



March 2020

### *Communication from the St Andrews Board Chairman*

Dear St Andrews Parents and Carers,

As you know, the entire world is facing a period of great uncertainty due to the COVID-19 pandemic and St Andrews. Workplaces are closing offices, Churches are suspending services and the news from various authoritative sources changes on a daily basis. St Andrews is also having to deal with this situation and I'm sure you have appreciated, as I have, the continuous updates we have been receiving from the School.

I do not wish to speak to the logistics and plans of what is proposed over the next few weeks as the staff will do a much better job of that than I would. As the Chairman of the College Board, however, it was on my heart that a communication from the Board to the St Andrews community would be appropriate.

The first thing I would like to say is that I have been immensely impressed with the response of the College staff to this crisis. The level of innovation, flexibility and sheer effort that I have witnessed has been unprecedented. This is most clearly demonstrated by the move towards continuous education that the College is undertaking. Eight weeks ago there was no plan or model for doing this in the College. The staff have built this programme from the ground up specifically to support our children and to ensure that their education is not impaired. This is doubly impressive when we recognise that each member of staff is just as impacted by this crisis as we are. They also have concerns for their own health, the health of their children and the health of elderly, at risk, relatives.

I would like to publicly thank all of the staff for the efforts they have been making. To all of the parents in the community, when you see a staff member, please take the time to thank them for the work they have been doing. During a crisis, encouragement can be a better boost to the weary than espresso.

The second thing I would like to say is specifically for the parents in the community. I am also a parent, with two children currently attending St Andrews, and this is something that I have been convicted of during the last few days. This time of crisis is a specific call to action for us to role model faith and trust in our Saviour during a time of obvious fear and uncertainty. It is easy to be trusting when things go well. It is only in a time of crisis such as this that our character - our faith - is truly revealed. Now is the time for us, as parents, to demonstrate to our children what it means to trust in God by being alert, being concerned, being serious about what we are facing but also by being positive, being strong and showing courage. Now is the time for us to show the fruits of the spirit - especially love, joy, peace, patience, kindness and self-control.

This is a challenge I have made to myself and I ask each of you to consider it also. The next few weeks will be hard. There will be cause for fear, frustration and even anger. It is my hope that, once this crisis has passed - and it will pass - that the manner in which the St Andrews community responded will be an abiding witness to everyone around us.

God bless and I pray for the health of all our families,

*James Bligh*

Chairman

St Andrews Christian College Board