



PARENT GUIDE TO REMOTE & FLEXIBLE LEARNING (2.0)

“When the winds change; so must our sails.”

I want to start this guide with a huge thankyou for the enormously positive response to the news of a return to remote and flexible learning. If we are being honest, not many of us (staff, parents or kids) would be over the moon at this news, but, in true MEPS spirit, everyone has rolled up their sleeves with a resolve to do what we need to do an work through this together..... again!

Although we now have a reference point when it comes to remote and flexible learning, there will still be an element of uncertainty in our community and, this combined with some tweaks we are making, requires a clear and detailed parent guide.

I apologise for the length of this document, however, as always, we feel it is vitally important that everyone has access to all the information and for us to answer as many questions as possible.

Please have a read over all of the following information and please do not hesitate to contact myself, Antoinette and Brant (our emails are later in this document) or your child’s teacher if you have any questions.

REMOTE & FLEXIBLE LEARNING PLATFORMS:

Our key learning platforms will remain the same – Seesaw and WebEx. If you have deleted these programs/apps or are not sure how to access these, please contact your classroom teacher(s) for guidance.



Webex Meetings

TWEAKS TO REMOTE & FLEXIBLE LEARNING

We were really proud of the way in which we managed this last time, however, we are always striving to improve. After consulting staff, students and parents, we have come up with the following ‘tweaks’ which we believe will have a very positive impact:

OPEN & CONTINUOUS WEBEX MEETINGS

Between 10am and 12pm on Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday, all grades will have access to their classroom teacher via Webex. During these open and continuous Webex meetings students:

- will connect with their teacher on a more regular basis for longer periods.
- will have the opportunity to “pop in and out” of the meeting on a needs basis. They may ask questions, clarify tasks and seek feedback (meaning parents won’t need to!)
- may participate in class games, class books, individual/group conferences.
- may participate in other activities the teacher chooses, including, but not limited to wellbeing check ins.



The rationale for this addition to what we do relates directly to:

- Teacher accessibility (Parents, kids and teachers love this)
- Student engagement.
- Task clarity.
- Immediate/'live' feedback (reducing the written/recorded responses to tasks).
- Lightening the load on parents.
- Increasing connection with and between kids.

We feel this adjustment to the day will have a huge impact on the students, their learning and their household!

TASK VOLUME & ALLOCATION

Earlier this week, classroom teachers sent out a survey to parents of students in their class. As a school, we think it is really important to give parents a voice as to what they believe works best for their child and themselves, especially because we have been through this before.

Two of the key questions asked in these surveys were (along the lines of):

1. How many tasks per day would work best for your child?
2. When is the best time to have tasks posted (in the morning or the night before)?

Teachers are going to use your responses to inform their teaching and will do their absolute best to meet the requests you have made. There were other questions included in the surveys and these will also have an impact on how teachers deliver learning to individual kids.

One of the other pieces of feedback we have received from parents was that dreaded **SEESAW RED BUBBLE!** 😊 Suggestions have been made that the number bubble increasing due to unfinished tasks was a further source of stress. With this in mind, teachers will look to wipe unfinished tasks each evening so the slate is clean each day.

We hope these tweaks also help and are a further positive step towards alleviating parent/child pressure.

NOTE: Where parent surveys have not been completed, the default task allocation will be three per day.

SO..... WHAT DOES A DAY/WEEK LOOK LIKE?

Monday - Tuesday - Thursday - Friday		Wednesday
9am	Morning greeting from classroom teachers (Daily tasks allocated at this time OR the night before)	SPECIALISTS DAY (Tasks set for all Specialist Subjects)
10am-12pm	Open & Continuous WebEx Meetings (Start, continue or complete tasks)	
All other times	Continue or completion of tasks (or respite, rest, play, family time!)	



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PRIMARY SCHOOL

KINDNESS. RESPECT. RESILIENCE. GROWTH.

SOME OTHER LOGISTICS FOR REMOTE & FLEXIBLE LEARNING

Whilst the above outlines how and what we will be doing with teaching and learning, there are other logistics to consider. These are included below:

SCHOOL DEVICE LOANS

Once again, we are able to loan a restricted number of devices to students who have no or limited access to devices at home. This is especially important given our key teaching and learning platforms are Seesaw and WebEx.

