

Friday 27th March 2020  
Issue 5

# LINK LETTER



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*Michael Kent - PRINCIPAL*

Hello and welcome to the final newsletter of the term.

Firstly, I need to acknowledge a fantastic term of learning and community engagement over the past 9 weeks. Even now at the most difficult of times, our community has been hugely understanding and supportive of the measures that the school has had to put into place. I realise that during these uncertain times, we have had to make rolling changes on a very frequent basis. All of our school families have been supportive and understanding of helping us to manage the changing landscape in school.

Our students have done an amazing job over the course of the term. It has been wonderful to see the great learning gains that the children have made this term. In a very busy term, we have welcomed in 80 Prep students and families, established high quality learning programs in all classes, established a fantastically positive learning culture across the school, commenced our specialist teaching programs, conducted swimming for years 3-6, facilitated inter school sport and intra school sport for year 3-6 students, conducted Open night and Family Fun Night, commenced our Prep-5/6 Buddy program, enjoyed our amazing Fete

I thank and congratulate all the students for their hard work and positive attitudes in participating and representing themselves and our school so admirably over the course of the term.

I apologise that the term has been cut a little short and we didn't get the chance to publicly congratulate our students at a final assembly. Please pass on this message to your amazing children!

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## IMPORTANT DATES

### APRIL

**CURRICULUM DAY  
TUESDAY 14th APRIL**

(students are not required at  
school on this day)

**Students return to  
school on WEDNESDAY  
15th APRIL**

**HAVE A SAFE AND  
HAPPY HOLIDAY**

## 2020 TERM DATES

**TERM 1  
30TH JANUARY - FRIDAY 27TH MARCH**

**TERM 2  
14TH APRIL - 26TH JUNE**

**TERM 3  
13TH JULY - 18TH SEPTEMBER**

**TERM 4  
5TH OCTOBER - 18TH DECEMBER**

I would like to thank the staff who have worked so hard this term to provide all the previously mentioned opportunities. We truly are fortunate to have such a committed, dedicated, professional and highly capable group of people whom work tirelessly to support, engage and develop our students.

I also am grateful that under such difficult circumstances our staff have continued to put the students first, demonstrating their commitment to the students and their learning. I would also like to thank our School Council for their ongoing support of the school across the term and during this time.

Please note that we do have access to a school holiday program for anyone requiring the service. However due to the low numbers of current enrolments, TheirCare are availing our students to attend the holiday program at Bundoora PS. This service will be supporting student from 3 local school. You can register your attendance via their website.

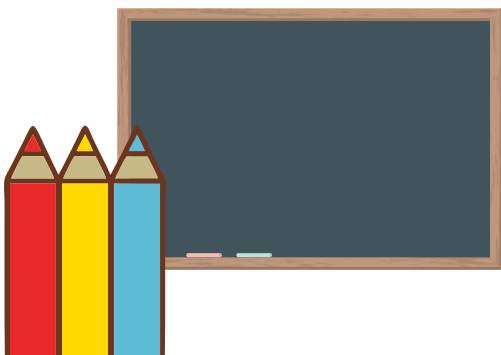
Obviously, in the current circumstances, there will be no offsite excursion type activities through this program. However, students will be supported and engaged in the school environment.

## This Week.....

With the rolling changes to schools and the early onset of the school holidays, our staff have been amazing at applying themselves immediately to the core business here of planning for our students so that the learning and supports can continue. We have been having a range of meetings, some face to face (with social distancing) and some video conference meetings in order to continue the work. As I'm sure you can imagine there are a number of unprecedented scenarios that we have been working through and considering for the next phase of COVID-19 and it's impacts. Teams have been planning the term 2 curriculum (continuing to plan for learning whether that be at school or off site), reviewing assessment data and work samples, putting considerations and plan in place for the potential off site learning for next term, moderating student work samples, reviewing various digital teaching, learning and communication platforms.



The Prep and 3/4 team  
working away on Tuesday!



# COVID-19

As you know we are dealing with quite unique and difficult scenarios right across the world. Whilst this continues to evolve, I urge everyone to focus in on themselves and their immediate family members. What can you do to ensure you are supporting the containment of the virus?

Stay at home and limit social activity. This will create some difficulties in itself but we have an obligation to do our part. However, this doesn't need to be debilitating. Keep it positive with your children. Keep it FUN! Find the joy in sharing in some creative ways to connect.

You will have received notifications from all our teams about some fun ways you can enjoy the naturally occurring learning opportunities that exist every day around us. It doesn't need to be formalized learning to be effective and enjoyable. First and foremost, as we teach daily at W.H.P.S, your wellbeing is the most important thing. Please make sure that even in social isolation you try to find ways to connect with those at home, video conference, facetime, Zoom or Skype to friends and family whom aren't in your home. Send some emails to people you haven't for a while, write a letter, create a postcard of your travels around the house! Keep eating healthy and exercising. Short energised brain breaks are a great idea. Keep up some mindful activities; music, colouring, meditation (some great apps to support this: smiling minds etc..)

A positive mindset is so very important at this time. Find the great things to be grateful for and discuss this as a family. The more you practice this, the more you'll notice!

*I would encourage everyone to stay as positive as possible during these unprecedented times. Remaining calm and rational are important in keeping our students focussed on being happy, healthy and safe.*

## Portfolios

Unfortunately due to the circumstances and the end of the term we were unable to conduct our Student Led Conferences and review the student portfolios and their individual learning goals. Therefore, throughout this week you will have received notifications about supporting your child to review their term 1 learning goals and review some of the work that students have produced. As part of this process, we ask parents and children to reflect upon the process and the term of learning. Next term we will review the reflections and the learning goals with the students. Thank-you for supporting the process. Obviously, it's not quite the same when the staff don't have the chance to support the conversations and reflections. Hopefully this will provide a positive learning experience for you to share with your child over the school holiday break.

