

Dear Parents,

Firstly, I apologise for the lateness and short timeline for this communication. The guidelines from DET only arrived at 9.15pm last night and I have been trying to put this information pack together so that this all makes sense to parents. I hope that all of our families are safe and well and that you have been able to find some joy as a family in virtual isolation.

As has been the case throughout this crisis, our prime focus is the health and well-being of our students, our staff and the Lyndhurst community. The school holidays have been a time of great uncertainty and I know, from the number of emails and phone calls that we have received, that parents have been desperate for clear information on term 2 for schools.

The structure for term 2

Tuesday 14th April is a Pupil Free Day for teachers to plan their launch into Remote and Flexible Learning. Wednesday, 15th April will be the first day of remote learning for students.

In term 2, all schools in Victoria will move to a model of Remote and Flexible Learning. That is, students will continue to be taught by their teachers but both students and teachers will remain at home. The Premier Daniel Andrews and our Minister of Education James Merlino, on the advice of the Chief Health Officer, have made it very clear that, if students **CAN** stay at home they **MUST** stay at home. This applies to every member of our community. Our school is not open as per usual. You have a duty of care for your child and as a member of this community to protect them and everyone else from the spread of this virus. Therefore, everyone **MUST** stay at home.

Remote and Flexible Learning: Teaching

From Wednesday 15th April we will be transitioning to Remote Learning. This is so that all of our students can continue their learning whilst staying at home. We will provide parents with very clear information on how that will work and how we will cater for your child's learning via email following our Pupil Free Planning Day on Tuesday 14th April. These plans will also include a structure to your child's day.

The teachers and support staff have been planning for Remote Learning since late last term. We are aiming to move towards activities that your child will be able to complete without a heavy reliance on an IT device like a computer or iPad. We believe that this will be the most sustainable and practical way for children to complete learning tasks.

Even through the holidays, we have been diligently planning for a transition to online learning. I can assure parents that we are well-placed to introduce it and well-advanced in our planning. Of course, this transition is a huge experiment. Each year level has taken a slightly different approach to the planning and so, as we move to online learning, it is likely that things will look different for different children. The teachers have been amazing in the way they have met this challenge and there is some exciting learning for us as educators that will come out of this, and that's a positive!

Your support for the teachers is vital to the success of this program. Many teachers will, themselves, be home schooling their own children whilst they also direct and monitor the learning of the classes. I ask parents not to begin comparing one teacher against another or one grade level against another. We are all in an experimental phase and the one thing I can guarantee is that our teachers, your teachers, are fully committed to the continuity of the learning of your children. That will happen in myriad ways. Sometimes it will be successful and sometimes not, but, as we always tell our students, the best learning often comes from making mistakes.

Devices and internet connection

Early in term 2, we will be releasing a survey to parents to gauge the level of internet access and the number and type of connected devices you have in your household. Much of the learning will not require students to have internet access and will not even require access to a device at all. As you know, our teaching and learning model sits on a bedrock of structured play-based and experiential learning and this will continue. Much of the advice you will be given as parents, will be around how to engage your children in active, real-life learning that minimises screen time.

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We have limited capacity to provide some devices to households that do not have them. However, the devices at school are configured only to work at school and so this will take some time. At this stage, we are planning that any households that need a device might possibly expect it in week 3. In saying that, families with multiple children will only need one device for the household as there is, as I said, minimal time required on screen.

The devices required are not sophisticated and the access required for learning can be quite capably handled by a phone, tablet or iPad. The government has also offered internet access to families who may not have an effective connection. We have no details about this at this stage but we will inform parents of this as soon as we have the information.

Care Packs

To kick off term 2 in a positive way and to ensure that every family has the resources to begin home learning for at least the first two weeks, we are giving each child a care pack with a variety of resources to support learning at home as well as items to support their continued well-being and their connection to the school.

The packs will be distributed on Wednesday 15th April from the school and we are requesting parents to organise someone to be available on that day to pick up the care packs. In order to ensure personal safety, we will be asking a parent to come to the school according to an alphabetical schedule so that we don't have 750 families all turning up at once. Attached is an alphabetical timetable for parents to come to the school to pick up care packs. The packs will be stacked outside classrooms and clearly named. I ask parents to enter the school, pick up student Care Packs and leave quickly.

