



No 13: 11 July 2020

## **“Be the Hands, Heart and Voice of Jesus”**

**School Theme 2020**

### **Our Commitment to Child Safety:**

“At St Paul the Apostle Catholic Primary School we hold the care, safety and wellbeing of children and young people as a central and fundamental responsibility of our school. Our commitment is drawn from and inherent in the teaching and mission of Jesus Christ, with love, justice and the sanctity of each human person at the heart of the gospel.”

Dear Parents and Families,

I hope that you've been able to take the opportunity to enjoy some quality time together as a family during these school holidays, so essential as our lives are impacted by COVID19 and the associated stresses. During these unpredictable, unprecedented times, children continue to rely heavily on your ongoing love, support and sense of hope and optimism and the belief that everything will be ok because they have you by their side.

### **School Holidays Extended For Next Week: NO SCHOOL**

As you would undoubtedly be aware, through the media outlets and announcement on Tuesday, students in metropolitan Melbourne and Mitchell Shire enrolled in VCE and VCAL subjects and those attending local specialist schools will all return to school this Monday. However all other schools will remain closed to children for next week.

All Primary schools (including SPA Doreen) will delay the return from the school holidays by a week with five pupil free days for Prep to Year 10 students next week (Monday 13 – Friday 17 July). These arrangements have been made to allow our teachers and school staff to prepare for a possible return to remote learning. During this coming week, our teachers' primary task will focus on preparing learning modules and will be unable to supervise children during the day.

**NB: As next week is an extension to the School Holidays and SPA Doreen does not operate a Holiday Program, there will be NO SCHOOL provided for our children by our school staff.**

### **No School Holiday Program for Monday 13 July**

To clear up any confusion following on from the Premier's statement last Tuesday regarding the provision of supervision at school for children of parents who work in the essential services and are unable to work from home and for vulnerable children, via a Holiday Program during the school day, I have sought clarification from the Catholic Education Melbourne and Camp Australia.

The CEM have responded that the Premier's statement referred to the Government Sector only which, up until today did not include the Catholic or Independent Schools sectors. Camp Australia will only hold a Before and After school Care Program for tomorrow which will not assist families who require a full day holiday program. On Monday **Camp Australia hopes to negotiate a full day holiday program for Tuesday 14 – Friday 17. Camp Australia have assured us that they will notify families immediately once a decision has been made.** I apologise for any inconvenience associated with the lock down imposed by the Government as they attempt to contain the spread of COVID19 to keep us isolated and safe.

## Camp Australia School Holiday Programs

In the meantime, after discussions with Camp Australia this afternoon, **Camp Australia** will continue to run **School Holiday Programs** at a number of schools which will be available for SPA children whose parents work in the essential services and are unable to work from home and for vulnerable children. Parents can call Camp Australia Customer Care (1300105343) or book online (campaustralia.com.au) to access these School Holiday programs next week. Unfortunately we have been informed the program will not be operating at Plenty Valley Christian College or Marymede College.

## A Return to School or Remote Schooling?

**NB: A decision about whether schools can safely return to face-to-face learning will be made in the coming week by the Victorian Government and based on the advice of our health experts.**

However based on the large numbers of COVID19 cases recorded daily throughout Victoria over the past week, it remains extremely unlikely that the Andrews' Government would recommend a return to onsite schooling over the next six weeks. We will inform families of any decision once we have received advice from the Victorian Government, DHH&S and the CECV.

## Daily Temperature Checks To Continue @ SPA Doreen

On the return to school last term after remote schooling had ended and contrary to recommendations from Victoria's Chief Health Officer at that time, we implemented twice daily temperature checks for all people entering our school site to ensure our safety and peace of mind in an attempt to slow COVID19.

It's reassuring to note that daily temperature checks will now be introduced in schools across metropolitan Melbourne and Mitchell Shire as part of the Victorian Government's effort to slow the spread of coronavirus. Students at Government schools in metropolitan Melbourne and Mitchell Shire will receive a temperature check every morning, with thermometers also provided to all non-government schools. More than 14,000 non-contact infrared thermometers (similar to the six previously purchased by our school) will be given to government, independent and Catholic schools in metropolitan Melbourne and Mitchell Shire, and to schools in neighbouring areas who need to undertake testing. We will also receive a number of thermometers to bolster our stock.



It's also reassuring that in line with our current practice, if a child, staff member or visitor has a temperature of 37.5 degrees Celsius or above, schools will be required to contact parents or carers to arrange for that child to return home immediately. Families will be encouraged to seek testing for coronavirus or advice from their healthcare professional to advise on the next steps.

**NB: If a child/staff member has a high temperature, or is feeling unwell and has COVID19 type symptoms, they must not attend school.** They must stay at home & seek medical advice.

## Awaiting COVID19 Test Results? – Please Remain at Home

**NB: If a child is awaiting the results of a COVID19 test, they are not permitted to attend school (nor their SPA siblings) until they have received a negative result and returned to full health. This would also be the protocol when any family member is awaiting results.**

Thank you to the families who have kept their sick children at home and have been astute in having their children tested as a precaution (while keeping siblings at home) and then providing us with the outcome of their COVID tests which remain strictly confidential.

## Staggered Drop-off & Pick-up Times Remain Term Three

In the event of our children returning to onsite learning in the foreseeable future, our staggered drop-off and pick-up timetable, implemented in Term Two to reduce the number of adults gathering around school grounds at any one time, will continue. I thank families for adhering to our Staggered Drop-off & Pick-up times and social distancing to help minimise COVID19.

## Enhanced Daily Cleaning To Continue

We remain grateful that the Victorian Government has invested up to \$45 million for enhanced daily cleaning in schools and this will continue throughout Term 3. To support the health and wellbeing of all students and staff, our school will continue an enhanced cleaning routine. Following on from normal classroom protocol, wiping down (wearing disposable gloves) of equipment, tables, door handles with hospital grade disinfectant will be conducted throughout the day, especially before and after recess, lunch and end of the day. As an added precaution, cleaning staff have been employed from 12.00pm – 1.30pm daily to sanitise surfaces.

## Hygiene - Washing of Hands

On their return to school, the children and staff will continue to enter the buildings at designated Entry Points where they will be supervised washing their hands using anti-bacterial soap liquid before entering their classrooms. All wet areas and learning areas have access to a thermometer, hand sanitiser, gloves, masks (if required) antibacterial liquid hand soap (which is now in all the soap dispensers), paper hand towels and a hospital grade disinfectant spray bottle.

## Adventure Playground, Slides & Taps To Remain Off Limits

Last term, despite the easing of restrictions allowing the public to access playgrounds, we made the decision to keep our Adventure Playground and slides off limits for our children as we could not ensure the thorough cleaning of the equipment after each recess and lunchtime. In line with the current advice and practices with the recent decision to close public playgrounds, our Adventure Playground, slides and drinking taps will remain off limits until further notice. Children are requested to bring their own drink bottles as our bubble taps will not be available.

Thank you for your continued support and patience during this time and we look forward to welcoming back our entire school community when we are permitted to do so. In the meantime our staff will be vigilant in preparing for a variety of meaningful and engaging learning opportunities for our children which will be adapted for remote learning if directed.

Let's also spare a thought, offer a prayer and show our gratitude to the many members in our community who work at the front-line to ensure our ongoing safety and wellbeing.

Warm regards,



Phil Doherty (Principal)

