

16th March 2020

To Our Silkwood Community,

What Does That Mean for Our Silkwood Community

As at: 16 March 2020

Dear Parents & Caregivers,

It takes a community working together to deal with a pandemic. What one person does will impact another so individual choice does matter.

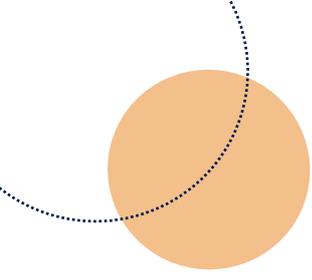
Silkwood is a community and as such has a responsibility to work in partnership to keep those who are our most vulnerable safe and where possible minimise the spread of COVID-19 and the effects of the economic impact that this will have on us all.

Silkwood's response is a considered way forward for our community. Unfortunately, this does mean that we will have disruptions to our learning program and as such disruptions to your individual lives. We have done our best to minimise this impact however sharing some of the load is what it means to be part of a community response. We apologise in advance for any inconvenience and trust that you understand it is for the betterment of all.

I ask you to please read the attached PDF document which outlines Silkwood School's commitment to reducing the effect of COVID-19 on our school community.

Rest assured, your child's safety and wellbeing is at the forefront of our decision, and our School Team is dedicated to providing a safe and hygienic environment whilst trying to minimise the impact of this pandemic for our school community.

Kindest Regards
Valerie Campbell-Hogg
CEO



Should We Have a Confirmed Case

If we are advised that a school team member or student has a confirmed case of COVID-19 we will shut the school immediately and follow government directives.

Immediate Impact on School Events

To ensure our responsibility for community safety the following gatherings will be postponed or cancelled until 31st May 2020:

- excursions, camps
- after school programs (excluding one on one music lessons)
- whole school events/meetings
- festivals

More detailed communication will be coming out about the camps on Tuesday morning.

Term End Closure

We have made the precautionary decision to extend our April break to 3 weeks, closing the school term a week early on the Friday 27th March 2020. We are treating this as an exclusion period for our school families.

Naturally, if the government enforce school closures beforehand, we will close earlier and follow the government directives and close the school.

During this week the teaching team will be working on a home-based school program to ensure should a future exclusion period needs to be implemented we can provide a school learning program for our students.

Changes to our Cleaning

The school has implemented the following additional cleaning practices.

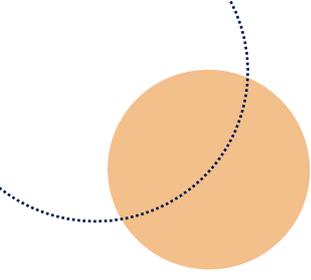
- Hospital-grade cleaning products are standard practice with all of our cleaning processes.
- We have increased deep cleaning frequency as per government guidelines for toilets, wash bays, drinking fountains and sickbay areas.
- Door handles, cupboard knobs and classroom & office surfaces are disinfected daily.

School Team Hygiene

Our school team is under instruction to wash hands and use sanitiser when leaving and entering an office, classroom, workspace or staffroom.

Student Hygiene

Students will be required to follow the same instructions as our school team when entering shared spaces ie. classrooms, music rooms, school buses etc.



Hand Sanitiser is provided in every learning space and students will be instructed to use this when leaving and entering shared spaces. If you are unhappy with your child using our hand sanitiser then please keep them at home. We are following government guidelines who use professionals to advise on how best to combat the spread of this virus and our hand sanitiser meets their requirements.

The School Team will assist in reminding students about this practice.

The Learning Community Leaders will roll out an education program to run with our students which will cover.

- What is the coronavirus
- How to keep themselves safe

This will be run this week and at the start of next term and ongoing as necessary.

Student Health

If your child develops flu-like symptoms ie. sore throat, cough, fever, shortness of breath, fatigue 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
- call ahead to the medical centre or doctor's surgery, advising of your child's symptoms and the closure of the school.

Student Absences

We have relaxed our stance on the requirement to provide medical certificates during this time for student absences.

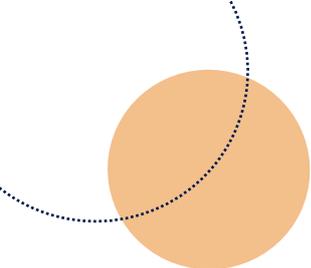
If you are concerned about your child attending school due to COVID-19, it is your right as a parent/caregiver to make the choice to keep them at home. We ask that you please follow our usual absentee process by emailing or contacting the school office if you make that choice.

