



20 April 2020

Dear parents and caregivers

As the COVID-19 situation continues to develop, our school has been planning for a variety of scenarios — the main scenario being that children and students may need to learn at home during Term 2. I am writing to confirm the arrangement for our school for Term 2.

### **Term 2 arrangements — Weeks 1–5**

The Queensland Government has decided that, in order to reinforce social distancing across the community and slow the spread of COVID-19, students will move to a home-based learning model from 20 April 2020 until at least 22 May 2020 (Weeks 1 to 5 of Term 2). A decision about the remainder of Term 2 will be made by mid-May. During this period, **all students who are able to be supervised at home and learn from home are to stay home.**

As was the case for the student-free days prior to school break, there will be exceptions for some students who will continue to be able to attend school: those whose parents or carers work in essential roles and must attend their workplace and cannot access alternative care, students identified as vulnerable, and students in designated Indigenous communities.

Each week, we will ask parents of these children to advise the school if they require their children to be supervised at school during this period.

### **Outside School Hours Care (OSHC)**

OSHC services will continue to operate before and after school care where there is demand for services and particularly for vulnerable or children of essential workers. This will include on-site OSHC or other services off site that cater for school age children, such as long day care or family day care. Parents are encouraged to check with their local service.

### **Preparing for home learning**

I acknowledge this is a challenging time for you and your child as you prepare to help them to learn from home. Our teachers and school staff have been working hard to plan for this approach and have developed learning programs that best suit the students at our school. Your child's teacher will be in contact with you to let you know what to expect and how you can best support your child's learning. We understand that some families may not have access to IT resources. Not all learning will be online.

You may wish to explore the Department of Education's range of learning@home parent resources online at <https://education.qld.gov.au/curriculum/learning-at-home>. The department is also working with television networks to develop new televised educational programs that will be broadcast on TV a number of days a week. Further information about these programs will be made available in the near future.

Please know that we are here to support you and your children. With our preparation and guidance and your support, I am confident that students will continue to learn and grow in Term 2.

To support parents and carers, some tips have been put together to make the transition easier:

- Treat the first week as a 'starting school' or orientation type of week. Not everything will go to plan, and it might take a while to work out how to find and use the right resources and understand what's best for you and your child. The 'how to' will come first, and then the learning.

- Remember that your child's teacher usually divides their attention between up to 28 students who all work at different paces and need different levels of support. At home, two to three hours of learning each day will usually be plenty. Try using a range of other activities to keep children engaged and stimulated without becoming overwhelmed.
- Routines and consistency can be a source of comfort for parents and children alike, but keep in mind that your routine doesn't have to be the same as a school routine. If you use a timetable at home, make sure it's manageable for everyone and flexible enough that you can adapt it as you learn what works.
- This situation presents an opportunity for students to find out more about themselves as learners and to become more confident in self-directing their learning. Encourage your child to take responsibility for not only learning but also for staying in touch with their teacher, their class and their friends and community.
- If your child is finding a task difficult, make suggestions and answer questions, but try to let them figure things out for themselves as much as possible. Give them opportunities, where appropriate, to take control of their own learning.
- Remember this is new for us, too. You can help us succeed by letting us know if you're unsure about something and using the preferred contact time and method that your teacher will advise you of.

Further information on supporting your child, maintaining healthy learning routines and setting up a learning space at home can be found at <https://education.qld.gov.au/curriculum/learning-at-home/wellbeing-of-students>

While there will be some adjustments along the way as we learn together, our teachers are here to support your child's learning. Please stay connected with your teacher, to our school and to one another.

### **Thank you**

Thank you for the support you are providing both your child and the school during these difficult times. You would have seen that all over Australia and the world, schooling systems are experiencing the same challenges with many countries also moving to home-based learning in response to COVID-19.

Our dedicated teachers and support staff continue to be here to teach and support your child. Together we will be learning and doing all we can to support you in this new mode of home-based learning. I assure you we will continue to maintain close contact with you over the next few weeks to provide learning for your child and together we will support each other and see all of our students continue to grow.

Regards,

Beth Petersen  
Principal  
Durack State School