



Director-General's UPDATE

26 March 2020

Dear foster and kinship carers

While you only just received a message from me late yesterday, I want to make sure you are being kept up to date as new decisions and information is available.

I know that you will be hearing lots of information, through various channels, about novel coronavirus (COVID-19) and I strongly encourage you to pay attention to the official messages from the Prime Minister, our Premier and the Chief Health Officers.

Today the Premier announced that Queensland state schools will go student-free next week. An additional five student-free days will be in place from Monday 30 March to Friday 3 April inclusive.

However, it is important for you to know that schools will remain open for the children of essential workers and children who are in out-of-home care, with children supervised by school staff. This means if it is preferable for your families circumstances that the children in your care attend school, then that is an option. We are not making a blanket rule about this because everyone's circumstances are so different. We thank our colleagues in Education for working with us to provide this option.

Of course, if you choose to have children not attend school next week, to support continued learning during this period, a newly established [learning@home](#) website has been developed by the Department of Education. This site contains a range of student learning material and information on other high quality education websites that may assist.

Schools will reopen to children and staff on Monday 20 April 2020, unless health authorities advise otherwise.

Of course Independent and Catholic schools are making decisions based upon their own situations so please check with your relevant school for details about attendance requirements.

Where needed, Outside School Hours Care (OSHC) may be available for children and families over these student free days. As this decision is at the discretion of the OSHC provider, further information about OSHC availability can be found at <https://www.startingblocks.gov.au/find-child-care/>

I know we are all receiving a lot of information and sometimes it seems that the advice from today is outdated before we hear it – that is the nature of this pandemic. However, I will keep sending you updates as soon as I can.

On behalf of my colleagues our heartfelt thanks to you for continuing to provide love and care to our children during these uncertain times.

Warm regards

Deidre Mulkerin

Director-General

Department of Child Safety, Youth and Women

