

The WATTLE Newsletter



Newsletter No. 5

17th April 2020

225 Warrigal Road, Burwood

Principal: Ms Gayle Cope

Tel: 9808 2165

Fax: 9888 7239

Email: wattle.park.ps@edumail.vic.gov.au

Website: www.wattleparkps.vic.edu.au

Dear Parents/ Guardians

Well, who would have thought at the beginning of the year our lives would be entering such unprecedented times in 2020?

I reflect on our school values or norms; Respect, Encourage, Value, Care, Challenge and To be Responsible and their significance cannot be underestimated in these times.

Thank you to the school community who have unequivocally supported the Victorian State Government's directive, based on the advice of the Victorian Chief Health Officer, Professor Brett Sutton that all students who can learn at home must learn from home.

Mr. Steve Donohue and I as leaders of the school have directives of which we must comply also. Two of them being;

- School staff must work from home, with only those who have agreed to deliver the on-site educational program to attend the school.
- No staff member can be compelled to attend on site, including principals and members of the school leadership team.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank the teaching staff, learning assistants and office staff who have volunteered to be available on the school site. Seventy percent of Wattle Park teaching staff have offered to deliver on-site educational programs for those children of 'essential services' personnel and vulnerable families. We are indeed a lucky school. I know of other state government schools where casual relief staff have been employed as their permanent teaching staff have not been able to attend.

So please be aware on one or two days of the month there will be limited or no communication from your class teachers as they are attending to the students who are being accommodated at school. The class teachers will endeavor to inform you the day before if that is to happen.

Mrs. Ainslie Peszynski who was a previous Year 5 teacher at the school and now working in the North East Victorian Region informed us this morning that our school's on-line learning platform is being used as the model for other state government schools as 'best practice' in

delivery of on-line curriculum.

Congratulations to assistant principal Mr. Steve Donohue, ICT leader Ms. Philippa Statkus and all of the teaching staff who made this happen. Congratulations on their innovative practices!

We have had two consistent questions from some members of the school community regarding live interactive communication and the borrowing of netbooks or iPads.

The answer to live interactive communication is no, this will not be happening.

In terms of the Victorian 'Child Safe Standards' of which schools must comply, six out of the standards would not be met if we were to permit live interactive communication on devices between student to student and student to teacher. The FlipGrid video app allows teaching and leadership staff to view all content material before it is uploaded.

In regards to borrowing school owned devices, schools are waiting for advice from the Department of Education. The devices are owned by the school and are not to be taken from the school site as per their warranty. So please be patient until we receive advice. The remote learning program that we have developed is not intended for a one to one ratio. Hopefully students are able to share disinfected devices and participate in different activities some not needing a screen at all.

We have so much to be thankful for as Australian citizens and residents. It is difficult to comprehend what is happening in many overseas countries. Although mathematics learning and teaching is one of my passions, I shudder when I read the daily death tolls in Italy, Spain, United Kingdom and United States of America.

Gratitude is probably another value we could add to our school values!

Stay safe and well everyone.

Warm Regards

Gayle

