



*From the desk of the Principal*

27 March 2020

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Dear Parents and Carers

Let me begin by saying how much we miss all our students. It is not the same without them at the college. The laughter, joy and the fun they bring with them each day enriches our lives. Although we are concerned for our students' health and well-being, we know that they are safe and well with their loved ones.

### **PROTECTING OUR COMMUNITY**

During our term break it is our usual practice to implement a cleaning and maintenance schedule. Current evidence suggests that novel coronavirus may remain viable for hours to days on surfaces made from a variety of materials. To limit the spread of COVID-19, upgraded hospital strength disinfectants are being used and cleaning has intensified with new protocols to aid in the clean-up. Additional cleaners have been employed to wipe down high contact surfaces, such as door handles, desks and other surfaces in heavily trafficked areas. Once a room has been cleaned and 'fogged' it will be taped and sealed off until the college reopens. Not only are we limiting the spread of pathogenic material we are hoping to alleviate some anxiety along the way. Please note that the entire college will be closed until the resumption of school whilst this process takes effect.

### **COLLEGE STAFFING OVER THE BREAK**

Although the college is physically closed, reception will be 'open' to phone and email contact during the school holidays. Due to the aforementioned cleaning, designated non-teaching staff will be working from home or taking scheduled leave so you are still welcome to contact us if the need arises.

### **MOTIVATION FOR ON-LINE LEARNING**

Research shows that routine and structure are important components for effective use of time when working from home. In a time of disconnection and social distancing, connection to our community **college spirit** is more important than ever.

To keep students motivated, the first rule of studying from home is never wear pyjamas or casual tracksuits. Here are a few reasons why students should be 'dressed appropriately' in their college uniform:

1. As a school all our Child Safe Policies must be stringently applied to ensure the integrity of the teaching environment.
2. You will be taking part in live, online lessons – where you can be seen and heard by your teachers and classmates.

3. To stop your brain thinking it is bedtime or lounging around time.
4. Being dressed properly really does matter. Focusing on classmates in their pyjamas or what they are wearing is a distraction.
5. Appropriate dress shows respect for the academic environment.
6. Wearing the college uniform sets a respectful tone for your teacher who will also be dressed professionally.
7. Not everyone has designer clothes. As a college, we believe in equal opportunity and justice. That is why we have global fees so no one misses out on trips and excursions, everyone has the same laptop, in short, a consistent uniform with simple affordable accessories.

A few of our Year 7 students do not have their winter uniform as yet. These students may wear their full summer uniform and wear their winter uniform when they are able to collect it from the uniform shop.

#### **CULTURALLY AND LINGUISTICALLY DIVERSE PARENTS**

A reminder that CALD Parents have access to translated information re Coronavirus on these links:

- <https://www.health.gov.au/resources/translated>
- <https://www.health.gov.au/resources/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-what-you-need-to-know>
- <https://www.education.vic.gov.au/about/department/Pages/coronavirus.aspx>

#### **PRAYERS**

You may wish to read the post on our [website](#) from a woman in Seattle, Cameron Wiggins Bellm and this [letter from Bishop Paul](#) in which he shares a Prayer from the Bishops of Australia. As people may be working from home there are several sites where you can access prayer resources and reflections:

Jesuit Communications - [Pray.com](#)

Irish Jesuits - [Sacred Space](#)

Independent Catholic Group - [Catholic Gallery](#)

Jesuit Media Initiatives - [Pray as you go](#)

#### **FINALLY**

These are uncertain times but I want to reassure you that we are doing all we can to support you and your child. The college is keen that no student is disadvantaged in their educational endeavours as a result of the COVID-19 situation. Any family adversely affected may contact the college Business Manager, Mr David Lim for a confidential discussion. I ask each of you to reach out to your neighbour and be aware that we can all do *something* to assist. Please do not hesitate to contact us at the college if we can be of assistance. We would like to thank everyone for your kindness and support, especially our **wonderful parents and families**. I have achieved a personal best in the number of letters I have sent to you over the past few weeks and I appreciate that you have taken the time to read each and every one.

May God bring comfort to our community in their need.

Blessings



**Mrs Marg Blythman**

Principal

# Why do I need to wear my college uniform for remote learning?

Along with the rest of the world, St Joseph's College is treading new ground during the COVID-19 pandemic. We must all adapt to ever-changing conditions, discover new ways of doing things and attempt to establish new routines.

As a college, we are ready for anything the future will bring. Using the latest technology, we have established remote learning to maintain our commitment to families and preserve the education of all students.

Clear remote learning guidelines will allow everyone to benefit from this new experience. All rules and regulations, no matter how small, will unify our college community despite necessary distancing measures.

To keep everyone motivated and dedicated to their education when studying from home, we must continue to act as though we still attend campus daily.

Here are a few reasons why students should be 'dressed appropriately' in their college uniform when learning remotely:

1. Safety is always a priority. As a school, all our Child Safe Policies must be stringently applied to ensure the integrity of the teaching environment.
2. Everyone wants to look good on camera. The online classes you will take part in are **live**. Your teachers and fellow classmates will be able to see and hear you.
3. Dressing the part helps you set the right mindset and tone for the day. Class time is learning time.
4. Minimising any distractions will make remote learning more effective. When everyone wears their uniform, we can focus on the work at hand.
5. Your college uniform is a powerful symbol of unity, respect, our virtues and our values. We need to live them now perhaps more than ever before.
6. Wearing the college uniform shows that you take remote learning seriously. Everyone is responsible for setting a respectful tone by dressing professionally.
7. Uniforms signify equality, equal opportunity and justice. St Joseph's College has global fees so that everyone is on equal footing and no one misses out. All students can go on trips and excursions, have the same laptop and wear a consistent uniform with simple, affordable accessories.

What we wear matters as much as how we behave and what we say. We cannot faithfully represent ourselves and the college whilst wearing pyjamas, tracksuits and casual clothing.

Please remember that your uniform represents part of the reason why we are all working so hard to maintain a positive attitude and stand strong to successfully navigate the next several weeks.