



Emmanuel Christian Community School

Address 3 Salcott Road,
Girrawheen WA 6064

Phone 9342 7377 **Fax** 9342 8286

Email emmanuel@eccs.wa.edu.au

www.eccs.wa.edu.au

15 March 2020

Dear Parents and Guardians

With regard to the COVID-19 Pandemic, Emmanuel Christian Community School is implementing measures to reduce the possibility of exposure to students, staff, visitors and the community.

The measures are in line with the Pandemic guidelines from the Association of Independent Schools of WA (AISWA) in conjunction with the WA Department of Health and WA Department of Education.

The current focus is on being prepared and implementing precautions that can be in place to slow the transmission of COVID-19. It is important that as a school community we apply a common sense, factual and practical approach to COVID-19. We will only provide information which we know to be factual and is provided through the Department of Health, Department of Education and AISWA.

We should remain alert, but not be alarmed.

Effective immediately, we request you do not visit our School or allow your children to attend if:

1. Your child shows any sudden cold or flu symptoms please keep them at home. Please advise us of this, by emailing your child's teacher and requesting approved absence from school. Please contact your GP for further advice.
2. You suspect any of your family members have COVID-19 or have tested positive with COVID-19 do not send your child to school and please follow the Department of Health guidelines regarding quarantine procedures. www.healthywa.wa.gov.au/coronavirus
3. You or your family have had known contact with someone who has tested positive to COVID-19. Please follow the advice from the Department of Health and stay away from school whilst awaiting results. Please advise us of this, by emailing your child's teacher and requesting approved absence from school.
4. You or your family have returned from any overseas travel. You will need to isolate yourselves for 14 days from midnight Sunday 15 March, as per the recent government directive. Please advise us of this, by emailing your child's teacher and requesting approved absence from school.
5. You have travelled in the past 14 days to a country listed as high or moderate risk per the Smartraveller advice page: <https://www.smartraveller.gov.au/>

Please advise us of this, by emailing your child's teacher and requesting approved absence from school and confirm the date on which you were last overseas.

Any ECCS students who have been tested for COVID-19, should follow the advice from the Department of Health and stay away from school whilst awaiting results. The above also applies to all parents/guardians, contractors, visitors, volunteers and staff of ECCS.

We already have plans to travel overseas in the April holidays – can we still go?

Emmanuel Christian Community School strongly advises that families reconsider their travel plans for the upcoming school holidays. All families should consider carefully their need to travel overseas at this time. The Australian Government has already put in place travel bans to some countries and this is being updated daily. Students returning from any travel overseas will need to isolate for 14 days before returning to school. Travel information and warnings can be found on: <https://www.smartraveller.gov.au>

Student Learning during isolation

When students are subject to isolation arrangements, we will work with families to ensure that they are provided with learning resources and materials to assist them in maintaining their studies. We are currently developing strategies to provide ongoing support to larger groups of students, should this become necessary.

Hygiene

We ask you to be vigilant around the recommended hygiene measures of regular handwashing with soap and water and teach your children about the importance of this. Our classrooms and ablution blocks are well equipped with cleaning supplies and we have increased the School's usual high standard of cleaning. High contact points such as basins, benches, dispensers, hand dryers, door handles, and push buttons are sanitised daily. All our toilet areas are checked regularly to ensure a steady supply of soap – with good hand hygiene being the simplest yet most effective safety measure we can all undertake. We hope that you will reinforce these good hygiene practices at home with your children.

Within the School, we have taken steps to increase the awareness of appropriate good hygiene practices to protect against infections. Good hygiene includes:

- washing your hands frequently with soap and water, before and after eating, and after going to the toilet,
- covering your cough and sneeze, disposing of tissues, and using alcohol-based hand sanitiser, and
- if unwell, stay home from school, avoiding contact with others (stay more than 1.5 metres from people).

What would happen if the Health Department or Education Department needed to close the School?

COVID-19 is generating a lot of media attention; some based on fact and some based on misplaced opinion. I have no doubt there has been particular interest in our community regarding the possibility of school closures, and I note that it gained further publicity on televised news and social media recently. We are confident that at this stage of the crisis we are well placed and prepared should we have a student or staff member test positive to this virus. Likewise, if we did face the situation of a school closure for ECCS, please be assured that we will have a strategy in place to assist with continuity of our learning programmes.

If the School needed to close, teaching and learning would continue. We will have provisions and technology in place that will allow our students to continue learning. We have plans to keep educating our students as much as practicable in essential curriculum. Staff will aim to think of all possibilities to minimise disruption to the academic programme both during closure and on the students return to school.

We will send out further information of the details of home learning plans for each year level.

It is possible that the School will remain open. However, it may be worth families with both parents working to discuss contingencies with your employers in the event that your child is confined at home for an extended time.

Student Wellbeing

With the recent focus in the media on the impact of this outbreak on schools, we understand that some students may be experiencing heightened anxiety. Our School pastoral care and wellbeing support remains in place and can assist students as needed.

As parents, you play a vital role in your child's wellbeing. We encourage you to talk to your child about any concerns they might have regarding this outbreak and how you as a family will respond.

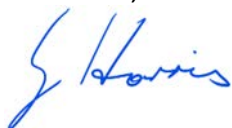
We will continue to keep you updated if there are significant changes or new developments, but we encourage you to remain personally informed of the latest Government advice. Further information can be found at www.healthywa.wa.gov.au/coronavirus or by contacting the WA Health Department Helpline 1800 020 080.

During times like this, being part of a calm, supportive and prayerful community is important. Let us hope that through careful planning, logical action, and continued prayer for our community, we can all work and support each other at this time.

Please pray for the protection of our community, for wisdom and for God's peace as we put our trust in our Heavenly Father.

We wait in hope for the Lord; He is our help and our shield. Psalm 33:20

God bless,



Gary Harris
Principal