



29 October 2021

Dear Parents, Staff and members of the Cairns Catholic Education Community

I write to briefly provide an update on the Queensland Government's plan for Queensland's border reopening to domestic and international travel ([link](#)), its implications, and how we are planning to work with our school communities to prepare for the possible impacts this will have for our students' continuity of learning. We are also liaising with Education Offices in other states where restrictions eased this week, seeing schools and borders re-opened.

What we know so far is that according to Queensland Health advice:

- From 19 November border restrictions will be eased for fully vaccinated and exempted people and they will be eased even further when we reach 80% and 90% state vaccination targets. Full details on the Qld Governments Plan to Unite Families can be found [here](#).
- The Queensland Government has clearly stated that once the border opens, COVID-19 *will* come to our region. As our region is a popular tourist destination, this is logical.

Over the coming weeks we will be working with our schools and colleges to continue the great work they have already undertaken and implemented over the last 18 months and we will now prepare for this new phase of the pandemic. Plans will be communicated to you as they are finalised.

While there are many varying views about vaccination, which I respect, what has helped us greatly over the last 18 months is listening to health authorities. The message that is clear from the State and Commonwealth Governments is the need for those who can be vaccinated, to get vaccinated now, if they have not done so already. I support the words of our Chief Health Officer and that vaccination is a personal choice, but if we wish to have the maximum protection of the vaccination by the time the borders open, then we need to do so now - and that means this weekend.

There are many views out there about the positives and negatives of vaccination for COVID 19. Some of these include health reasons and others, religious. I have included a letter from our Bishop, +James Foley which may assist you in your decision making. If you have not already been vaccinated and have some reservations, I encourage you to go to the [Queensland Health website](#) and/or speak with your trusted health professional and discuss vaccination with them.

What we are assured of by the health authorities is that experience in and beyond Australia is that those who are fully vaccinated will:

- have a lesser chance of contracting COVID
- generally, have milder symptoms if they contract COVID 19 and
- be less likely to spread COVID.

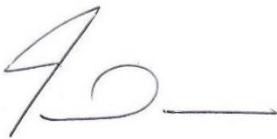


Our focus over the coming weeks will be to prepare for the possible impacts of this next phase of the pandemic so that our schools and colleges can continue to provide learning for our students as they have done, so professionally, over the last 18 months.

I ask everyone who is not vaccinated and, is able to be vaccinated, to do so this weekend. At this stage, this is the best strategy to assist our schools to remain open throughout next year and for our staff, students and families to remain well.

Again, if you are in doubt, please consult with Queensland Health or a health professional.

God Bless

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Ian Davis', with a horizontal line extending to the right.

Ian Davis
Acting Executive Director