The criteria for loaning devices from school are:

- Your child has no access to any device at home.
- Your child does not have enough access to a device at home (ie, due to a parent working from home or VCE siblings needing greater access than the primary school student)

If you would like to make a request, please email Brant Kennedy detailing your reasons as soon as possible at brant.kennedy@education.vic.gov.au.

Devices will be available for pick up at school at the following times:

- Friday July 17th, 10am-11am
- Monday July 20th, 10am-11am
- Monday July 20th, 2pm-3pm

NOTE 1: We are only able to provide one device per family at this stage.

NOTE 2: All iPads are locked and loaded with required apps. No changes should be made to any settings

NOTE 3: A loan agreement will need to be signed upon collection of the device.

NOTE 4: Last time we noticed that some families that borrowed iPads didn't engage in learning tasks regularly. If we notice devices aren't being used for learning, we will ask for them to be returned.

NOTE 5: If you would prefer hard copy work, this is something that should be raised with the classroom teacher. Parents will not be able to come on-site to collect this, but other arrangements of delivery can be made.

STUDENT BOOKS

We have been contacted by several families requesting they pick up student books and other items from school this week in preparation for remote learning. Given we are not allowing parents on-site, this is quite a logistical challenge.

However, our wonderful teachers and very flexible education support staff have come up with a plan and will or have notified families how they intend to deliver books etc for families who would like them. Different levels are using different approaches to this and if you would like further information, please get in contact with your child's teacher.

KEY CONTACTS – TEACHING AND LEARNING

The key contact to discuss any of the teaching and learning element of remote & flexible learning is the classroom teacher. They are best positioned to discuss your child's progress and any changes/tweaks that may need to be made to the learning program as the days and weeks go on.



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OTHER INFORMATION & LOGISTICS (Including On-Site Operations)

ON-SITE ACCESS

For health and safety reasons, we are limiting on-site foot traffic to staff and students only. **No parents or carers are permitted on-site** without prior consent from the school leadership team or a member of administration. This is and must be a blanket rule.

If you arrive at school and need to speak to someone, please call the office and a staff member will attend to you.

Parents who have received written approval to send their kids to school for care and supervision throughout the next few weeks have been given clear and detailed information regarding on-site safety protocols and management plans. It is important that these parents (and students) abide by these.

If you have any questions or require any clarification at all about our on-site plans, please don't hesitate to give us a call.

OTHER KEY CONTACTS

As well as classroom teachers the leadership and school wellbeing team is here for you. If you need to make contact please call 9726 9422 or email us:

Name	Role	Contact Details
Matt Mulcahy	Principal	matthew.mulcahy@education.vic.gov.au
Brant Kennedy	Assistant Principal (Operations & Logistics)	brant.kennedy@education.vic.gov.au
Antoinette DiLudovico	Assistant Principal (Student Wellbeing)	antoinette.diludovico@education.vic.gov.au
Libby Emery	Learning Specialist	elizabeth.emery@education.vic.gov.au
Ethan Shaw	Learning Specialist	ethan.shaw@education.vic.gov.au
Gaylene Layton	School Psychologist	gaylene.layton@education.vic.gov.au

WELLBEING

If any family has wellbeing or welfare issues involving their children or any other member of the family/household, please do not hesitate to contact us immediately. We have access to fantastic welfare support people and organisations and we can connect families with these in a matter of hours.

We are very mindful of the challenging times that some families will face and, once again, our school and staff are here for you. REACH OUT IF YOU NEED ANYTHING!

ONLINE SAFETY

Given the online nature of learning in Term 2, it is really important for parents to be vigilant when it comes to their children's online behaviour.

<https://www.esafety.gov.au/about-us/blog/covid-19-online-safety-kit-parents-and-carers>



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FUTURE MEPS EVENTS

We are so lucky to be able to provide so many events and opportunities for our kids each year. Sadly, the COVID-19 situation has had a big impact on these already this year which has been really disappointing for the kids.

Much of this is out of our control, with all plans and possibilities up in the air until we are given direct guidelines from the Department of Education. For what it is worth, we intend to offer every single event and opportunity we are allowed to!

Below is a bit of a status summary for our future events and plans. Many of these are unknown, some will be cancelled and some, at this stage, will go ahead.

