



St Columba's School Bayswater

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Grow in Faith Seek Wisdom Live in Peace

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Coronavirus (COVID-19) - UPDATE

Dear Parents and Carers

Hope everyone is going well and all your loved ones are okay. I wanted to once again take this opportunity to thank you for your support of our staff and your children. Your positive words of encouragement and care have been a constant conversation throughout our classrooms and administration. You have been remarkable in your understanding with the high volume of communication and ever changing landscape of the operations of our school day. Agility and flexibility have been the key, but nothing has been more important than the gentleness everyone has shown when things have not gone exactly to plan. We know that it is in the challenges when we need to remain strong in what we stand for. We all smash this out the park.

As a staff, we have noticed our children becoming more resilient and confident as they're dropped off at the gate and they make their way to their classrooms, carrying their own back packs, walking with their siblings or friends. We also realise this has been a difficult time for parents, dropping their children off at the gate and walking away. What we do know, from all of this, is that you trust us with your most precious gifts. Never think we take this for granted. I just need to look at the number of staff that come out to duty to support other staff on the Kiss and Drive on Roberts. Our little guys are feeling safe when coming to school and when being picked up. This is a wonderful team effort by staff and parents. It is a blessing every day. Then we have our Milne Street families and kids who are taking such responsibility as the older students in the school. They have been outstanding in doing the right thing. Their care and respect for what is required as St Col's kids in leading by example has been outstanding.

As mentioned in previous correspondences sent to families, it is the parents' choice whether to send their children to school or keep them at home. We will continue to support and teach those children working remotely, to the best of our ability, if parents choose to keep them at home, in Week 3, Term 2. Since school commenced last Wednesday 29 April, all students, who have returned, have been working in their classrooms with their classroom teachers. This contact and teaching has given the parents and children the courage to return to a safe, hygienic and controlled environment.

Catholic Education WA Update and Review School Operations

As you are aware CEWA will be reviewing their decision on Monday 11 May as a system, however schools are now able to make the informed decision to return to regular educational programs if the numbers indicate an appropriate level to do so. The number of students returning is increasing daily with many classes now operating between 65%-70% attendance. **With an even higher percentage of students expected on Monday 11 May, we have made the decision as a school to return to the regular teaching and learning program at St Columba's School. Home learning will be available for those students working from home. Parents are requested to advise their children's teachers if their child/children will not be returning to school on Monday 11 May for Week 3. Please let teachers know by Friday morning [tomorrow] to allow time for planning.**

The St Columba's staff will continue to support those students working remotely, to the best of our ability. Please be aware however that teachers will have close to a full cohort of students in their classrooms from Monday 11

May. Teachers will be focused on the teaching of children during the school day. With this move to full teaching of their classes, teachers will be restricted in their availability. Teachers will communicate with their students who are learning from home via Seesaw as much as is possible.

As of next week, remote learning will look different in the year levels throughout the school. One major change will be the use of Seesaw being cut back to communication of lessons/activities. Video demonstrations and the detail that was previously communicated via Seesaw this term will be lessened and stripped back. As I explained earlier, teachers are now on full teaching loads within their classrooms. We will revert back to the structures we had in place for Week 7 and Week 8 of Term 1 for students at home. Individual teachers will communicate what this will look like to those families who choose to continue learning at home next week. Home learning may also include work packs for home.

Pre-Kindy Green Update – CEWA will meet on Monday 11 May to review the system position. At this point we will have further clarity on when an official date will be set for Pre-Kindy Green to fully recommence their program. Pre-Kindy White, will also be given a start date once we have further direction.

Attendance

With the current arrangements in place for on-site teaching or remote learning from home, all students need to be participating in one of these programs. If your child is learning from home, your child's class teacher must have a response in the morning to indicate their participation in the day. If no response is received, your child will be marked as 'absent' and you will need to provide written notification about why your child is not participating in the teaching and learning program. If your child is participating in the home learning program, and you have responded to your classroom teacher then you do not need to provide additional written documentation. Your child is marked as attending school and engaging in their learning. This is a government requirement for attendance data collection.

I sincerely thank our St Columba's staff for working long hours and for their commitment to the students. Our staff have worked tirelessly to provide the best possible education for the students, responding to emails/messages and making contact with parents. This will continue in the interim until we have a full cohort of students at school or directed by CEWA.

I would like to sincerely thank you all, once again, for your support and encouragement during this pandemic. The situation is improving daily and getting back to regular school operations as quickly as possible, is our priority. I would like to re-iterate what I have stated above and previously, it is the parents' choice whether to send their children back to school or engage in remote learning at home – you can change your mind at any time. We very much look forward to seeing all our students back to St Columba's School in the future.

Wishing you all a safe and enjoyable rest of the week. Keep looking after yourself and finding time to stop for a moment of peacefulness. I know, easy for me to say, my girls are 20 and 22.

Warmest regards



Art Lombardi
Principal