

Friday 24 April, 2020

ST. MARY MACKILLOP PRIMARY SCHOOL

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Staying Connected... Update 4

Dear Community,

What an incredible week it has been as we have settled into Remote Learning. Remote Learning is new for all of us. It is something I never could have imagined happening!

I acknowledge that the whole concept of Remote Learning is providing many challenges for families. Some families are coping better than other families. There are many reasons for this fact... we respect the diversity of families and make no judgments as to how you are going with Remote Learning. What I need to say is; **GO EASY ON YOURSELVES AND ON YOUR CHILDREN.**

We are not expecting you to do 7 hours of formal schooling each weekday. I am a father and a grandfather. I know what it would have been like in my home and I hear what it's like in my grandchildren's home. They are engaged in their learning, but we acknowledge the learning times need to be spaced and varied.

I also am realistic, when I suspect that the novelty of Remote Learning maybe wearing off for some children and for you as parents also! Over time it may become harder and harder for your children. It may become lonely and less engaging. Distractions will become more difficult for children to resist and some children may feel more disconnected from school.

Remote Learning can advantage children who are diligent and self-motivated, but may disadvantage those who struggle.

We look forward to returning to classes as normal one day, because I firmly believe nothing is as good as what we were doing a few weeks ago when everyone was at school.

SO I REPEAT... GO EASY ON YOURSELVES. GO EASY ON YOUR CHILDREN!

Do what you can do reasonably and practically in the context of your busy family home.

I don't believe children will miss out. They will catch up.

In saying all of the above, **I cannot express adequately how grateful I am to our staff.** The teachers of SMMPS have designed and are delivering a Remote Learning program on Seesaw which is most impressive. We have designed this program on short notice, using the platform most familiar to us. It is working for many children. The feedback we are receiving from parents and the children has been most supportive and affirming. We are doing our best to deliver a program that the children can access and manage.

Next week, most teachers are connecting through Google Meets or a phone call. I see many children have already booked one or the other. Google Meets is certainly raising the bar on what we have been doing, but we want to ensure the children can connect with their teacher and school even more, than through the marvellous posts the teachers have been delivering.

OUR AIM IS TO KEEP THE CHILDREN CONNECTED TO SCHOOL.

Thank you also to the boys and girls, many with the support of a parent, sibling or carer, for posting your work and for sometimes posting a video of you engaging in a task. Well done to the boys and girls for all their hard work, dedication and commitment. Keep posting your work!

We have a small number of children onsite each day. I recognise that those of you in essential services and for some other children, school is the only place they can be cared for safely.

I acknowledge and appreciate most sincerely, those teachers, learning support staff and leaders who generously volunteer to be onsite caring for the children. I appreciate our admin staff and maintenance staff who simply don't stop working as they support Anthony D'Amico (Deputy Principal) and I as we provide for the children of our school.

St. Mary MacKillop said,

"Courage will rise with difficulties and obstacles."

Despite the many difficulties and obstacles, I thank everyone for your patience and trust. Our courage will continue to rise.

ST. MARY MACKILLOP primary school

Thank you parents for your support. We appreciate it.

We ask Our Lady of Perpetual Help and St. Mary MacKillop to pray for us.

Keep well everyone and keep safe.



Anthony McCluskey
Principal.



ENROLMENTS FOR 2021

Despite the disruption to our school year, **we are still accepting enrolment applications for 2021. If you have a child to be enrolled in Prep 2021, please email Kellie at kdoherty@mmkeilordowns.catholic.edu.au or give her a call and she'll assist you.**

We need to know our numbers so we can keep planning.

Despite the chaos in our world today. Life goes on and for that we are grateful. Life is good and we will get through this together.