

Friday 24 July, 2020

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Staying Connected... No. 17

Dear Community,

What a week it has been for us and no doubt for you... Remote Learning 2.0 is certainly proving a challenge. However, I am extremely proud of my teachers and the absolutely amazing work they are doing. I recognise the many hours they are putting into planning, preparing Learning Grids and being online teaching their class and small intervention groups (in some cases up to 4 hours per day). This does not include the many hours spent providing feedback, recording adjustments for individual students and the myriad of other tasks that need doing every day to ensure Remote Learning is effective. This is all very new to our teachers, and something we never would have expected to ever be doing. However, this is the reality of our world at this time.

Of course, I am ever grateful to our teachers who are on the front line supervising children that must come to school for whatever reason. I firmly believe school is not the safest place to be. Victoria has over 70 schools closed at this time, due to COVID-19. Some of those schools are very close to home. However, as committed teachers we will always welcome and care for those children who need to come to school.

Our Teachers are now wearing masks or face shields. They are not required in schools for those in the act of teaching, but teachers are using their own masks and we are supplying PPE, to keep our teachers safe.

In acknowledging our teachers, I have to also express my gratitude to you as the 'teachers' at home. Whilst we are providing activities and engaging in online classes, I know you are the ones managing your children and supporting them with their learning. Thank you most sincerely. You want your children to learn. We want your children to learn. It's not ideal, but as I will keep saying, this is the way of the world at this time. Perhaps it is the new 'normal' for some time to come.

The feedback the teachers and I are receiving is largely positive. Thank you. I really and most sincerely appreciate your generosity. I also understand some of you are finding it all a bit much. In many ways, I don't blame you! You have your own personal stresses with Victoria's current restrictions. You may have employment and subsequently financial worries. We are all missing our usual routines. We are missing our extended families and on top of all this we are stuck at home with our kids. Even being stuck at home with your partner 24/7 can be a challenge!

On top of all this, I am always thinking of our students, your children. It's hard for them too, but they are brilliantly resilient and what I see happening, through the work being posted, is kids really doing their best to be engaged in their learning. We must be proud of them!

I understand too that some children are not as engaged as others and find it difficult to take part in online learning for whatever reason. I perfectly understand and respect the diversity of every family. Simply do what you can in your context. That's okay. Don't be too hard on yourself and don't be too hard on your children.

WELLNESS WEDNESDAY

Based on consultation and feedback from parents, students and teachers, I am declaring each and every Wednesday, **'Wellness Wednesday'**. **It will be a screen-free-day for teachers and for the children. On this day, there will be no teachers online.** This is a day for the teacher to plan, prepare, record videos, provide feedback, record student achievement and so on.

Most importantly it is a day for the students to move a little more slowly. They need a screen-free-day also. The children can check their Learning Grids for a number of lighter activities. They can choose from:

- **Physical Education**
- **Art/Craft, and/or a**
- **Wellness Activity.**

These activities will replace the Phys. Ed, Art/Craft and Wellbeing as optional activities in the white section of our Learning Grid. The children simply have to view the activity and then if they choose, they can complete one or more of the activities. They may choose to post their work. Feedback may be provided.

I appreciate a number of children are engaged in one on one sessions or small group interventions on Wednesdays. These interventions will be rescheduled. Parents will be contacted.

Onsite supervision will still take place.

I have made this decision, because I am concerned that teachers, children and parents will burn out if we continue at the pace we have been moving. This is particularly so, if Remote Learning continues past 19 August.

Thank you in anticipation for your positivity and support. We always are looking to move forward.

Again, we call on Our Lady of Perpetual Help and St. Mary MacKillop to pray for us, that we may keep safe and well.

Take care everyone,



Anthony McCluskey

Principal

STUDENT REPORTS

We are mandated by the Government to provide Student Reports, twice per year. However, it is difficult to provide Reports at this time, due to the fractured nature of our school year.

Reports will be available next Wednesday. These Reports are largely based on the assessments the teachers had completed in Term 1 and what they know of the children's achievements during Remote Learning in Term 2. Progression Points will not appear on the Reports, as we have no way of knowing the accuracy of the children's achievement over Term 2 particularly.

Reports will be sent out Wednesday afternoon (29 July) via nForma to your email. You should have a user name and password (Prep and new students will receive a user name and password via email). If you have forgotten your password, follow the prompts to reset your password.

PARENT TEACHER STUDENT CONVERSATIONS

Parent, Teacher, Student Conversations will be conducted via Google Meets on Tuesday and Wednesday 4 and 5 August between 10:00am and 5:00pm.

This will be an ideal opportunity to touch base with your child's teacher and have a chat about how it's going in this crazy world of Remote Learning.

Bookings will be available Monday 27 July via email. To book a conversation please click on the School Interviews link and follow the prompts.

On Tuesday 4 August activities will be posted to the Learning Grids that do not require teacher screen time or intervention. On Wednesday 5 August, activities will be the same as for Wellness Wednesday.