

Dear Families and Carers,

As you are all aware we are beginning our move to onsite learning, with our year Prep - 2 students returning to school and classrooms from Tuesday 26th May. Our 3-6 students will remain offsite and continue with Remote Learning until June 9th. From Tuesday June 9th our school will have ALL students back onsite and learning in classrooms. We have carefully planned a comprehensive return to onsite learning schedule and have started to share this with our school community. Please ensure you keep up to date with all the details of our plans for return to onsite learning via our social media platforms which include Skoolbag, ClassDojo, Showbie and our school Facebook Page.

In the meantime it's important that you continue to support your children to keep a balanced approach to home learning. Time spent using digital devices for learning should be broken up with physical exercise and offline learning tasks often. It's also important that during this time of remote learning we maintain safe and responsible use of information and communication technologies. This includes:

- The appropriate use of digital platforms, privacy and information protection
- Respectful online communication.

Just as you set aside time for physical exercise, it is important to make time each day to check in on your child's mental health and wellbeing.

As your child continues to adjust to their new routine and not being able to see their friends in person, it is important to be understanding of their feelings of frustration, anxiousness and even anger – every child will react differently.

To support your child, please continue to use these mental health and wellbeing check ins to:

- Provide an opportunity to talk about how they feel and listen to what they say
- Identify one or two things they could do to address what they are concerned or angry about

Ask how they are going, whether they are finding it easy or hard to learn remotely, and if there is anything they'd like your help with.

Please note that if you have any other concerns about the health and wellbeing of your child, contact your class teacher directly, and your child's class teacher will have access to resources that can help.

We appreciate that this point in time may be very challenging for you and your child as you prepare for your child to return to school. Please know that we are fully prepared for providing the best care possible for your child whilst they are onsite in our classrooms learning and playing in our playgrounds. We look forward to welcoming back each and every child to the routines of learning in our classrooms

"Grief and resilience live together".
— **Michelle Obama, Becoming**

Warmest Regards,
Kathy Cvitkovic – Assistant Principal 3-6 Learning Community

As Melton West Primary School prepares to return to school on May, 26th it is crucial that all parents and carers read through the following information carefully.

The decisions around how the school will operate until further notice is based on the following advice from the Department of Education and Training (DET):

..... the most important action school communities can take to reduce the risk of transmission of coronavirus (COVID-19), is to ensure that any unwell staff, children and young people remain at home.

As the main risk of transmission of coronavirus (COVID-19) in the school environment is:

- between adults, it is important that visitors to school grounds are limited to those delivering or supporting essential school services and operations.

- from adults, close proximity between adult members of the school community should be avoided, particularly during school drop-off and pick-up.

Maintaining a physical distance of 1.5 metres will not always be practical in education settings. Physical distancing is most important between adults.

Where possible, children will be encouraged to keep their distance however, it is more important to increase hygiene practices and progressive cleaning throughout the day to ensure we reduce transmission.



Key information:

- For the duration of term 2, there will be no large gatherings on school grounds. Assembly will be conducted online and all excursions and incursions are cancelled.

- Children who bring a mobile phone to school must ensure it is cleaned before handing it in at the office as per the Mobile Phone Policy.

- Progressive cleaning will continue throughout the school day. Areas include: toilet areas, classroom, high touch areas and playgrounds.

- Children are discouraged to share any equipment including, stationery items and food.

- All classroom environments will ensure fresh air (weather permitting) is circulating.

- Children will have restricted movement throughout the school, entering and exiting learning areas and corridors as signed.

Parents CAN

- Contact the school or their child's classroom teacher by phoning the school office.
- Enter the school office via the front gate to:
 - Return school loaned devices
 - Collect their unwell child
 - Make payments
- Please adhere to the social distancing guides.
- **Please note:** For social distancing purposes the foyer area is restricted to 2 adults at any one time
- Designate a meeting place for their children to meet them after school.
- You could:
 - Let them know which gate you will be waiting for them at the end of the day.
 - We suggest Prep children's parents meet them at the gate inside the school ground, in the new garden area outside office.

Parents CANNOT

- Enter the school premises throughout term 2, unless they have an appointment or need to drop something off at the office.
- Be closer than 1.5m to another adult outside the school grounds during drop off and pick up times.
- Continue coming to school in a voluntary capacity at the school until further notice. Please note this means that School Banking, Playgroup, Parent Helpers, Parents and Friends will be postponed until further notice

Parents MUST

- Keep children home if they are unwell.
- Collect unwell children immediately from the school.
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- Send children to school with their own drink bottle. Drinks taps have been disengaged, however taps to refill bottles are available.
- Remind children of hygiene practices such as: sneezing into elbows and regular hand washing/sanitising.
- Be on time to collect children at their designated dismissal times.



School Drop off and Pick up instructions.



