



Dear Parents and Carers,

Welcome to 2022 at Shire Christian School. I would especially like to extend a warm welcome to students and families joining us for the first time this year. I hope and pray that you quickly feel part of our community and that your children develop meaningful relationships with teachers and peers.

The first day of Term 1 is Monday 31 January. We are committed to ensuring that all students have a safe and positive start to the year. Our teachers are looking forward to seeing their students in the classroom next week. We have made some special arrangements for Kindergarten and Prep students to help them settle in quickly. This has been communicated separately.

Testing

- All students from Kindergarten to Year 12 are asked to take a rapid antigen test (RAT) and get a negative result before attending school at the start of Term 1.
- **RAT kits will be provided to each family.** Two weeks worth of tests will be available via a drive-through collection from school on Friday 28 January. We would appreciate those with surnames A-K coming between 10am and 11am and L-Z between 12pm and 1pm. Collection will remain open until 3pm. Please tell us at the collection point if you are picking up tests on behalf of another school family.
- Students should take a rapid antigen test twice a week on Monday and Wednesday mornings before attending school. Staff (including Out of School Hours Care) will also follow this protocol.

COVID-19 Positive Cases

- Students who are a 'household contact' must isolate at home for 7 days, regardless of a negative test result.
- Staff and students who get a positive rapid antigen test result must register it on service.nsw.gov.au or the Service NSW app as soon as possible (carers are able to do this on behalf of their child).
- Staff and students who receive a positive rapid antigen or PCR test result must email the school as soon as possible, and follow NSW Health advice.
- If your child has no symptoms and there is a positive case in their class, year or other grouping, they can continue to attend school in line with NSW Health advice. We will communicate to parents regularly about the presence and impact of COVID-19 in our community. The latest information can be found on the [COVID page](#) of our website.



- Negative results do not need to be reported to Service NSW or to the school.
- Staff and students can leave isolation and return to school after 7 days if they have no symptoms (sore throat, runny nose, cough or shortness of breath). No negative test is required.

Watch for Symptoms

- If your child is unwell, even with mild symptoms you must keep them home until symptoms cease. If they display any symptoms they should take a PCR test or rapid antigen test.
- If symptoms continue your child should stay home and take another RAT or PCR test in 24 hours. If that test is also negative, your child may return to school if another diagnosis is confirmed by a doctor (e.g. hayfever).

Ventilation

- All learning spaces have been assessed to ensure appropriate levels of ventilation. Staff will take measures to increase airflow (opening doors, windows, using the air conditioning systems and air purifiers where necessary).

Student Cohorting

- We will continue to apply strategies to minimise the risk of cross transmission, including limiting interaction between year groups where possible.

Masks

- All staff and Secondary School students are required to wear masks indoors and on public transport.
- Primary school students are expected to wear masks indoors when possible.

Visitors

- Parent volunteers and classroom helpers must be fully vaccinated.
- Visitors will be required to wear a mask indoors and will be encouraged to wear a mask outdoors if they cannot maintain physical distancing.
- All visitors must report to reception and check in using the Service NSW QR Code before entering.



Pickup and Drop off Arrangements

- P-12 drop off arrangements - Parents should drop off their children in the bus bay from 8am. We will have a staff member greet your child at the school drop off zone in the bus bay and a dedicated Prep staff member for Prep children. Please do not walk your son or daughter into the school unless they are unable to manage on their own. If this is the case, please only walk as far as the breezeway doors.
- P-2 pick up arrangements - Please wait on the oval near the front entrance.
- 3-12 pick up arrangements - If possible, please wait in your car for your son or daughter to come to you. Before your child leaves for school in the morning, please let him/her know roughly where you will park the car in the afternoon. If this is not possible, please wait on the oval near the front entrance.
- Please practice physical distancing while waiting and wear a mask if required.

I am confident that these measures will ensure we have the best possible start to the year. You can download our [Safe Return to School Information Sheet](#) and view the most up to date information on the [COVID page](#) of our website.

Staff Week and 2022 Theme

This week our staff are spending time preparing for the year ahead, considering how they can best cater to the individual needs of their students and developing their professional practice.

Each year we develop a theme or focus as a way of engaging everyone in the school community to continually refine and improve practice. This year our theme is **Character**. As our students and staff seek to learn, develop and grow we will explore the importance of traits such as integrity, courage, humility, compassion, perseverance, faithfulness and Christlikeness. I look forward to sharing more with you throughout the year.

Staff Update

We have a number of new staff joining our school this year. Our counselling team welcomes Rebecca Mitchell and Nathan Green, in Secondary School we welcome Scott Mannow (ICT), Sarah Christian (Art), Rachel Roberts (HSIE) and Greg Harvey (Maths) and in Junior School Marion Thomsen. We also have a number of staff returning to Shire Christian in different capacities: Belinda Tilley, Julianne



Holdsworth, Kathryn Findlay, Jan Alterator, Ann-Maree Bennison and Ashleigh Sawley.

Building Works

Over the holidays improvements have been made to our school grounds and facilities to benefit our students. Classrooms have been freshly painted, 21 large 4K interactive whiteboards were installed in classrooms and our school bell, security and emergency systems were significantly upgraded.

Most notably, four new music studios have been completed, providing acoustically treated spaces for music tuition, ensemble rehearsal and recording facilities.

HSC Results

Congratulations to Kate Coffey and our music department for their terrific HSC results. Kate placed equal first in the state in Music 1, an extraordinary achievement.

I am extremely proud of each of our HSC students. In difficult times Year 12 persevered and are now seeing the fruit of their hard work. I am very thankful for our caring and dedicated teachers who have supported each of our students to achieve their best. We are confident that the group of young men and women who graduated Shire Christian School last year are well prepared to embrace their futures.

As we begin the school year I encourage you to trust in the Lord Jesus. While every year has different challenges, this year I look forward to the many opportunities before our students as we work together in Christian education. There will be times to develop and grow, to improve academically through engaging learning experiences, to form lasting relationships and to develop a better understanding of the Bible.

As I take on the role of Acting Principal for the start of 2022, I am encouraged by both the professionalism and care of our staff and the wonderful community of parents and students, all working together in partnership under our Lord Jesus.

Kind regards,

Mr David Stonestreet
Acting Principal