

26th March 2020

Dear Emmaus families and friends

Novel Coronavirus – COVID-19 Update

A commonly used phrase you may have heard is *“you find out what is inside a fruit when it is squeezed”*. During this current time of ‘squeeze’ across the globe, it has been such a personal blessing for me to see so many instances of ‘sweat nectar’ emerge from the broader Emmaus community. It has been so encouraging for our staff to have received so many affirming words of thanks from parents recently, in addition to a range of other tangible gestures of appreciation. Likewise, we have received many offers of physical assistance in any way possible from parents also keen to help. It is such a blessing to be part of a community where service, grace, and gratitude is not just something we talk about but see in action.

I would like to again reassure you that your ongoing trust in the staff at Emmaus is both an honour we highly value, and is very well placed. All staff are working tirelessly to educate and care for your children who are still in physical attendance daily; prepare for a future where full transition to school guided remote learning may take place; while managing the students currently in the transition phase between these two modes of educational delivery due to parent choice. I would like to reassure you irrespective of how this matter unfolds over the coming hours / days / weeks, we have the very best interests for your children well in hand and are ready!

Emmaus remains fully committed to the highest levels of educational service for your children in a **‘full-service’** capacity irrespective of whether the mode of delivery is *‘face-to-face’* or *‘school-guided-remote-learning’*. In either mode, Emmaus will continue to take full responsibility for all curriculum delivery, assessment, and reporting. The wisdom, expertise, knowledge, faith and care for your children from our highly experienced and qualified teaching staff will continue seamlessly, irrespective of what the future may hold. As the Emmaus experience is far more than just the learning, it is with great excitement I share with you the launch of our new “Emmaus Wellbeing resource” which will allow students to continue to seamlessly access counselling, wellbeing and chaplaincy services online. This resource will allow students currently receiving support to continue should we see physical distancing from school, while students seeking support for new circumstances, can easily do so in real time online. I refer you to the below link to further explore this new resource:

<https://sites.google.com/emmauscc.sa.edu.au/wellbeing/>

In order to support families with tracking all COVID-19 related school communication and resources (such as the above-mentioned Wellbeing resource), Emmaus has set up a special link on our website homepage. All new updates will be added to this link together with other communication sent by the school, hence I suggest you bookmark and visit the link regularly

<https://emmauscc.sa.edu.au/news-events/covid-19-updates>

As previously communicated however, urgent news of an unplanned school closure for example will be primarily communicated in the first instance by email, hence be sure to continue regularly checking the email address you have provided the school, especially prior to bedtime in case of a late notification by health authorities.



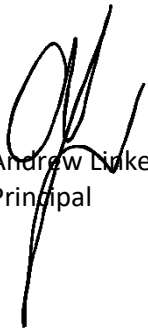
As a school community, we are praying for those within our community who have been financially impacted as a result of this pandemic. If your family financial circumstances have been adversely impacted, I ask that you **do not delay** in contacting Sarah Chilarski (Senior Finance and Administration Officer) who will be able to sensitively and confidentially work this through personally with you. We understand that there will be many in our immediate community impacted in this way and I would like to reassure you our highest priority is to support all impacted families. Sarah's contact details are schilarski@emmauscc.sa.edu.au.

Finally, you may have heard the South Australian Government's announcement today declaring the week leading up to Easter (4 school days of Week 11) as **Pupil Free days (Monday 6th – Thursday 9th April)** across South Australia. Where possible families should make every endeavour to keep their children home on these 4 days. The Government has however, requested that schools provide the opportunity for any 'essential workers' who are unable to make other supervision arrangements for their children on these days to be supervised at school. As these are 'Pupil Free Days' there will be no learning programs being delivered by either remote or face to face means for any students on these days. The arrangement is merely a means of child supervision for essential workers where no other supervision options exist. If you require access to these services on any day between Monday 6th and Thursday 9th April, please notify Debby Scheepers dscheepers@emmauscc.sa.edu.au at Student Services before 4.00pm Thursday 2nd April so supervision arrangements can be put in place.

Teaching staff will be using this valuable pupil free time in Week 11 to refine our already advanced arrangements for anticipated 'school-guided-remote-learning' commencing in Term 2. I will provide subsequent communication about this over the next week as greater clarity becomes available.

I would again like to thank you for your ongoing support of Emmaus. Please let us know if there is any way we can be of further assistance to you at this time.

Blessings



Andrew Linke
Principal