

MARCH 16 2020

# PARENT COMMUNICATION

Pleasant Street Primary School

## SUPPLEMENTARY NEWSLETTER

**Dear Parents and Guardians,**

As you would know, the situation with COVID-19 is evolving quickly. We are carefully following the daily directives from the Department of Education and Training (DET) and Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS).

At this stage, Pleasant Street Primary will remain open and operational unless we are directed to do otherwise by DET. We will communicate with families each day before 3:30pm about the latest advice.

If you or your child is feeling unwell or experiencing symptoms, please keep your children at home and notify the school. Teachers will be sending children who appear unwell home to try to maintain a healthy learning space.

As a school we are planning for possible closures by establishing a whole school online learning space for children to continue their learning and communication with classroom teachers. In the case of a school closure, we will send home information about this space to families. Home learning will be available as soon as possible, please contact the school to advise if you are self-isolating,

All parent meetings at the school will be conducted via phone or postponed. Term 2 Learning Conferences will be postponed at this stage.

Thank you for your cooperation.

### IN THE CLASSROOMS

**Increased hygiene measures have been put in place across the school, including ensuring that each classroom is equipped with a hand washing station that includes running water, soap and hand sanitiser. Students will be directed to wash their hands often, including before eating and after using the toilets.**

### Excursions and Camps

**ALL camps and excursions have been cancelled or postponed until further notice. This includes Bush Nippers, Grade 6 camp, sporting activities including Lawn Bowls and Cross Country, Grip Leadership and visits to Sovereign Hill. We will advise when new dates have been arranged.**

**All extra curricular events will not be running until further notice.**

## Changes to Parent Access at School

We are putting in place protocols to limit crowded spaces and to encourage social distancing and ask families to abide by these measures.

As of Tuesday 17th March, we will be asking that;

- **All parents drop off children at the external doors of their building and not to enter corridors or classrooms. Prep children will all be walked to the Pirate Sandpit by their teachers at the end of each day and can be collected from there.**
- **Parents limit their entry into school buildings/the office for essential reasons only and consider calling the office, rather than visiting, where possible.**
- **Parents are encouraged to remain in their cars at drop off in the morning where possible.**

Notices to this effect will be posted at all entrances and exits.

## Managing Stress and Anxiety for Children

The outbreak of coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) may be stressful for people. Fear and anxiety about a disease can be overwhelming and cause strong emotions in adults and children. Coping with stress will make you, the people you care about, and your community stronger. Everyone reacts differently to stressful situations. How you respond to the outbreak can depend on your background, the things that make you different from other people, and the community you live in.

Children and teens react, in part, on what they see from the adults around them. When parents and caregivers deal with the COVID-19 calmly and confidently, they can provide the best support for their children. Parents can be more reassuring to others around them, especially children, if they are better prepared. Not all children and teens respond to stress in the same way. Some common changes to watch for include;

- Excessive crying or irritation in younger children
- Returning to behaviors they have outgrown (for example, toileting accidents or bedwetting)
- Excessive worry or sadness
- Unhealthy eating or sleeping habits
- Irritability and “acting out” behaviors in teens
- Poor school performance or avoiding school
- Difficulty with attention and concentration
- Avoidance of activities enjoyed in the past
- Unexplained headaches or body pain

There are many things you can do to support your child

- Take time to talk with your child or teen about the COVID-19 outbreak. Answer questions and share facts about COVID-19 in a way that your child or teen can understand.
- Reassure your child or teen that they are safe. Let them know it is ok if they feel upset.
- Share with them how you deal with your own stress so that they can learn how to cope from you.
- Limit your family’s exposure to news coverage of the event, including social media. Children may misinterpret what they hear and can be frightened about something they do not understand.
- Try to keep up with regular routines. Create a schedule for learning activities and relaxing or fun activities.
- Be a role model. Take breaks, get plenty of sleep, exercise, and eat well.
- Connect with your friends and family members.