

11<sup>th</sup> June 2020

## Response to complaints received by elected local representatives

Dear Councillor Owen, Minister Enoch and DRD Alan Jones,

*The first complaint was made to Councillor Owen made about a staff member telling a parent to move-on before a child was secured with a seatbelt – this isolated incident was addressed on the day, staff member was spoken to by me and it hasn't been repeated. It is a symptom of a broader problem.*

*The second complaint to Minister Enoch concerned traffic and is addressed in this letter.*

I would like to begin by acknowledging that the traffic around the College has been a problem for six years of my principalship at Calamvale Community College. By a problem, I mean a source of complaints and abuse whether shouting and blaring horns in the carpark, verbal comments to staff on pick up duty or frustrated comments on FaceBook. That frustration is levelled at other parents, our staff and myself. In addition, there have been multiple proposals from parents presented to the College with resolutions to the traffic, none of which the College can implement and all of which given the advice that the roads are the responsibility of the Brisbane City Council and we have no authority in that area.

This has been a long running issue and the College has exhausted its resources. I have provided an outline of all that has been done for your information. Traffic complaints cannot continue to be the responsibility of a school, when there is little more that we can do. The P&C and the College Council support and applaud our efforts and have canvassed this themselves on several occasions.

The College has tried many strategies to alleviate the traffic:

- Split shifts with students released: secondary 2.30pm; Years 3-6 2.45pm and Secondary 2.30pm Walking School Bus – parents did not support the multiple attempts to commence this program
- Active School Travel Program on multiple occasions supported by our councillor
- Students exit the school from seven exit points
- Investigated using the 'Ring Road' as a loop, but it is public/private and we have no jurisdiction including of the speed on that road
- Diverting Year 3-6 student collections to the secondary exit, due to their later release
- Staffed the pedestrian crossing and managed the flow across the crossing to increase traffic flow –ceased despite effectiveness, polite parents and praise for the College's actions, due to a complaint to the P&C that staff have no jurisdiction in this area
- Used a stop/go sign to manage the exit from the 'ring road' and the carparks – also ceased despite effectiveness, polite parents and praise for the College's actions, due to a complaint to the P&C that staff have no jurisdiction in this area



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Throughout all of this, the only community support we have had with traffic are:

1. Council widened the pedestrian access to the carpark making it a 'children crossing' zone
2. Police arrived one afternoon (2018) and gave out seatbelt fines but did not address cars in '2 minute' zones
3. Launch of BCC vehicles by the Mayor
4. Post Covid-19 and post 2 complaints beyond the school to other bodies:
  - a. there have been four police drive-bys in the morning when the traffic is minimal
  - b. police told cars to keep moving on one afternoon
  - c. council traffic have driven by twice in the morning

During Covid-19 restrictions, since May 11<sup>th</sup>, we have had to restrict parent access to the school to avoid crowds of parents around classrooms and at gates. With the knowledge that all Preps are signed in and out of school, we had to manage that situation, with the following actions:

We instigated the 'LookOut' program using the following strategies:

- Printed and provided every primary school family with a 'last name' card for their windshield
- Made a nametag for every Prep/Year 1 to ensure the right student went into the right car
- Parents are requested to remain in their cars, including in rain
- Set up a microphone and painted car bays onto the footpath and a safety yellow line
- On day 1 of this program with students sitting on the wide footpath, we had parents in significant numbers pushing past staff, despite our requests, to 'grab' their children. We even had parents behind the carpark fence, with the busy access road between, beckoning their 4 ½ year olds across the road. I had, at the time 'vulnerable staff', on duty having returned to school, and no record of Preps being taken by the correct person.
  - As a result, we cut out a fence panel to provide safe space for Year 1 and Prep (with older siblings gathered there as well). We are currently having a sliding gate made for this area.
- Pop up shelters have been assembled morning and afternoon when rain is likely and tarpaulins spread out for students to sit on when the grass is wet
- Prep and Year 1 students are escorted from their cars into the school by 6 staff every morning
- Between 15 and 25 staff have been involved in the 'pick up' schedule every afternoon
- Neither of these activities is normal allocated duty, all of it is volunteered or diverted from other tasks
- Staff have followed this process in teaming rain, sheltering students with umbrellas and plastic ponchos as they were delivered to waiting cars
- Walking families have a collection point, with social distance markings, and students are delivered to them
- Students who use wheelchairs have had access to a pick up point on the 'ring road'.
- C&K (30-50 cars) continue to use the 'ring road' access

**Time taken from the final school bell to the last car:**

**Best ever: 21 minutes**

**Worst (first day of 1100 students back to school) 35 minutes**

**Torrential rain: 27 minutes**

**Average: 23 minutes**

In the Secondary School, the following arrangements:

- Student flow across the pedestrian crossing is regulated



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- The gate to a temporary 'carpark' at the end of the street labelled 'student access' directly off Hamish Street, which is normally reserved for student drivers but has access to Beaudesert Road, has been opened
- Using advice from Education Queensland, the entry has been graded, signage installed and drivers are encouraged to use this exit rather than return to the Junior School traffic on Hamish Street
- Secondary students have the choice to marshal on the oval and be collected in this carpark rather than wait on Hamish Street
- Request for an upgrade of this entry, exit and carpark has been submitted to Education Queensland through the College's School Strategic Infrastructure Plan (SSIP) but it would also require traffic modification of the Beaudesert Road access road.

Prior the return of ALL students from the Covid-19 learning@home, we began communication with the BCC May 15, we submitted several plans (attached) to repurpose the Council carparks to increase the flow of traffic. We were acutely aware of the fears of our Chinese community, our vulnerable staff and students and the requirements of the Covid-19 restrictions. By Thursday 21<sup>st</sup> May midday, we did not have a response. Given the preparations and communications that were required, we enacted our own plan so that parents would know what was expected on the following Monday.

#### What's worked well?

1. Covid-19 restrictions have been upheld
2. Our community is safe and confident of our support and care for them
3. All students have been safely managed to and from school
4. Significant parental support
5. Some parents staggering collection times
6. No traffic issue in the morning
7. Using the Covid-19 system, 21 minutes from first to last car is impressive, with parents and other family members waiting in the comfort of their car
8. CCC staff is amazingly dedicated to the welfare of our students and our community

#### What hasn't worked well?

1. Junior School parents arrive at 2.30pm, blocking secondary school access. They were arriving at 2pm, but we begged them to delay their arrival until 2.45pm.
2. Flow of traffic prior to the finish of Junior School – it is stationary.
3. Number of cars trying to access the school and the capacity of the road system
4. Parents' frustrations at long queues and roundabout blockages
5. System depends on the good will of CCC staff to alleviate danger and chaos
6. Any walk to school program or drop off points beyond the school fence

As the principal, I believe that our College successfully supports students in their academic pursuits, sporting goals and wellbeing including support for extensive support for EALD beyond systemic expectation and support. We embrace our diverse community that requires our College to engage in multiple ways to ensure the students have every success. We have much more to do and many more challenges to overcome. However I do not believe, that as a P-12 co-educational college of over 2400 students the management of traffic should be one of our key objectives.



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Please do not expect that when the Covid-19 restrictions change that this problem will be resolved. It has existed for more than 6 years and will require consultation and communication to resolve it. Plans submitted to Brisbane City Council for temporary changes have been attached to this document. There are also a few sample de-identified complaints from the Covid-19 period. Calamvale Community College has met this challenge, for the most part alone, but remains committed to solutions.

Yours faithfully



Lisa Starmer  
College Principal



Mike Butler  
College Council Chair

