



Wednesday 8th of April, 2020

Dear Families of Warragul & District Specialist School,

The recently announced transition to flexible and remote learning will have a big impact on our school community. Over the next week or two we will all settle into a new remote school routine, which will be important to provide your child with structure and consistency in their education during Term 2.

Please engage with the school and your child's teacher when they make contact as of next week. They are there to help continue your child's education at home and will be available to provide support to yourselves and students in these different times.

Yesterday we received the following information:

TRANSITION TO FLEXIBLE AND REMOTE LEARNING

To increase physical distancing across the population and slow the spread of coronavirus (COVID-19), children in Victorian government schools should move to remote and flexible learning and care at the commencement of Term 2.

This means that from the start of term two all students who can learn from home must learn at home.

The following operating model will apply.

1. ALL STUDENTS WILL BE LEARNING FROM HOME, EXCEPT FOR STUDENTS IN THE FOLLOWING CATEGORIES

Children on days when they are not able to be supervised at home and no other arrangements can be made. This will be available for children of parents who cannot work from home, and vulnerable children, including:

- children in out-of-home care
- children deemed by Child Protection and/or Family Services to be at risk of harm
- children identified by the school as vulnerable (including via referral from a family violence agency, homelessness or youth justice service or mental health or other health service and children with a disability).

If you believe your child meets any of the above criteria, and you would like to send them to school, please contact the school on 5623 1385 on Tuesday 14th. If you have any additional questions about the transition to remote and flexible learning, please contact the school. We and other school leaders will be available on Tuesday the 14th of April (Student Fee Day) to speak with you via phone. Please do not arrive to the school unannounced, the first mode of contact must be via phone to ensure we are able to manage social distancing regulations.

Once we have had confirmation of any student attendance, the school will inform the bus service who will collect these children from their usual stop. Please do not be surprised to see the bus drive past your house even if your child is participating in the remote learning from home, as the bus lines have been instructed to follow their usual route.

Important points from the state government announcement:

- Remote and online learning will occur in Victorian schools for the duration of Term 2
- All students who can stay at home, MUST stay at home
- In line with this and state requirements, the majority of staff will also work from home
- A small number of school leaders and operational staff will remain at school for the purpose of ongoing leadership, coordination and quality assurance of our teaching and learning online programs

Our School will provide a place of care, support and learning for children of essential service workers and vulnerable students who have no other option than to send their children to school. Please understand there is no additional learning advantage to this model – learning content and materials will be the same for students learning online at home and school.

All students will receive a hard copy of work via post which we will refer to as Learning from Home Packs. Learning from Home Pack 1 should arrive (Australia Post dependent) next week. School staff will communicate and guide families through this pack and other online and planned activities.

Due to the limited number of staff physically at school, those identified students who have no other option but to attend, may be cared for and supported by staff other than their current classroom teacher or ES. These students are highly likely to be grouped with students other than their normal classmates.

What to Expect Next:

Every family will be contacted with additional information on how flexible and remote learning will work for you and your child. Next week, Classroom teachers will contact families via phone to discuss the learning tasks and then will be in regular contact to measure your

child's progress. More detailed information will be communicated prior to the commencement of Term 2 for students on Wednesday 15th of April.

Each time we send an email we will continue to send a text message out to families to notify you that there has been an email update, this update will also be posted of the school website under school communication. We hope this model will ease anxiety in an already stressful time and reduce the need for families to constantly check their emails in case an update has been sent through.

We understand that for some families the move to remote learning is daunting and unfamiliar, please be assured that the staff at Warragul & District Specialist School are still here for you and your child (even though we are at a distance, we are still here!). Remote learning will be new for us all and we may not get everything right. As this mode of learning continues to evolve so will our practices. However please be assured that we are committed and determined to ensure that we, yourselves and most importantly your children have success.

It is important that we continue to support the children at the forefront during this time of change. A great way to do this is to ensure your child has a regular routine, including time for learning, time for play, time for exercise and a time for sleep. We will be providing a range of resources to help with this.

We continue to thank our school community for their ongoing support during these unsettling times. Please try and look after yourselves in all aspects of your health and wellbeing. Our sincere thank you to all essential service workers working tirelessly throughout our communities.

There are still a number of days remaining in this term holiday break, as a family please try and take the time to recharge at home and seek support should you require it.



Regards,

Matthew Hyde
Principal

Alesha Marshall
Assistant Principal