



22 April 2020

Dear Parents and Caregivers

I hope everyone is healthy, well and has enjoyed the time at home with their children over the holiday period.

Over the past couple of weeks being at home, I have managed to watch many news bulletins and I have become increasingly confused as to which state has what in place, not just for education, but for a whole range of COVID-19 restrictions that have been imposed. To this end, I thought it an imperative that I write to clear up any disparities of understandings before we start next week.

As you are aware at the end of last term, we surveyed our community about their intentions to return to face to face schooling in Term 2. Thank you to those who responded to this survey, we had a 90% return rate which indicated to myself and the staff that our school would function very close to normal, with online provisions required for those families who intended to keep their children at home. Our staff have planned for several scenarios that we may face when school commences, of which all depend on the percentage of students returning. At the end of Term 1, SJMS trended at approximately 60-65% attendance, with our lowest day being 53% attendance.

Ultimately the goal is to transition all students back to school in a planned and managed manner based on advice from government and health, observing required physical distancing and hygiene measures. Learning, health and wellbeing of students and staff remain my priority.

Earlier today, Premier Marshall and the SA Chief Medical Officer, Nicola Spurrier, stated strongly that parents should plan to send their children back to school. Dr Spurrier repeated health advice that schools continue to be safe places for students and staff. We continue to make decisions based on advice from government and health authorities and are expecting higher numbers of students to return to school than initially anticipated.

During Week 1 of Term 2, SJMS will deliver one mode of learning - online learning - for all students whether they remain at home or attend school. Fortunately, our school can be flexible and agile in this space with 2 or 3 classes per year level or year level grouping. As to how this looks will depend on the number of students returning at the commencement of Term 2, which will require careful staff management and planning.

SJMS continues to acknowledge and respect the choice of those parents and caregivers who choose to keep their children at home during the first weeks of Term 2 and understand that for some students in families with health issues this is a necessity.

It is expected that the SA Chief Medical Officer will release a statement to families in the coming 24 hours and I will write to you again upon this statement.

Yours sincerely

Brady Stallard  
Principal