Please resist the temptation to dive into the packs at home and let the children just jump into the activities willy-nilly. A great deal of time and planning has gone into the provision of the packs and guidance will be given to you as to how the activities should be spaced out over the first two weeks and beyond.

Entry to the school and office supervision

Whilst the school phone and email address will be constantly monitored, the school office will not be open for usual business. If you require support or assistance call the school phone number, email the school address, email your sub-school leader, email your child's teacher or email me on the address below. After Wednesday's Care Pack pick-up day, entry will be strictly limited and will only occur through the front entrance for the school or for the usual entrance for Out of Hours Care.

On-site Care and Supervision

From Wednesday, 15th April, if you cannot provide care for your child at home because you work and you cannot arrange alternative care, then you are to register your child or children into our Care and Supervision program based at the school. This program will replicate the Remote Learning program. Students will not be receiving anything different to the learning that has been provided for the children at home. Students who are at school are unlikely to be supervised by their regular class teacher. Although this care and supervision is provided and we will be following all appropriate social distancing guidelines, the personal safety of students, and that of staff is best served if everyone stays at home

You can register for Week 1 - 15th April – 17th April filling it out and sending it back to us via our school email: lyndhurst.ps@edumail.vic.gov.au

Pupil Free Day and Before and After School Care

Camp Australia will be operating Pupil Free Day on Tuesday 14th April and OSHC will resume from Wednesday 15th April at Lyndhurst Primary School.

As per the recent State Government advice, from the start of Term 2, **all students who can learn from home must learn at home**. Complying with this direction, only children of parents who meet the criteria for school attendance should access our care. To ensure that all families understand the important message is to stay at home as much as possible, Camp Australia has made the decision to cancel all previously made bookings for OSHC for Term 2, except for bookings made within the last 7 days.

Families that meet the school attendance criteria, must register their status in our system and rebook their care as needed. For all families that attend, childcare will be provided free of charge until 30th June as per the Federal Government's announcement on the 2nd April.

Support and assistance

We will be monitoring the school email address (lyndhurst.ps@edumail.vic.gov.au) and someone will be on the phone if you call the school phone number during school hours (8768 6700). If you are in need or have burning questions, please don't hesitate to call or email and we will try to get back to you as soon as we can. We may not be able to help you but we may know who can.

Zoom and other Video-conferencing systems

Teachers and support staff will be in constant contact with students and parents throughout the learning week. Often that will be through the normal learning management systems such as SeeSaw and Google Classroom but it will also entail video-conferencing facilities such as Zoom, Webex, Google Meet, or Skype. Your classroom teachers will let you know which platforms they will be using and when and how often they will be making contact. Sometimes that contact will be individual and sometimes it will be in groups. You will be given information on how to set up the software for this to occur early in the term.

If your child is video-conferencing or voice-calling with their teacher, it is important that you are alongside them. The information given may be guidance on the learning activities to follow and so it will be important for you to be aware of the information given. For monitoring purposes, teachers may be recording conferences for later reference and it is important that parents are aware of this.

Finally

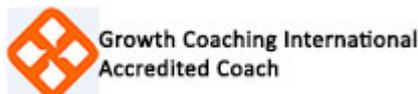
This is clearly going to be a challenging time for all of us. It's going to be critically important that we work very closely together to ensure that we provide the very best possible support for the ongoing wellbeing and learning of our students and your children.

In the meantime, remain positive and hopeful and most of all, stay well. Continue to follow the social distancing guidelines. Continue to practise good hygiene habits and continue to encourage them in your children. Remember isolation means isolation. If we are all diligent in our adherence to these protocols, we should reduce the amount of time that COVID-19 will be influencing our community.

Please stay safe, stay healthy and stay at home.

Greg Lacey

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The Department of Education and Training's Learning from Home website also provides information and resources for parents and carers: <https://www.education.vic.gov.au/parents/learning/Pages/home-learning.aspx>

Further information regarding coronavirus (COVID-19) and schools can be found on the Department's website, which will continue to be updated as the situation evolves:
<https://www.education.vic.gov.au/about/department/Pages/coronavirus.aspx>