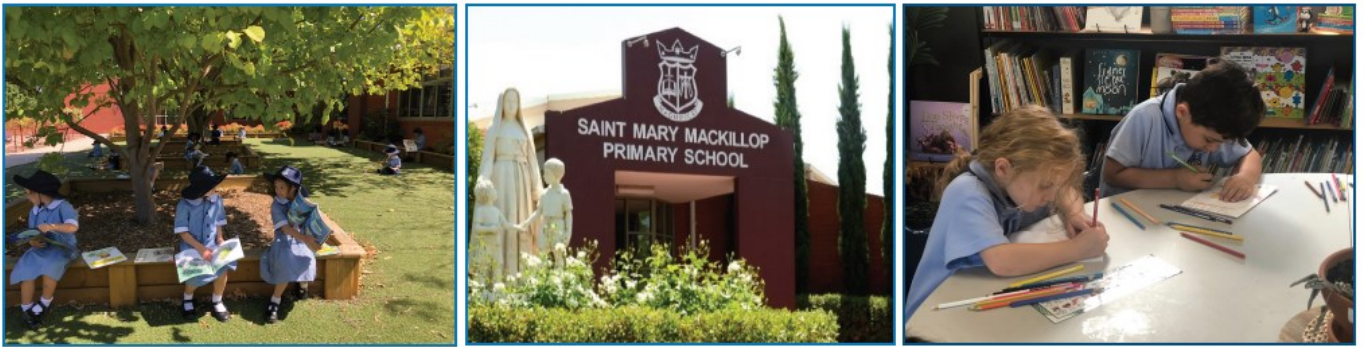


Tuesday 14 July, 2020

ST. MARY MACKILLOP PRIMARY SCHOOL

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Staying Connected... No. 15

Dear Parents and Carers,

As we enter Term 3, I fully appreciate it is an anxious time for many of you as we face the challenges of Remote Learning once again. I know it is not the ideal way to learn. We have never had to do this prior to 2020. You were not ready for Remote Learning and our teachers were not ready for Remote Learning. However, Remote Learning is now happening worldwide. Many countries have been engaged in Remote Learning for up to six months. Most of Australia has moved back to face to face schooling, but unfortunately for us here in Metropolitan Melbourne, here we go again.

I cannot express how appreciative I am of our teachers who have risen to the challenge and provided some continuity of learning through our Learning Grids. I remain extremely grateful to you the parent community, who have been so positive, supportive and understanding towards the school and the teachers. **Of course, the support you are offering your children to implement the Learning Grids has been tremendous and is noted and appreciated by all of our teachers.** This is particularly difficult if you are balancing your own work and your child's school work. Thank you. **The children have to be congratulated as they work to complete the Grids.** We are really proud of them.

The feedback regarding our Learning Grids has been most positive from you the parent body. However, we have spent the past week reviewing our Learning Grids. We recognise that we have to put in place something that might be more sustainable for the children and for you, if Remote Learning is to continue for any significant length of time.

To this end, our Learning Grids have been adapted. The adaptations reflect the expectations set by the Catholic Education Commission of Victoria in terms of what time allocations need to be implemented to various subjects. **We also hope the new format Learning Grid and expectations take pressure off children and off you as the children's 'teachers'/ support persons at home.**

The Learning Grids will comprise activities in:

- **Reading**
- **Writing/Spelling and**
- **Maths.**

These are the **core subjects** which we ask the children to engage in Monday to Friday. This is the Grey section of the Grid. The children will be required to post two of these tasks to SeeSaw daily.

We will continue providing pre-recorded demonstration videos uploaded to SeeSaw to support these core subjects.

The priority is the core subjects. It is approximately 2 hours of work each day. After this, you might think your children have done enough formal learning for the day. You might choose to do some activities as a family or allow your children to do other things at home.

However, **the Learning Grid will offer the children an optional section** which allows the children to choose activities over the week in:

- **Discovery P-2/ Design Your Own Learning 3-6**
- **STEM**
- **Italian**
- **Wellbeing/RE**
- **Art**
- **PE**

The children are welcome to post their responses to these activities also. They will receive acknowledgment from their teachers. This is the white section of the Grids

There will also be a greater online component to the delivery of the core subjects.

We are going to **trial** over the next two weeks, **Live Google Meets with class groups and smaller intervention groups, which will be live and interactive. This will ensure connection for the children who choose to be part of these Google Meets and more opportunity for small group teaching to target individual needs.**

These will begin at 9:00am with:

- **Morning Greeting and Roll Call.** (We found that the children really enjoyed hearing their name called in the previous pre-recorded greetings. It will now be live.)
- **Prayer.** Prayer will include scripture, story, inspirational quotes, prayers of petition and discussion. This will go for about 10 minutes each morning. In this way we ensure we remain true to our Catholic identity and keep teaching our Catholic faith to the children.
- **Explanation of the day's Learning Grid.**
- Maybe some **class and teacher discussion.** This is good for connection.
- Teachers will then be available online to answer questions and to assist for some of the time when not teaching in intervention groups.

The times for online access will vary across classes, however children will be welcome to email questions to their teachers.

In the afternoon, teachers will be providing feedback, planning and pre-recording lessons for the next day.

Even though we aim to do more live, we recognise the value of pre-recorded sessions for children that may not be able to go live for whatever reason. These pre-records might also assist parents in explaining tasks.

I will publish protocols for Live Google Meets later in the week.

We will continue to review and improve our Learning Grids and approach as we move forward.

I REALLY AND MOST SINCERELY APPRECIATE YOUR SUPPORT.

I know this is a lot of information. It is stressful for you and it is stressful for us too. However, we know that every school in Melbourne is in the same situation. We are in this together. We all need to be kind and patient with each other, especially with our children. We are determined though, to do our best and provide the best we can for your children.

Our Lady of Perpetual Help and St. Mary MacKillop, please watch over all of us.

Keep safe and keep well everybody.



Anthony McCluskey

Principal