

Issue 8
5th June, 2020

Boundary News

ONSITE LEARNING

What a fabulous return to onsite learning for the P-2! The return to the new 'normal' has been very smooth and I thank the parents for their co-operation in the new routine of school times and routines. Next week will see the return for the 3-6, meaning that our entire school is back on site learning. We are all very impatient for the return of our remaining students. We have definitely missed their smiling faces around the school.



I hope you have had the opportunity to view our FACEBOOK page. If not please have a look you will see our video of reflections from Remote Learning!

<https://www.facebook.com/geelongeastprimary/>

During the week I spoke to a number of parents and children about their return to onsite learning this comment from one of our grade 2 children summed up what I heard:-

"Mum and I were a little nervous about coming back to school but once I got here it was great. We have been using sanitiser at home. I really loved being at home with mum but I missed my friends and being at school. It's really good to be back and mum waits for me at the gate."



REMOTE LEARNING SURVEY

One parent from each family will receive an invite to complete a Remote Learning survey from the Department of Education. We would really appreciate if you could complete the survey. It is completely anonymous and will assist both the Department and the school reflect on your experience over the past six or more weeks.

We would really appreciate if you could find the 10 minutes to complete the survey, as it will help the school reflect using your opinions as well as our own. To support this, the students from four - six will also complete a survey so we can utilise this for school improvement.

Thankyou in advance.

PREP ENROLMENTS

Please let everyone know we are now accepting enrolments for 2021.

Our school normally does personal tours but of course with current restrictions we cannot do that at the



COMING EVENTS

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

moment. Please let your friends know and direct them to our website or FACEBOOK page. We thank all those people who have already enrolled. Once enrolled you will receive your confirmation of enrolment letter.

Have a terrific long weekend see everyone on Tuesday,
Karen Chaston
Principal

NEW START OF SCHOOL ROUTINE

We thank all our community to the great start to our onsite learning, this has included the changes to start and finish times and entry into the school. Just to remind parents that this is for the **safety of our children and onsite staff** and one we have carefully considered. We are taking as many **precautions** as we can to ensure continual safe practices for our community. COVID 19 is still something we need to be aware of and follow the safety precautions without exception. It is now imperative that everyone keeps to these times as **staggered entry and exit** is not only for the children but to ensure we are complying with the strict rules around gathering of adults. Only the main front gate will be open to minimise surface contamination from our community.



Please only come at those times allocated to your group.

- P/1/2 begin at 8:45am and finish at 3:00pm
- 3-6 begin at 9am and finish at 3:15pm

Children in 3-6 who have siblings in P/1/2 who normally leave with parents can leave at 3pm with their younger siblings.

The gates will be closed before and after these times. If you bring your child early you must wait with them in your car or with them at an appropriate social distance from other parents. PLEASE supervise your own child before they enter the school.

If your child is late or they need to leave early for an appointment, parents will need to **ring the school office (52484885)** to open the gate (as noted on the signage around the school).



NITS

Changes to public health approaches mean that teachers can no longer check for nits, which is a problem given that research shows that many parents are unaware that their kids have nits until an infestation is serious.

We are currently faced with a unique opportunity. We've already had over a month with very limited contact between kids. When everyone returns on



Tuesday schools resume hair length and our current policy of shoulder length hair or longer being in a head band (boy or girl) remains in place.



Whilst in isolation families have had the opportunity to check and thoroughly treat themselves for head lice. As a family you would know by now if your child had nits and completed the treatment. PLEASE recheck before they return on Tuesday.



Sure, if even only a few get missed, they will once again start their creep towards world domination. But a reduction in the prevalence of nits — some "nit-free time" — would be a welcome relief for parents and kids alike.

We are currently hoping for a return to "normal" but, anticipating a state of normal-minus-nits would be a welcome post-COVID world.

GEELONG EAST PRIMARY SCHOOL COMPASS PLATFORM

In the next few days, all parents will receive an email regarding the Geelong East Primary School Compass Platform.



The email will contain your username, a temporary password and the school portal address for you to log in to Compass and gain access to the Parent Portal.

By using our Parent Portal you will be able to:

- Access your child's Student Progress and Semester Reports
- View up-to-date class and school attendance information
- Approve or enter upcoming or past absences for your son/daughter
- Update your registered email and mobile number (used for SMS alerts) details

We are looking at expanding the use of this program in the future to include:-

- Book your Parent/Student/Teacher conferences
- Excursion notes and approval online
- Payments
- Access information regarding upcoming events and news



If you have do not receive an email or need help with the process, please contact the office on 5248 4885.

2020 MID-YEAR REPORTS

Today marks the end of flexible and remote learning for all students in Victoria. Six to eight weeks of offsite learning was challenging for students, parents and teachers alike, as we all adjusted to a different way of teaching and learning.

Thank you again for the support you have provided to your child/ren during this time.

As always, you will receive a report for your child for in Semester One, 2020 against the Victorian Curriculum. We have received advice from the Department of Education and Training regarding modifications to the Semester One reporting that takes into account the limitations to accurately assess student progress during the remote learning period. So you're child's mid-year report will look different, as it has not been possible to implement our standard report writing process following two months of remote and flexible learning.



As a result of this advice, teachers at our school will:

- not be providing a five point scale for curriculum areas (i.e. A to E)
- provide future learning goals for you child in Reading, Writing and Mathematics
- be available for parents/carers and students to discuss



the school report at the beginning of term three. Opportunities for parents who have concerns that they feel need to be addressed immediately can contact the school prior to scheduled discussion opportunities in term three.

