Emergency Response Plan
COVID-19

25 March 2020
Introduction

Context

The COVID-19 outbreak has reached a state of global emergency and is now classified as a Pandemic. The Australian Government has implemented the Emergency Response Plan for Communicable Disease Incidents of National Significance: National Arrangements and the Australian Health Sector Emergency Response Plan for Novel Coronavirus (jointly referred to as the ‘National Emergency Response Plans’ in this document). The closure of Schools is identified as a potential control measure in the National Emergency Response Plans, although this is stated as a last resort measure.

As of 23 March, across the world there have been more than 280,000 confirmed cases and more than 12,400 deaths.

Although carriers are largely known to exhibit flu-like symptoms, there has been a significant number of asymptomatic cases. Similarly, while an incubation period of up to 14 days has been most common, there has been evidence of longer incubation periods in some cases.

Australia has a relatively low number of confirmed cases however recent increases have been more significant and community transmission is evident.

The Senior Executive Team has developed this plan as a scalable response to the outbreak as the global and local situation evolves dynamically.

Objectives

The objectives of Essington’s response to COVID-19 are anchored in the effective coordination of preparation, response and recovery activities to:

- Ensure the health and safety of staff, students and the wider School community
- Limit the impacts on educational outcomes for students
- Contribute to a socially responsible response to the outbreak in the local and global setting
- Manage downstream risks to the School introduced by the outbreak.
Overview

Guiding Principles

Response strategies are informed by the National Emergency Response Plans, the achievement of the School’s overarching objectives and the consideration of the unique risks affecting the School.

The following principles are used to guide decision-making and to formulate this plan:

Holistic and Proportionate Response

- The risks associated with the outbreak are considered holistically, including direct and downstream impacts
- The level of response is proportionate to the level of risk

Planning and Preparedness

- The School aims to prepare for all likely eventualities
- Planning will provide reliable foundations whilst being flexible enough to enable response to dynamic changes in the situation

Communication and Engagement

- Regular and honest communication to all stakeholder groups builds confidence in the School's response
- Engagement of the School community is pivotal in successfully implementing control measures

Prevention is Key

- Preventing transmission through contact with the virus is the primary response strategy
- Containment of the virus once it has entered the community is likely to be challenging

Maintaining Educational Continuity

- Second only to protecting the health and safety of our community, maintaining educational continuity is the underlying purpose of our response
- Core curriculum is prioritised over non-essential activities
- Planning and preparation for maintaining educational continuity shall occur at all phases
Response Stages

The Emergency Response Plan is divided into four stages to enable a proportionate response to the outbreak as the situation evolves.

Overview of Emergency Response Plan Phases

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Phase &amp; Context</th>
<th>Overview</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| **Phase 1**  
**Preparedness** Outbreak largely focused  
Internationally with limited local cases, contained.  
Low-level downstream impacts. | - Communication with Essington Community  
- Restriction of school travel to key outbreak locations  
- Scaling up of cleaning and sanitisation of School facilities  
- Self-quarantine of return travelers from key outbreak locations and direct contacts  
- Delivery of remote learning for quarantined students and plans for return to school  
- Development of specific plans for dealing with potential identified cases  
- Managing exposure through contractors and suppliers  
- Take initial steps to confirm supply chain of critical equipment and supplies  
- Monitor debtor behaviour |
| **Phase 2 Response**  
Increasing international outbreak with increasing national and local cases, potentially uncontained.  
Increased downstream impacts. | - Communication with Essington Community  
- Isolate from external activities, including sports, camps and excursions, options and tours  
- Limit internal group gatherings  
- Increased cleaning and sanitation regime  
- Secure supply of critical equipment and supplies and increase stock holding  
- Prepare for potential school closure to ensure remote learning capability |
| **Phase 3 Response**  
Uncontained local outbreak with significant direct and downstream impacts. | - Communication with Essington Community  
- Contain students to in-class activities and limit cross sub-school activities  
- Increased vigilance on health screening  
- Limit contractor and supplier activity  
- School closure (if required by Government) and move to remote learning |
| **Recovery**  
Containment of the outbreak and move to resumption of normal activity. | - Communication with Essington Community  
- Resume where possible, normal educational, co-curricular activities  
- Return-to-learn strategies implemented by teachers for those who have been isolated from school  
- Monitor for staff and student welfare and learning outcomes |
# Decision Making

## COVID-19 Response Team

The Senior Executive Team (SET) will coordinate the School’s response to the outbreak and make decisions in relation to this plan.

