end of last term and the beginning of term 3.

COVID-19 Update

I would again like to thank you for all your support over a very difficult time in education. COVID-19 has presented complexity that we are still measuring as we go into Semester 2.

You would all be aware of the recent outbreak in our own area, resulting in the closure of a school not far from us. We put out some initial information on our Facebook page and sent through some communication to all parents and guardians via email yesterday.

Unfortunately, to protect our entire community, I need to put higher restrictions in place.

As of Monday, August 3 2020, parents and non-essential visitors will not be permitted to enter the school. The only exception to this will be scheduled meetings where safe COVID-19 hygiene practices can be observed.

As a result, students will need to be dropped off and picked up at the front of the school on Lancewood Street or at the side of the school on Crest Road. If parents are wanting to pick students up early, could I please ask that you contact the school office and a staff member will walk your child to the Lancewood Street entrance where they can be collected by you.

The uniform shop will not be available for walk-ins; however, uniforms can be purchased online. Parents will also need to make payments online rather than at the finance window.

We will continue to be vigilant with hygiene practices and students will be expected to use the hand sanitiser provided in each classroom when entering. Students choosing not to observe this rule place staff and other students at an added risk. Therefore, we will have no other option but to send these students home for defiance of safety processes. We will also require staff and students to observe the 1.5 metre social distancing rule where possible.

If your child is exhibiting any flu like symptoms, fever or loss of smell, or if your child has come in contact with possible COVID-19 cases; could I please ask you to keep your child home and have them tested before returning to school. We are happy to provide resources for your child to allow them to continue learning from home.

If you are choosing to allow your child to stay home because you would like them to self-isolate, could you please let us know so that we can support a study plan. We cannot provide direct teaching and learning; however, we will endeavour to supply as much self-directed work as possible.

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At the P&C on Monday night some concerns were raised about toilets not being open during lunch breaks, we really appreciated getting this feedback as it provides us with an opportunity to investigate concerns. I want to put your minds at rest, every toilet is not only open during both lunch breaks but also manned by our dedicated teacher-aides. The toilets are being cleaned and re-stocked 3 times a day to ensure high levels of cleanliness. Students tampering with toilet supplies and facilities will suffer high level consequences, it is imperative that we are all looking after our resources to ensure safe environments for every child. If you believe that a facility has not been opened, please let us know immediately so that we can investigate. Teacher-aides are required to keep a log to provide us with updated information and check-ins on appropriate facilities use.

These are difficult times and I want to assure you that we appreciate all your support in working in partnership with us to protect our students. COVID-19 has seen an atypical surge in students suffering from stress and anxiety. This is understandable considering the strain that it has placed on everyone in our community and across the world. Students are turning to social media more and more as a means of connecting with friends and family. Some of this communication is very healthy, and some, unfortunately is unhealthy. Can I ask you to check-in with your child daily to inquire about the social messages they are receiving. If they are damaging or drawing them into negative mind-sets, could I please ask that you contact the school immediately to access support. I will include, in this email, the numbers of support agencies outside of the school that you can also tap into.

I am mindful that this has been a very difficult year for our Year 12's. Not only are they the first cohort to go through the new Senior System, but COVID-19 has robbed them of many of the activities and opportunities afforded to other Year 12 cohorts. Prior to my unexpected leave, I was working closely with the leadership team to develop some unique opportunities to celebrate our senior students. Now that I have returned, I will re-engage in those conversations and provide you with up-dated information soon.

To end on a positive note:

With the school growing exponentially, we have come to a point where we need an Associate Principal role to manage the non-teaching aspects of our school. I am happy to announce that Stuart Douglas has won the acting position for the rest of the semester. I will remain the Executive Principal of Park Ridge SHS and all areas will remain under my supervision. However, this role gives us more flexibility and an added layer of support. Stuart will also retain his responsibilities as DP of Junior Secondary at this stage.



Thank you again for your understanding, your patience and your energy. It has made a very big difference in supporting our entire school community during this difficult time.

Yours sincerely,

Sharon Amos

Principal

Qld Health

<https://www.health.qld.gov.au/news-events/doh-media-releases/releases/queensland-novel-coronavirus-covid-19-update53>

Red Cross

<https://www.redcross.org.au/coronavirus>

Lifeline

<https://www.lifeline.org.au/get-help/topics/mental-health-and-wellbeing-during-the-coronavirus-covid-19-outbreak>

Beyond Blue

<https://www.beyondblue.org.au/the-facts/looking-after-your-mental-health-during-the-coronavirus-outbreak>

Reach out

<https://au.reachout.com/articles/how-to-deal-with-uncertainty-during-coronavirus>

<https://au.reachout.com/articles/10-ways-to-take-care-of-yourself-during-coronavirus>

Black Dog Institute

<https://blackdoginstitute.org.au/COVID-19>

Mind Spot

<https://mindspot.org.au/coronavirus>

Emerging Minds - supporting children during the COVID 19 outbreak

<https://emergingminds.com.au/resources/supporting-children-during-the-coronavirus-covid-19-outbreak/>