



Penola
CATHOLIC COLLEGE
EST. 1995

8th April 2020

Dear Parents,

Following my communication to you on March 18, Penola Catholic College will begin its remote learning plan, as of Wednesday April 15. I write to you today understanding that this is an increasingly challenging time for our community which has brought with it large shifts in our daily lives. I want to reassure you that the school is well prepared for the impact of COVID-19.

With our enviable learning support systems such as MyPenola, Microsoft Teams, OneDrive, Education Perfect, Edrolo and JacPlus to name just a few, we are well-placed to ensure that your daughter/son can undertake their learning routines. Our staff have been planning for courses to be moved online since last term so that students can work from home in a seamless way. In terms of your own planning as a parent, it would be my recommendation that you also set (high) expectations early with your child/children and ensure that a daily schedule is agreed upon and followed, daily. As parents, you have a critical role in helping the school manage the learning for your daughter/son. Encourage your child to be proactive and committed to their school work and to stay connected with the school, their peers and their teachers. If matter arise, please keep the lines of communication open, and contact the College so that we can wrap support around those in need. We also encourage parents to download the MyPenola App where notifications can be sent as well as the College website which has a dedicated COVID -19 Updates page.

The goal of the College is to maintain our school learning routines as much as possible. To this end, teachers will be making themselves available to students throughout the day (via email and the Social Stream on MyPenola predominately), in general, during their normal timetabled classes. However, for some of our teachers this will not always be possible as they too will be managing young and older family members from home too. Rest assured, there will always be a teacher for your child to liaise with during each and every lesson, even if it is not their regular teacher. We have comprehensively investigated further segments of Microsoft Teams (and its online security) and its capabilities for streaming small segments of lessons with the aim to trial this in pilot classes during week 3. For those families involved with the student enhancement department, you would have received a letter on March 25 addressing how the College will continue those services for your child. For parents of Year 11 & 12 students, notifications around updates are on the VCE page on MyPenola and will be made available to parents as soon as we receive the information.

Teaching staff will be available during the normal school hours to respond to emails as per usual however, they will not be available 24/7, nor will they be available during their timetabled classes. Therefore, if you notice staff communicating with your child during his/her lessons, this is not the time to communicate with the staff member as this is likely to be occurring as part of a timetabled lesson and include the children of other parents too. For your reference, attached to this letter is a copy of the Parent

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Remote Learning Plan as well as a flyer that all students received last term so that you have a greater understanding of the vital role you play and the expectations of this partnership.

Together, our community is collaborating to maximise the learning potential for each child. The importance of the partnership between home and College will never be stronger than during self-isolation. It presents its own challenges but also an opportunity to slow down and reflect in prayer as we join our globalised community in remote learning, with the continuity of learning for all children as the common endeavour. As mentioned, the lines of communication must endure for this to be most successful and there will undoubtedly be hiccups along the way. However, united by our shared responsibility and care for each student, the College is confident that no student will be left behind and that each need will be carefully catered to in this time. We will be making weekly contact with all families just to touch base, receive feedback and address any concerns that you may have. More support and strategies on how to assist your child/children is available on the COVID-19 Updates page.

I wish you a happy and holy Easter and trust that you will be counting your blessings much more fiercely in a time like this.

Yours truly

John McKay

Deputy Principal – Learning and Teaching

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