27 April 2020

Dear Parent/Caregiver,

We have now completed our first day of on-line flexible learning, with students learning at school and from home using the structures and processes outlined in the On-line Flexible Learning Guide distributed last week.

Those who have been viewing the media would be aware the Department for Education has been following the advice of South Australia’s senior health officials. SA Health and Australia’s expert health body, AHPPC advice remains unchanged that schools, preschools and early childhood facilities are low risk environments for COVID-19, and should remain open. Last week students were encouraged to return to school for Term 2 due to the current low rates of infection in South Australia. We will continue to respect the preferences of parents who don’t feel comfortable sending their children to school or preschool for whatever reason.

Furthermore, the AHPPC advised that maintaining 1.5m between students, and the ‘venue density rule’ of no more than 1 person per 4 square metres is not appropriate or practical in classrooms or corridors. The AHPPC states that there is very limited evidence of transmission between children in the school environment, and population screening overseas has shown very low incidences of positive cases in school-aged children.

Today, 58% of our students were learning from school, with 42% learning from home. We believe the introduction of such a different way of operating went reasonably well, although we did encounter a few teething problems due to it being unfamiliar to students and staff. In addition there were state wide issues with Learnlink, which is the Department for Education’s online learning portal. We have been gathering feedback from staff and will make adjustments to improve students’ learning experiences. I wrote to all students this morning that this temporary change is providing them with the opportunity to improve their independent learning, creative thinking and problem solving skills. Today certainly ticked that box.

Parents/caregivers who chose to have their children learning from home, and who are experiencing problems, have been contacting the school. We encourage you to do so as we want student learning to continue with minimal disruption. A few common issues reported today include:

- Connection problems due to Learnlink issues. If this occurs you are welcome to contact the front office for advice.
- Students finding it difficult to locate learning materials. We advise students to log onto Daymap to read lesson overviews. We have asked teachers to provide step by step instructions to locate materials on MS Teams.
- Requests for password resets. We encourage students to carefully record passwords so they are not forgotten, however front office staff are able to assist when students have password problems.
• Parents/caregivers requesting paper workpacks. We are able to provide paper versions of the on-line materials. We request that contact is made with the school beforehand so we are able to provide the appropriate material. Packs will be available by 2.00pm tomorrow afternoon.

What to expect tomorrow?
Hopefully the day will run smoothly. All year levels will begin the day with a Home Group session at 8.45am with the usual Home Group teachers. Students who are learning at home will receive an invitation to join a video conference with their class. We will do this every Tuesday and Thursday while we continue to have significant numbers of students learning from home.

How are we marking attendance for students learning at home?
Each Monday, Wednesday and Friday students learning at home log onto Daymap at the beginning of the day and follow a link so they are able to respond to a Survey Monkey. It is important that the survey is completed as it will indicate they have begun the day. Teachers will also monitor student completion of learning and assessment tasks. The school will follow up with families of students who have difficulties connecting online.

What if our plans change about sending our children to school?
We respect the rights of parents to make the choice about the mode of learning for their children although there will be a time when we resume our usual school operation. We do request that when parents/caregivers make the decision to return to learning from school they make it with the long term in mind, although the AHPPC suggests students who are unwell with flu-like symptoms stay home.

How is the school complying with environmental cleaning requirements?
• We now have adequate supplies of hand sanitiser in key locations around the school.
• 4 hours of cleaning time has been provided during the school day to clean and empty rubbish in all toilets, wipe door handles and surfaces.
• An additional 4 hours of cleaning has been provided at the end of the school day to clean and disinfect frequently used high-touch surfaces such as benchtops, desks, doorknobs, taps. Computer keyboards are also being cleaned and classroom bins are emptied regularly.
• Students have been reminded about their personal hygiene practices.

We are closely monitoring student numbers and will review the situation Wednesday next week.

We thank you for your continued support.

Yours faithfully

DAVID GARRETT
PRINCIPAL