



# St Marys Senior High School

Kalang Avenue, St Marys NSW 2760  
P.O. Box 1053, St Marys 1790

Phone (02) 9623 8333  
Facsimile (02) 9833 1304

Dear Students, Parents and Caregivers,

Firstly, we would like to thank each and every family for working with us over the last two months as we have adjusted plans to respond to new advice from NSW Health or new procedures from the Department of Education. At times you have been given little notice, and, at other times, you have had to wait for us, while we developed these plans to suit a senior school context. We appreciate your support, trust and patience. You have been inundated with communication about changes to daily routines and you have helped us to continue to support your son or daughter's learning at home, whilst juggling the demands of your own work and daily routines. Thank you for your consideration and support in a very stressful time for our entire school community.

I would also like to take this opportunity to acknowledge the efforts of the staff at St Marys Senior High School. They have had to adjust their teaching with little notice, create new resources, learn new skills, and juggle their own family needs. The last two weeks have been extremely challenging, teaching half a class on site, whilst ensuring the other half of a class were receiving the same work.

As you would have heard in the news, we will be resuming full time face to face teaching for all students from Monday 25 May 2020. We are looking forward to welcoming all students back to school and settling into the remainder of the term. The Department of Education has provided advice for families about the return of students to full time face to face teaching, which is attached. If you have any further questions or concerns that we have not provided in the information below, please make contact with us.

## Attendance

Following Department guidelines, all students are expected to return to school, unless they have a medical certificate which states they are unable to return to school due to an ongoing medical condition, or if they are currently unwell. If you have specific concerns about your son or daughter returning to school, we encourage you to call and discuss your concerns with their Deputy Principal, Leah Havord (Year 11) and Danielle Ervine (Year 12)

## Absences

From Monday, the regular notifications for absences will resume and all absences will need to be explained. For students who have a diagnosed medical condition and are unable to attend, attendance will continue to be marked as present using the flexible code if they complete and submit all required learning tasks. Students who fall into the vulnerable category will be required to have a medical certificate from their medical practitioner outlining their medical condition and the need for them to be absent from school due to their increased risk from Covid 19.



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## Vulnerable students

Vulnerable students who have a confirmed medical condition will continue to be supported with learning from home, but this will not be the same Remote Learning that has occurred over the last two months. Our staff will do their best to provide learning tasks and support for these students via their Google Classrooms. Please keep in contact with your child's Deputy Principal or Student Adviser if there are any concerns about your child's learning.

## Unwell students

The Department of Education advice for students and staff who are unwell and have flu like symptoms remains unchanged, and it is expected that students and staff who are experiencing these symptoms will remain at home until their symptoms subside. If your child becomes unwell at school you will be contacted to arrange for your child to be collected from school.

## Student Breaks

Given the complex nature of our school timetable, we are unable to stagger our recess and lunch breaks. Students are encouraged to sit outside during recess and lunch where possible, however, we do recognise that with winter approaching, that this could be challenging on cold days. Students are not permitted to play any contact sports during their break times.

## Cancelled excursions

The school administration staff will be in contact with families over the next two weeks in regards to cancelled excursions to see whether families would like a refund or have any money paid remain in your account and be used as fees in advance. Refunds are required to go through a centralised department finance centre and will take thirty days to process.

## Reports and assessment

All students will receive a report this semester. We anticipate Year 12 reports will be released via the Sentral Parent and Student Portal by the start of Week 6 and Year 11 reports in the same manner by the start of Week 10.

The Department of Education has restricted access to school for non-essential visitors and our Student, Parent, Teacher interviews cannot occur on site. We are looking at alternate modes to facilitate this communication. Further information about these processes will be provided in due course.



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On Wednesday May 20 2020, our draft timetable for the Trial and Preliminary Examinations was released to students via Skoolbag and their student email. These examinations will occur between Weeks 3 - 5 of Term 3.

## Year 12: University Early Entry

As discussed in previous correspondence, there will be opportunities for students to apply for early entry to university. Please ensure you are keeping up to date with information related to any of these schemes. All students who are applying for Early Entry and require a school reference must obtain this from the school principal. Classroom teachers do not complete this section of the application.

We expect that there will be some challenges ahead for all of us in the coming weeks as our state begins to open up existing restrictions. One such challenge that we are cognisant of is students who are required to travel to school using the public transport system. Buses are required to pick school students up if they are at a bus stop. NSW Government communication has also indicated that students will be a priority on the train system along with people with a disability. This may result in some frustration with other commuters, especially as more people return to work. We ask that students report any issues that they may experience to either myself or their Deputy Principal upon arrival at school. It is expected that students will respect physical distancing on the transport system, including standing back from the doors and allowing other passengers to alight prior to boarding.

You may also find that there will be an increase in staff absences as we enter the winter season. Staff are required to stay at home if they have any flu like symptoms such as a cough, runny nose or sore throat. The Premier is asking anyone with these symptoms to get tested for COVID -19 in case a cold is masking the virus. Obviously, staff are not able to return to work until they have received a negative test result.

We look forward to a smooth return to school and wish you and your family good health.

Yours sincerely,

Sally Smithard  
Principal  
St Marys Senior High School  
21 May, 2020