The SET is comprised of:

- Brian Kennelly – Principal/CEO
- Greg Alderson – Business Manager
- Peter Moore – Head of Senior College
- Joan Judd – Head of Middle School
- Renee Schultz – Head of Junior School
- Rhiannon Hale – Head of Early Years

The SET will consult with key stakeholders and members of the School Board where necessary to inform decision-making.

## Communication

Communication in relation to the School’s response is managed by the SET. Communication will generally address the following key audiences:

- Board of Directors
- Staff
- Students, families and the wider School community
- Contractors and suppliers
- Media outlets
- Government departments

## Communication Requirements Overview

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Audience Group</th>
<th>Communication Triggers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Board of Directors</strong></td>
<td>➢ Key updates on the School’s response</td>
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<tr>
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<td>➢ Significant change in the external situation forcing immediate action</td>
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<td></td>
<td>➢ Significant events related to the outbreak impacting students or staff</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>➢ Progression in phases of this plan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Staff</strong></td>
<td>➢ Specific requirements for action in relation to the School’s response</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>➢ An event impacting staff or students relevant to the staff group</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>➢ General information updates relating to the outbreak or the School’s response</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>➢ Progression in phases of this plan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Students, families and the wider School community</strong></td>
<td>➢ Specific requirements for action in relation to the School’s response</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>➢ General information updates relating to the outbreak or the School’s response</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Contractors and suppliers</strong></td>
<td>➢ Specific requirements for action in relation to the School’s response</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Audience Group</td>
<td>Communication Triggers</td>
</tr>
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</tbody>
</table>
| Media outlets  | ➢ Information on the School’s response which is relevant to the School’s brand and image objectives or which supports the implementation of this plan if necessary  
➢ Response to unsolicited media coverage which may affect the School’s brand and image or ability to effectively implement this plan via the Principal |
| Government departments | ➢ Information solicited by a Government department in response to the outbreak  
➢ Information which supports the School’s objectives in relation to this plan  
➢ Legal obligations  
➢ Information which may support the local or national response to the outbreak |

**Emergency Response Plan**

Each phase of the Emergency Response Plan includes a range of activities designed to address the key risks imposed by the outbreak in accordance with the School’s strategies. The scope for escalation in response to situational changes is built into each phase and it is the responsibility of the SET to determine the appropriate timing and level of response within each phase.

The escalation of phases should be made not only on the basis of significance of the outbreak itself, but also the impacts of downstream effects. It is likely that public response and the perception of risk in the community will pose an equally significant threat of disruption to the School as the virus itself and the decision to move to a higher phase may be made by the SET on that basis.

**Phase 1 Preparedness**

Phase 1 is appropriate to the initial and early stages of the outbreak where the majority of confirmed cases are confined to particular region, outside of Australia. The downstream effects of the outbreak may be apparent however have not reached critical stages and show minimal local social impacts.

**Phase 1 Preparedness Measures**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Preparedness Strategy</th>
<th>Actions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Information Gathering and Initial Response | ➢ SET establishment of regular meeting schedule  
➢ Establishment of reliable information sources and sharing of information  
➢ Establish Emergency Response Plan  
➢ Establish business continuity plan |
| Planning & Preparedness | Establishing plans for dealing with identified symptoms amongst staff and students  
| | Identification of possible quarantine location, controlled by the medical coordination team.  
| | Establishing stock of key medical consumables and equipment to deal with potential symptoms  
| | Regular review of emerging risks  
| | Preparing for the delivery remote education/virtual classrooms in the event of a school shutdown or widespread absence  
| | Prepare for non-operational staff to work from home where possible  
| | Identification of suppliers and contractors that will need to be contacted |

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Preparedness Strategy</th>
<th>Actions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Communication & Education | Promoting the use of good personal hygiene practices amongst students and staff  
| | Communication to staff to highlight potential symptoms and increase awareness  
| | Communication strategies to limit the spread of misinformation with a focus on student welfare  
| | Regular communication with the School community to maintain up to date situational awareness and engage in the community in response activities  
| | Communication with AISNT/SA  
| | Regular updates to Board of Directors |
| Managing Transmission of the Virus | Implementing a self-quarantine period for any students or staff returning from high-risk locations, or where there has been direct contact with someone returning from a high-risk location  
| | Request families limit travel  
| | Implementing a heightened cleaning regime  
| | Daily monitoring of global and local information and regular review of high-risk locations by SET  
| | Prohibiting staff travel to high-risk locations  
| | Cancellation of international tours and upcoming camps and excursions |
| Maintaining Educational Continuity | Prepare for remote access to core curriculum for those isolated by self-quarantine measures and to prepare for all students learning remotely |
**Phase 2 Response**

