



**Emmanuel Anglican College Community Update: 25 January 2022**

## **Return to School Plan 2022**

Dear students, staff and families,

Happy New Year! I hope that all of our community enjoyed many blessings over the Christmas season, had a fun, relaxing and refreshing break and are ready to return for another fantastic year of learning. Following the latest NSW Government Health advice and consultation with the Association of Independent Schools, the College has developed a 'Return to School Plan' to support the health and wellbeing of all students, staff and parents and minimise the risk of spread of COVID-19.

### **Practising good health and hygiene habits**

The return to school process will be supported by the following health and safety measures:

- Any students and staff with cold and flu like symptoms or respiratory illness are to stay home, seek medical advice and get tested for COVID-19. They are not to return to school until symptoms are resolved.
- All staff and secondary school students must wear a disposable surgical mask (or equivalent) in all indoor areas including when travelling on buses. Please note that cloth masks are not considered effective and are not recommended by NSW Health. Primary students, particularly those in Year 3-6, are actively encouraged to wear masks. Exemption exists for students with known health conditions. Parents are asked to provide supporting documentation if students seek an exemption.
- Regular hand washing will be encouraged throughout the school day. Hand sanitisers will be readily available and all toilets have soap dispensers.
- Additional cleaning of facilities and surfaces will occur during the day.
- Students are to bring water bottles to school as bubblers are refilling stations only.
- Doors and windows across the College will be open to promote cross flow ventilation.

### **Vaccination**

All staff and contractors engaged by the College are fully vaccinated as per the existing Public Health Order (PHO). Many staff have already received their 'booster shot'. The College supports the NSW Health recommendation that all children aged 5 years and older should get vaccinated against COVID-19 to reduce the spread of infection and the risk of serious disease.

### **Rapid Antigen Home Test (RAHT) Kits**

The NSW Government will supply all schools with enough RAHT kits to allow for students in Kindergarten to Year 12 and staff to undertake surveillance testing for the first four weeks of the term. Students will be issued with RAHT kits to take home and families are asked to administer a RAHT twice each week, prior to leaving home for school. Families are asked to have children complete a RAHT on the morning of their first scheduled day of school.



### **Distribution of Rapid Antigen Home Test (RAHT) Kits**

The NSW Government has delivered an initial supply of 4 RAHT kits for each student in Kindergarten to Year 12. The tests will be available for collection from the new Multi-Purpose Centre, The Lindsay Walker Centre on Thursday 27, Friday 28 and Monday 31 January from 9.00am to 1.00pm to facilitate testing prior to the return to school. Please park near The Lindsay Walker Centre and follow the signage to the collection point. Remember to wear a mask and social distance at all times. We ask that only one family member collect the RAHT kits on behalf of their family.

Families with students in Year 7 are encouraged to collect their RAHT kits on Thursday to facilitate testing prior to Year 7 commencing on Friday.

### **Testing positive to COVID-19**

If a student or staff member displays any COVID-19 like symptoms then they are not to attend school and get tested. If the test is negative then the individual must wait until symptoms cease before returning to school.

If a student tests positive, they must follow the current health advice. Currently a positive case is required to isolate for 7 days and then may return to school once symptoms have ceased. The family are required under the PHO to notify the College of a student's positive result and if using a RAHT, families are to register a positive result on the ServicesNSW App. A positive PCR test will lead to an automatic notification to NSW Health.

### **Household contacts and requirements to isolate**

If a member of a student's household tests positive, then all those who reside at the same address are deemed a household contact and must isolate for 7 days. Students are not permitted to attend school if they are a 'household contact'. Under the essential worker exemption, school staff who are deemed household contacts, may attend work if they are symptom free and if they complete a RAHT each day for 7 days.

### **Managing students who become unwell at school**

If a child has symptoms or is sick they must stay at home and get tested. If they present at school with symptoms, they will be sent to sick bay and their parents contacted to come and collect them.

### **Maintaining continuity of teaching and learning**

It is anticipated that staff and students will test positive and as a result be unable to attend school. It is also possible that a pattern of 7 day absences (and in some cases longer) will continue for some time. As per the NSW Government directive, schools will stay open and curriculum delivery will continue as face to face lessons. Teachers are currently developing material to allow students who are at home but only mildly unwell or asymptomatic to access some work and stay connected with the learning.

Teachers in Years 5-12 will continue to use Google Classroom to provide a brief overview of each lesson, including any resources available (web link, text, attach a worksheet etc) and outlining a



learning activity. For students in Years 3 and 4, teachers will adopt a similar approach using the Seesaw platform. Kindergarten to Year 2 teachers will create a pack of resources to be distributed in Week One as a home learning pack for absent students.

Staff are also going to be absent and we are currently working on processes to minimise the disruption to learning as much as possible.

### **College activities and events**

Under the NSW Government plan, there are no explicit restrictions on events in schools, however, each school must undertake a risk assessment for all activities and take appropriate risk mitigation action. At this point, all student related events will go ahead as calendared. We may break some larger gathering into small groups and some indoor activities will move outdoors. The Primary Choir Program will not commence in the first 4 weeks of term. Swimming Carnivals will go ahead as scheduled at this point. Obviously, as the term progresses and we have a better understanding of the level of transmission, we will update our response.

### **Parents, visitors and events**

Restrictions regarding parents entering the school grounds will continue. Parents of students in Kindergarten, Year 1 and Year 7 as well as other new students in the Primary school are permitted onsite to assist with student transition and school commencement, however, parents of returning students as asked to drop their children at the College gate and remain off campus. Mask wearing and social distancing are required when parents are onsite. The College Office will be open but I will encourage parents to use phone and email as the primary method of inquiry for the first 4 weeks of the term.

### **General health advice**

I ask all families to stay informed of the latest health advice, to be proactive in supporting our community efforts to protect ourselves against the risk of illness and to take up the opportunity to get your children vaccinated. The latest NSW Health advice can be found at <https://www.nsw.gov.au/covid-19>

Once again, I thank you for your support, patience and goodwill as we continue to navigate these uncertain times together.

Your faithfully,

Mr Robert Tobias  
Principal