



ST. PAUL'S PRIMARY SCHOOL
230-240 SUNSHINE AVENUE
KEALBA VICTORIA 3021
Phone: 03 9366 6033
Email: principal@spkealba.catholic.edu.au

KEEPING OUR CONNECTIONS – UPDATE 13



Friday November 13 2020

Dear Families,

PROGRESS SO FAR

As the busyness of Term 4 and the end of the school year continues to increase, I have been both delighted & proud to see your children's continuing growth, development & resilience, in spite of the year we have all experienced.

Teachers have commented particularly on the children's calm & confident settling back into school routines and learning. I too have seen this as I have visited classrooms and wandered in the play areas at break times. Your children are happy and settled.

I am so thankful for and proud of my staff team; they too have managed to continue their tireless work throughout and in spite of the huge challenges to learning & teaching, which COVID-19 has confronted them with.

To you, our parents & guardians, I cannot express enough my thanks to you all for the amazing job you have done, in taking on the responsibility of supervising & supporting your children's learning at home. I have no doubt having your children at home was both reassuring & challenging in these worrying times, but they are now back learning where they need to be. You now have the opportunity to reclaim your home space and return to close-to-normal home routines.

Our collective experiences of 2020 have proven to me that we are part of a strong, supportive and stand-out community, and for this I am incredibly grateful and proud.

As we enter the final weeks of Term 4, there is a real sense of hope in our local and wider communities. COVID-19 cases in Melbourne and regional Victoria have continued at 0 for 14 days now but this does not mean we can become complacent about the virus; we need to be COVID safe, remain vigilant, observe expectations & regulations and maintain a real sense of hope for our city & state.



COVID SAFE AT ST. PAUL'S

COVID-19 has not been eradicated in our community and we do not yet have a vaccine for it. With this in mind, every effort is being made at St. Paul's to ensure we are COVID safe. Below is a list a list of COVID Safe Strategies in place at St. Paul's, which all community members need to be aware of and comply with:

1. Our **COVID Safe Plan**: can be found on the school website, on the Student Wellbeing page, as well as in hard copy in the office reception area
2. **Replacement of Bubbler (Drink) Taps**: we are currently sourcing replacement drinking taps, so that children will not need to place their mouths directly onto the tap fittings. The new fittings will hopefully allow children to fill their drink bottles by pushing a button. Children will be permitted to bring their drink bottles outside during play breaks and store them in grade labelled containers, so they can have a drink during the break, as well as refill their bottles from the new tap fittings
3. **Continued restriction on additional adults onsite**: the only additional adults permitted on school sites at present are those attending for essential purposes, as per government directions and advice. This is a continuing safety measure to avoid numbers of adults gathering and increasing the risk of virus transmission. One of the other observed positives of this direction has been the increased confidence, independence, resilience & organising skills the children have been displaying, especially in the Junior Levels (Prep, Year 1 & Year 2), coming into school by themselves and getting themselves organised for the school day. This has also allowed teachers to have more time engaging with the children, during the morning arrival & organisation time (8.40 am – 9.00 am).
4. **Restrictions Impacting Planned End-of-Year Events**: with restrictions for school operations changing almost on a day-to-day basis, we are not in a position to proceed with some planned activities or organise additional activities on short notice. Our Annual Christmas Carnival & Carols hves been cancelled, as we are still not permitted to have large numbers gathering onsite. Should this restriction change we would still have to leave it as cancelled as it would be impossible to organise everything that is required for the event to go ahead. This has also been the same for school camps for our Year 4 & Year 5 students, as well as for excursions & incursions.



FOUNDATION (PREP) 2021 ORIENTATION & TRANSITION

This has been a huge challenge to organise, with directions & advice changing constantly. The following orientation and transition activities & opportunities have been put in place, within current directives & guidelines:

- ✓ We have been permitted to introduce a 'Stay & Play' session for 5 children and one of their parents or guardians. The sessions are an opportunity for the children to come onsite and familiarise themselves with the Prep classrooms and playground spaces, as well as allowing teachers to observe them and interact with them.
- ✓ The Foundation 2021 children will also be part of 'Step Up Day' on Monday December 15, when all grade groups will spend time in their 2021 classrooms, with their 2021 teachers.
- ✓ Foundation 2021 children will start the 2021 school year on Friday January 29, as an Orientation Day for the Preps only; Year 1 – Year 6 students will start school on Monday February 1.
- ✓ There will be no school for Foundation students on Wednesdays, up until the week beginning Monday March 8. On these Wednesdays teachers will timetable students to come to school for some assessments. These assessments should take approximately 45 minutes, with parents or guardians expected to remain at school with their child.
- ✓ Over the first 3 weeks of Term 1 in 2021, the Prep children will remain together as a Foundation Community; they will engage in a variety of activities with each of the Prep teachers and a number of Learning Support Officers; this time will support the children in becoming familiar with school & classroom routines; it will also allow us the opportunity to observe them in the classroom, interacting with their peers and then group them appropriately



YEAR 6 GRADUATION

Graduation Ceremonies are now permitted for students in Year 6 & Year 12. Unfortunately, current restrictions only allow for the graduating students and their teachers to be present at the ceremony, observing social distancing guidelines. This year's Graduation Ceremony will be held on Wednesday December 9, at 10.00 am, in the school hall. We have engaged the services of an audio-visual company to live stream the ceremony; they will also make a high-definition recording available for purchase. Further details will be sent home to all Year 6 families.



EVENTS FOR YOUR END-OF-YEAR CALENDAR

- ❖ Wednesday December 2: Year 6 Big Day In
- ❖ Wednesday December 9: Year 6 Graduation
- ❖ Friday December 11: Year 6 finish; Year 6 'Farewell Guard of Honour'
- ❖ Monday December 14: P-5 'Step Up Day'
- ❖ Wednesday December 16: P-5 Finish (at 1.50 pm)
- ❖ Thursday December 17: Office closes & staff finish



I hope you all enjoy an unrestricted weekend with your family & friends.

Denis

Denis J. Daly
Principal