Phase 2 response is appropriate to scenarios where the spread of the virus locally appears imminent and or the spread to additional jurisdictions is increasing exponentially. Downstream impacts may also be having significant effect locally.

**Phase 2 Response Measures**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Response Strategy</th>
<th>Actions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Communication & Education         | - Promoting the use of good personal hygiene practices amongst students and staff  
|                                   | - Informing families to avoid all international travel                  
|                                   | - Informing staff to avoid all international travel                     
|                                   | - Preparing the community for potential of more severe response measures |
|                                   | - Communication with AISNT/SA                                            
|                                   | - Regular updates to Board of Directors                                 |
| Managing Transmission of the Virus| - Increase cleaning regime to include multiple pass-overs of high transmissibility surfaces |
|                                   | - Cancelling external group activities, such as sport, excursions, camps, other external options |
|                                   | - Cancellation of internal group gatherings                             
|                                   | - Imposing a self-quarantine period for any students or staff returning from high-risk locations, or where there has been direct contact with someone returning from a high-risk location |
| Maintaining Educational Continuity| - Preparing an operational roll-out for remote education/virtual classrooms in the event of a school closure or wide-scale absence |
|                                   | - Investing in appropriate infrastructure to support remote learning     |

**Phase 3 Response**

Phase 3 response is appropriate to the wide-scale and uncontained spread of the virus locally. It may also be in response to requirements imposed by the Australian or Northern Territory Government or significant disruptions caused by downstream effects, such as recourse shortages, economic stresses, social or civil unrest, or inability to access essential services.

**Phase 3 Response Measures**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Response Strategy</th>
<th>Actions</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Communication &amp; Education</td>
<td>- Increase the regularity of communication to the School community</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Establish clear communication pathways for members of the community to contact the School</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Engage in regular communication with Department of Health</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Communication with AISNT/SA</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Regular updates to Board of Directors</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Managing Transmission of virus
- Close campus to students
- Limit staff attendance to campus to critical functions
- Close campus to all staff if deemed necessary or as directed
- Scale down contractor and supplier activity accordingly

Maintaining Educational Continuity
- Implement and commence delivery of remote online classrooms

Recovery
Recovery phase is appropriate to the resumption of normal activity where the risks associated with the virus and its downstream impact are manageable in a ‘business as usual’ scenario. It is likely that the move to recovery phase will coincide with a similar move in the National Emergency Response Plans.

Recovery Measures

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Recovery Strategy</th>
<th>Actions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Communication &amp; Education</td>
<td>Establish and implement a communication plan for return to school for staff and families</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Communication with AISNT/SA</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Regular updates to Board of Directors</td>
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<tr>
<td>Stand down of Transmission Control</td>
<td>Consider scaling down transmission control measures as appropriate</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Monitor Government advice on travel restrictions and the Virus</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Monitor for return to one of Phases 1, 2 or 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Staff &amp; Student Welfare</td>
<td>Establish support plans for monitoring and supporting the welfare of staff and students who have been specifically affected by the virus</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Maintain emphasis on inclusion through educational programs and monitor for awareness of exclusion or negative behaviours towards individuals or groups</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maintaining Educational Continuity</td>
<td>Recomence teaching and learning programs</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Recomence excursions co-curricular programs based on advice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monitoring &amp; Review</td>
<td>Monitor key indicators for successful resumption of ‘Business as usual’</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Conduct post event review of the effectiveness of the Emergency Response Plan</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
### Document Control

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>ACTION (issue, reissue, amendment, replacement of pages)</th>
<th>Initials</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>21/03/20</td>
<td>Document construction</td>
<td>BK</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23/03/20</td>
<td>Document revised and amended</td>
<td>GJA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24/03/20</td>
<td>Approval of Emergency Response Plan</td>
<td>SET</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24/03/20</td>
<td>Board Endorsement of Emergency Response Plan</td>
<td>NJR</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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