

Update on Novel coronavirus (COVID-19), 31 March 2020

31 March - Updates made to the following sections:

- No additional information has been included in the update today, 31 March.

Please be aware, the Governments position can shift rapidly. Our plans will continue to change as the COVID-19 unfolds and we will work to provide an update as soon as we have information available from the relevant Government sources.

The safety, health and wellbeing of our students and staff is paramount and we continue to work with the relevant authorities to monitor and respond to developments of COVID-19

Please be aware that some of our teachers and staff may be working from home to work on plans to ensure continuity of learning for their students. Active implementation is now being provided to broader staff at both a Diocesan and school level, to move into working from home.

We also emphasize that while this strategy is in place, schools and the Catholic Schools Office will remain open.

A daily update is being posted at 4pm on the [CSO homepage](#). Please use and check this site regularly for the most up-to-date information.

Should there be any localised issues, information to the parent and carer community will be provided directly by the school.

Schools and parents should be relying on balanced and verified sources of information. The following are primary sources:

- [Catholic Schools NSW](#)
- [NSW Health](#)
- [Australian Government](#)

Please be aware that some of our teachers and staff may be working from home to work on plans to ensure continuity of learning for their students.

However, we wish to assure you our schools **remain open** to support parents that need to send their children to school.

Report suspected or confirmed cases

All suspected and confirmed cases must be reported to the local Public Health Unit on 1300 066 055 (24 hours).

Any suspected or confirmed case of COVID-19 should be reported to the Diocesan office via the [Incident Reporting Form](#). Please contact Peter Roberts, Manager Safety and Wellness at the Diocese,

on 0477 016 701 as well as Gerard Mowbray, Director of Schools at the Catholic Schools Office, on 0427 683 297.

Contact should also be made with Catholic Schools NSW, Gerard Delany on (02) 9287 1549, for assistance and support.

Preventative measures

School staff and students should heed the following advice:

1. Wash your hands regularly and thoroughly.
2. Sneeze into your elbow or a tissue. Dispose of the tissue straight away and then wash your hands.
3. Stay home if you are unwell. Students and staff who show signs of being unwell during the day should be assessed by the school and, on a case-by-case basis, the decision to contact the parents or carer should be made if the student needs to be sent home.

Print the resources available from [NSW Health](#) and distribute these across the school environments.

Student attendance

The Prime Minister reaffirmed in his [press conference on Friday 27 March](#) the medical expert advice that it remains safe to attend school.

However, the Prime Minister clarified that in transitioning to the new online mode of operation schools remain open solely for children of workers for whom no suitable care arrangements are available at home to support their learning, physically attend school.

These measures have been put in place to help minimise the spread of the COVID-19 pandemic in NSW.

School holidays

The dates of the upcoming school holidays remain unchanged.

Learning continuity

Schools must ensure they can continue to operate as effectively as possible in the event of closure.

Schools and staff are asked to consider how they can best adjust current work practices with minimal disruption to the delivery of services.

Large gatherings

Government advice on [29 March](#) stated that indoor and outdoor gatherings be limited to two persons only.

The following non-essential gatherings should be **cancelled**:

- School assemblies
- Open days, open classrooms or school information sessions
- Whole school masses and liturgies e.g. St Patrick's and St Joseph's
- Whole school and inter-school sporting events
- Art, drama and theatre events
- Parent/ teacher/ student interviews

This advice has also required churches to close their doors for private worship and public services. Please see the [Diocese website](#) for further information regarding the closure of churches.

Parents and Friends Meetings

In keeping with the cancellation of all non-essential meetings, P & F meetings are postponed over the next four weeks.

Sporting events

The following non-essential gatherings should be **cancelled**:

- Whole school and inter-school sporting events

All PSSA and CCC carnivals in the next four weeks have been cancelled.

All remaining Term 1 Diocesan sporting events/trials have been cancelled.

