

24 March 2020

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Dear Parents and Caregivers

Transition to Remote Teaching in the Junior School

Further to Andrew Linke's email yesterday afternoon offering an update on the position of Emmaus Christian College, I am pleased to share detailed Junior School news for both campuses:

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2. Teacher preparation
3. Classroom visits
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7. Realistic online response times from teachers if/when we experience a whole school closure
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11. Current Learning for children who have already been taken out of school
12. Current on site face-to-face learning

We acknowledge that as parents you may also be required to transition to your child/ren's online Remote Learning world and so hope the following information keeps you in the loop and is helpful.

1. Thank you

I would like to thank those parents who have personally offered encouragement to teachers at this time – please know how much this brightens and lightens the day in this current climate.

I would also like to acknowledge the F-2 parents who did a marvellous job yesterday morning responding to teacher requests of distancing during morning reading. What a delight it was to see parent partnership to accommodate social distancing guidelines.

2. Teacher preparation

As you can imagine there have been some rapid changes and steep learning curves embraced by staff in case we experience a school closure (both campuses) sometime in the future. Whilst continuing a quality face-to-face teaching program, Junior School teachers have:

- met individually with me to ascertain individual teacher, class and resourcing needs
- upskilled in additional digital tools on the two platforms Seesaw and/or Google classroom
- learnt how to record & upload a video of themselves ready for sharing messages with children
- learnt new strategies like Google Meet so staff can engage with staff and students while off-site
- met in year level Teacher Teams to ensure learning programs will be consistent digitally across each year level
- programmed lots of on-site lessons that involve teaching new digital skills to children so that if/when there is a need to deliver remotely, children are set up for success
- prepared a physical Remote Learning Pack that each ELC- Year 6 child will take home in the event of a school closure

I would like to sincerely thank the Junior School classroom teachers across both campuses for their hard work in this area.



3. Classroom visits

I have visited many classes this week to present Class Awards (in the absence of Assembly), and to personally talk with children about the process we are going through. I shared the analogy of getting ready for Christmas – we often buy presents for people around Christmas time, wrapping them up ready for the big day, however we are unable to give and unwrap presents until Christmas Day arrives. That is a bit like what we are doing now – we are getting ready, preparing and practising, just in case the Government tells us we need to continue to do our school work at home for a while. We talked about the fact that when we all learn new things – adults as well – we don't always get it right the first time and that's ok! Sometimes we need to have another go, and with some patience and a growth mindset, we are able to achieve the desired outcome.

On a daily basis, teachers are now trialing at least one online lesson task every day. We are slowly trying to build confidence so children feel ready if/when they are required to continue their schooling at home. In this way, children will be more independent and less reliant on you as parents when they arrive. Children who have not been at school will receive further instructions from the teacher if we move to Remote Learning for all students.

4. Protective practices

Teachers in some year levels are currently exploring the option of being able to hold face-to-face student/teacher conferences with each of their children once a week. This would only start if/when we begin full-time Remote Learning for all students.

In using Google Meet, teachers would send an email to your home with a meeting link. Your child would click on the link, and if the device has a camera and microphone, the teacher and student would be able to have a conversation so your child's teacher can provide feedback on work submitted. Any Google Meet situation must have parent permission, occur in a public space (not in a bedroom), and would be recorded by the school as part of protective practices. I will share more information if/when we move to Remote Learning.

5. Remote Learning Packs and Daily Schedules

In the event that the government asks all schools to close, and if/when we move to Remote Learning, children will be given a physical Remote Learning Pack that supports ECC online delivery. These packs are currently being put together by teachers.

We will be simplifying the process so children do not need to bring home multiple books. Between their online device and a couple of books, all work will be able to be recorded in a central location. We will be intentionally asking Year 3-6 students to use a Maths graph book to show their thinking and working out, as a step toward preparation for Middle School.

If/when we move to full-time Remote Learning, children will be emailed each morning, a daily schedule by their classroom teacher. This will include an outline of the focus topics for the day, and be accompanied by additional resources or sheets required. **Please note, a regular detailed online daily schedule will only begin if/when we have been given a directive to move online for 100% of students.** It is not physically possible for teachers to plan and deliver this level of detail online, whilst at the same time delivering full-time face-to-face teaching in the classroom.

In preparing the Daily Schedule, teachers will set a normal day's work. Excluding break times etc, this is about 4 ½ hours of work for F-6 students. Please understand in the context of a 1:1 home environment, that some children may complete the work faster than the allocated time. At home, children don't need to wait their turn in a class of 28, may have access to an adult straight away, won't have the normal group discussion with their class mates; and don't have to walk between classes etc. Please acknowledge the difference. If/when the College moves to Remote Learning, you would like your child to do more than the daily schedule specified by the teacher, the responsibility for this rests with the parent.



From time to time some teachers may provide additional resources that might be helpful for parents to use at home. Please understand if/when we move to Remote Learning, the only required work will be what is detailed in the daily schedule by teachers.

