

24 April 2020



Our Lady of Mercy College

Dear Parents and Caregivers,

As you are aware, the last six weeks have been an incredibly challenging time for everyone. The COVID-19 virus has impacted on every aspect of our daily lives. Education has been no exception. I do want to thank you for your ongoing support and commitment to Our Lady of Mercy College.

We are looking forward to school recommencing on Wednesday 29 April and we are especially excited about welcoming back our Year 11 and 12 students for direct face to face teaching and learning on campus.

I would like to remind you that Our Lady of Mercy College is open for your child to attend if you so choose, and we welcome their attendance. The recent advice from the WA Chief Health Officer, Dr Andrew Robertson confirms that the risk of transmission of the virus in the school setting is low. Of course, you need to make an informed decision about whether you wish to send your child to school at this time.

Additionally, please understand that our school may be operating a little differently at the moment due to the physical distancing requirements. Whilst the Prime Minister has made a recent announcement today in relation to schools via a media statement, the College will respond appropriately following the provision of details through the usual channels.

To ensure that we respect whatever decision you make about your child's attendance, and to enable equity for all students, our teachers will be delivering the curriculum by "one mode" of instruction. This means that whether your child is physically attending school or working from home they will be provided with the same teaching and learning opportunities.

Additionally, please be assured that whether your child is working at school or home, they will be provided with help, although the manner that this assistance is provided will vary.

If you do have concerns or questions about how your child will be supported, I would ask that, in the first instance, you contact your child's teacher. If there are continuing concerns, please contact the relevant Head of Year.



There has recently been public and media attention regarding fees in Catholic schools and a suggestion that parents should receive discounts. I would respectfully like to make the following points;

1. Parents have been guaranteed that their child's place at Our Lady of Mercy College is guaranteed regardless of a parent's financial situation. I have already provided you with information regarding fee relief and information regarding the Health Care Card discount scheme. I encourage you to contact our Finance Officer, Michelle Williams on (08) 9720 3302 if you have any concerns regarding school fees. Any such arrangements are, of course, confidential.
2. It is our intention to refunded/credit you the cost of any events or activities that you have been charged for and which are now not occurring.
3. All members of our wonderful staff have continued to work very hard to support your child's education. You will understand that they have continued to be paid for their work. We rely on your school fees to assist us in meeting this significant ongoing financial obligation.
4. Please be assured that our annual fees and charges are set at the lowest possible level to balance our yearly budget. All Catholic schools are not-for-profit, which means that if there are any surplus funds left at the end of any year, they are automatically used to offset future fee increases and/or fund future improvements for our students, including equipment and facilities.

We are currently planning for this arrangement to be in place for the first four weeks of the term with a review taking place mid-May. However, as you know this situation is fluid and we will continue to respond to health and government advice.

Our staff are missing the vibrancy and excitement of having all our students at school and we are looking forward to the time, hopefully in the not too distant future, when we will see a full return to our physical school site by all our students.

In the meantime, we will continue to offer our students the very best teaching and learning opportunities possible, whether they are at school or home.

Regards,



Rob Crothers
Principal