To reduce the transmission of COVID-19 among adults, we have designed a schedule to minimise adults congregating in large numbers outside the school.



We have set-up staggered entry and exit times for ALL children. All children will have the same amount of instruction time, spread across the day.



All families are allocated to a House Colour on enrolment. Entry to the school will be at designated times for each House Colour. Your child's teacher will inform you and your child of their House Colour via Class Dojo over the next few days



Orange House - Drop off 8:30am. Pick up 2:30pm.

Red House - Drop off 8:45 am. Pick up 2:45pm.



Purple House - Drop off 9:00am. Pick up 3:00pm.

Green House - Drop off 9:15am. Pick up 3:15pm



Please note, gates will be locked between each designated time. Please take note of the time your child is due to start and finish and please ensure you DO NOT arrive before this starting time to avoid waiting unnecessarily.



Social distancing signage will be displayed around the outside of the school and MUST be followed by all adults at ALL times.



Please speak to your child and direct them to the gate where you will meet them at the end of the day. It would be most useful if this was the same gate you dropped them off at.



In order to keep social distancing effectively please do not gather at gate entries at the end of the day. Please wait along the social distancing guides and wave to your child through the fence to show them where you are. For older children you may encourage them to meet you at the car, in an area where you normally park.



To reduce car congestion, families are encouraged to walk to school or park at the Melton Waves Pool and cross Coburn Road.



Children cannot enter the school grounds until their designated time and must go straight to their classes in the morning. At the end of the day they must leave the school grounds immediately – no playing on playgrounds.

School Start/Finish Time for *Prep Children*

Drop off and Pick up is the same for Prep children as for the rest of the school.

MWPS Staff will be at the gates to greet the children as you say good-bye



When there is a group of about 6-8 Prep children gathered inside the school gate a MWPS staff member will walk them to their classroom

Orange House - Drop off 8:30am. Pick up 2:30pm

Red House - Drop off 8:45 am. Pick up 2:45pm

Purple House - Drop off 9:00am. Pick up 3:00pm.

Green House - Drop off 9:15am. Pick up 3:15pm



At the end of the day staff members will walk the Prep children from each House Colour at the relevant time to the gate near the front office

If Prep children have older siblings, they can be collected from their classroom by their sibling before meeting parents outside the school

If the Prep child has no older siblings a MWPS staff member will collect the children from the classroom at the designated time and walk them to Gate 2 (near front office) Please wait for your child near that gate

Getting it right in English!

Engaging older readers and writers

In the middle to upper years of primary school students use reading and writing to learn and explore other learning areas, and to seek out information for themselves as active learners. It's important to continue to encourage a love for reading and writing at these ages, particularly leading into secondary school.

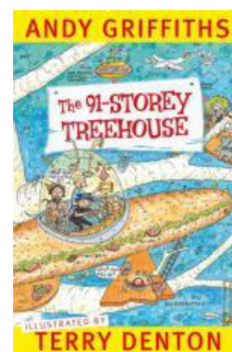
Below are some activities that might engage your older readers and writers.

Share ideas about texts

Talk to your child about how you select books for your own reading. After your child has read a text, encourage him or her to share insights, feelings and understandings of the text.

Some ideas that may suit your child's interests:

- ❖ Read about the author or illustrator at their website.
- ❖ Find and read another story by the same author.
- ❖ Follow the instructions from a text to create something, for example, recipes, making models, or origami (Japanese paper folding).
- ❖ Read several articles together on the same issue to get more than one opinion. Discuss the different views expressed.
- ❖ View a movie based on a book and make comparisons.
- ❖ Draw or paint pictures about the scenes or characters from a story.



Encourage your child to read or write with a specific purpose in mind

Some ideas include:

- ❖ Listen to and view texts on the internet or other digital audio player.
- ❖ Read, collect, experiment with and write recipes to create a cookbook.
- ❖ Find out facts about topics of interest or your family's cultural background
- ❖ Keep a diary where your child can record events, feelings etc.
- ❖ Write a shopping list for a recipe you and your child wish to make.
- ❖ Play appropriate computer games that require reading i.e. instructions
- ❖ Download podcasts to listen and discuss.
- ❖ Join a blog to read and to make contributions together.



Ideas taken from '201 Literacy and maths tips to help your child', Department of Education and Early Childhood Development

Sarah Mills- Leading Teacher Literacy



Dear Parents,

We are all really excited to be returning to onsite learning. It will be wonderful to see all the students again and rebuild our connections and relationships. Sometimes we can forget that the best learning takes place when there is a strong, mutual respectful relationship between student and teacher.

