



St Columba's School Bayswater

32 Roberts Street
BAYSWATER WA 6053
PO Box 61
BAYSWATER WA 6933
Tel: 08 9208 2700
Fax: 08 9370 3985
admin@stcolumbas.wa.edu.au
www.saintcolumbas.com.au

Grow in Faith Seek Wisdom Live in Peace

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Dear Parents and Caregivers

Home Learning Update

Okay a little Reflection Time:

Please ensure you have read yesterday's information on 'School Provision'. It is imperative we know the students attending school next week.

With the busyness of yesterday, I wanted to take a moment to pause and give further clarity around what will be happening next week for those families who have children at home. If there has been one thing I have learned during this time of uncertainty is that however we are all feeling is how we are feeling, and that that is actually okay. So if you are feeling a little unsettled, maybe overwhelmed with what may be ahead of us, be gentle on yourself and know there is support if you need it. I appreciate how rapid this change is, but remember we are going to take this one small step at a time.

It has been interesting as I have found it very hard to sleep this week, which is never normally a problem, but it is especially difficult tonight. So here I am making coffee and wanting to write to you about what our priority is for next week.

I cannot get it out of my head, so I am just going to say it. Our priority is not to allow for us to lose the connection between home and school, between your family and our staff, and very selfishly, the connection between your kids and me, you and me. We are already missing all of you. Staff keep telling me this daily, 'I am missing them, Art'. Is there anything better?', is what I say. How good to be missing our kids and their families? It is a sign of our deep care for them. While I know we are a resilient people, I also know loss of connection can take its toll, so please stay connected with our staff, with me, with your family and friends. I am discovering 'WhatsApp' and the potential for connecting, which has been good fun. I have formed different groups that allow for quick checking in that everyone is okay.

So next week and the teaching and learning:

The following are key things to note:

- Teachers will continue as we have been these past two weeks. Nothing will change in the delivery at this time. We have one more week of teaching, so let's keep the routine for our kids as best we can. I appreciate many schools may be going to full on-line delivery across various platforms from Monday. We will not be doing this till Term 2, if we are still in this current operational mode. This remains an unknown, so please do not try to think past getting to the holidays and Easter.
- We have a platform ready to go and will work on refining it during the four days of professional learning during the Week of 6 April. This will be Seesaw Class, plus the possibility of other forms of communication that allow for teacher student connection.
- Hopefully, this will lessen your load as parents and also allow our staff to keep connected over this time of transition for our kids.

- Each year level will deliver their programs next week. You may receive a package or it may be all on-line, or there may be a combination. Our teachers will let you know more as the week rolls out. Please do not become overwhelmed during this week. Less is more.
- We know this will be a change, and whenever there is change, there is a time of maybe things not working perfectly. Teachers will be initially trying to set up routines and work for their 30 students, therefore we do appreciate your patience if things do not go to plan.
- Important to remember, I am also focused on looking after my staff. I need them well and feeling supported during this time. I feel like a dad, big brother, sometimes when I am working with them, which I find pretty special. I know we will do our very best in rolling out the educational delivery.

Delivery On-line: Term 2

- We appreciate some of the learning will be delivered on-line once the Seesaw Class App is up and running in Term 2. If you have any concerns regarding the use of devices, or need some support in this area with the availability of a device, please communicate this through to your child's teacher. A detailed notice will come out about this App next week.
- We do not expect any parents to be going out to purchase iPads etc for the on-line learning in Term 2. If we know you need this support, we will organise this in the four days of professional learning in the Week of 6 April.
- If you are worried about not having a device for next week, please email your teacher and they will make sure you receive a pack for collection.

Wellbeing and Self Care:

- This is so much the most important thing right now. We need to be looking after ourselves and each other. I cannot stress this enough.
- Can we wisely hold the fears we may feel at the moment, without having it overwhelm us? When we get stuck in this sense of fear the challenge is to work through it. I came across a website, 'ten percent happier. An ability to sit quietly, close our eyes and take some deep breaths will help settle us. You may want to check this out <https://www.tenpercent.com/coronavirussanityguide>. I am not great at meditation, but one of our mums also sent me the *Calm* App, website, which did settle me a bit on Wednesday night. With your wellbeing and that of your kids, there are many websites and Apps that you can access for free.
- One of the best ways to stay well is to remember to be grateful for what we have, and to practice being gentle on yourself and those you love. Stay Kind, and Be You, were a couple of chalk statements I saw around the school yesterday. Good work Year 5s. I think this says it all about wellbeing.
- I am serious when I said if you need support during these times, remember you have each other, your families, your friends, your neighbours, and you have us, our staff.
- One last thing, do you think you are seeing life differently at the moment?

As I sign off for the week in communication, you know what I will be doing for my wellbeing, yep, video time. Seriously, I have found something that allows me to just keep talking, even if it doesn't make sense. Please take care of yourself and your family. We cannot wait to have everyone back here at St Col's when this passes. What will I do without Kiss and Drive?

May God bless you all and keep you safe. Thank you again for being who you are and for creating something special here at St Col's Baysie.

An abundance of goodness to you

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