

The **WATTLE** Newsletter



Newsletter No. 15

17th July 2020

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Dear Parents and Carers,

Welcome back to Term 3 remote learning!

At the end of last term there was certainly no expectation that we would be returning to remote learning, hence teachers this week have spent all their time preparing resources, videos and programs for the next weeks. I thank them most sincerely for not just their work ethic but also the passion they have for their students' learning. The staff think very carefully about what tasks are best for the students and construct a range of varying learning tasks; educational with a touch of fun!

We're not 100% certain but the date that is currently proposed is that this will continue until at least August 17th.

Assistant Principal, Mr Steve Donohue and I also do our own considerable research and reading as to what constitutes the best learning environment for our school. As you can imagine, we have many long and protracted discussions as educators!

The Year 6 ambassadors and well-being leaders constructed 3 different student surveys during last term for all of our students from Foundation to Year 6 to ascertain their viewpoints and opinions about remote learning. Ava-Lily, Naomi C, James, Minjun, Coco and Naomi L did an absolutely amazing job. All of this information was collated during the holidays and presented to staff on our first day back as student feedback. There were whole school trends in the data but also level specific data.

The school can't thank you, the parents and carers, enough for all of your efforts in educating your children during this time. It's a huge undertaking and here we go again! I know that many people now have a deeper appreciation of what it is to be a teacher.

At the beginning of this week I contacted a parent Michelle Scott, mother of Ben in Year 2 if she could write a piece about her experiences during remote learning for the newsletter.

Please take the time to read about Michelle's experiences and her advice. It's preferable coming from a parent's perspective. Thank you so much Michelle and Ben for sharing your experience.

Please be reminded that Parent/Teacher interviews are scheduled for week 3 beginning Tuesday 28th July. The interview schedule will have been released today via your Compass account. Of course these will be a different

format too, no onsite attendance rather a phone or virtual call.

Stay safe everyone. It's the perfect weather to be inside immersed in a good book, maths problem and jigsaw puzzle.

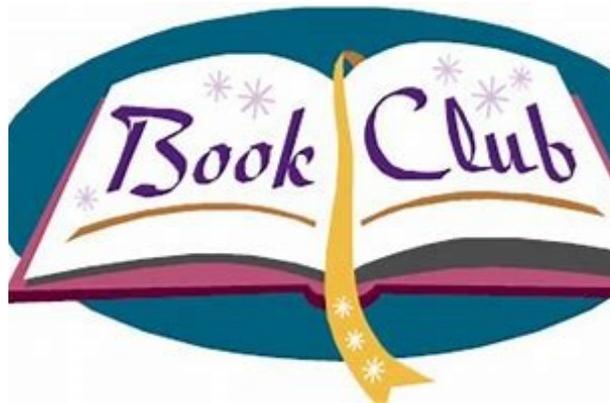
Warm Regards

Gayle

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https://www.scholastic.com.au/media/5642/bc_520.pdf



Some Thoughts On Remote Learning

Remote learning, for some it creates fear and unease, for others excitement and an eagerness to learn in a more self-directed way. It will be a different experience for each individual family, but with ours, it was a new way to learn, one where my son could more readily pursue things that interested him. It gave him the ability to spend more time researching and learning about things that were of particular interest to him and thus created an environment where schooling was more fun and learning came naturally.



Some things that I found important during the last period of remote learning, were simple things like making sure we kept the routine of starting “school” at the same time each day, as if we were actually still physically at school. Kids need routine and to keep the pattern of Monday to Friday school beginning at 9am, was important in maintaining the notion that it was a school day and as such, that was when it was expected that school work was done. This helped my son have a clear picture of what was expected of him and it was his new “normal”.

Having a spot in the house, whether it is their own desk, table or whatever space they can call their own, can help a child take ownership of their learning. I found it gives them a sense of security and a feeling of control, it is their learning environment and when they are there, they are “doing school” and conversely when they leave it “school” is over and it’s time to relax.

Similarly I believe it is important to make sure there are breaks from “school” to “clock off” and to recharge, to re-energise and leave behind the worry, or stress if something is not working or is a struggle. When you finish on Friday, to put the previous week behind you and to start afresh again on Monday. Having an endless supply of work to do, just overwhelms kids, or even us as “Home School Teachers”. Children need a defined week, so they know that there is time for themselves and their interests and school has a beginning and an end. I try not to obsess over getting every single thing suggested done, but take it week by week and strive to achieve the best we can for that particular week. Every child has their good and bad days/weeks, and as parents we know when this is and need to acknowledge that this is happening and tailor the workload to suit. This is reality and is happening in the classroom by your child’s teacher as a matter of course, so don’t feel you and your child are not coping if you need to do this too. Let your teacher know what is going on, they only want your child to have a positive learning experience and only expect you to do the best you can.

