



July 2021

### COMMENCEMENT OF TERM 3

Dear Parents and Carers

Based on the advice we have received from the NSW Government Health Department, Catholic Schools NSW and EREA in relation to the extension of the lockdown in Sydney, Blue Mountains, Central Coast and Wollongong, the following plan has been established regarding the commencement of Term 3.

1. A Staff Development Day has been scheduled on Monday July 12, to allow teachers time to prepare for the delivery of home-based learning, which will commence on Tuesday July 13. The NSW Premier will provide further advice throughout next week on the transition to face to face teaching for all years. We will establish a plan based on this advice and share this with you as soon as possible.
2. Home-based learning will be delivered via Microsoft Teams and it is expected that all students log in online at the commencement of every lesson and participate in a live Microsoft Teams meeting with their teachers. Student participation in this meeting is compulsory and attendance will be recorded. Parents will be notified if their son is not engaging in these live meetings or if work or assessment items are not being completed. Teachers will continue to use the meeting time created throughout each period to be available to provide feedback to students when required. Access to these meetings will be made available to the boys via their class page for each subject in Canvas, our online Learning Management System. These links will be available by the afternoon of Monday July 12. The work set for every lesson will also be available to students on the Student Portal.
3. A normal five period day will operate commencing on Tuesday Week A. Teachers will be available for 50-minutes of the one-hour lesson to allow teachers and students 10 minutes to prepare for their next lesson. We will follow the normal three periods on Friday for Years 7-10, with no classes scheduled for the Friday afternoon for these year groups allowing students to have some screen free time. Students in Years 11 will have a one-hour period on Friday afternoon which will appear on their timetable on the portal. Students studying HSC subjects that require a Major Work component where appropriate will be invited to attend a face-to face practical lesson on Friday afternoon following the strict protocols that were established for these classes over the holiday break.
4. Pastoral Leaders for Year 7-12 will be conducting a compulsory online Microsoft Teams Meeting on Tuesday July 13 to commence the day. This meeting will commence at 9.00am and conclude at 9.40am. Classes will commence at 10.00am with Period 2 Tuesday Week A. At these meetings Pastoral Leaders will reinforce the expectations of students in relation to home-based Learning. All students will receive a letter from me outlining these expectations over the coming days. Students will receive an email with a link to these meetings on Monday to enable them to join this meeting. This link will also appear on each student's calendar in Microsoft Teams.
5. If students experience technical difficulties, they can contact our Information Services department at: [helpdesk@stedwards.nsw.edu.au](mailto:helpdesk@stedwards.nsw.edu.au) or by phone on 4321 6444 between 9am – 3pm.



6. If the occupation of parents is in the essential services or if a parent has returned to work and a student cannot work from home, supervision will be provided at the College. Students attending school will engage in parallel learning, following the same lesson structure and online learning activities as students working at home. It is **mandatory for all staff and students** who attend school next week, to wear a mask at all times while at school and travelling to and from school. Students are required to bring their own mask. Normal school buses will commence operation next week.

I ask that **only parents who intend on sending their son to school**, complete the survey available at: [School Attendance Survey Link](#) by Monday July 12 at 12.00pm, so that adequate supervision can be established. Please note that there will be no canteen facilities during the first week of term and students will need to bring a reusable water bottle which can be refilled at our cold-water filling stations. The heightened hygiene restrictions placed on schools do not permit the use of water fountains.

7. Parents are not permitted to attend the College Campus throughout next week. College Staff will be answering calls on 4321 6400 throughout each day between the hours of 8.30am and 3.30pm to answer any questions or refer queries on to the appropriate member of staff. Parents are also able to email [info@stedwards.nsw.edu.au](mailto:info@stedwards.nsw.edu.au). Please be patient as we will endeavour to respond to questions as quickly as possible.
8. The Academic Assemblies that were scheduled for week one of term three have been postponed to a date yet to be decided.
9. I have included below some additional information for parents regarding supporting your sons during home-based learning.

I thank families for your ongoing patience and support. I will continue to provide updates based on the advice received from Catholic Schools NSW and NSW Government Health Department. Please feel assured that the ongoing safety of staff and students is paramount in any decisions or planning in response to COVID-19.

Please do not hesitate to contact me on 4321 6400, or at [principal@stedwards.nsw.edu.au](mailto: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



## Expectations and Protocols associated with Home-Based Learning.

### Student responsibilities during home-based learning

- It is compulsory for all students access their timetabled Microsoft Teams meeting at the commencement of each lesson.
- Establishing and/or following a daily routine for learning
- Identifying a safe, comfortable, quiet space in their home where they can work effectively and successfully.
- Regularly monitoring digital platforms and communication (Office365, canvas, email, education perfect, one note etc) to check for announcements and feedback from teachers.
- Completing tasks with integrity and academic honesty, doing your best work
- Doing their best to meet timelines, commitments and due dates.
- Communicating proactively with their teachers if they cannot meet deadlines or require additional support.
- Collaborating and supporting their classmates in their learning
- Complying with the college's acceptable use of ICT policy
- Seeking out and communicating with school staff as different needs arise

### Parents are encouraged to support their son(s) with their learning by:

- Establishing routines and expectations
- Defining a space for your child to work in
- Monitoring communications from teachers
- Beginning and ending each day with a check-in
- Taking an active role in helping your children process their learning.
- Encouraging physical activity and/or exercise
- Checking in with your child regularly to help them manage stress.
- Monitoring how much time your child is spending online.
- Keeping your children social but set rules around their social media interactions.

