

TOOWOOMBA STATE HIGH SCHOOL

Creating Stars for our Future

24 March 2020

Dear Parents and Caregivers

I am writing to update you on the ongoing response to the novel coronavirus COVID-19 across the education sector.

These are unprecedented times for schooling systems and you can be assured that all Queensland state schools are working closely with the Department of Education as we respond to this significant and evolving public health issue.

Thank you for your support and understanding as our school and the broader education community manage the impact of COVID-19.

School operations

As you may have heard in his press conference on 22 March 2020, the Prime Minister reiterated the view that schools are an essential part of our community and should remain open. This continues to be the advice of Australia's chief health officers.

Leaders agreed that we cannot see children lose up to an entire year of their education as a result of possible school closures caused by COVID-19. Parents and caregivers will be offered a choice as to how their children receive their learning. State schools will remain open and parents and caregivers can send their children to school in the knowledge they will be safe.

If, however, you wish to keep your children home from school, you may do so. If you choose to keep your children at home, learning materials will be available on the Department of Education's new [learning@home](https://education.qld.gov.au/curriculum/learning-at-home) website <https://education.qld.gov.au/curriculum/learning-at-home> This website has downloadable learning materials, tips for parents and links to other well-regarded, free education websites that parents and caregivers and their children can use. Additionally the school has resources being updated on the Mighty Minds portal for students in Year 7, 8 & 9, <https://mightyminds.com.au/portal/mighty-minds-portal/> where students can work through the fundamental skills assessments in English, Mathematics and Science curriculum. Students should aim to complete 15 questions daily in each curriculum area. The current focus for students in Year 10, 11 & 12 should be to complete all current assignment tasks.

If you choose to keep your child at home, you must be responsible for them. You must ensure they stay at home and that they continue their learning using the material and websites that you can access online.

Student attendance

As is always the case, I ask parents and caregivers to let our school know if your child will not be attending school, for how long and the reason why. If you choose to keep your child home due to concerns about COVID-19 you can be assured that you have made an acceptable decision.

You may have seen media reports last week that claim Education Queensland is 'cracking down' on parents who choose not to send their children to school due to COVID-19 concerns and that you are risking prosecution if you have made this decision. I can assure you that this is incorrect.

As outlined above, if you choose to keep your children at home, you can access materials available on the department's [learning@home](https://education.qld.gov.au/curriculum/learning-at-home) website <https://education.qld.gov.au/curriculum/learning-at-home> or other websites



with curriculum materials. These materials have been available from the department for times when children have not attended school for extended periods.

School routines

As you would be aware, schools have been asked to change routines and some specific planned activities over the last few weeks to assist in managing the spread of COVID-19.

These include:

- ceasing all international school/departmental travel for students and teachers;
- postponing or cancelling external school activities such as fetes, concerts, fairs, etc.;
- cancelling of school assemblies and rescheduling other large in-school student gatherings and events.
- postponing or cancelling all school trips, camps and excursions including interschool and representative school sport competitions as a further step in reducing the risk of transmission in our school and community

School hygiene

I can assure all parents and caregivers that during this time we are paying close attention to the cleaning of our schools. Queensland schools have excellent, dedicated cleaners and the department has provided them with additional advice on cleaning techniques since the onset of COVID-19.

To support this work the Government has also increased the amount of cleaning in Queensland state schools in response to the COVID-19 outbreak.

Our schools will be able to provide additional time to cleaners to enable them to pay extra attention to high touch point surfaces such as door handles, light switches, desks, toilets, taps and sinks.

Thank you

I sincerely thank parents and caregivers for the support you are giving your children and for the understanding you are showing to our school staff as they respond to this unique situation. It is important we continue to ensure our schools are safe and positive places for our children during these challenging times.

As always, the health and wellbeing of your children, and our staff, remain our focus.

We continue to take advice from Queensland Health in relation to this matter and the latest information is available on the Queensland Health website at www.qld.gov.au/health/conditions/health-alerts/coronavirus-covid-19.

It is likely that these circumstances will be in place for many months ahead and we will all continue to work together in the interest of our school and our school community.

Sincerely



Tony Kennedy
Principal

B.A.; Dip T.; M Ed;

Some Links for Students and Parents

Toowoomba State High School - Mighty Minds Portal (requires mighty minds username and password)

<https://portal.mightyminds.com.au/Security/login?BackURL=%2F>

- If students do not know their password this can be reset by selecting "I've lost my password" and filling out the details for their school email address.
- Students can access resources for English/ Maths/ Science.
- Students should continue to access Mighty Minds to complete daily tasks.

Toowoomba State High School – Student Hub (requires school username and password)

<https://qedu.sharepoint.com/sites/2013/students/>

- This area is currently being setup by Toowoomba SHS staff and contains, in year level specific folders, resources that students would normally have access to on "G Drive" at school.
- Should students be required to access resources on this site, this will be communicated via email.

Toowoomba State High School Email (requires school username and password)

- Can be accessed via <http://owa.eq.edu.au> or,
- On mobile devices, go to your app store and install Outlook (app)

Queensland Government - learning@home

The Department of Education has a number of online tools and resources to support students. These can be accessed via:

<http://qld.gov.au/learningathome>

This site contains links to:

- [Advice to parents](#)
- [Wellbeing of students](#)
- [English](#)
- [Mathematics](#)
- [Maintaining healthy routines](#)
- [Learning resources](#)
- [Senior Schooling](#)

Queensland Government - The Learning Place resources (requires school username and password)

Curriculum resources that provide students with opportunities to continue their educational development are available [here](https://learningplace.eq.edu.au/cx/resources/file/6f953822-eb08-473b-9f36-f5637af98019/1/index.html) (<https://learningplace.eq.edu.au/cx/resources/file/6f953822-eb08-473b-9f36-f5637af98019/1/index.html>)

This site contains links to:

- [Subject Specific Curriculum Resources](#)
- [Two-week units of work](#)