Other things that were beneficial for us were having a healthy snack or fruit break regularly to help maintain energy levels and having a drink bottle nearby, so frequent disruptive trips to the kitchen for a drink, were not necessary. At the start of the week as a parent, I’d try and read through what each teacher had set for their particular subject and have a rough plan of what I’d like to achieve each day, keeping in mind that this was flexible and would most certainly change as the week progressed.

I found spreading out the subjects like PE, Art, LOTE and Performing Arts across the week, both helped break up the day and also gave my son something to look forward to each day. It was something to do, often more active in nature, that we frequently did in the afternoon when he had tired of writing and his concentration levels were waning.

Remote learning is flexible, if we were having a bad day, then it gave us the ability to say ok, let's stop, have a break and I could let my son work on another project he was interested in and return to whatever set piece was causing problems, at another time. We commenced each day with the set spelling task, so he knew what to start off with every day and could begin his day by himself. I learnt doing the work that my son found the most difficult and that will be different for each child, was best attempted first thing in the morning when he was fresh and eager to learn and more likely to persevere, if it was a struggle for him. Encouragement is immensely important and even if the day has not gone well for whatever reason, to remember at the end of the day to praise your child for something that they achieved, so that they end the day on a positive note, this was a small thing, but a vital one.

For me remote learning was just that, about LEARNING, in whatever form that may be. We used what the teachers set as a steppingstone. Some areas my son loved learning about, so we would pursue that further if he showed enthusiasm for a particular thing, like building a marble run or learning about a Melbourne landmark etc. If I was cooking, we used that to learn about measuring and numbers. If it happened to be a sunny day, remote learning enabled us to make the most of that opportunity, we'd go outside, take a walk, practise our tables, counting, mental arithmetic, spelling etc while out walking. We'd pass gardens, note the different plants people used, possibly take photos of them, come home and maybe look something up on the computer, learning both about how to take photos and about plants and the environment they grow in. It was self-motivated learning, my son could pursue knowledge of a subject that had caught his attention, a great benefit of remote learning. If this is not your thing, maybe your child is interested in houses and how they are built, creatures/bugs that you see on your walk, vehicles like garbage trucks and street sweepers that make our community function well, or maybe just take that opportunity to talk with your child/children, to listen to whatever it is they want to tell you about. In the hustle and bustle and pressure of trying to learn at home, I found this "escape" to be of untold benefit to both of us.

Lastly always remember to keep in contact, with your child's teacher, other parents and your child's classmates/friends. People are resources, for ideas, reassurance and just to affirm that everyone is in this together. We all face challenges of one sort or another, but maybe someone has faced your challenge before and has ideas to help you through it, or can just say "hey it's going to be ok, I hear you". We can only do our best and tomorrow is a new day to start afresh. Good luck everyone and happy learning!

Michelle & Benjamin.

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE



PSW RETAIL OPERATIONS UPDATE

Wednesday, July 8, 2020

Dear Valued Customer,

In response to the significant increase in community transmission of Coronavirus (COVID-19), we are currently assessing the recent statement from the Victorian Government around details on restrictions and how they will affect PSW retail operations.

At this stage there will be **no change in our retail trading hours** and all stores will continue to function as usual. We will reappraise this situation in 7 days time and update you accordingly.

The health and well-being of our employees and customers remains our highest priority, and we will continue to act thoughtfully despite the disruption and uncertainty this situation has once again brought to our daily lives. We have implemented strict procedures for customers which include the mandatory wearing of face masks, exclusion of physical contact with product and restricted numbers of patrons in store to 5 at any given time.

We are also currently undertaking the implementation of our 'click & collect' service which we expect to have fully operational over the next 4 weeks.

As we work together through these difficult times, we remain committed to offering excellent customer service to our loyal partners and wish to thank you for your continued support.

Please refer to our website - www.psw.com.au - for updates which will be posted regularly and we will continue to process online orders without any interruption during this period.

Kind regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'AS', is positioned above the name of the Managing Director and CEO.

Anthony Charles Sterpin
Managing Director and CEO



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Term 3 begins Monday July 13th

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