



May 2022

COVID-19 Update

Dear Parents and Carers

The College has received an additional supply of Rapid Antigen Home Testing Kits and is currently preparing them for distribution to students and families. All students will receive an additional five test kits on Monday to support the testing protocols and guidelines for close contacts that were introduced at the commencement of the term. These guidelines are as follows:

1. Guidelines for Close Contacts

The guidelines are designed to enable all staff and students who are close contacts and have no symptoms to attend school. Students who test positive for COVID-19 or are unwell or showing COVID-19 symptoms must continue to isolate at home.

Close contacts attending school will need to adhere to the following in addition to the NSW Health guidelines:

- Parents must notify the College if they are intending for their son to attend school under this provision. This can be done by phoning the College on 4321 6400 or via email at info@stedwards.nsw.edu.au
- They should assist their son in administering a daily RAHT and return a negative result each morning before attending school for 5 school days.
- Students must wear a mask indoors except when eating or exercising.
- No student or staff member identified as a close contact will be permitted to participate in overnight excursions, including school camps.
- No students on work placement identified as a close contact will be permitted to attend settings identified as high risk by NSW Health (healthcare, aged care, disability care or correctional facilities)
- Any visitor to a school site who is a close contact is required to advise the school that they are a close contact before they come on site. These visitors should conduct a daily RAHT and return a negative result before attending. They must also wear a mask indoors at all times.

2. Update on Cases Within the St Edward's Community.

We continue to have a steady rate of COVID-19 infections within our own community with up to twenty student new cases on average reported each week. In addition to this we have had a number of staff test positive and have been in isolation. The school continues to operate as per normal and we have endeavoured to ensure that all classes are provided with supervision by a cover teacher if their class teacher is away and guided through the work set on the portal. There have been a few occasions when due to the



number of staff away either unwell, positive to COVID or participating in extra-curricular activities, that we have had to combine classes for a lesson into a larger teaching space and provide supervision by a member of the College Leadership Team.

We do employ a number of excellent casual teachers who have experience in working at St Edward's but unfortunately due to a combination of the pandemic and the teacher shortage we are experiencing, there have been occasions where we simply did not have enough teachers on site each day to cover each class with an individual teacher. We are doing all we can to ensure that this remains a rare occurrence.

3. Support in Protecting our College Community

I ask families to continue to take a very conservative approach if their son displays any signs and symptoms. Whereas Rapid Antigen Tests are one strategy in monitoring your son's health I provide an important reminder that the testing regime is a precautionary measure. The test results are sometimes inaccurate, can lag in detection time and rely on being correctly administered. It is important that families carefully monitor their sons for signs and symptoms and do not send their son to school if either they test positive or are displaying signs and symptoms. Parents and carers are the best people to know the health status of their children and I ask for your support in protecting our community.

A further reminder also of the need to notify the College of a positive test result via the link on the College Website at <https://www.stedwards.nsw.edu.au/>.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me on 4321 6400 or via email at principal@stedwards.nsw.edu.au.

Yours sincerely,

Mark Bonnici
College Principal