



3 April 2020

PARENT UPDATE: PUPIL FREE DAYS - TUESDAY APRIL 7 - THURSDAY APRIL 9

Dear Parents and Carers

The College was informed late last night by CSNSW that all Dioceses across the state have now gazetted the last week of term as Pupil Free days. This decision was made in anticipation that we will commence Term 2 with an off-campus delivery of teaching and learning that is likely to be for an extended period of time. Throughout the day, I have been consulting with EREA and the Diocese of Broken Bay and we have established the following plan for the last week of term. On Monday April 6, we will continue to conduct online lessons as we have been for the last two weeks. **However, Tuesday April 7 through to Thursday April 9, will be Pupil Free days.**

Throughout the last three days, teachers will be provided with much needed planning time to develop teaching resources, administrative processes and participate in ongoing professional learning in preparation for the commencement of Term 2. This final stage is critical in facilitating the effective transition to a complete online delivery of teaching and learning for this extended period. Students will not be required to participate in class work online throughout these three days. Senior students will be required to complete all assessments that were due throughout this week and your teachers will be available to provide feedback via normal communication mediums, but not necessarily during the scheduled lesson. We also encourage senior students to use this time wisely in consolidating their learning through the establishment of a revision program.

We have been trialling an online delivery of teaching and learning for just over a week and it is very pleasing to see how most students have engaged and responded in a positive way. The feedback that we have received from students, parents and teachers has been invaluable. As anticipated however, the rapid rate in which we have been required to adopt a whole new approach has provided challenges for some students.

The feedback has indicated that boys have been challenged by the need to focus on six different subjects each day, all with separate instructions, varying levels of work requirements and a reduced opportunity to engage with their teachers. On Monday April 6 and then continuing throughout next term, we will transition into an altered timetable which is structured around three double periods, rather than six single periods, four days of the week. Double periods will allow more time for teachers to engage with students, provide feedback on learning as well as reduce the stress for students having to focus on six different lessons in one day. On Wednesday, the timetable will consist of three periods with no lessons scheduled in the afternoon. This free time is designed to break up the week and allow students to have some free time, away from their screens in the hope that they will engage in activities that will promote both physical and mental wellbeing. Senior students however are encouraged to use this time to devote to the completion of assessment tasks, additional reading and research. Teachers will meet on Wednesday afternoons to evaluate and collaborate on future learning activities and therefore will not be available online for feedback. This new timetable will be available on the student portal on Monday.

A range of strategies have also been developed to support teachers in monitoring student engagement with their online learning and protocols established to provide feedback to students and report to parents if concerns arise. We encourage parents to continue to support students in establishing positive learning routines while at the same time allowing them to develop greater independence and responsibility for their learning, urging them to continue to seek regular feedback from their teachers.

I apologise for the late notification in the change of plans for next week and I thank families for their ongoing support and patience. Please do not hesitate to contact me at principal@stedwards.nsw.edu.au if you have any questions or would like to discuss the information outlined in this letter.

Yours sincerely

Mark Bonnici
College Principal