Diocesan sporting events suspended:

DATE	EVENT	STATUS
Mon 27 April	SSSA Diocesan sport meeting	Cancelled
Tues 28 April	SSSA Diocesan individual Football Trials	Cancelled
Wed 29 April	PSSA Diocesan Touch Trials	Cancelled
Tues 5 May	PSSA Diocesan X Country	Cancelled
Thurs 7 May	SSSA Diocesan X Country	Cancelled
Wed 13 May	SSSA Diocesan Senior Football Knockout	Cancelled

Catholic Schools NSW sporting events suspended:

DATE	EVENT	STATUS
Mon 16 March	NSWCCC Water Polo Selections	Suspended until further notice
Mon 16 March	NSW All Schools 15 Years Cricket Selections	Suspended until further notice
Tues 17 – Thurs 19 March	NSW All Schools U19 Years Cricket Selections	Suspended until further notice
Sun 22 – Wed 25 March	School Sport Australia Triathlon	Suspended until further notice
Mon 23 March	NSWCC Hockey Selections	Suspended until further notice
Mon 23 – Tues 24 March	NSW All Schools Tennis	Suspended until further notice

Tues 24 March	NSWCC Baseball Selections	Suspended until further notice
Wed 25 March	SICC Rugby League Selections	Suspended until further notice
Wed 25 March	NSWCPS Swimming Championships	Suspended until further notice
Fri 27 March	MacKillop Football Trials	Suspended until further notice
Mon 30 March	NSWCCC Golf Selections	Suspended until further notice
Tues 31 March	NSWCC Swimming and Diving	Suspended until further notice
Wed 1 April	Polding Australian Football (AFL) Trials	Suspended until further notice
Wed 1 April	Northern Country Rugby League Selections	Suspended until further notice
Wed 1 April	Western Country Rugby League Services	Suspended until further notice
Fri 3 April	MacKillop Australian Football (AFL) Trials	Suspended until further notice
Mon 6 – Tues 7 April	NSW PSSA Swimming Championships – Sydney Olympic Park	Cancelled
Tues 7 April	NSWPSSA Diving Championships – Sydney Olympic Park	Cancelled
Wed 8 April	NSWCCC Touch Selections	Suspended until further notice
Wed 8 April	NSW All Schools Baseball Selections	Suspended until further notice
Mon 13 – Thurs 16 April	NSW All Schools Sailing Championships – Belmont	Cancelled
Mon 13 – Fri 17 April	NSW v QLD Cricket Exchange	Suspended until further notice
Mon 20 – Wed 22 April	NSWCCC Girls Rugby League Development Camp	Suspended until further notice
Term 1	NSWPSSA Knockout Competitions	Cancelled
Sun 26 – Fri 1 May	NSW v QLD 15 Years Cricket Exchange	Suspended until further notice
Sun 26 – Sun 3 May	School Sport Australia Baseball	Suspended until further notice
Wed 29 April	NSWCCC Australian Football Boys Selections	Suspended until further notice
Wed 29 April	NSW All Schools 16 years Volleyball Trials - Homebush	Cancelled

Thurs 30 April	NSWCCC Australian Football Girls Selections	Suspended until further notice
Fri 1 May	NSW All Schools 16 years Girls Hockey Trials – Moorebank	Cancelled
Fri 1 May	Polding Hockey Selections	Suspended until further notice
Fri 1 May	Polding Football (Soccer) Selections	Suspended until further notice
Fri 1 May	Polding Rugby League Selections (U/11 & Opens)	Suspended until further notice
Fri 1 May	Polding Netball Selections	Suspended until further notice
Sat 2 – Sat 9 May	School Sport Australia Tennis 18 Years & Under	Suspended until further notice
Mon 4 May	NSWCCC Rugby U18 Boys Selection	Suspended until further notice
Mon 4 – Tues 5 May	NSWCCC Rugby U16 Boys Selection	Suspended until further notice
Tues 5 May	NSWCCC Girls Rugby 7's Selections	Suspended until further notice
Tues 5 – 7 May	NSWPSSA Boys Basketball Championships – Terrigal	Cancelled
Tues 5 – 8 May	NSWPSSA Tennis Championships – Broadmeadow	Cancelled
Fri 8 May	Mackillop Hockey Selections	Suspended until further notice
Fri 8 May	Mackillop Rugby League Selections (U/11 & Opens)	Suspended until further notice
Fri 8 May	Mackillop Netball Selections	Suspended until further notice
Sat 9 – Sat 16 May	School Sport Australia Softball 17 Years & Under	Suspended until further notice
Tues 19 – Thurs 21 May	NSWPSSA Girls Football Championships – Rooty Hill	Cancelled
Tues 19 – Thurs 21 May	NSWPSSA Boys AFL Championships – Byron Bay	Cancelled
Sat 23 – Tues 26 May	NSW All Schools Canoeing Championships- Nymboida River	Cancelled
Tues 26 – Thurs 28 May	NSWPSSA Boys Football Championships – Griffith	Cancelled
Tues 26 – Thurs 28 May	NSWPSSA Girls Hockey Championships – Unanderra	Cancelled

