



CATHOLIC EDUCATION  
WESTERN AUSTRALIA

## **Media statement**

**23 April 2020**

### **Catholic Education supports opening of schools and parental choice**

Catholic Education Western Australia (CEWA) Executive Director, Dr Debra Sayce confirms that Catholic schools will open for Term 2 on Wednesday 29 April:

“Every child who attends a Catholic school in the coming days (at home or at school) will receive equitable access to engaging teaching and learning opportunities, and attentive pastoral care. Children will not just be supervised. Children attending school will be taught. Children at home will be taught. The content and mode of delivery will be same. Our schools will ensure that all children, regardless of the choice made by parents, will be provided a quality Catholic education.”

CEWA has confirmed that it is acting in full accordance with the National Principles for School Education as set out by the Prime Minister on Thursday 16 April, which were developed by the National Cabinet. It has also fully supported the advice of WA’s State Premier and Chief Health Officer to reopen schools from the start of Term 2.

“We endorse the Premier’s comment that, “the soft opening is about transitioning students back into classrooms in a responsible manner, to receive the best education, without risking the health of students, staff or parents”.

“Our first commitment in reopening schools in Term 2 is the health and safety of our students and staff. The Prime Minister has stated that schools must be “healthy and safe environments for students, teachers and other staff to ensure the effective and efficient delivery of education to students.” Dr Sayce said.

When schools reopen next week, Year 11 and 12 students in all Catholic schools will return to face-to-face learning. In line with the WA Government’s position, parents have the choice to send their children in Years K to 10 to school or to learn from home. This arrangement will invariably mean that in every classroom there will be some children in attendance, and some at home.

Given the State Government’s strong commitment to parental choice, Catholic schools are ensuring that every child has an equal opportunity to learn.

Catholic schools are committed to equity of learning for all children, providing appropriate and quality learning opportunities for all children, both at school and at home.

“To ensure that all children, whether at school or home, can learn in the best possible manner, Catholic schools will promote a mode of instruction which permits equitable and quality learning to occur,” Dr Sayce stated.

CEWA schools have a strong online learning capability, whereby students are not simply supervised but engaged in a rich learning experience. Over the last four years CEWA has been developing a digital learning platform for its schools. This has enabled its schools to deliver contemporary and interactive learning online through a system-wide implementation of a digital ecosystem, including Microsoft Teams, and other school-based digital platforms. An example of the rich teaching and learning taking place via the digital platform is CEWA’s Virtual Schools Network (ViSN) which has successfully delivered ATAR course content over the past three years via remote learning.

Catholic Education is hopeful that schools will return to normal operation as soon as possible.

**ENDS**