TERM 3 EVENTS

Original Date	Event	Current Status	Comment
July 22 nd	School Council Meeting	UNCHANGED	This will happen via WebEx
Aug 4 th & 5 th	Parent Teacher Interviews	TBA	Investigating alternative method, possibly video conferences via WebEx
Aug 14 th & 21 st	Grade 5 Ski Trip	CANCELLED	We are considering the possibility of running four ski trips in Aug 2021. This will enable both the 2020 Grade 5s and 2021 Grade 5s to attend.
Aug 18 th	School Photos	RE-SCHEDULED	These will now take place on Tuesday October 27 th .
Aug	August PE/Sport Events	CANCELLED	No news if these will be re-scheduled at this stage. Updates will be provided by Leigh Dunn.
Sep 2 nd	MEPS Movie Festival	TBA	Peter Johnson will keep the community updated regarding this.
Sep	September PE/Sports Events	TBA	Updates will be provided by Leigh Dunn
Sep	Father's Day Stall	TBA	We are hoping to do something.....
Aug/Sep	School Council	UNCHANGED	TBC if these will be on-site or via WebEx



TERM 4 EVENTS

At this stage, there is very little purpose predicting what is going to happen. However, there is a huge amount of events that take place in term four and we will keep the community as updated as possible with the status of these.

TERM 4 EVENTS ~ GRADE 6 ONLY

To say this has been a frustrating year for our Grade 6 kids would be an understatement. Grade 6 is a year of school jam-packed with special events and, in normal circumstances, is a wonderful way to finish off primary school.

Given the kids may be wondering if we plan to go ahead with these, we thought a stand-alone status report would be a good idea. Please note again however, we cannot predict or control what is going to happen with the COVID-19 situation and government guidelines, but our intentions are outlined below:

Original Date	Event	Current Status	Comment
October 27 th	Grade 6 Graduation Photo	UNCHANGED	This is the plan at the moment, but we will let people know if this is pushed back due to all school photos now being taken on this day.
November 27 th	Amazing Race	UNCHANGED	The plan is for this to go ahead. Any required tweaks/changes will be advised later in the year.
Feb & June!! ☹️	Grade 6 Camp	RE-SCHEDULED	<u>Mon December 7th – Wed December 9th</u> The Grade 6 team have worked hard to have this re-scheduled for a second time. Unfortunately, this has resulted in a reduction of days from 5 to 3. A couple of notes: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The price of the camp has only been reduce marginally from \$416 to \$336 – this is completely out of our control!• Those who would like to withdraw from camp will receive a full refund.• If the camp is cancelled at a later date, families will receive a full refund.
December 11 th	Grade 6 Surf Trip	UNCHANGED	At this stage, this will go ahead as planned.
December 17 th	Grade 6 Graduation	UNCHANGED	At this stage, will go ahead as planned. Venue is booked etc. We will definitely have a Graduation and will tweak the format etc if need be.



FINAL THOUGHTS!

We want to finish the guide as we started it – with thanks, gratitude and a message of reassurance that everything will be alright.

We would also like to provide a few reminders that we sent out last time around and hope that these provide you with positive strategies you can implement at home with your kids:

- ***Try to be as patient as possible – with yourself too!!***
- ***Break the day up.***
- ***Set boundaries and expectations.***
- ***Set up a learning area.***
- ***Make the child the teacher.***
- ***Reward and praise when kids step up.***
- ***Have fun and do your best!***

THIS IS NOT HOME-SCHOOLING AND YOU ARE NOT EXPECTED TO ALL OF A SUDDEN BECOME A TEACHER

Our staff are still the key educational people in your children's lives and, whilst it is happening remotely, they are primarily responsible for providing for your child's educational needs.

The three simple things we ask of parents are:

1. Please encourage and ensure your children are engaging with the tasks/activities assigned by teachers.
2. If it gets too hard on a particular day, be kind to yourself and choose happiness/connection over pushing your child to complete a piece of work!
3. Just do your best!

I hope you have found this information useful and, as always, please contact your child's teacher or a member of leadership if you have any questions!

Take Care & Best Wishes

Matt Mulcahy (Principal)
& The Entire MEPS Staff