



19th January 2022

Dear Parents/Caregivers

Welcome back to the 2022 school year. It is my prayer that the Christmas season presented you and your family a time to refresh and recharge. Although it will be a start to the school year somewhat different to a 'normal' school year, the notion of 'normal' has been considerably redefined over the last few years anyway!

You have no doubt heard discussions over the last few weeks regarding possible changes to the commencement of the 2022 school year as the COVID Omicron variant spreads rapidly across the nation. Different States are adopting different strategies for school commencement and last week the SA Government announced that:

- Monday (31st January) and Tuesday (1st February) are Student Free Days for ALL year levels – time for teachers to prepare for the new arrangements. No learning programs will be available on these days.
- There will be a staggered start to the school year from Wednesday 2nd Feb with some year levels physically returning to school for face to face learning while other year levels will commence with online learning.
- At this time, the SA Government's intention is for all student to return to face to face on site learning from Monday 14th February (however this date will be reviewed as it approaches I understand).

At Emmaus, on Wednesday 2nd February, the following year levels will physically return to school where they will be taught face to face: **Foundation, Year 1, Year 2, Year 7, Year 8, and Year 12**. In addition to the year level's the Government has stipulated for physical return to school first, Emmaus has included **Year 2's** due to our general structure of 1/2 composite classes. This change is necessary as teachers are unable to simultaneously teach 'face to face' and in 'on line' mode (hybrid) which would be the case if the Year 1's physically returned and Year 2's did not. All other year levels (Year 3-6 and 9-11) will commence on Wednesday 2nd Feb in on line learning mode (not physically on site). As teaching staff are unable to teach in hybrid mode, on line learning is not available for students in year levels where learning is being delivered in face to face mode. Teachers will provide periodic learning updates for such students to ensure their learning can still progress if absent over the first few weeks, but will not be a pseudo on line learning alternative.

In an effort to slow the Omicron spread, parents will not be permitted to enter the school site (past the school gates) for student drop off and pick up with an exception only for Foundation students for the first few days. On **Friday 21st January** each Head of School will send families a letter providing a greater level of specifics pertaining to students in those year levels including:

- Special arrangements for Foundation parents in the first week
- Collection arrangements for Primary age students at the end of school days
- Full details of how online learning will operate for students commencing in that mode
- Arrangements for collection of electronic devices and other materials from the school
- All other details necessary for a smooth and productive start to the school year for all students

If your child(ren) are in Year Levels which are not physically returning to school on Wednesday 2nd Feb and you are required to physically attend your place of work and **do not have any other appropriate supervision at home**, your child(ren) are able to physically attend school to be supervised while they undertake their online learning programs. It is important to understand this is only for supervision of your child(ren), they will not receive face to face teaching as their teacher(s) will be completely occupied with their online teaching responsibilities. If you need this supervision for your child(ren) **it is necessary that you pre-register your children** for every day required by replying to an email Debby Scheepers will subsequently send to you. For supervision arrangements, it is critical the College knows numbers ahead of time.



From Wednesday 2nd February, OSHC, Canteen, and College Bus services will also operate as normal. However, to slow the Omicron spread, all other school events / activities outside of the delivery of the core curriculum will be postponed / modified. As such there will be no College assemblies, excursions, incursions, camps, sporting or music events, parent events etc for at least the first 2 weeks of school. In their correspondence with you on Friday 21st January, each Head of School will communicate with you in relation to some of these specifics (such as how Parent Information Evenings will still operate, but in a COVID safe way).

Based on SA Health advice, the following measures need to be implemented in schools in order to minimise the spread of COVID-19:

- Please keep your child home if they are unwell, even mildly. Students exhibiting even mild symptoms will be sent to First Aid and subsequently sent home.
- Masks are required for all adults when indoors (except if it is hindering our staff's ability to communicate effectively while teaching).
- Masks are **strongly recommended** indoors, for students in Years 7 to 12 and **strongly encouraged** for students in Years 3 to 6. Please discuss the importance of mask wearing with your children in support of preserving face to face learning.
- Physical distancing requirements will be maintained where possible.
- Student intermingling will be minimised indoors, for example across class groups or year levels.
- Non-essential visitors will be limited on site.

I would like to thank you for your ongoing support of Emmaus as we navigate together this complex start to the 2022 school year. As mentioned above, I ask that you hold off raising any questions of your respective Head of School until after you have received their follow up more detailed correspondence on Friday 21st January where I am confident these will be addressed. Following Friday's correspondence, if you still have unanswered questions, please follow up with the relevant Head of School.

Blessings

Andrew Linke
Principal