

Good morning Parent & Community Members,

Firstly, I wish to acknowledge the strong support that the Yokine school community is providing to one another during these uncertain times. We appreciate your assistance and cooperation with complying with the changes and requests that we are implementing in response to the information as it evolves.

Please find attached information that sets out our school's response to the directives we continue to receive from the Department of Education. The Department of Health advises that the risk of transmission in Western Australia remains low; they are monitoring the situation and we are acting on their advice to take any necessary precautions for all children and our staff. The current focus is on minimising and preventing transmission and making sure that our school is prepared and responsive. Western Australians should remain alert, but not be alarmed.

Today, 18 March the Australian Government announced that all organised, non-essential mass gatherings attended by more than 100 people for indoor events and more than 500 people for outdoors events must be cancelled from Wednesday 18 March 2020. Please refer to [Healthy WA](#) for more information on the Prime Minister's announcement.

The announcement was very clear that there is no need for school closures. All schools have been requested to review all future events and activities in order to minimise the need for large gatherings and postpone any that meet the criteria until further notice. In consultation with key staff the school has developed a comprehensive contingency Action Plan, which was shared with all staff and members of the School Board yesterday. With this in mind, it is "*business as usual*" for us all at school. Where possible we are looking at alternative formats and modifications before cancelling events and school-based activities, but always with the overriding focus on adhering to the advice provided by those best informed to guide us.

Harmony Day Activities	Thursday 19 th March	Proceed with modified format and adherence to grouping protocols. Closed Event – sorry no parents/families/friends
P&C Meeting	19 th March 2020	Meeting to proceed with adherence to protocols.
School Board Meeting	26 th March 2020	Meeting to proceed with alternative format/adherence to protocols. Exploring online conferencing options.
Perth Concert Hall Excursion	Friday 20 th March	Cancelled – may be rescheduled at a later date.
T20 Cricket		Cancelled until further notice
School Assemblies	Friday mornings	Proceed with modified format over PA, Ms Hirsch will visit classrooms and present Merit Certificates.
Breakfast Club	Friday mornings	Cancelled until further notice
School Choir	Thursday/Friday	Cancelled until further notice
Yokine Playgroup	Thursday mornings	Cancelled until further notice
Parent / Teacher Interviews	Friday 27 th March	Option for parents to reschedule or opt for phone interview
Easter Hat Parade	Thursday 9 th April	Proceed with modified format and adherence to grouping protocols. Closed Event – sorry no parents/families/friends
School Photos – Grant Taylor Photography		Reschedule
In-Term Swimming, Terry Tyzack Aquatic Weeks 9 - 10		Cancelled until further notice. Payments to be refunded

Parent Helpers/Volunteers/Ed Connect Volunteers	Cancelled until further notice
Student Teacher Practicums	Proceed with adherence to school and university protocols

Attendance at School:

On Sunday 15 March, the Prime Minister introduced measures placed on international arrivals into Australia. This means a mandatory 14 day self-isolation requirement will be placed on all international arrivals into Australia effective from 15 March, 2020. This also applies to all parents/carers, contractors, visitors and volunteers on school sites.

Students or staff cannot attend school or work and need to self-isolate if they have also been informed by public health authorities that they have been in close contact with a confirmed case and they must isolate themselves for 14 days after the date of last contact with the confirmed case. Students or staff who have tested for COVID-19 should follow the advice of the Department of Health and stay away from school whilst awaiting results. A medical certificate is not required to return to school.

Students whose parents have chosen to keep them home, without seeking medical advice, will not be provided curriculum work and activities. The priority for staff at this point in time is to maintain focus on classroom learning programs. In the event of a temporary school closure, further advice will be provided.

If your child is unwell please keep them home to rest and recover, and follow the regular classroom/school communication processes that you would normally do.

Minimising Risk and Preventative Steps:

It's so important that we continue to support each other, stay calm and plan to achieve the best outcomes for our children, whilst maintaining high levels of hygiene and care. In the interest of all children and staff we respectfully ask you to assist us with the following changes to some daily routines:

1. For those of you that walk or ride with your child/children to school please continue to do so, however, we ask that you refrain from entering classrooms.
2. Please drop your child at or near their classroom door, where possible please remain on the Quad area rather than the verandah areas. *(This will assist in reducing traffic congestion)*
3. There will be no communal food sharing – Crunch & Sip and Shared Fruit (Kindy) needs to be prepared for your child only. Please note that staff are unable to cut or prepare food.
4. The school has good supplies of soap, hand sanitiser and tissues; with staff checking all facilities throughout the day to maintain standard. Please continue to reinforce good hygiene practices at home.
5. If your child is unwell thank you for keeping them home, and assisting us with reducing the potential of spreading coughs, colds and stomach upsets with others.
6. Where possible please use the gated entries, when open, rather than the Front Office for general traffic.
7. At the end of the day please leave the school grounds promptly. Only children accessing After School Care should remain and we thank you for your cooperation. Teachers and staff are undertaking additional duties and we need assurance that everyone is off-site.
8. Our Cleaners are working hard to support us all and have been asked to be extra vigilant with hygiene and classroom cleaning. Teachers and support staff will also assist throughout the day with regular wiping down of shared surfaces, handles and equipment with approved disinfectant.

If you have any further queries, please feel free to speak with your child's teacher or a member of the school's Leadership Team. Thank you again for your understanding and ongoing support and cooperation.

Temporary School Closure

If a WA school has to close due to a confirmed case, it will be on advice from the WA Health Department's Chief Health Officer. The Chief Health Officer will, if there has been a positive COVID-19 test result within our school, close the school temporarily while assessment and tracing of exposure is conducted. A thorough school clean will then be carried out to make the school safe for the return of students and staff. In this situation the Department of Education will guide us with all communications and set protocols.

This week staff have been working on developing alternative "at home" learning packages and commenced planning to support working from home, should the need arise, as part of our contingency Action Plan. We have made the decision as a school to provide students with hard copy work packages and resources, as we are aware that not all families have online access. The priority for staff at this point in time is to maintain focus on classroom learning programs and the care and wellbeing of students attending school.

As a school community we recognise and respect individual family's decisions, and will continue to be supportive. Please note that at this point in time parents opting to withdraw or keep children at home, without seeking medical advice, will not be provided with curriculum work and activities.

I've attached a link that I think will prove to be an informative and balanced resource for parents to consider when talking to your children about what's currently happening. I trust you find it useful.

https://schooltv.me/wellbeing_news/special-report-coronavirus

I am deeply grateful to all members of our school community, and thank everyone for your support and ongoing vigilance during these challenging times. Please adhere to the advice provided by the health experts, and let's continue to take care of one another. Thank you in advance for your understanding and cooperation with supporting our new routines over the coming weeks. If you have any further queries please don't hesitate to contact the school.

Kind regards,

Jenny Hirsch
Principal

18th March 2020