Dear Parents,

Happily, I can confirm that no staff or student has been diagnosed with COVID-19. However, some further changes will be implemented to ensure we stay ahead of the spread.

Beginning **Monday 23rd March 2020** WWPS will be putting in some additional measures to keep our students, staff and wider community safe as the COVID-19 pandemic continues. As I’m sure you are aware, the COVID-19 situation is causing concern across Australia and we all need to work together to minimise the spread.

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)

Below are the expectations and restrictions being implemented beginning week 9, until further notice.

**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 by remaining at least 1.5m apart from each other. Teachers will walk their classes down to these areas in a staggered arrangement, so they can be available for usual afternoon chats, but only if required.

**Morning drop off** – Two teachers will be on duty every morning. One teacher will supervise the back gate so parents can feel comfortable dropping their child/children off from 8:55am. We respectfully ask that ALL parents dropping children to school use this as their new arrangement for drop offs. This will allow for a quick drop off and therefore the number of parents and additional siblings being present at this time reduces. Remember we are expected to reduce crowd numbers as a precaution towards preventing the spread of COVID-19. A simple drop to the gate is expected during this time. The second teacher on duty will be located at the normal concrete area in front of classrooms.

**Parent** helpers will no longer be able to work in classrooms until further notice.

Our **canteen** will remain open at this stage and will continually review food handling and hygiene practices to ensure that there is minimised risk to students. Again, we respectfully ask all canteen volunteers to monitor their symptoms and do not come in to help if they show any signs of cold or flu.

**Teachers** are monitoring hand hygiene and enforcing strict hand washing routines during the school day. Students are washing their hands with antibacterial soap before entering classrooms each time. They are also sent to wash their hands before eating.

**Shared resources** are being reduced in classrooms. Students will all be given their own resources such as pens and pencils reducing the need for shared resources. To assist in this practice, please discuss with your child if there is anything additional they may need at school to reduce the need for them to ‘share’ personal items with friends and classmates.

**Fast parent contact** is essential at a time like this. We ask that all parents have someone available to pick up their child/children throughout the day in case their child starts to feel unwell or displays cold and flu like symptoms.

**School events,** in-line with government recommendations, have been cancelled such as Star Struck, Cross Country, Easter Hat parade and all representative events with in-school events also being altered or cancelled until further notice.

Finally, as a school Principal and parent, I am constantly reviewing the unfolding concerns about students going to school during this pandemic. At a local level at WWPS, we are all continually reviewing our in-school practices to ensure that staff, students and parents/carers are all upholding the highest level of safe practice during this time. I wish to thank all parents that have discussed with me their concerns during this time. Please always feel free to call me to share your concerns and in most instances I will most likely be able to offer some reassurance. Please remember, it is in the best interest of children to remain at school during a time like this. School provides stability in their lives during an otherwise disruptive global time.

I thank you all in advanced for your continued support and understanding during this time.

If you have any questions please do not hesitate to call me on 49751312 or e-mail wangiwangi-p.school@det.nsw.edu.au

Kind regards,

Tim Lewis