6. Printers

If you don't have a printer, it doesn't work, or you run out of ink, it does not matter! We would ask you to improvise by transferring the information to a blank page in your child's exercise book. This is particularly important for Year 1 and 2 children who are still learning to write in sentences, and write on the line. Children at this stage require a lot of scaffolding and do not have Chromebooks. This means pdf sheets will be provided electronically on a USB as a 'one stop shop' resource. This enables parents to print off multiple copies at any time should an activity be repeated, a sheet is damaged, and/or there is a need to consolidate and stretch learning. Teachers will refer to and revisit these at various times throughout the year which means you will be able to reprint as many times as needed. We would ask that these USBs not be shared outside your family to respect copyright licences where teachers have permission to copy for 'one class'. In providing these files in advance we would also ask parents to be mindful of not jumping ahead too quickly, or else teachers will come to introduce something new, and the children will have already done it! Parents may also like to download these files onto their own computer as a back up in case the USB is misplaced.

Year 3-6 parents are advised it is not uncommon to experience glitches when trying to print from a Chromebook. If this is the case, children can be encouraged to download a pdf document and email to themselves or a family member, for printing from a laptop or PC.

7. Realistic online response times from teachers if/when we experience a whole school closure

Parents are advised that as a general rule teachers will be available during general business hours. Parents are asked to be mindful of the frequency of contact with teachers, knowing in general they would hope to be able to expect a communication response within 24 hours.

We ask parents to understand that in a class of 28 children, if every child/parent/family made contact 3 times a day, that would be 84 pieces of electronic communication not including whole school matters. We would be so grateful if families could please be strategic in this area. Please assist the teacher to minimise contacts each day. Teachers will also need time to mark work and program lessons for the next day.

8. Submission of work for feedback and/or assessment by teachers

Please be advised in a normal school situation teachers don't mark everything every day – it's not physically possible to do this. As such, if/when we move to Remote Learning, teachers will advise at the beginning of every day, which piece of work needs to be uploaded or emailed for marking. We would ask parents and students to support teacher directives in this space so teachers can manage the high volume of online correspondence.

We understand that some young children in particular might get very excited about wanting to take photos and share all their learning every day. Again, we would respectfully ask that unless there is a specific request from teachers, students only submit the piece of work specified at the end of the Daily Schedule each day. Thankyou for your help in this area as teachers over the first week or two monitor the changing landscape in this area.

Families who do not have a scanner are able to take a photo of the student's work and upload to Seesaw (F-2), post in google classroom or email to the teacher (3-6).

9. F-2 - Reading Eggs & Reading Express

The College has purchased an online subscription so all F-2 students will be able to continue their reading development by accessing online readers through Reading Eggs & Reading Express. Please understand the levels in this program are not the same as levels 1-30 at school. Parents are encouraged to not 'over help' their children or they may progress too quickly. This would not be helpful for skill development. Comprehension is the key! Children either understand it and can answer the questions or they don't! If they don't understand it, as hard as it may be, they cannot progress.



Please ensure your child has access to a device that enables sound. This will be required for Reading Eggs & Reading Express

10. Instrumental Music

Instrumental Music Teachers are beginning Remote Learning via online learning at the College today (Tuesday).

11. Current Learning for children who have already been taken out of school.

Due to the ever-changing situation, the College leadership resolved yesterday that beginning this Thursday, students who have been withdrawn from face-to-face teaching by their parents, will receive a summary of work being covered at school in two Essential Learning Areas: English and Maths.

Parents are advised, in order to continue prioritising face-to-face teaching, teachers will not be required to share daily details, nor will they, at this point in time, provide summaries for other Learning Areas. Rather they will provide a brief summary of what is required over a 2 or 3 day period. Sharing of English and Maths for children at home will occur twice a week from next week. This will change if/when we move to full-time Remote Learning. At this point in time, parents will need to maintain responsibility in overseeing anything shared to the home environment. Teachers will not have time during the day to respond to queries from children who are absent from school.

This means any families who are withdrawing their children from face-to-face teaching due to social distancing with COVID-19 (and have already advised the absentee line, or Student Services), are welcome to come to ECC this Thursday anytime between 9:30am and 4:00pm to pick up:

- an individualised Remote Learning Pack (children in ELC-Year 6)
- a Chromebook if required (all children in Year 3-6)

South Plympton families see Debby Scheepers at Student Services. Brooklyn Park families see Sonya Gordon at the Front Office.

Please Note: Teachers are still finalising the Remote Learning Packs. I would like to re-emphasize that **Remote Learning Packs and Chromebooks can be picked at Student Services from Thursday morning onwards only if you have removed your children from the school environment for the remainder of the term.**

IMPORTANT: Please let your child's teacher know if you will be coming to pick up the above resources. This is because IT need to prepare for early distribution of the Chromebook AND classroom teachers will need to forward Remote Learning Packs to Student Services. **If parents turn up unannounced, resources will not be ready and parents will have to return at the end of the day, or the following morning, after resources have been readied.**

12. Current on site face-to-face learning.

I would like to reassure you that teachers are continuing to deliver high quality Teaching and Learning programs on-site at school. Further information will be distributed as needed to assist in any upcoming transition. We have 2 ½ weeks until school holidays. It will be interesting to see how much the landscape changes between now and then.

We are particularly grateful to those families of ours who are serving in the health and medical sector. May the Lord bless and protect you abundantly during this time.

If you have any further questions about any of the above, please contact your child's class teacher.

Every blessing

Helen

Helen Vonow

Head of Junior School, South Plympton (Fdn-Yr 6)

Head of Junior School, Brooklyn Park (ELC-Yr 6)