

3 April 2020

Dear Parents and Carers,

I hope you and your family are well and that your child/children are engaging with their online learning. As we work in partnership for the education of your child/children, especially in these times, I want to thank you for your support and understanding as we continue to respond to directions from Government and Health authorities.

With the outbreak of COVID-19, change and uncertainty has presented itself to the students and to you as a family. I am very conscious of the circumstances that many families are facing.

I am very proud of the amazing work the staff of the College are doing to provide continuity of learning for the students via an online mode. Structures have been put in place to support online learning, faith formation and the wellbeing of students while working from home and for those who attend the College daily. We remain committed to providing a quality Catholic education for the students in our care.

Marist schools in Australia are not unfamiliar with the impact of periods of great challenge such as the recession of the 1890s, the Great Depression and in more recent times the Global Financial Crisis. During these times, many families were supported by Marist Brothers and the broader Catholic community to maintain their commitment to the provision of a Catholic education for their children. These serve to remind us of the resilience, resolve and hopefulness of our school communities.

As the spread of the COVID-19 pandemic increases across Australia, the initial economic impacts of this crisis are becoming evident with the loss of jobs and a significant downturn in business activity. Many of you as well as family members and friends have suddenly been placed in circumstances unthinkable a month ago. In addition, the impact of the drought is still very real. There is hope with current rain to provide continual relief. Several families have informed the College of changes to their financial circumstances in the short term. The support of all families, especially those in most need at this time is a priority for the College.

In consultation with Marist Schools Australia, I want to reiterate the College's position regarding school fees to provide some certainty for you in regard to the ongoing education of your child.

The enrolment of a current student at Red Bend Catholic College will not be terminated/suspended owing to outstanding fees in circumstances where the family has made genuine efforts to communicate their circumstances in accordance with College procedures and MSA policies.

I would encourage any family who is experiencing financial hardship to contact me at the College via phone 68522000 or via email principal@redbendcc.nsw.edu.au

I am also acutely aware of the concern from our boarding families regarding the cost of boarding fees while the students are at home with you. Please be assured that I will respond to boarding families in the near future regarding this matter.


The impact of the COVID-19 pandemic is fast changing and uncertain. The College will continue to provide ongoing communication to you via email and you can access updates on the College website under the *Our College* tab in the *Parent Information* section. Be assured of our support for your family at this time.

As we approach the end of term , **online learning for students will conclude on Tuesday 7 April**. This will allow the teaching staff to have a planning day on Wednesday 8 April to prepare online learning for term 2. This will also give them the opportunity to evaluate online learning and to continue to improve the learning experience for the students. The College will still be open to supervise students on Wednesday 8 April for those families who are required to partake in essential work.

Thank you for your support especially over recent weeks. We will continue to keep you updated over the holiday period. Online classes for term 2 will commence on Tuesday 28 April.

May Mary, our Good Mother, continue to be for us our source of strength and hopefulness.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Stephen Dwyer', with a small flourish at the end.

Stephen Dwyer
Principal