



2 September 2021

MS/SS Academic Year extension

What it means for the Field Studies Programme

What is happening with Residentials 5 and 6 (2021)?

The School is hoping to run a combined programme for boys who are scheduled to take part in Residentials 5 and 6 – that is, the Year 9 boys who have not gone on the FSP this year.

The programme will include these 80 boys and will run in Weeks 7-10 this term.

If the Government's return to school plan works out, and if the public health restrictions permit, the boys should be able to go from Monday 15 November-Wednesday 8 December.

If it is not possible to run the full four-week programme, it may be that an abbreviated programme may still run at some point in November.

If that is not possible, the School has set aside a time in the January 2022 break for an abbreviated residential programme.

If the Public Health Orders do not permit a January programme, an abbreviated residential programme has been scheduled for July 2022.

Why have other schools run residential programmes?

Some families have made the observation that certain other schools have been able to run residential programmes in regional NSW this term and asked why Trinity didn't do the same.

In this particular situation, the two Sydney independent schools that have run a regional residential programme this term have been able to do so because of the nature of their respective campuses.

- ▲ They can be entirely self-contained and have been able to set up an iso-bubble.
- ▲ No-one going in and no-one going out for the first fourteen days.
- ▲ No contact between the boys and anyone who has contact with the local community.
- ▲ Enough staff to provide 24/7 supervision, either because they already live onsite, or because they are able to move onsite for a fortnight.

Our Field Studies Centre is a wonderful campus, but it doesn't accommodate a large staff team. Our people there all live in the local community, so the risk is that we might take the virus down there from Sydney with us. Earlier in the term, when the outbreak and restrictions were far less severe than they are now, we did not think that it would be responsible or appropriate for Trinity to send boys from an outbreak area to a region that was unaffected.

The key issue is that we can't send people from Sydney to the Shoalhaven region for Programmes 5 and 6 under the current restrictions.

Why can't you run a shorter Field Studies Programme next year to fit students in?

The extended, term long Field Studies Programme, is now inseparably linked to class placement and the academic programme, delivered at the Field Studies Centre and Summer Hill. The Stage 5 innovation, taking effect for Year 9 (2022) at the commencement of the next Academic

year, means that some Stage 5 content is taught exclusively at the Field Studies Centre, while other content is delivered exclusively at Summer Hill. The rhythm of the new 25-hour electives also factor into this. The link means that it is necessary for the Field Studies Programme to run for the whole term to meet necessary academic hours.

What about Year 9, 2022 and the extended Field Studies Programme?

The Field Studies Programme residential allocations previously made for boys in Year 9 (2022) will be preserved. That is, students allocated to Term 1, 2022, will attend in Term 1. Students allocated to Term 2, 2022 will remain on Term 2, and so on.

Students allocated to Term 4 in 2021, will remain linked to Term 4, but will instead attend in Term 4 in 2022.

This is due to the inseparable link between class placement, the academic programme, as outlined in the previous answer, and the timing of significant sport and co-curricular commitments.

Can the FSP be conducted in a way that is COVID-safe?

Yes, *if* the Shoalhaven LGA is at Level 1, 2 or 3 restrictions. We have developed COVID-protocols that adhere to the public health guidance and follow the restrictions that are placed on boarding schools.

Will vaccination play a part in enabling the FSP to take place?

Yes. The Government recently announced, although the detail is yet to be provided, that everyone who works in a school must be fully vaccinated by the middle of next term.

With the recent decision to approve vaccination for everyone 12 years and older, there is nothing to stop the current Year 9 boys seeking vaccination. The assumption is this would give great confidence to parents and the wider community, knowing that the group had been vaccinated. The same observation is made for next year's Year 9 cohort.

Is vaccination mandatory?

To be clear: the Government has not announced the mandatory vaccination of students. There has been no suggestion that students should be excluded from school based on their vaccination status. Trinity does not anticipate going beyond the public health advice on this matter.

The School makes the common-sense observation that vaccination is our best hope of returning to a semblance of school as we know and love it. We encourage families to listen to the recommendations of public health experts in this matter.

IMPORTANT: the status of the Field Studies Programme remains contingent upon Public Health advice. The School continues to monitor the situation and will make decisions in line with that advice and in the best interests of the boys, staff, and local community.