



Thornlands State School

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Principal **Robyn Wilton**

COVID-19 Update – A special message from the Principal for Parents and Caregivers

Dear Parents and Caregivers

I am writing to you regarding the evolving situation with the coronavirus (COVID-19).

Queensland Health and the Australian Department of Health are working tirelessly to manage and contain the impact of this virus for Australians and Queenslanders alike. They are regularly updating travel advice (<https://www.smarttraveller.gov.au/>) as new information emerges.

The Department of Education continues to work closely with Queensland Health to monitor the situation and identify and manage any impacts on schools and early childhood centres. You can be assured that we have been preparing and stand ready to act should the need arise.

I wanted to also provide you with some more information about the approach that our school might need to take if a COVID-19 case is identified in our school.

If a case is identified in our school, the Department of Education and Queensland Health will work closely with us in managing our response and our actions will be taken with community health at the centre of our decision making.

If there is a confirmed case at our school, it is likely our school will need to close for a period to allow Queensland Health to assess the situation and to perform contact tracing as required to identify people and students who may have come in contact with the COVID-19 case. You may have already seen this happening in other states where confirmed cases have been identified.

The Department of Education will then work with our school to conduct any specialised cleaning of our facilities as required to ensure our school is safe for students and staff to return when clearance is given. A closure is likely to include any on-site services such as outside school hours care (OSHC) and other facility hirers.

Continuity of learning is extremely important to us and, as in other disaster and emergency events, the department has online learning materials and virtual classroom capability that can be used by teachers to support your child's learning. The Queensland Curriculum and Assessment Authority (QCAA) also has procedures in place to support senior secondary students.

If your child develops flu-like symptoms, please:

- keep your child at home;
- avoid close contact with others such as touching, kissing or hugging, or any mass gatherings, especially those involving other children;
- see a doctor or contact 13 HEALTH (13 43 25 84) immediately;
- seek medical advice if your child has other underlying medical conditions; and
- call ahead to the medical centre or doctor's surgery, advising of your child's symptoms and the closure of the school.

It is also important to continue to encourage your children to:

- wash their hands regularly with soap and water, particularly before and after eating, and after going to the toilet;
- use alcohol-based hand sanitiser if soap is unavailable;
- cover coughs and sneezes with a tissue or the inside of their elbow; and
- dispose of tissues in the bin immediately.

Further advice and information about the coronavirus is available on the Queensland Health website: <http://conditions.health.qld.gov.au/HealthCondition/condition/14/217/838/novel-coronavirus>

As a community, during this preparation phase, it may be timely for families to consider their own family and care arrangements should school closure be necessary.

Again, while you can be reassured that the Department of Education and Department of Health are taking all necessary measures to contain COVID-19, it is important for me to keep information flowing to parents and caregivers to ensure we are all informed and prepared as a community, should this public health issue come into our school.

I thank you for your support in managing this event and supporting student awareness of the additional need for strong health and hygiene practices.

Yours sincerely


Robyn Wilton

Principal