### Establishing routines and expectations

We encourage students to plan their day around their school timetable. Allocating time to complete the work set in the allotted time. This timetable should also include using breaks for activity, eating and drinking. During breaks, it is important that students get up and move around.

### Setting up a learning environment

Try to create a quiet and comfortable learning space. Your child may have a regular place for doing homework under normal circumstances, but this space may not be suitable for working in for an extended period.

A space/location for extended learning should be planned with your son. For the younger years, a public/family space, may be appropriate, but for more senior years as students are more independent a bedroom or study may be more suitable. It should be a





place that can be quiet at times and have a strong wireless internet signal, if possible. Above all, it should be a space where you or another adult is present and monitoring your children's learning.

## Wellbeing

Being confined to home for an extended period can cause stress and conflict. Tips for looking after your children during isolation include:

- Talking to your whole family about what is happening. Understanding the situation will reduce their anxiety.
- Help your children to think about how they have coped with difficult situations in the past and reassure them that they will cope with this situation too. Remind them that the isolation will not last for long.
- Exercise regularly. Options could include exercise DVDs, body resistance and floor exercises, yoga, Pilates, walking or using home exercise equipment, such as a stationary bicycle, if you have it. Exercise is a proven treatment for stress and depression.
- Encourage your children to keep in touch with family members and friends via telephone, email or social media (where appropriate).
- The Pastoral team including the Director of Pastoral Care, the Year Group Pastoral Leaders, Leader of Well-Being, Counsellors and College Counsellors, will be available to support any boys and their families who may be experiencing distress. The email addresses of your son's teachers and Pastoral Leader are available on the Student Portal.

## Communicating with your child

We encourage you to start and finish each day with a simple check-in. These check-ins need to be a regular part of each day and start straight away. Not all students thrive in a remote learning environment; some struggle with too much independence or lack of structure and the check-ins help keep them on track.

In the morning, ask:

- What are you learning today?
- What are your learning targets or goals?
- How will you be spending your time?
- What resources do you require?
- What support do you need?

In the afternoon, ask:

- What went well today?
- Acknowledge one thing that was difficult. Either let it go or come up with a strategy to deal with the same problem if it comes up again
- Consider three things that went well today. Why were they good?
- Are you ok? Do you need to ask your teacher for something? Do you need help with something to make tomorrow more successful?

These specific questions matter because they allow your child to process the instructions they have received from their teachers and help them organise themselves and set priorities. Older students may not want to have these check-ins with parents (this is normal!), but they should anyway.



## Communicating with the school

It is important that parents continue to liaise with the College during a time of student non-attendance. Parents are encouraged to use email as the main source of contact to teachers. Teachers will respond to emails, but please be patient and remember that teachers will not be expected to contact parents or students via email after 3.30pm. The email addresses of each of your son's teachers are available on the Student Portal.

General feedback can be provided through [info@stedwards.nsw.edu.au](mailto:info@stedwards.nsw.edu.au). This email address will be monitored with appropriate staff responding when required.

## Communicating with teachers

Teachers may be communicating with your child during this period using email and other applications such as One Note, Office 365, Google Classroom, Microsoft Teams and Canvas.

It is important for you and your child to remember that teachers will be communicating with dozens to more than one hundred other families and that your communications should be meaningful and short. You may also need to remind your child to be patient when waiting for support or feedback.

## Managing screen time

Screen time refers to the amount of time a user spends on a device to access on-screen activities. There are limits as to the amount of time everyone should spend online, but the amounts and the rules for screen time vary by age. Sydney Children's Hospital [Sydney Children's Hospital Fact Sheet](#) provides valuable information on age appropriate limits and guidelines to assist parents in monitoring screen time with their son(s).

## Digital citizenship

We recommend that you take the time to explore the [NSW Department of Education](#) website which provides accurate advice to parents on supporting your son(s) safety in an online environment.

It is important that during this period of remote learning we maintain safe and responsible use of information and communication technologies. This includes appropriate use of digital platforms, privacy and information protection, respectful communication and how to deal with online issues. If concerns arise regarding inappropriate use of communication technologies, please contact either Mr Paul English, Director of Pastoral Care at [penglish@stedwards.nsw.edu.au](mailto:penglish@stedwards.nsw.edu.au) or Mr Jay Sutton, Deputy Principal at [jsutton@stedwards.nsw.edu.au](mailto:jsutton@stedwards.nsw.edu.au).

Please do not hesitate to contact me via email at [principal@stedwards.nsw.edu.au](mailto:principal@stedwards.nsw.edu.au) if you have any questions or would like to discuss the information outlined in this letter.

Your sincerely



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