



17 March, 2020

Dear Broome cluster school parents and carers,

We are writing to update you on the evolving situation in response to COVID-19. As we have already seen across the world, this situation is likely to continue for some time and is evolving and as such, our preparations must be for the short, medium and long term.

The health and safety of our students is of the utmost importance. As of **Tuesday 17<sup>th</sup> March** the following changes have been made to all Broome schools' activities. We are sure you will appreciate these precautionary measures to restrict gatherings will minimise the risk to our school community in these unprecedented times. We would like to thank you all for your patience and understanding in advance of the following items.

### School Events

In order to keep students safe, all major school events planned for the remainder of Term 1 and Term 2 will be cancelled/postponed:

- Harmony Day (large gatherings; students can still wear orange or traditional clothing on this day)
- Whole school assemblies
- Interschool swimming and sporting carnivals
- School ANZAC ceremonies
- School camps and discos
- Excursions and incursions
- Parent nights (Parent-teacher interviews)

### Hygiene Practices

- Students are encouraged to stay at home if unwell.
- Students will be reminded of handwashing, sneezing, coughing procedures which include sneezing and coughing into the interior elbow. Soap and/or alcohol-based hand gel are readily available in toilets and classes.
- Students will be encouraged to wash hands prior to eating and on returning from play sessions
- Students are encouraged to bring their own water bottles to school. Sharing of food and drinks is discouraged.
- Students are asked not to arrive at school prior to 7:45am.
- Additional school cleaning measures are being put into place.

### Communication

- It is important that your school has your latest contact details. Please contact your school's front office to amend as required. Don't direct enquiries through apps (eg: Seesaw, Connect, Class Dojo) for this purpose.
- **A hard copy** of this letter has been distributed to all families as of Wednesday 18<sup>th</sup> March 2020.
- All staff have been advised of these processes and students have been informed today.
- Cluster schools are in continuous communication with the Department of Education's Coronavirus Support Team and the Department of Health.
- This information is based on our most current advice and we will continue to keep you informed.

## Tips for how you can talk to your children about COVID-19

### Help them to understand:

Find out what they know, this will help you to correct any misunderstandings they might have.

Encourage children to talk about their feelings and explain that their feelings are normal responses to an abnormal situation.

Follow their lead, some children may not want to talk and this is okay. Remind them that you are available to talk to them if they would like to.

Give them age-appropriate facts. In the case of COVID-19 the following websites are helpful sources of accurate information:

<https://www.healthywa.wa.gov.au/coronavirus>

<https://www.who.int/emergencies/diseases/novel-coronavirus-2019>

### Be aware of what they are watching:

Check your own language and responses, during times of stress a child looks to the adults in their life for cues on how to react. Your language and responses might be causing the children in your life to feel more alarm than they need to.

Monitor their intake of social media and news, make sure the information they are getting is accurate and help them to put it into context.

### Provide reassurance:

Events like this can challenge anyone's sense of security. Remind children that you will be there to care for them even if things may seem scary. As much as possible stick to regular family routines.

Give them specific things that they can do to help, for example good hand washing techniques not only help to keep the child strong but can help to keep other more vulnerable people healthy too.

Help them to look for the helpers, for example medical and health professionals globally are working hard to keep people healthy.

Kind Regards,

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