A home program will be provided for students with absences that fit the home learning criteria below.

Home Learning due to COVID-19.

Our Learning Community Leaders and School Principal are currently working with Advisors to develop an education program to run from home for students who are not able to attend due to the direct impact of COVID-19. This will be ready for launch in Term 2.

It will be provided to any student who meets the following criteria:

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- a) having symptoms of COVID-19 or
 - b) a family member being infected or suspected of being infected by COVID19 or
 - c) being instructed by the government or school to stay away or
 - d) have a family member who is at high risk of serious implications or death (as defined by the government) of the virus

All other students are expected to attend school as normal.

Advisors can provide limited support for a home program for student absences before the start of Term 2. Contact your Advisor directly for support with this.

School Bus Travel

Currently, the government is still recommending public transport.

However, the school is being cautious and in response has:

- increased cleaning and hygiene procedures
- introduced hand sanitiser on the bus
- looking at seating arrangements to keep the social distance
- reminding students of a 'no-touch' policy

If you are not comfortable with these measures you are welcome to place your bus travel on hold until such time you feel comfortable again.

Helping Hands – Outside School and Holiday Care Statement

Silkwood outsources our Outside of School and holiday care to Helping Hands. We are currently working with them on what to do in the first week of school closure we will keep you updated.

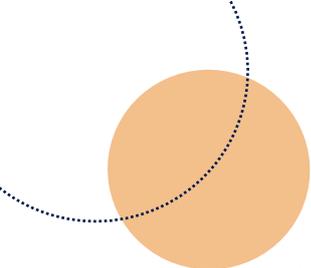
The following is their statement to our families on COVID- 19 Coronavirus:

Helping Hands Network is committed to ensuring the health and safety for all children, families and educators within our service and your school community. We are actively monitoring and following all guidance provided by the World Health Organisation (WHO), Department of Education and Department of Health regarding the Coronavirus (COVID-19).

We understand that many families may be feeling anxious at this time and we want to assure you that at Helping Hands Network the health and wellbeing of the children in our care is our number one priority.

The most relevant advice remains that practising good personal hygiene is the best defence against infection. So, at each of our services including yours, we are reinforcing to our team and all children the importance of:

- *Washing your hands regularly with soap and water (especially before eating and after using the bathroom)*
- *Covering your mouth and nose with a tissue when sneezing or coughing into your elbow.*
- *Disposing of tissues and washing hands immediately afterwards*

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- *Avoiding contact with others, if unwell*
 - *Upholding stringent cleaning processes in our services*

The practice of 'social distancing' to 1.5 meters is difficult to maintain in a Helping Hands Network environment. To enhance this, where possible we are adjusting our programming to maximise outdoor spaces which will optimise the child to space ratio.

This week, we will be re-educating all our team members on our internal Infectious Disease Management Policy and Procedure to best prepare our frontline staff to manage children presenting with symptoms.

We are also scenario planning, and deploying action plans as appropriate, so if your school has a crisis action plan, please share it as we will integrate your school's plans and strategies into our action plan to ensure consistency for your school community.

In the event of a school closure, Helping Hands Network will work closely with your school and notify all families of the service closure accordingly. In the event of a closure, all bookings during the closure will be cancelled and families will not incur any out of pocket costs.

One safety measure we have already enacted is related to our Vacation Care service. If a Vacation Care service runs at your school, we have made an organisation-wide decision to cancel all excursions to minimise the risk of infection exposure to the children in our care. School holiday programs will be updated to run in-service activities or incursions on these days instead. Further communications will be sent to families regarding these changes later this week.

Until otherwise advised by you or the National Cabinet, Helping Hands Network are absolutely committed to supporting your school community by providing Before and After School Care programs as normal.

We understand this is a challenging time for you and your school community. We will continue to provide services in support of the school and adjust our services to meet your needs accordingly. If there is anything further, we can do to assist you through this time, please don't hesitate to contact me.

Warm regards,
Priscilla Mulcahy | Partnership Manager Queensland
HELPING HANDS NETWORK