

RETURN TO ONSITE SCHOOLING

Wednesday 20th May 2020

Dear Parents, Carers and Students,

Thank you for all your support during these past weeks of remote and flexible learning. As outlined in last week's newsletter, we enter a new phase in our response to the Coronavirus. Specifically all staff return to school next Monday followed by students in Grades Prep- Year 2 on Tuesday.

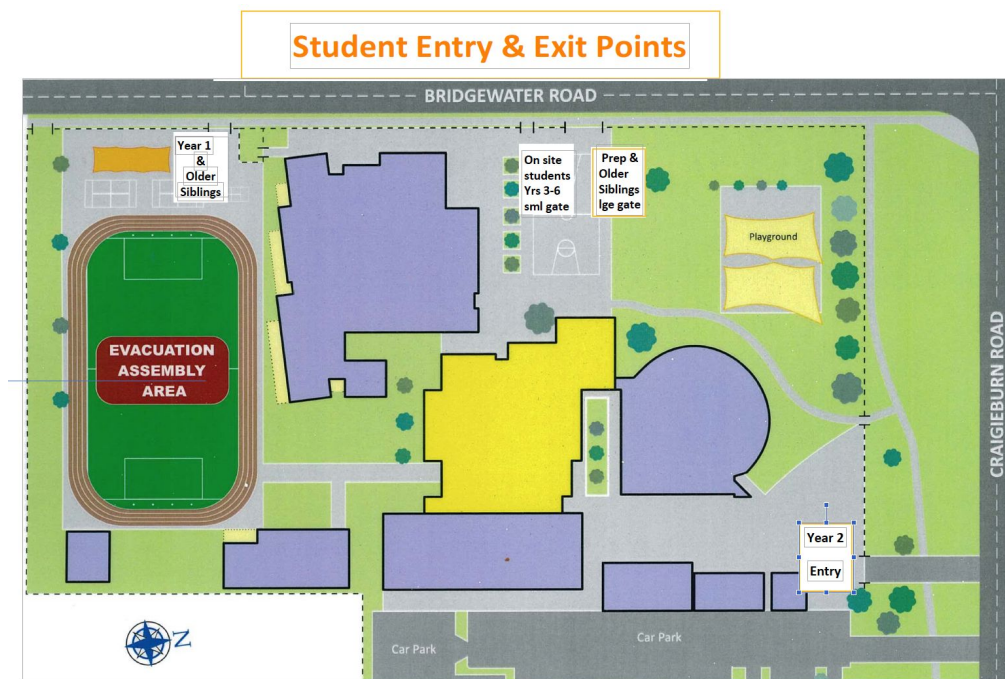
In the *second stage* of our return to onsite schooling, all other year levels will return to school from Tuesday 9th June. ***For those students in Years 3-6 who cannot be supervised at home and vulnerable children, the existing model of onsite schooling will remain in place during the two-week period from Tuesday 26th May to Tuesday 9th June.*** The current process that we are using to enable parents and carers to indicate the days for which onsite schooling is required will continue for this two-week period. All other students in those year levels will continue learning from home until Tuesday 9th June.

Our return to school arrangements have been made under the direction of all relevant authorities. If you choose to keep your child/children home after their year level has returned to onsite schooling, we can no longer support their learning from home. For students in Prep- Year 2 there will be no HELP program from Monday 25th May. From the 9th of June, all other year levels are expected at school and we will no longer be running a remote learning program through our school.

Our Lady's is adhering to the advice and direction of the Chief Health Officer, the Victorian Government and the Catholic Education Commission of Victoria Ltd (CECV). I have also had correspondence from, Professor Monique Ryan, Head of the Neurology Department at the Royal Children's Hospital, issued last week.

'All the information to hand from the international experience, however, has been that children do not experience severe respiratory illnesses with COVID19 infection, and that manifestations of this condition in children are far more mild than in adults. The RCH has still not had to admit a child to the hospital with COVID19 infection, although a number of children affected by this illness have been seen and tested here. That being the case, our advice to families is that we feel safe for children to return to school. (‘families’ referred to here are those with children currently in ongoing treatment by the hospital for severe and life threatening respiratory illnesses.) Being out of school when their peers have returned will have an impact on children's mental health and general wellbeing which we feel is, at this time, a greater risk to them than any risk of being exposed to COVID19.'

I hope this assists to alleviate some of the questions and concerns that you are all feeling. As Principal of our school I am acutely aware that we are entering a new phase of continuing our commitment to providing a healthy and safe environment for our students. I can assure you we will continue to hold the wellbeing, learning and safety of all our students at the centre of our actions.



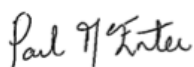
NO ADULTS ARE PERMITTED TO ENTER THE SCHOOL SITE

The administrative arrangements for the return to school of our Prep-Year 2 students next week are as follows:

- Learning commences for all students at 8:50am and students may access the school grounds from 8:30am onward, where they will go directly to their classroom.
- We will now be operating with 3 entry points to the school for our students. **Please refer to the attached map** to see which gate your children will enter through.
- All family groups enter through the gate allocated to the **youngest sibling**.
- Students in Year 3-6 who are attending our onsite program for children of essential workers, should continue to enter through the usual gate.
- Staff will be on duty in the school grounds and **parents or caregivers will not be permitted on the school grounds**.
- At 3:20pm, students will go to the gate area they entered and will be dismissed when they see their parents. They will be supervised in this area until 3:45. Please respect our social distancing rules and do not congregate at the gates prior to this time.
- During break times each year level will play in separate and designated play areas.
- Our canteen will not be operating until the 9th of June when all students return.
- All students will need to bring their own food and water to school as the outside drink taps will not be available.
- All Prep- 2 students must return their iPad to the school on Monday.
- As always, it is important to remember that if your child is unwell, they do not attend school. Should students begin to feel unwell while at school, you may be contacted to pick them up early.
- The school has implemented an updated plan for enhanced cleaning protocols and reduction in the use of shared equipment
- No sport or other play equipment is to be brought from home. We will be providing all play equipment and ensure it is sanitised to the appropriate standard.

I have attached a social story that teachers of students in Years Prep-2 will be going through with your children. It will provide a valuable starting point for you in having conversations with and supporting your children to return to school. Thank you for your continued support and patience during this time. Once again, if you have any questions regarding our school program, please email me. We look forward to welcoming students back to the classroom.

Yours sincerely



Paul McEntee
Principal