

## **Response to IEU questions – 23 March 2020**

The following responses have been provided to the specific questions sought by the IEU. Please be aware that this is a very fluid situation and responses today may vary from those appropriate in the future.

Catholic Education Tasmania is working closely with Government authorities and pandemic response teams to support the Tasmanian community during this challenge. Actions will be implemented based on the best available information with a particular focus on our students, staff and school community. Continuity of education is an important component in supporting the community and essential services staff during the pandemic response.

1. Have risk assessments been done at each workplace where there might be heightened risk of direct or indirect contact with persons who may have been exposed to the Covid-19 virus?

All schools have established directions for actions in the event of direct or indirect exposure. Protocols have been disseminated via Principals. Tasmania has strict governmental requirements on self-isolation and CET practices reflect these. At this time, Health Dept advice is that schools do not pose an increased risk of Covid-19 transmission.

2. What steps are being taken to ensure compliance with DoH advices, and otherwise minimize and control risks at each workplace

TCEO response team has been established to manage responses, disseminate information and coordinate communication. Schools have been directed to ensure vigilance and attention to hygiene and environmental cleaning.

3. What advice has been given to school communities to minimize contact and risk.

Information and communications have been sent via Principal School Office Circulars and email with status updates, information and mitigation practice information. Schools have sought to reduce “incursions” from people outside of the school community and reduced external contacts such as parent meetings, enrolment interview, etc.

4. What steps are schools taking in relation to minimising potential exposure on overseas exchanges, camps and excursions

All camps, excursions and exchanges have been cancelled for 2020. Inward and outward interactions with schools have been severely curtailed to essential core activities.

5. What will happen in the event that there is a requirement for any staff member to undergo a period of quarantine.

Where safe and effective legitimate attempts to work from home is the first option and then actions are determined in accordance with the circumstances. Refer to School Office Circular 23 March 2020.

6. What will happen in the event that there is a School closure?

Seen as a last option by the Tasmanian Government. Staff arrangements to be determined depending on nature of government requirements. In the first instance, if a school is directed by Health to close for a 48-hour period after a Covid-19 exposure confirmation, some staff may be directly involved in cleaning and others may simply be directed not to attend the worksite on full pay. Use of remote learning delivery is being strongly pursued with regards to ICT capability and planning.

7. What will happen in the event that a staff member gets infected?

Staff who are sick can access Personal leave and if infection occurs at school Communicable Diseases leave in accordance with Tasmanian Catholic Education Single Enterprise Agreement (TCESEA) 2018 is clearly applicable.