Also new to our reporting system this semester is the opportunity to receive your child's report online through Compass.

All parents would have received an email on Friday June 5th inviting you to access the Compass parent portal. This portal provides many convenient features to communicate with the school, including receiving your child's semester reports and booking for student led conferences online.

If you did not receive this email or are having difficulties accessing the parent portal please contact the school on 52484885.

Mandy Duthie
Assistant Principal

NO SMOKING REMINDER



From 13 April 2015, smoking was banned within four metres of an entrance to all primary and secondary schools in Victoria, and within the school grounds, under an amendment to the Tobacco Act 1987. A similar ban applying to the entrances and grounds of Victorian childcare centres and kindergartens is also in place.

RELUCTANCE TO COME TO SCHOOL?



While some school reluctance is normal, when this escalates to continual battles with your child this is normally called school refusal. Around 1-2% of children experience school refusal.

Usually these children do not have other behavioural concerns. School refusal commonly arises after a period of school absence – due to illness or holidays – or a big change, such as starting a new school or moving from primary to high school.

COVID 19 is both a big change and has been a long period of absence. It is expected that some children may experience school refusal transitioning back to onsite learning.

No one factor or person is to blame for school refusal; it is caused by a complex interaction of many factors involving the child, their family and social challenges.

What can you do?

Interventions to treat school refusal favour encouraging relaxation, challenging anxious thoughts and supporting a gradual exposure to the fear. Interventions also include parent therapy to discuss optimal support strategies, and school liaisons.

Strategies to address school refusal can be tailored to children of all ages. The aim of intervention is to provide skills to cope with distress or discomfort while increasing school attendance. Research suggests that with support, school attendance can be improved, but anxiety may persist for some time.

If your child refuses to go to school, or you are supporting another parent or child in this situation, here is some suggestions on how you can respond:

1. Ask for help

Parents often wait until the problem is deeply entrenched before acting. Unfortunately, every day of school missed has an impact on achievement, and continued absence is associated with high rates of emotional & behavioural difficulties, poor social adjustment and early school leaving,

To minimise these outcomes, you need to act early and, if needed, seek professional help.

2. Consider possible triggers

At a time when you are both calm (not on school mornings), ask your child to describe the key challenges of going to school. Together, you may be able to solve these problems or develop a plan to manage them.

For younger children or those who struggle to express their feelings, you may need to use the observe-validate-redirect model:

Observe: “I have noticed that you appear upset and worried in the morning and you often ask to stay home.”

Validate: “We all feel upset and worried sometimes and it can feel uncomfortable.”

Redirect: “Going to school is very important. What are some things that we can do to help you to get there?”

3. Take a kind but firm approach

It's important to convey kindness, as your child is experiencing something distressing. Kindness can be conveyed by listening when they talk about their worries, offering a moment of physical affection, or remaining calm in the face of frustration.

It is important to listen to your child's concerns about going to school. There is also a kindness in encouraging children to face their fears; this promotes confidence and autonomy.

Avoiding the triggers of anxiety increases anxiety in the long term. So keeping them at home actually increases their anxiety

Be kind but firm in your resolve to work with your child to address the school refusal. This stance can be reflected in comments like:



“I understand that going to school feels difficult. We can work through your concerns together. But you do need to attend, because every day at school is important.”

4. Give clear and consistent messages

Research suggests there are subtle yet critical differences in how parents communicate about school attendance.

Consider this scenario:

You wake your child for school at 8:15am and need to leave the house at 8:45am, concerned that they need to get more sleep. You sit on the bed and ask, “How are you feeling today?” Your child becomes distressed and says they can’t go to school they are sick. Concerned, you say, “It would be really good if you could”. Your child refuses. You start to feel anxious and upset, and tell them “You can’t keep doing this” before walking out.

While the parent is clearly supportive and concerned, the verbal messages around school attendance are vague and the parent leaves the room in distress.

A suggested approach: - :

- waking the child at the same time each day with **enough time to get ready for school**
- giving **clear messages about school attendance** such as “It’s time to get up for school” and “I know you don’t want to go but we cannot allow you to remain at home”
- **encouraging** a staged approach to the morning if the child becomes distressed: “let’s focus on breakfast first”, “let’s get your school bag sorted”, and so on.

5. Set clear routines on days when not at school

Well-meaning parents will often find that efforts to encourage their child’s school attendance are hampered by their own positive reinforcements for staying at home: Children might get the opportunity to sleep in and spend the day relaxing, watching TV and playing video games, or having more individual attention from a parent.

If you find your child at home on school days, you could set up a home routine similar to school so that they learn that school is the place to be during school time:

- get up and dressed by school time
- limit access to TV and the internet during school hours
- encourage the child to complete their school work
- limit one-on-one time with the parent until after school hours
- reduce activities out of the home, such as shopping, visiting friends or family.

6. Work with the school

Clearly communicate and set clear expectations your child, with the school, and any other professionals involved, such as your child’s GP.

At school, children with anxiety often present to teachers or the office with physical complaints such as headaches and stomach aches. If you are concerned, take the child to a GP to check for physical causes. In the absence of a physical illness, these complaints are likely to be anxiety related.

Speak to your child’s classroom teacher about the challenges your child is having. They may help develop a plan for school drop-offs, as well as helping to address any other social or learning issues.

While these feelings are unpleasant for you and your child, with the right support and intervention, your child can stay in the school environment and gradually increase their participation.

Patience, persistence and an openness to problem-solving are central.

