

Issue 7
May 21 2020

Boundary News

Hi Everyone,

The return back to school is now a reality, even though it is still a little way off for some. I know many of you (like me!) will have breathed a sigh of relief with the announcement of a return to school plan and timeline. This is exciting and it is nice to have a date to look forward to and work towards.

WebEx Conferencing

Class Webex conferences began this week with small group conferences between teachers and class members. The kids (and staff!) are really enjoying these and it has been a terrific platform for everyone to re-connect.

Well done to everyone for getting involved in this!

Remote Learning Survey

We sent a short pulse survey to children in Grade 3 to 6 in relation to remote learning. We really wanted to get feedback on the elements of remote learning that are working, those that children may find challenging and how they are coping with the whole experience. Although our Prep to Grade 2 children are back at school soon, remote learning will continue for our Grade 3 to 6 children for a few more weeks and we remain committed to improving our practice with this and doing the best job possible!

What Has Gone Well?

Last week, I asked for some quick messages from parents outlining what has been going well for them at home. These were some of the responses:

"Understanding I can start the day whenever I want- thanks Mrs Duthie for being on the end of the phone!"

"It was nice to see teachers and their friends and (my son) was absolutely pumped to hear his name called out! Makes this hard time that much easier."

"We're just making the most of this experience, creating memories and learning things together."

"This week, the main positive has been my daughters WebEx meeting with her teacher and classmates - she was so excited and happy during the meeting to connect with her friends!"

Online Safety

With all the online learning and use of technology during this time, this is just a gentle reminder to remain as vigilant as possible when it comes to kids and online behaviours. There have been some great resources developed on this and if you click on the link below you will find some helpful hints:

<https://www.esafety.gov.au/key-issues/covid-19/advice-parents-carers>

Have a great week and stay safe everyone!

Karen Chaston

Principal

COMING EVENTS

May

Mon 25th Curriculum Day - no students attend School – No remote learning

Tue 26th Prep to Grade 2 - return to school – 8.45am start – 3.00pm finish

June

Tue 9th Grade 3 to Grade 6 - return to school – 9.00am start – 3.15pm finish

Fri 26th End of Term 2 – school finishes at 2.30pm



THINGS TO THINK ABOUT IN THE TRANSITION BACK TO SCHOOL

With schools opening again soon the reality of school under the COVID19 cloud is about to hit. Here are some thoughts on what the return to school might look like for young primary school aged children.

Parents and teachers are doing more than we would have thought possible before the Pandemic. Parents and teachers are doing many things all at the same time. Parents are trying to support their schools and children by helping them submit as much work as they can, teachers trying to tailor their online classes to their students' needs.

All adults are doing heroic efforts to buffer the children during this time. Some parents may be anxious about how their children are coping and worry over the potential consequences of this disruption.

For many children the return to school will be a delightful experience. It will mean reconnecting with friends and school teachers and they will race out the front door ready to get back to normal.



This however won't be everyone's experience. The return to school is likely to stir up some anxiety for our children, ourselves and teachers. Emerging from the safety of our homes and back out into public spaces is likely to be a little confronting. At the moment children and adults may feel pretty stifled being at home and ready to get back into things, back to normal.

THINGS TO THINK ABOUT IN THE TRANSITION BACK TO SCHOOL CONT...



However, things are not back to what they were like before COVID 19. Hand sanitizer at the door, restrictions on how many people can be together at any one time still remains. Respectful social distancing will continue for some time. It may not be what some children are expecting. They may feel sad and a little angry.

First, our children may experience anxiety of going out into a world that they feel is unsafe. Over the past few weeks parents have had to teach children that the outside world is dangerous and that staying home is necessary. Now we are telling them it's okay and sending them back into the world they have been told was unsafe. It's going to be a tricky transition for them.

Second, once they are at school they'll discover it isn't exactly the same experience that they knew before COVID19. There will likely be many differences whether it be the lack of other year levels, or the additional safety procedures the school is implementing. This change is likely to be uncomfortable. For children that school is 'not quite the same' or the anxiety they feel, may go along with their wish to be near their caregivers and home.

Some things you might start to see in the coming weeks include:

- Reluctance or refusal to go to school
- Increased clinginess in the morning
- Increased tearfulness
- Poor sleep on nights before school
- Temper tantrums on school mornings
- Feeling sick- especially stomach aches, headaches and any other ache related to muscle tension

We might be tempted to see these behaviours as signs of being 'naughty', attention seeking or just wanting to stay home because it's easier than school. We all need to remember we have told them and modelled to them that we need to stay home. Children mirror adults' responses. Now we need to help our children adjust to the health advice that it is safe to return to school.

Children may be hyper vigilant, paying attention to everything in and outside of the classroom. They may become easily distracted or unfocused. This hyper vigilance may also make their body hurt and feel sick, it's exhausting and they may be a little grumpy. Most children will be functioning this way a little bit, but some children may display this a lot.



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You know who else will be like this? Us. We're likely to send our children back, with a fair amount of anxiety. Schools are

dealing with new safety measures, department of education requirements. It's going to be hectic.



There is no one great solution. This will be a challenging time as you model and trust the measures in place to support your child's return to school. The trust you model and build in the school with your children will make for a smooth transition and help to reduce your child's anxiety. Predict and assume there will be some bumps. Right now we are all a little anxious. Use your experience and patience with good faith to guide your child through this transition.

