

## MEDIA STATEMENT

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**23 March 2020**

*Catholic Schools will provide for children who need to attend school.*

The 56 Catholic schools in the Archdiocese of Canberra and Goulburn will work alongside the ACT public school pupil free days and NSW Premier's intention to keep schools open while encouraging parents to keep students home.

Catholic schools are committed, as far as possible, to providing students who need to be at school with quality learning opportunities. Providing schooling to students who need to be at school, for whatever reason, is an important contribution to the national effort to mitigate the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic by teachers and staff across all schools in Australia. I thank them for this great service.

Where possible, ACT and NSW Catholic schools will continue to welcome students whose families wish them to attend school until at least the end of Term 1, Thursday, 9 April.

Parents and carers have been informed that they may choose to keep their child or children at home. We have asked them to notify the school using normal procedures if they choose this option.

We recognise the essential community role played by many Catholic school parents across the ACT and NSW. This includes parents working in logistics, grocery retailing, emergency services, government and many other occupations and professions essential to the effective operation of our community at this time. Where students need to be at school, Catholic schools will endeavour to accommodate this.

Catholic Education in Canberra and Goulburn is prioritising the safety and wellbeing of staff and students. We will seek to ensure the continuity of learning, as far as possible, in a safe environment for all of our students. From Term 2 it is our plan that schools will offer a program of learning that can be accessed in school or remotely.

Mr Ross Fox

Director for Catholic Education, Canberra and Goulburn