



**ST HILDA'S SCHOOL
GOLD COAST**

From the Principal

3 August 2021

COVID-19 Update from the Principal – 3 August 2021

Dear Parents and Guardians

I'd like to express my thanks for your quick response to, and support of, the alternative program we are running during this Lockdown. Monday unfolded with a staggered start for Junior School students and Years 7–12 were deeply engaged in their online learning from our regular 8.20am start.

Our students presently on site, which include children of essential workers and Boarders, are missing their friends but are calm and absorbed in the well-remembered routines established last year. The wearing of masks by secondary students and all staff has been adopted quite quickly, but we are all having to adjust to recognising each other on screen with the lower half of the face hidden - communication cues can be quite different in these circumstances.

Following the establishment of our online practices yesterday, we have today considered the number of students we have on site and made decisions about the number of staff we require to meet students' needs. This follows advice regarding school operations received late yesterday from Independent Schools Queensland on the rotation of staff on school sites over the next few days. While following the restrictions mandated for the 11 Local Government Areas included in the South-East Queensland lockdown, schools will also still be making site-specific decisions, particularly those dealing with positive cases in their communities. Our thoughts and best wishes are with those affected.

As of Wednesday, students in Years 7–12 who are on site will have designated year-level rooms. With our numbers on site being below 20 in each year level, we have opened the glass walls in Jennifer Reeves to create spacious double classrooms spaces. Students are familiar with this organisation from some of our examination blocks. Grouping a year level together, given our numbers, enables us to maintain social distancing, and ensures opportunities for socialisation. Ms Upasiri recently wrote to students in Middle/Senior School recommending how they might instigate a conversation with others they did not know well. This advice stems from student feedback received early during the 2020 lockdown, that being the only person in your group at school requires some adjustment.

Students will continue to receive advice particular to their year level from their Head of Year.

Junior School parents will continue to receive communication specific to the operations of the Junior School from Mrs Shuttlewood. Pre-Prep will likewise be advised by Mrs Cleverly.

Thank you again for keeping communication open with us. I trust that as the week continues, if we identify that we have frequently asked questions, we will include both the question and our advice in our communications.

I wish you and your family good health.

Kind regards

Wendy Lauman

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Principal