Secondly, observe your own responses. Pay attention to days when you're feeling more vulnerable, reactive and in sensory overload (i.e. days when noises and touch annoy you more than usual). Acknowledge and notice any anger as it starts to build and be aware that you might be less patient and more reactive than you'd like to be.

Awareness is key. Approach this transition from a perspective of understanding (whether it be a child or yourself).. Expecting ourselves, or the children, to get back to normal without acknowledging the weirdness we are currently living is unrealistic. Returning to school will be challenging on many levels (and joyful on others) so expect anxiety to rear its head in some weird and wonderful ways.



IDEAS TO TRY



Try and gradually expose your children to all things school related. You can try:

- Start your normal morning routine a week before school starts
- Walk past school before it starts
- Start using language such as “when you go to school”
- Use visual aids such as calendars to count down to school starting.
- discuss safety procedures the school will be implementing
 - discuss them a few times before school starts
 - you’ll be doing lots of hand washing
 - your teacher will still be using the hand sanitizer.
 - For the moment you will need to walk in the gate by yourself as parents aren’t allowed on school grounds.

• give emotions names. These can be names such as “sad”, “angry” or “worried”. But they can also be descriptive words such as “shaky”, “fuzzy”, “gurgley”, “heavy”.

For example: - “I was so excited to go, but then when I got there I felt surprised and disappointed because it wasn’t the same”.

“I felt a bit fuzzy the whole time, a bit wibbly wobbly and I was happy to come home.” “It was fun to drive somewhere new and see my friends that bit felt warm and nice.”

- Check in with kids before school starts. Ask them what they’re looking forward to, what they think might be different, what they’re expecting. Talk over any worries.
- If something is a particular worry, work with your child to help come up with a few solutions.
- Use your own feelings as a model. i.e. “I’m going back to work again soon and I’m feeling a bit nervous about seeing people again”

• Stay calm ourselves.
This point will likely be the most difficult. Stay calm ourselves. To do this in a genuine way we need to focus on ourselves as parents. Think about what you’re going to need to help support your child back to school. All this takes both emotional energy and time. Breathe, trust yourself and the school.



- Speak to your teacher if you still have any concerns.

Just as we transitioned to remote learning, so too, returning to school will be a necessary learning process where you, your child and the school will work together to ensure the best outcomes for your child and our school community.



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Good Afternoon families of GEPS.

We have had a fantastic couple of weeks in OSHC. The kids have been engrossed in Science activities. We have been experimenting with different items trying to make a range of things e.g. Instant snow, slime, Gobbleck, glue and volcanoes. The Children have been hypothesizing with each other on different expectations and outcomes. We have had a lot of laughs over the failures and a lot of buzz and excitement over the discoveries. The children have also been interested in board games such as UNO and Game of life. It's been fantastic to see and hear the kids engaging with each other in such a positive manner. Together we have also been coming up with ideas for the Winter Holiday Club.

Upcoming: We are implementing a OSHC project with our kids and their families. From May the 26th, its Reconciliation Week for the indigenous communities across Australia. We at OSHC are asking families to do some research about the indigenous culture and their own culture, and then bringing it in for us to use in our indigenous programming over those 2 weeks. We feel this is a fantastic opportunity to bring the community together and help children have a better connection with their world and back grounds. We plan to continue a multicultural theme through June, learning and celebrating everyone's different cultures. Please see the attached document for reference on this project.

Note to families, here at OSHC we have rolled out photo journal. Children will have their photos taken during activities and (with their approval) have those photos uploaded to view in real time. This is a reminder to families that they need to speak to me regarding opt out or tagging restrictions with other children.

The 25th of May is a pupil free day for schools as they prepare for the new plans coming into effect on the 26th of May. Camp Australia will be running an all day program for families starting from 7am till 6pm. We are taking booking now.

Reminder to all families that school is not open until 8.50am, if you are registered with Camp Australia you and need to drop off earlier, you are more than welcome to drop your kids off at the OSHC room and we will send them off at 8.50am. The government is still allowing free childcare/ before and after school care. If you are having any issues with billing though, please let me know and give Camp Australia a call on 1300 105 343 or visit: <https://auth-cust.campaustralia.com.au/Account/ParentPortalRegister>



Program Details

To find out more about our program, view fees and to register, visit www.campaustralia.com.au.

We look forward to seeing you and your family soon!

The Camp Australia Team – Katherine ☺

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Reconciliation Week:

Dear Families,

We at OSHC will be celebrating Reconciliation Week with the children. We will be creating Indigenous Artwork, watching educational videos and stories and researching the history of Indigenous Australia. We are asking families to do their own research with their children and then bring in the information they have found. We also want to encourage families to do some family research and bring in information about their culture/ heritage so we can incorporate it into our program. We will be starting discussions/ activities from the 25th May till 5th June, if we can have your information in before the 25th that would be great.

Ideas to research:

- Indigenous Australian History
- Traditional Owners of Geelong
- An activity the children can do in the service sessions
- Your history: Where are you/ your ancestors from?
- Favourite food: Where is it from?
- Places you've visited
- Languages you or your family speak at home (Multiple languages?)

We cannot wait to see this implemented in our service.

Thank you ☺

Katherine

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