Tues 2 – Thurs 4 June	NSWPSSA Boys Hockey Championships – Newcastle	Cancelled
Tues 9 – Fri 12 June	NSW All Schools 16 years Boys Hockey Trials – Homebush	Cancelled
Tues 16 – Thurs 18 June	NSWPSSA Boys 11 years Rugby League Championships – Kiama	Cancelled
Tues 16 – Thurs 18 June	NSWPSSA Girls Basketball Championships – Cambridge Park	Cancelled
Tues 23 – Thurs 25 June	NSWPSSA Open Boys Rugby League Championships – Tamworth	Cancelled
Term 2	NSWPSSA Knockout Competitions	Cancelled

Please see this [link](#) for further information regarding Catholic Schools NSW sport.

Arts, drama and theatre events

The following non-essential gatherings should be **cancelled**:

- Art, drama and theatre events

ASPIRE rehearsals have been cancelled for the next four weeks. An update on rehearsals will be provided at the end of term.

School excursions and camps

All school excursions outside of your school's local community should be suspended until further notice, including all overnight excursions and school camps.

NSW Health advised that no groups of students should visit aged care facilities or attend other facilities in the local community (e.g. hospitals) where there are elderly people or people with underlying health conditions.

School environments

Implement:

- Regular and enhanced cleaning for high-touch surfaces such as handrails and door knobs
- Increase ventilation in classrooms
- Use the outdoor environment/setting where possible

Support good hygiene practices:

Good hygiene practices are regularly reinforced with our students and staff.

[NSW Health](#) advises that when social distancing actions are combined with good personal hygiene measures the spread of a pandemic through the community can be slowed and provides the following recommendations relevant to schools:

- Schedule hand washing breaks throughout the day.

- Encourage students to have washed their hands for at least 20 seconds prior to breaks, lunch and, where appropriate, prior to entering the classroom.
- Supervise hand sanitation, particularly for younger students.
- Regularly check soap dispensers are full in all bathroom facilities.
- Clean and disinfect frequently touched surfaces each day
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands.
- Cover your nose and mouth when coughing and sneezing with a tissue or a flexed elbow.
- Stay home if you are sick and don't expose others.
- Get a flu shot when it becomes available.

- Stop shaking hands, hugging or kissing as a greeting.
- Avoid crowds if possible. If not, keep the time short.
- Avoid small gatherings in enclosed spaces, for example family celebrations.
- Attempt to keep a distance of 1.5 metres between yourself and other people, where possible.
- Avoid visiting vulnerable people, such as those in aged care facilities or hospitals, infants, or people with compromised immune systems due to illness or medical treatment.
- Use debit and credit cards instead of cash and make use of online and self-serve transactions (for example Opal cards on public transport).

Work travel

International travel

All international travel activity is cancelled or postponed.

Domestic travel

Non-essential travel is on hold until further notice.

Travel restrictions

The Australian Government has announced a travel ban on Australians travelling overseas, effective from 25 March.

Staff and students who should self-isolate for 14 days from a school or workplace are those who departed from or transited through:

- China within the last 14 days
 - Iran within the last 14 days commencing 1 March 2020
 - Republic of Korea (South Korea) commencing 5 March 2020
 - Italy commencing 11 March 2020
- OR**
- have been diagnosed with the COVID-19
 - have had close contact with a confirmed case of COVID-19 infection.

Anyone arriving in Australia from overseas **after 11:59pm Sunday 15 March 2020**, including Australian citizens and permanent residents, is required to self-isolate for 14 days from the date of arrival.

Travel restrictions are evolving and we rely on the [Australian Government website](#) to capture any changes.

