



Term 4 Week 5

# St. Mary's Primary School

## Newsletter

website: [www.smswanhill.catholic.edu.au](http://www.smswanhill.catholic.edu.au)



1st November, 2021

### Welcome to Week 5

Dear Families,

I sincerely thank our school community for their support over the last week. As you know we had 2 initial COVID cases in our school which were reported on October 19th. The cases were immediately reported to the Catholic Education Office, Covid team. Our response was then guided by their directives and DHHS. Our Leadership Team spent many hours working through all of the required contact tracing, contacting students who were considered to be either Tier 1 or 2 contacts and keeping our school community informed of our situation. The extensive testing of staff and students who were contacted, resulted in further cases being detected in Year 1, some staff and in a group of children who were onsite for supervision on Tuesday 19th. Again we were directed by the authorities in our response, to close the school and remain in remote learning for the week.



I'd like to thank everyone for your support and many positive messages during this time. Thank you to families for following the directives to ensure everyone is kept as safe as possible and to our staff and leadership teams who have been amazing. It was wonderful to hear how frequently staff, including those in isolation themselves, kept contact with families, through emails, calls and texts. A special mention must also go to Jason Perry, Maree McLean and Ginny Gook who have spent many hours over the weekends and throughout last week working alongside me, managing aspects of the COVID response.

We are very excited to have the majority of the school return today and look forward to our students who are currently isolating, returning soon after.

Currently, parents are only permitted onsite for essential reasons. If you do need to come onsite, we ask you to sign in using the QR Code and report directly to the office. Any parents who do need to come are limited to our grounds, with only staff and students permitted in classrooms. We will have extra staff on the gates this week to support students at drop off and pick up times and will continue with our current A-L families using the front carpark and M-Z using the gym car park as per our normal arrangements.

Please ensure you seek medical advice and/or have your child receive a Covid test if they are presenting with Covid like symptoms.

The Canteen is open for orders placed via CDF PAY only. Counter sales will not be available until further notice.

#### KEY INFORMATION:

**Monday November 1st** - Back to school

**Tuesday November 2nd** - Public Holiday Melbourne Cup Day

**FAQ:** One question that some parents have asked is what happens if we have another COVID-19 case? It is a possibility that this could occur between now and the end of 2021. With all year levels back at school, there are now streamline procedures in place for schools, which would see the school closed for a day for deep cleaning and then reopen for all year levels and classes who were not affected by the case.

### **New Junior Hub Building Project**

Expressions of interest to tender for the new building have begun to appear in regional newspapers, The Age and The Herald Sun last week. It was also exciting to learn we have been allocated an additional portable for 2022 to assist with accommodating classes while the build is happening.

### **Shade Sail Grant**

We received notification that our application for \$25,000 for the construction of a shade structure to facilitate an outdoor learning area was successful. We hope to have this installed by the start of the 2022 year. The new structure will be installed on the senior oval.

Thank you once again for your positive support, resilience shown and the way people have looked after each other during this challenging time.

**Kate**



## **Riding the Covid Wave by Michael Grose who is one of Australia's leading experts in supporting parents.**

The disruption caused by the coronavirus pandemic continues, with the scale of its impact dependent on geography. Families in the nation's two most populated states are no strangers to lockdowns and the disturbance they bring to normal life. Regardless of where you live, the sense of the pandemic is always present, ready to disrupt daily life at short notice.

### **We crave connect and certainty**

Human beings crave certainty and human connection, both of which are severely impacted by the current pandemic. Just when life appears to return to normal, coronavirus case numbers can flare, sparking changes to our daily lives. As demonstrated by the massive increase in people seeking psychological support services over the last 18 months, these are difficult times for us all. Every family has its own coronavirus story consisting of loss, disappointment, hardship, frustration or overwhelm of some kind. While there is no magic bullet that will make living through these uncertain times easy, here are some strategies to help you and your family stay upright while you ride the COVID waves of uncertainty and change.

### **Model a coping mindset**

Let's start with a coping mindset, the hardest and most important strategy. The leader in any group is the person who remains calm in a crisis, so as parents we need to do all we can to keep our acts together, or at least look like we are in control. Kids of all ages, but especially primary-aged students, take their cues from parents, the most important people in their lives, about how to view events. If catastrophising, anxiety and anger are modelled, then inevitably younger family members will mimic these behaviours. More significantly, these behaviours contribute to their feelings of lack of control. Alternatively, when acceptance, perspective and optimism are on display, kids learn how they can cope with uncertainty and change. This is not to suggest that parents aren't struggling, and that we shouldn't show our vulnerability to children. However, children and young people feel safer and more secure when their parents radiate a sense of calm and composure in the face of difficulty. Challenging but essential.

