

From the desk of the Principal

20 August 2020

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Dear St Joseph's College families

I hope you are all well and staying safe during this time. As I write this letter we are now into week three of remote learning. I know that remote learning can pose many challenges and difficulties for our families so I wish you well and remind you that all the staff at St Joseph's College will do all they can to support you through this time.

The purpose of this letter is to try and inform you about the impact the current coronavirus pandemic is having on college finances and the effect this may have on school fees.

In some areas of the school, costs have been significantly reduced as a result of the pandemic. Areas in the college that show financial savings centre around a large number of events not taking place. While we have and will be doing whatever we can to reschedule significant events, the likelihood is that some of these events may not be able to take place at all in 2020 given our current circumstances with reduced on-site schooling in Term 3. In addition, costs relating to subject excursions, sporting competitions and staff professional learning have been reduced, which has resulted in the school saving costs associated with travel.

On the other side of the ledger, however, we have had to spend a significant amount of money upgrading our IT infrastructure to cope with remote learning. Other increased spending that has taken place has been in the cleaning and maintenance budget of the school. Our staffing costs have increased due to employing an additional three cleaners to ensure high contact areas are regularly disinfected. We have also put in place many safety measures to accommodate the extra hygiene and cleaning requirements to keep our students and staff as safe as possible; this includes the purchase and installation of many hand sanitizers throughout the school grounds, as well as additional cleaning products for all parts of the college.

Some of our families have been directly impacted by the pandemic in terms of losing employment or by a reduction in hours of employment resulting in a loss of income. We are supporting many of these families and will continue to do so. We also welcome and encourage all families who are experiencing financial hardship for any reason to make contact with us so that we can provide you with support.

In terms of the overall balance sheet, we will not be in a position to know the exact impact of this pandemic until much later in the year. As the situation currently stands, we do not know how many more of our families will be affected, nor how many events we will be able to reschedule and run later in the year. So many factors are dependent on what happens with the evolving situation of COVID-19.

Please be assured that we have been discussing school fees and the overall financial position of the school at Executive level. If the school does end up in a favourable financial position by the end of the year as a result of the cancelled activities, we will definitely be looking at providing some refund or fee relief to our families. At this stage we do not know what that will look like in terms of amounts or particular year levels as we don't have a clear picture of what any surplus might be.

We will keep you all informed on this matter as it is under constant review. In the interim, I cannot stress enough the importance of making contact with Mr David Lim our Business Manager, if you are experiencing financial hardship so that we can provide you with assistance. David can be contacted at the college on 5018 8000 or [email](#).

If you have any questions relating to the information included in this letter, please do not hesitate to make contact with [David](#) or [myself](#).

God bless

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'M Blythman', with a long, sweeping flourish extending to the right.

Mrs Marg Blythman
Principal