

23 April 2020

Dear Emmaus friends and families,

As shared in my 20<sup>th</sup> April correspondence, I write to you today to provide an update regarding the commencement of Term 2 at Emmaus following developments this week and today's National Cabinet meeting. As anticipated in my 20<sup>th</sup> April correspondence, being the week leading up to South Australia's scheduled return to Term 2, there has been a significant increase in information being provided including a long awaited degree of clarity from the South Australian Government. Together with information and insight from other states, this has provided Emmaus the best possible platform for decision making regarding Term 2 arrangements.

Following last Thursday's National Cabinet meeting, Australia is now one week into the stated four-week phase of increased testing; contact tracing capacity, and localised outbreak response preparation required prior to any general reduction of national restrictions. Positive COVID-19 suppression progress has also seen a number of localised relaxation measures already starting to occur across Australia generally. The circumstances for Australia generally, and South Australia particularly, is increasingly positive with only one new COVID-19 case recorded in all SA yesterday, following a week with multiple zero new case days also recorded. With great caution still in mind, this certainly gives great confidence for our continuing passage along the 'road out' of the pandemic restrictions.

With respect to schools generally, to date there have been **zero** cases nationally of COVID-19 student-to-student transmissions in schools. Similarly, there have been **zero** cases of transmission from student to teacher nationally. This is clear evidence in support of the National and State Health Authorities continuing position that schools are **safe** places for students and teachers at this time. For the most up to date South Australian medical position on COVID-19 and schools (released just yesterday evening), I refer you to the two attached documents from Professor Nicola Spurrier, Chief Public Health Officer. This position is both clear and reassuring for parents of South Australian schoolchildren regarding the safety of attending schools.

Consistent with the abovementioned current South Australian health advice and the position taken today by the South Australian Government regarding the state's schools, **Emmaus will open (both South Plympton and Brooklyn Park campuses) with face to face on site teaching for all F-12 students on Monday 27<sup>th</sup> April (next Monday)**. Please be reminded, as was shared in my 2<sup>nd</sup> April correspondence, the Pupil Free day originally scheduled for Monday 27<sup>th</sup> April has been cancelled. All School Bus and OSHC services will be operating as usual from Monday 27<sup>th</sup> April. The previously advised plans next week for supervision of 'essential worker' children is now superseded by the return to normal classes (but thanks to those who registered for this service).

Emmaus teaching staff will be focusing their primary efforts from next week into the high quality face to face teaching we are renowned for, and we all know is best educationally for our students. Recent experiences with remote education from the Eastern States confirms this. I strongly encourage all Emmaus students to return to school (if not unwell in any form) from next Monday 27<sup>th</sup> April. We, however, respect that some families may still choose to keep their children home for a slightly longer period. As Emmaus' focus will be on face to face class based teaching as our primary delivery method from next week, the full remote education delivery programs previously discussed will not take place. Students learning from home from the beginning of Term 2 will, however, still be supported by their teachers, just not in the full remote delivery mode previously discussed. Ultimately, it is not possible for teachers to simultaneously run both modes of education in full to the high standard we expect at Emmaus. If your child is well, but not physically attending Emmaus



from next Monday 27<sup>th</sup> April please notify Student Services in the morning so we do not mistakenly record them as a sickness related absence.

As has always been the case during this pandemic, however, this current position is only current 'at the time of writing'. If there is a sudden change in medical advice from the State Government (due to a spike in cases for example like recently in Singapore) this position will of course be reviewed again and we may consider arrangements more consistent with my 2<sup>nd</sup> April correspondence.

From next Monday 27<sup>th</sup> April, Emmaus will continue to exercise the medical advice regarding increased hygiene and cleaning protocols, and will not yet introduce any gatherings or activities outside the core class teaching experiences (still no assemblies / excursions / camps) until medical advice is received stating it is safe to do so. For face to face classes to continue it is vital that students experiencing even the **slightest illness symptoms NOT be sent to school**. This is non-negotiable and any students experiencing such symptoms will be immediately sent home. I ask that you please be completely supportive of this position in the event you receive a call during the day to collect your child under such circumstances. Our ability to continue face to face teaching relies on this key element and the support of all families to this end.

As much as I also enjoy interacting and engaging with so many parents during the daily drop off and pick up times, this is another matter that will determine our ability to continue face to face teaching. Can I respectfully ask that **you drop your children off (and arrange pick up) at the school gate rather than enter the school grounds yourselves**. I understand there may need to be some flexibility for Foundation students but the more we can minimise interactions on site the greater the likelihood we can continue face to face teaching of your children. It follows at this time parents reading with the JS children at the commencement of the school day will also not take place. As much as I know it builds culture, can I also please ask that parents do not congregate (even outside the school gates) after drop off as this too places our ability to continue face to face teaching at higher risk. Hopefully a time will soon come where all this positive culture building interaction can resume.

No doubt the circumstances surrounding this situation will continue to change rapidly, and as has been the practice at Emmaus, I will endeavour to keep the community well informed in a timely manner. I would also like to thank you all in the trust you have extended to Emmaus for the education and safety of your children at this uncertain time. I can assure you that we are sourcing the very best information available in real time and balancing the many competing factors with the very best in mind for you and your children. If you have any questions I ask that as a first port of call you follow up with your child's class teacher and then respective Head of School as they will be able to answer more specific questions in relation to your particular circumstances which of course vary depending on the year level and Sub School involved.

Blessings,

**Andrew Linke**  
Principal