



Monday 11 October 2021

Dear Families and Friends of Geelong Grammar School,

COVID-19 (Novel Coronavirus) – Update #52 as at 5.30pm on Monday 11 October

It has been a joy to welcome the return of students and staff to on-site learning and living at Bostock House, Corio and Timbertop for the commencement of Term 4, including the successful completion of the GAT (General Achievement Test) for our Year 12 students. We look forward to the staggered return of face-to-face learning for all of our students across all of our campuses in the coming weeks, as outlined in [Update #51](#).

Return to on-site learning – Bostock House and Corio

| Year levels | From Monday 11 October | From Tuesday 26 October |
|-------------|------------------------|-------------------------|
| Prep | ✓ | ✓ |
| Years 1-2 | ✓ | ✓ |
| Years 3-4 | Tuesday-Wednesday | ✓ |
| Years 5-6 | Thursday-Friday | ✓ |
| Year 7 | ✓ | ✓ |
| Year 8 | Tuesday-Wednesday | ✓ |
| Year 10 | Thursday-Friday | ✓ |
| Year 11 | ✓ | ✓ |
| Year 12 | ✓ | ✓ |

Return to on-site learning – Toorak Campus

| Year levels | From Monday 18 October | From Tuesday 26 October | From Monday 5 November |
|-------------|------------------------|-------------------------|------------------------|
| Prep | Monday-Wednesday | Monday-Wednesday | ✓ |
| Years 1-2 | Thursday-Friday | Thursday-Friday | ✓ |
| Years 3-4 | | Tuesday-Wednesday | ✓ |
| Years 5-6 | | Thursday-Friday | ✓ |

Public Exposure Sites – Corio and Timbertop

As the Department of Health (DoH) continues to actively identify and update its list of [public exposure sites](#), a number of our Corio and Timbertop students have been identified as having attended exposure sites prior to returning to campus. This has required the careful coordination of testing and isolation of those students, with affected boarding Houses also being isolated (in House) until confirmation of negative test results. One Senior School boys' boarding House and three Timbertop Units were impacted last week until the students identified returned negative COVID test results. Two Senior School girls' boarding Houses are currently in isolation awaiting test results.

I wish to acknowledge the extraordinary efforts of our Corio and Timbertop staff, and in particular our Head of Senior School, Heads of House, Heads of Unit, boarding and Health Centre teams; everyone involved in supporting our students and staff are to be commended. I wish to also applaud the calm and positive response by our students and staff at Corio and Timbertop. As we have done throughout the pandemic, we continue to take a highly precautionary approach that prioritises the safety, health and wellbeing of our students, staff and

their families. We have confidence in our COVIDSafe protocols and processes, which have served us extremely well to date.

Three Vs to keep us COVIDSafe

As you are aware, we actively review our COVIDSafe protocols in consultation with our Senior Medical Officer, Professor Fergus Cameron. During the staggered return to face-to-face learning and ongoing operation during Term 4, we will prioritise the Three Vs –Vital COVIDSafe Steps, Vaccination and Ventilation:

- **Vital COVIDSafe steps** – we are continuing to promote COVIDSafe protocol and practices, including exceptional hygiene, spatial distancing, completion of our [Daily Health Questionnaire](#), appropriate temperature testing, and mandatory wearing of face masks, both indoors and outdoors (with the exception being in boarding house bubbles), for both secondary school and primary school-aged students – a precautionary step that was recently mandated by Victoria’s Chief Health Officer (CHO) for all Year 3-6 students;
- **Vaccination** – we are supporting the vaccination of our learning community through partnerships with RMIT Medical Hub and Mansfield Vaccination Hub; and
- **Ventilation** – we are increasing fresh air flow into indoor spaces through opening windows, using door jams, and monitoring/adjusting air conditioning units, whilst also conducting room ventilation audits using the National Construction Code for naturally ventilated spaces and Australian Standard AS 1688 for mechanically ventilated spaces. For those rooms not meeting standard, we are investigating additional remedies, which may include the use of air purifiers.

Vaccinations

We are very grateful for the ongoing support from the RMIT Medical Hub and Mansfield Vaccination Hub respectively to continue to progress on-site Pfizer vaccinations at Corio and Timbertop. Those Year 11 students who utilised the on-site vaccination hub at Corio in Term 3 received their second Pfizer vaccination dose last week, with Year 12 students scheduled to receive their second dose on Wednesday 13 October. We are now progressing planning for on-site Pfizer vaccinations for Years 7-10 students at Corio in early November.

As previously noted by our Head of Timbertop, Tom Hall, we are offering three separate vaccination clinics at Timbertop in Term 4 to capture all possible timings and dose logistics, with the first Pfizer vaccination clinic administered by Mansfield Vaccination Hub yesterday, Sunday 10 October. Timbertop families should refer to the recent [Term 4 Information](#) on Hive for more information.

Rapid Antigen Testing (RAT)

Thank you to members of our community who have been in touch regarding Rapid Antigen Testing (RAT). We continue to monitor guidance from the Therapeutic Goods Administration (TGA) and advice from our Senior Medical Officer regarding the efficacy of introducing RAT in our ‘high risk’ residential environment. The advice has been consistent that until we have achieved high immunity within our learning community and the risk of COVID-related school closures diminish, the ‘gold standard’ PCR (Polymerase Chain Reaction) testing continues to be the most appropriate in our context. We anticipate that this will evolve rapidly, and it is likely that we will adopt RAT in the latter stages of Term 4 and/or at the start of the 2022 academic year.

Interstate Travel

We note from last Thursday 7 October, a number of NSW local government areas were downgraded from Red Zone to Orange Zones and from Extreme Risk to Red Zone. Victorian residents or interstate residents in Orange Zones are only required to undertake a COVID-19 test within 72 hours of arriving in Victoria and to quarantine until they receive a negative result. Unfortunately, the Department of Education and Department of Health instructions continue to prohibit us from quarantining students on-site. We thank those families who have communicated early and transparently with us regarding their travel plans.

Next Steps

We are uplifted by imminent return of all students. We particularly welcome the return of those interstate students completing mandatory quarantine and/or planning to travel to Victoria.

As ever, the School will communicate swiftly and accurately with our community if the situation evolves. Thank you for continuing to direct all COVID-19 related queries to C19questions@ggs.vic.edu.au.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Rebecca Cody".

Rebecca Cody
Principal

A large, stylized handwritten flourish or signature element, consisting of a long, sweeping curve that starts from the right side of the signature area and loops back towards the left.