



Fairholme College

TOOWOOMBA

COVID-19 UPDATE

24 April 2020

Dear Parent/s

Thank you for your support of another week of *Learning from Holme*: not ideal schooling for us but not without its silver linings either. There has been strong practice on and offline by our teachers who are literally reinventing school, on the run. There have been some lovely teaching moments too, despite distance, despite technology hitches, and despite the new look classroom environment. It was a delight to see my own Year 10 English class via Zoom yesterday – even briefly. Further, there has been good level of connectivity from daily social class check ins in the Junior School; Holme Group sessions; along with Assemblies and House Meetings and our ANZAC service this week. We have been buoyed by some very positive and encouraging feedback from teachers, students and parents along the way. It is not to say that this is our preferred manner of doing school, but our staff are embracing every opportunity to connect positively and to provide strong learning platforms. Their own learning curve has been steep but approached with professionalism and positivity. We are grateful to our community who are staying home where they can. We are also grateful to our essential workers who are providing important services within the community.

For now, and into the future, Fairholme will continue to respect and adhere to the directives of Queensland Public Health and the Director General of Education. We can all take heart from the national response to social distancing and reducing our interactions to only those which are necessary – what a difference we are making, collectively. It is apparent from government sources and health experts that social distancing is here to stay for some time and it would be naïve to imagine that this won't impact upon how 'we do school'. As other states of Australia start to return to school, in different ways, with staged returns, rostering, and other models, we can reasonably imagine that Queensland will follow the trend. As a school, we continue to scenario plan, ever hopeful of an imminent return to the classroom setting with which we are most familiar; along with some of the plethora of extra activities that characterise Fairholme, but we do so with a realisation that there will be restrictions due to social distancing requirements. Patience is important, along with trust that government decisions continue to support health and wellbeing first and foremost.

Thus, as we continue in this new pattern of learning, we are keen to improve practice, improve connections, and maintain our strong sense of community. As such, from next week, members of staff will be phoning each Fairholme family and asking five questions around these matters. These will be

non-teaching staff members and their role is to collect data which will then be considered by appropriate staff with the purpose of streamlining current processes where possible. There is no obligation to participate in the conversation around our current learning approaches, but it would be helpful for us to gain your insights. Families are reminded, as is usual practice, to make direct phone contact with relevant staff if there are emergent issues that need attention.

Wishing you silver linings in a situation that is far from ideal, and far beyond our collective control. What is in our realm of control, fortunately, is our approach to one another – may we continue to be helpful to, thoughtful towards, and respectful of all. Thank you again for your support, I cannot think of a school community of which I would rather be a part. I look forward to sharing the driveway ANZAC dawn service virtually with many, tomorrow morning – with my freshly constructed wreath. Lest we forget.

Kind regards

Linda Evans

Dr Linda Evans | Principal