Good afternoon parents and caregivers,

As you are aware, the Australian Government has taken significant revised steps to increase restrictions across the country to support necessary social distancing measures.

**From tomorrow, Tuesday 24/3/2020 parents and caregivers are strongly encouraged to keep their children at home.** Children are asked to stay at home unless they are children of essential service workers and there is no available care in their household. This expectation has been set by the NSW Department of Education.

WWPS staff have being preparing for such a time, and the school has sent out today in the mail or home with students, booklets for them to complete at home. Content in each booklet has been matched to relevant curriculum outcomes, in line with our school’s scope and sequencing of learning.

All of our teaching staff are currently preparing online methods to connect with students during this time. Please keep checking the school’s Facebook page or mobile app as these will become our main methods of instant communication. Our staff will be using a platform called Google Classroom that all students have access to through their department portals. Step by step instructions of how to access this will be posted in the coming days when the platform is up and running. Within ‘Google classroom’, students can access set school work, ask questions and interact with teachers during school hours.

Our school website will also be updated to reflect any whole schools notes that are sent out. These notes will also be posted on the school Facebook page and Skoolbag App. Please turn on notifications from our app to ensure you are kept as up-dated with, what feels like daily changes, during this pandemic.

While these measures are in place a couple of things that parents need to be aware of:

* WWPS canteen will be **closed** until further notice.
* All NDIS providers, that currently come to school, have been cancelled. They will be making direct arrangements with their clients.
* Absence explanation/note – it is suitable to state that you are choosing to keep your child/children at home. Please let us know that you will be keeping your child/children at home as a result of the Government’s request. You will only need to send this message to the school once to cover for the duration of term 1. We will update our attendance documentation to reflect this through a flexible code - meaning it does not impact any student’s yearly attendance percentage.
* If you need to send your child/children to school - **Afternoon pick up** - Parents are to wait for their child/children on the back oval and basketball court. This will allow adequate space for parents/carers to practice recommended social distancing.
* To stay updated with local information, please view the Hunter New-England Facebook page (HNE Health) which provides published information about the events of COVID-19 in our area. Also, you can read about the latest advice about COVID-19 on the Department of Education’s website at [http://www.education.nsw.gov.au.](http://www.education.nsw.gov.au)

Please be respectful with your decision making around student attendance during this uncertain time. Remember our staff have families, health concerns and reasons for feeling uncomfortable in a frontline workforce, during a worldwide pandemic. As employee’s of a supportive public education system, our teacher’s at WWPS are passionate and committed to providing a quality education to all students. We will be following instructions as per our employer, the NSW Department of Education, to ensure that we can provide, where possible, a connected education for students whilst at home.

Tim Lewis