Self-isolation

You must self-isolate if any of the following applies to you:

- you have COVID-19
- you have been in close contact with a confirmed case of COVID-19
- you arrived in Australia after 11.59pm on 15 March 2020

For anyone required to undertake self-isolation, please refer to the [NSW Health fact sheet](#) outlining the requirements.

For any further clarity or questions, please contact CDMN-Services-HR-Safety@mn.catholic.edu.au.

If you do not need to self-isolate, you should still [protect yourself and others](#).

Professional development, Formation, conferences, seminars and gatherings

All professional learning and meetings held at the CSO for school-based staff in the next four weeks is cancelled. An update will be provided at the end of term.

Virtual meetings or conference calls should be considered as an alternative.

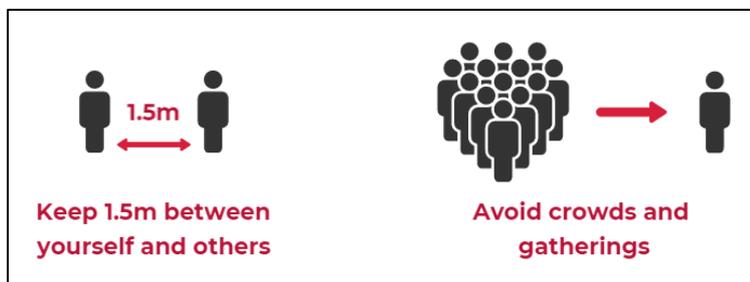
Social distancing

The Prime Minister announced [revised measures](#) on 24 March, including greater restrictions on social gatherings. Keeping a healthy physical distance between individuals is a powerful weapon in fighting the virus and we must remain vigilant on this front wherever possible.

Social distancing to support the containment strategies is recommended, for example:

- Avoid crowds and mass gatherings
- Avoid small gatherings in enclosed spaces
- Avoid shaking hands, hugging or kissing other people

NSW Health provides [straightforward information](#) about social distancing and we seek to reinforce these messages with our students and reinforce this in the school environment.



External providers and volunteers

Consider any external providers, including St Nicholas or other OOSH providers, and make contact to understand if there will be any changes or disruption to services.

Schools should advise any volunteers of changes to school procedures and additional hygiene measures.

Visitors and parents on school sites

Any non-essential visitors to the school site should be cancelled.

There should be no external visitors to the school site unless there is an emergency or critical incident. The Diocesan Property and Facilities team should be considered essential and should be allowed on site.

Parents and carers are requested to be mindful of social distancing during peak periods such as pick-up and drop-off.

We encourage parents and carers to remain in their vehicle when dropping off or collecting your child.

All incursions, events and ceremonies on-site that involve visitors have been cancelled.

All assemblies have been cancelled.

Parent/ teacher interviews have been cancelled, this includes Individual Education Plans (IEP) meeting.

At risk students or staff

As of 25 March, vulnerable and at-risk persons as identified by NSW Health below **should work from home wherever possible**.

[NSW Health](#) advises that based on what we know so far about COVID-19 and what we know about other coronaviruses, those at greatest risk of serious infection are:

- People with compromised immune systems (eg cancer)
- People with diagnosed chronic medical conditions
- Elderly people
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, as they have higher rates of chronic illness
- Very young children and babies*

*At this stage the risk to children and babies, and the role children play in the transmission of COVID-19, is not clear. However, there has so far been a low rate of confirmed COVID-19 cases among children, relative to the broader population.

The process and checklist for working from home will be available from the principal.

Communications

The situation is complex and continually evolving and our plans will continue to develop as the COVID-19 unfolds.

A team of senior leaders from the Diocese is meeting daily to discuss our ongoing response and heed the most relevant Government advice.

From Tuesday 17 March, a daily update has been posted at 4pm on the [CSO homepage](#). Please use and check this site regularly for the most up-to-date information.

Government technologies to stay informed

The Australian Government has established trusted channels of information:

- An official app providing key information on coronavirus, you can download this from the Apple App Store or on Google Play.
- A WhatsApp messaging feature sharing information on basic health advice, updates on the measures established etc. Go to WhatsApp and type in 'aus.gov.au/whatsapp' to access.

St Nicholas OOSH

The above information is applicable, where relevant, to St Nicholas OOSH services.

Communication to OOSH families is also available via www.stnicholsoosh.org.au.

Contacts

For any questions or clarification, please contact:

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