



18 September 2023

Dear Parents and Caregivers

CONTINUING TO MAINTAIN A HEALTHY SCHOOL

Health experts remind us that although we are no longer in the emergency phase, COVID-19 remains a public health threat and its continuing evolution could yet cause future problems. As such, we are cautioned to remain vigilant to protect ourselves from what is still a very serious disease, particularly for those over 65 years of age, unvaccinated or under-vaccinated, or have other health issues particularly as we enter what is traditionally the winter flu season.

During the latter part of the term the College recorded an upsurge in COVID cases. While isolation is no longer mandatory for cases and suspected cases of COVID-19, **the Health Department is still advising that people should stay at home until their symptoms resolve** and I ask that we continue to stay abreast of the latest advice from WA Health via their website which is regularly updated.

It is still vitally important that we continue to maintain a healthy and safe school while also minimising the disruptions to student learning. **Students and staff must remain at home if they are unwell**, even with the mildest of symptoms and not try to 'soldier on'. A child who is sick will not be able to perform well in school and is likely to spread the illness to other children and staff.

Students experiencing cold, flu-like symptoms, or simply a runny nose should not be sent to school and must stay at home until their symptoms significantly subside or they receive a medical clearance certifying them fit to return to school. As a general guide, students should not be attending school and should not be sent to school if he/she has:

- Fever in the past 24 hours,
- Vomiting in the past 24 hours,
- Diarrhea in the past 24 hours,
- Chills,
- Sore throat,
- Strep Throat (must have been taking an antibiotic for at least 24 hours before returning to school),
- Bad cold, with a very runny nose or bad cough, especially if it has kept the child awake at night,
- Head lice – until your child has been treated according to the nurse or doctor's instructions.

It is essential that the College has a telephone number where you can be contacted during the day and an emergency number in the event you cannot be reached. **If your daytime or emergency phone number changes during the year, please notify the College office.**

In case of illness, we suggest making plans for pick-up, transport and childcare ahead of time so you will not be caught without a comforting place for your child to stay if he/she is ill.

Everyone – even when well – can continue to help maintain a healthy school. This means:

- washing hands often with soap and water. This includes before and after eating and after going to the toilet,
- using alcohol-based hand sanitisers when soap and water are not available,
- avoid touching eyes, nose and mouth,
- clean and disinfect objects in frequent use such as mobile phones, keys and wallets,
- increasing the amount of fresh air by opening windows where possible.

Of all these measures, I cannot stress enough the importance of student and staff staying at home when they are sick.

After three years it is understandable that some people may be fatigued, but COVID is still out there in the community, and it is therefore important that we remain vigilant and make decisions based on the greater good. We also need to ensure we keep following the current health advice – if you are unwell or have been exposed to someone who has tested positive then use your free RATs.

These guidelines are meant to serve in the best interests of the children and staff in the College and I extend my appreciation for our continued support of each other.

If you have queries or concerns regarding your child, please contact the College. If you have any health concerns, please contact WA Health on 1300 316 555.

With regards and best wishes.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'G.P. Mills', with a horizontal line underneath.

Geoff Mills