### **Only sweat the big stuff**

If you find that you're arguing with your child over minor issues such as leaving clothes around the house, then it's time to let the small stuff go and focus on the bigger issues. You may need to set the parenting bar a little lower, focus less on academics, even relax screen time limits for a time if they are a source of conflict. Expect behaviour blow outs from children who have lost their own bearings – in some cases access to friends, school, and schedule. Give kids space if they regress, rather than reward tantrums with plenty of your attention, which will reward and keep the behaviour going.

## eSafety's Parent Guide to Digital Technologies and Mental Health

This Term 4 webinar will provide parents and carers with strategies to help young people and their mental health when they are online. It is designed for parents and carers of young people aged 10–18.

It will cover:

What do to about accidental exposure to content about suicide, self-harm or eating disorders using games, apps and social media to support mental wellbeing the pros and cons of digital mental health platforms strategies for young people to support friends online.

Register now at: <https://register.gotowebinar.com/rt/8245460212320493072>

**Dates:** Tuesday 9 November 7.30 to 8.30 pm, Thursday 18 November 12.30 to 1.30 pm

### eSafety's Parent Guide to Online Gaming

This Term 4 webinar will provide parents and carers with an understanding of the benefits and risks of online gaming.

It is designed for parents and carers of young people aged 8–13. It will cover:

eSafety's State of play research the games young people are using and how they are engaging with them the benefits of gaming and how to mitigate risks practical strategies to use at home and where to find help and support if things go wrong.

Register now at: <https://register.gotowebinar.com/rt/224257905834791949>

**Dates :** 15 November 12.30 to 1.30 pm & 24 November 7.30 to 8.30 pm



## UPCOMING DATES:

**Tuesday November 2nd**

Public Holiday  
Melbourne Cup

# News from the Office.....

## OSHC @ 2 Murlong - Before & After School Care



The Out of School Hours Care program, @ 2 Murlong, is operating out of the gym hub and provides before and after school care for school age children in the Swan Hill area. Please express your interest via the following link;

<https://prodadmin.myxplor.com/enrollment/index/dHdBOThsSW9JeHUxYTFEwaHNxZIMrdz0>

## Leave Passes

With students returning to school, we kindly ask that you make appointments outside of school hours and avoid picking your children up early where possible. Announcements are done daily at recess (10.55am), lunch time (12.55pm) and 3pm. If you need to pick your child up, we ask that you phone the office ahead of time.

## Bus Schedules

With so many changes to after school activities this year, please take the time to confirm your child's/children's bus schedule with the office. A reminder that day to day bus changes can be done on PAM, however if you require a permanent change, you will need to contact the office.



## How to add your child's absence on PAM

**PAM is our preferred notification method for absences.** Absences must be entered prior to 9.25am on the day your child will be absent. Absences can also be entered in advance.

On PAM, you can add an absence if:

- Your child is going to be absent for the day (All Day)
- Your child is going to be late to school (Arriving Late)
- Your child is going to be leaving early from school (Leaving Early)
- Your child will be leaving school and returning eg. for an appointment (Partial)
- Your child is going to be absent for more than one day (Multi-day max of 7 days)

To add an absence:

- Log in to your PAM account
- Select "Parent Notified Absences" listed under "Students". This can also be accessed by selecting the 3 line menu bar on the top right hand corner of the screen and selecting "Parent Notified Absence".
- Select "Add Absence"
- Select the child who will be absent
- Select the reason for your child's absence
- Select the appropriate absence period
- Select the absence date
- Notes can be added if required
- You can edit or delete current and future absences, by clicking on your child and amending it if required



# HAPPY BIRTHDAY TO...

NOVEMBER 1ST: ANGUS S, THEA T, MEMPHIS T, ARIA C

NOVEMBER 3: MAX G

NOVEMBER 4: EMMY B, HARRY B, DHRUV D, DANE R

NOVEMBER 6: ISABEL B, LENI D, SOHIEL H, ELLA O'B,

TIGER V, SARAH V

NOVEMBER 7: STEFFANY S

