



### Update for Friday, 9/4/20

Dear parents and carers

As we head into Easter and school holidays, thank you for your support, kind words and feedback over recent weeks. In these extraordinary circumstances of learning from home for the great majority of our students, we have had to make many decisions, and many more remain to be made as further advice comes to us from the Department of Education and the NSW Education Standards Authority (NESA). Adapting to remote learning is for all of us — teachers, students, and parents and carers alike— a fluid, constantly changing situation. How we respond is always, by necessity, a ‘work in progress’ and a steep learning curve. There will always more to do, and things that can be done better upon reflection. As the teaching staff we have tried, at every step in the process to date, to address the learning needs and the wellbeing of students. At the same time, we have also tried to take into account that many of you are having to balance working from home with the needs of your children, as well as the health and safety of all other family members. In these circumstances, your feedback about what we can do better has been appreciated. We welcome it, and will continue to act on it when we can. This week, for example, Head Teachers have agreed to look to ensure that the class work being posted for Year 7 and 8 students in particular is reduced from the start of Term 2. Similarly, we are looking into ways of structuring learning time for students in a way that makes it less overwhelming for many, and achieves a better balance between their learning, physical and emotional wellbeing needs. More is to come on this at the start of Term 2. Such refinements have come about because of the thoughtful and considerate feedback and suggestions we have received. Please direct feedback to the school through email, marked for the attention of the most relevant person. This might be the Head Teacher of a specific subject area; your child’s year adviser; Ms Harris, the Wellbeing Co-ordinator; Mr Maher, for computer and technology related matters; or, if you are unsure who to send it to, please send it to me. In the meantime, I strongly urge our students, parents and carers, and teachers to all have a well-deserved holiday, which means a break from school work, and the teaching and learning this entails.

In looking ahead to Term 2, the following updates are important.

#### **SPRINGWOOD HIGH SCHOOL**

Grose Road, Faulconbridge NSW 2776

p. (02) 4751 2111 f. (02) 4751 1677

[www.springwood-h.schools.nsw.edu.au](http://www.springwood-h.schools.nsw.edu.au)



### **School remains open**

The health advice on schools remains unchanged. Our Chief Medical Officers indicate that schools should remain open for education provision at this time. The Government and Department are encouraging you to keep your child at home to contribute to supporting the community response to COVID-19. The school's doors will remain open for those students whose parents are in the essential services or who are vulnerable. Beginning their HSC courses at the start of Term 2, HSC students undertaking subjects with a Major Project or an element of performance are a particular group of students we now need to cater for in a specific way. In moving to schools being open, but parents and carers being asked to keep students at home, the Department of Education did say that HSC students working on major projects should be able to come into school, where safe physical distancing practices are to be observed. At the time of writing, we are awaiting advice from NESA about Major Projects and the HSC exam. A special meeting about this was being held at NESA today, so there will be more to come on this. The advice NESA has provided this week in relation to performance subjects — i.e. Drama, Dance and Music — is provided below.

### **Supporting continuity of learning for students**

Teachers continue to develop learning resources for students to undertake from home. Following feedback, it was decided this week by Head Teachers that a week's work for each subject is best uploaded as the new week begins, rather than day by day, starting Term 2. With this work will be a direction as to what needs to be completed and uploaded by students by the end of the week. The aim here is to give students greater flexibility in allocating their time to particular subjects and tasks each day, recognising that many families are having to balance the access that a number of young people have to the family computer or computers.

Whether your child is at school or at home, the aim is for all students to access the consistent learning content provided by teachers. This continues to be typically delivered to students by the Google Classroom that your child's teachers have established for subject areas and classes.

From Term 2, the set work students complete is not formally assessed, the exception being HSC students, who are still required to complete assessment tasks (see below). Students in Years 7-10 will have assigned work, which is expected to be completed and uploaded by students. This set work will inform the formative

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judgements teachers will need to make to monitor and evaluate students' participation and progress, including for the purposes of school reports.

Our delivery of online learning will continue to expand in Term 2, particularly as teachers continue to undertake professional learning in video communication, which can be delivered to students on platforms such as Zoom, Microsoft Teams and Adobe Connect. We are working to establish consistent practices in this area on a preferred platform, working within the capacities of teachers and the technology available to us all. This is a promising area for development, but it is one which we will grow and develop with due recognition of, and moderated expectations stemming from, the practical limitations that it entails.

### **HSC Update**

The HSC is going ahead in 2020.

NESA held a special meeting in relation to HSC performance tasks on April 7. The relevant subjects for us were Drama, Dance and Music 1. The outcomes of this meeting for these subjects can be found at:

<https://educationstandards.nsw.edu.au/wps/portal/nesa/about/news/novel-coronavirus/creative-art-performances-projects>

In short, the determination was that mandatory group and ensemble performances will not be examined for the HSC this year. Advice was provided as to how students will be examined, including how musicians can be accompanied, and how schools can make changes on this basis to assessment tasks and schedules. This advice was in line with the NESA position on HSC assessment, which is:

“NESA has given principals and system authorities the power to determine the number, type and weighting of tasks for HSC and Year 11 school-based assessment.”

Our Head Teachers are presently working with their teachers to make required adjustments to our HSC Assessment Schedule, which would otherwise have been provided to students before the end of this term. This document, and the HSC assessment calendar, will now be provided to students early in Term 2, as they begin their HSC course studies. Presently, the document is a work in progress as we await advice on Major Projects, following today's meeting.



### **Support for students at home**

I encourage you to access the [Learning from Home](https://education.nsw.gov.au/teaching-and-learning/curriculum/learning-from-home/advice-to-parents-and-carers) resource which provides practical advice to parents and carers on how to best create and support a productive learning environment in the home. <https://education.nsw.gov.au/teaching-and-learning/curriculum/learning-from-home/advice-to-parents-and-carers>

Thank you, parents and carers, for ongoing patience and support. I trust that all in our school community will be able to stay safe and healthy in the coming weeks, and throughout the year ahead of us.

Regards

Dr Mark Howie  
Principal

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