## Holiday Learning

As is the case in every school holiday period, there is the opportunity to continue the learning program from home. There are so many wonderful and varied opportunities to learn at home. Amongst our ongoing focus on reading, keep the many other opportunities in mind...

Read anything, not just books, Writing; a poem, a letter, a postcard, a crazy recipe, a joke book, an email etc. Drawing; illustrations for a book, a crazy zoo creature book, a comic strip, etc, do some bark rubbings, explore different tools to draw with, paint something (not the house), a sculpture, Get physical; design a healthy menu for a restaurant, skip, jog, burpees, push ups, explore a magazine for the advertisements for healthy and unhealthy things, etc. Play a card or board game or a bored game, unpack some song lyrics, make a new song or dance, create a movie review, act out a new ending to a story or movie, so some cooking and focus on the maths of measurement, time and fractions. Do some gardening and measure out the space needed or just get your hands dirty! Maybe some mindful colouring, yoga, smiling minds app, go noodle, check out the live stream of the animals at Melbourne Zoo.

There are so many wonderful learning opportunities around us every day. Take these moments to enjoy and appreciate what we do have, rather than want we can't access at the present time.

## Term 2

At this stage we are presuming students will be back at school next term. As a staff we have been working extremely hard to prepare the curriculum for next term and also preparing to deliver this in whatever form that takes. We may be back at school, but the likelihood of the projections is that we will have students working from home. This creates an unusual situation for staff, parents and students. Teaching is a very connected profession and the key teaching moments are captured by the teacher in the classroom. Therefore, the challenge to take these moments when students aren't in front of us, is difficult and different. However, we can still find ways to stimulate, support and engage the children in the learning process. This will at times require lots of assistance from parents at home, especially in the junior years of schooling.

We will be putting in some protocols and expectations for everyone for next term. As I am conscious of teacher workload in trying to be accessible for all students during the day, develop and upload digital and non-digital content for students, assess work, plan together and most importantly try to be available to support the social and emotional needs of the students as and if required – and whilst trying to do this remotely. This will present challenges. I urge parents to continue their amazing support of the school, the staff and most importantly your children as we navigate through these uncharted circumstances over coming times.

Something I shared last week that's still very appropriate.

### Perspective..

Downtime or free from distraction time?  
Isolation or pause, reflect and meditation?  
Loss of entertainment or increase in creativity?  
Your life shut down or are you now tuned in?  
Cancelled events or rise of new activities?  
Panic ridden or purpose driven?

Be positive, proactive, calm and measured.

Some food for thought over the holiday period. We are creating young learners and leaders of tomorrow. Our students have the creative capacity to evolve, grow, find solutions and entertain themselves – given the freedom of time and space to do so...

These holidays will provide an opportunity. A unique opportunity.



We look forward to school resuming next term.

**We commence the term with a Government mandated curriculum day on Tuesday 14th April with students commencing on Wednesday 15th April.** It is likely that we will be commencing the term with remote learning and we are well prepared for this. We will be communicating with parents once this gets confirmed.

As more information comes to school over the holidays, we will continue to keep you up to date with details as they emerge.

In the meantime, thank-you again for a wonderful term and start to the school year and I wish and your families the very best of health during these times. Look after, and be kind to yourselves and each other.

Should you have any questions or queries, please feel free to get in touch.

Warmest regards,  
Michael

PS: Thanks to everyone for not parking in the staff carpark this week. It has meant staff can easily get to and from their workplace safely and efficiently.





# ACROSS THE AP'S DESK...

TONY RYAN - ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL

## Thank You:

Well, that brings to a close what has been a very eventful Term 1. These are unprecedented times in living memory. In times such as this it is natural for our community to be concerned about their health, that of their family and loved ones, as well as the current financial climate. I want to thank our community for the calm and reasonable response that you have shown during a time of rapid change and the support you have extended to the school.

Our world history is littered with a variety of challenges and difficult times. We have always overcome these obstacles. **This too shall pass!** I think it is important that we maintain our sense of calm. We all need to work together and support each other through this time. Whilst we need to be vigilant and follow the current health advice carefully to ensure the safety of our loved ones and the wider community, we also need to avoid panic. I think it is important to frame the school holiday period as an opportunity for some rich family time. A time for family games, movies, stories, cooking, gardening, books, rest and laughter.

This term has been a very positive one despite some of the disruption caused towards the end of term. Our students have settled into their classes nicely and developed a cohesive learning environment. Our prep students have transitioned into school life beautifully and we have been very excited to add them and their families to the WHPS team. There has been a really positive vibe around our school and this has been very evident during a number of the programs and special events that occurred during the term. Middle and upper school children have had an active start to the year with intensive swimming programs, swimming trials, swimming carnivals and interschool sport all in addition to their weekly PE lessons. Our school Fete was an amazing school event and it was a massive highlight for me to see the teamwork and interaction amongst our parent/guardians and the community spirit it generated. The smiles on the faces of our students make this a fantastic event, but it can't happen without the extensive support of the community. **Thank you!**

Our staff have been working very hard this week to prepare for Term 2. As things currently stand we are expecting to welcome our students back to school on the first day of Term 2, **Wednesday the 15th of April**. We have also been planning for the possibility of remote learning and putting things in place in case this is required. Further information will be shared with the community prior to the start of Term 2 to keep everyone informed.

Finally let me wish everyone a happy, healthy and safe holiday period. Please keep abreast of current health advice through channels such as DHHS and importantly follow this advice. <https://www.dhhs.vic.gov.au/coronavirus-covid-19-daily-update>

As stated above, I sincerely hope that this holiday period proves to be a rich family time for our community and one with good measures of laughter.

Take care,

Tony