



21 April 2020

PARENT AND CAREGIVER LETTER

Term Two Update

Dear Parents

I hope you are continuing to enjoy some quality family time during the holiday break and that your Easter celebration was joyfully spent with loved ones at home.

A week seems like a very long time for those of us working in schools, as we find ourselves having to adjust to changes that come our way, and require us to quickly adapt to new situations.

As you may be aware, Premier Mark McGowan announced Term Two arrangements for **public schools** in Western Australia on Friday 17 April. The following sets out arrangements for Term Two for Matthew Gibney Catholic Primary School, which reflects the guiding principles of Catholic Education Western Australia (CEWA):

1. The health and safety of our students and staff remain our first priority.
2. All students will continue to be provided with a quality Catholic education.
3. Decisions regarding school education will continue to be informed by national and state-based health and education advice, and align with the National Principles for School Education.

All schools in WA will commence Term Two on Wednesday 29 April and Matthew Gibney Catholic Primary School will provide one mode of learning until Friday 22 May, with a review taking place on 18 May.

Parents are asked to note the following important points about the commencement of school for Term Two:

- From the start of Term Two, parents and caregivers **may choose to keep their children at home** to engage in flexible, remote learning, using the online platforms and work packs.
- Work packs will be available for collection on Tuesday 28th April at 9.00am.
- The Remote Learning Plan outline was emailed to all families during the last week of Term One. This plan will continue to be applied in Term Two.
- As has been the case since our school transitioned to flexible and remote learning in Term One, this approach particularly allows parents and caregivers who are engaged in essential services, or are required to maintain employment, to send their children to school if they are unable to care for them at home.

- Should parents and caregivers choose to send their children to school, these students will engage in the same mode of learning being provided to students learning from home. Staff at Matthew Gibney Catholic Primary School will provide supervision and assistance for students to engage with the remote learning package, but not face-to-face teaching for students attending school in person.
- **Parents and caregivers need to advise the school via an email to the administration office (admin@gibney.wa.edu.au), by Thursday 23rd April if their child will be attending, ,**
- This is necessary to ensure appropriate plans are in place to comply with the Department of Health's physical distancing advice. It also ensures the school is able to make appropriate arrangements for student supervision while ensuring teaching and learning continues.
- Medically compromised students are asked to remain at home until they receive a medical clearance to attend school.

The Three Year Old Program

The Three Year Old Program at Matthew Gibney Catholic Primary School will continue to be closed until the 22nd May. Parents will be informed prior to this date about a recommencement of the program. I am most grateful to our parents for their understanding about the need to close the program for the short term.

Drop Off and Pick Up Arrangements

In accordance with instructions provided by the WA Minister for Education, parents and caregivers are not permitted on school property, other than to drop off or pick up their children. At Matthew Gibney Catholic Primary School, parents are required to:

- Kindy and Pre-Primary children are to be dropped off and collected from the Kindy/PP play ground gate. The gate will be open at 8.30am in the mornings and again at 3.00pm in the afternoons. A staff member from Kindy and Pre-Primary will be available to meet the children in the mornings and escort them to their classes. The children will be supervised by a staff member in the afternoons as they wait to be collected by their parents from the under cover area near the gate.
- Students from Year One to Year Six will need to be dropped off at the main gate. A staff member will be available at the gate to meet the children and escort them to their classes. Staff members will be available in the afternoons to supervise the children as they are collected by parents from the gate or as they wait for the car park drive through.

Communication with Staff and Collecting Children During the School Day

- Parents who need to speak to a class teacher or have a message for the office must telephone or email for the time being.
- Parents who need to collect or drop off a student outside of normal school hours must ring the bell at the front gate and a staff member will come out to assist you.

Additional Information

- Assemblies, excursions, interschool activities and school-based co-curricular activities will not recommence until advice is received from the Department of Health that it is safe to do so.

- The school canteen will be open commencing Tuesday 5th May. A revised menu will be sent home on Tuesday 27th April. A basket will be available outside the administration office for the students to place their order bags into. Parents will be unable to pay for canteen orders in person. Please ensure that the money is placed in your child's canteen order bag.
- Students attending in Term Two will need to wear their Winter Uniform.
- The school will continue to ensure that environmental cleaning practices are in place, with enhanced routines where necessary.
- Students will be required to continue with the hygiene practices put in place in Term One and will need to follow the physical distancing measures that are needed to ensure the safety of all students and staff.
- Students learning from home need to refer to the Remote Learning Plan, available on the school website and sent to all families last term, for details about communication.
- Parents are reminded that staff will reply to emails or Seesaw messages from parents during normal school hours and within a 24 hour period. Staff are not expected to respond to emails or messages from parents and/or students during the weekend.

I wish to reiterate that during this period, our staff will continue to ensure we best support our students' learning from home, as well as those students who may be at school. We acknowledge that it will be important to maintain regular contact between the school and parents and caregivers.

At this difficult time, I wish to reassure every parent and caregiver that the ongoing enrolment of every child in our school is guaranteed. I encourage parents seeking financial support arrangements to discuss one of the following options, which are immediately available to all families with children in Catholic schools:

- The Centrelink Health Care Card Discount Scheme provides an automatic fee concession to the holders of eligible means-tested family concession cards. **This discount applies to all year levels from Kindergarten to Year 12.** Additional financial considerations are also available depending on each family's circumstance.
- For parents and caregivers who do not qualify for the Health Care Card discount, but who are experiencing financial difficulties, arrangements can be made to provide immediate support to assist you with tuition costs.

I will keep you updated with any new information as it becomes available. Thank you for your continuing support during these challenging times. It is greatly appreciated.

Yours sincerely

Therese Hussey
PRINCIPAL