Some fun maths games to play at home

1. It's in the Cards

For a twist on the traditional card game War, assign values of 1 to the ace, 11 to the jack, 12 to the queen, and 13 to the king, and face value for the cards two through 10 (for younger children, limit the game to number cards only). Playing in pairs, each person lays two cards face up, then subtracts the lower number from the higher. Whoever has the higher answer wins all four cards. If the totals are the same, the players flip over two more cards and repeat until there is a winner.

Challenge: Use the two cards to form a fraction, and then compare to see who has the larger fraction. If they are equivalent, repeat until someone wins the round.

2. Weighing In

Line up a variety of fruits and veggies, such as oranges, bananas, cucumbers, kiwis, tomatoes, and bell peppers. Ask your child to predict the order of the foods from lightest to heaviest. Use a balance scale to test their predictions, then rearrange the foods according to their actual weights.

Challenge: Slice each fruit in half. Invite students to analyse how the density of the fruit or vegetable affects its weight.

3. Twister Math

Stick labels with numbers, shapes, or images of coins onto the circles of a Twister mat. Give your child/children, in turn, an equation, a description of a shape, or an amount of money, then have the student place his or her hand or foot on the answer.

Challenge: Label the mat with numbers ending in zero, then call out numbers and tell kids they must round up or down to the nearest answer.

4. Salute

This simple game is all about bringing together verbalisation and maths.

What you need to play: Two willing participants, Cards numbered 1-10 (these can be made from a sheet of paper)

How to play:

Step 1: The game starts with the two players facing each other. Each person selects a numbered card and sticks it on their forehead, so the other player can see.

Step 2: The person leading the game gives a statement, such as what the sum of the two numbers is, the difference between the two or the product of the two etc....

Step 3: Each player has to work out what number is on their own card, based on what is written on the other person's head and the rule given.

5. The 24 Game

This is a very simple game that will help your child practice their arithmetic skills, and it is a game they can play with a group of friends.

What you need to play: A pack of playing cards (The number cards only)

How to play:

Step 1: Each player picks 4 number cards at random from the pile.

Step 2: They then need to find a way to manipulate the 4 digits using any of the 4 operations (+, -, x, ÷) so the end result is 24. For example, if they chose 4, 7, 8, 8, they could do $(7 - (8 \times 4) = 24)$

Step 3: If nobody is able to reach 24, you can make it closest wins!

Jennifer O'Connor

Assistant Principal Prep- 2 Learning Community



It is the mission of Melton West PS to work collaboratively to ensure high levels of learning for all.

INSIGHTS

Successful close quarter living



The current physical distancing measures due to the COVID-19 pandemic will be with us for some time. This cocooned existence is a test of parental patience, children's willingness to cooperate and a family's ability to pull together.

So, if you're about to enter the family cocoon, or even if you've been living in close family quarters for some time, the following tips will help ensure your children not only survive each other, but emerge from the cocoon with a strong sense of camaraderie, a greater appreciation for their siblings and knowledge that they belong to a rock solid family who can pull together in a crisis.

Get kids on board

Start your period inside the family cocoon by getting everyone on board. Give kids a voice in how they'd like their social isolation time to flow. Listen to their fears and worries. Empathise with any concerns about missing regular activities and contact with friends but point to the positives of having more free time than normal. Consider providing kids with family organisation roles – the music girl, games guy, food planner and so on – and swapping these regularly to maintain interest. At Parenting Ideas, we believe that it's reasonable to expect kids to help at home and there are many resources at our website that help with this.

Establish structure

Many kids struggle with anxiety when routines break down, so ensure that you have a regular structure that brings predictability to each day. Parents and kids need their own routines starting with get up times, work times and in the event of at home learning, times for schoolwork. Break the day into different time zones that mirror their school days. A regular structure will make the days more workable, feel shorter and be more manageable. It's important to keep daily foundation behaviours in place such as waking up at the same time, dressing for school and preparing for class as they trigger your child's readiness for learning. Similarly, relaxing your routine on the weekend gives everyone a break from the structure of the school and working week. A regular family meeting provides an ideal way to give kids some input into their own routines and also a say in how family-life looks in the cocoon. If formal meetings are not for you, then ask for opinions and gain feedback in more conversational ways.

Set up activity zones

The Nordic countries with their long, dark winters lead the way in successful close quarter living. One of their major strategies for success is the establishment of living zones within homes and apartments. These zones differ from the usual sleeping, cooking and communal living areas that you may be used to. They incorporate areas for individual activities including learning, playing, chilling out and exercise. With consistency children soon associate a specific activity with a particular zone making concentration and focus a great deal easier. Avoid having multiple activities in one space as this may lead to conflict, while diluting the impact of this whole zoning strategy.

parenting*ideas

Get moving, grooving and having fun

Maintaining children's healthy exercise levels when organised sports and informal group play are prohibited is a major challenge for parents. Some organisation and creativity will help. Establish mini movement breaks during each day involving dancing, shooting hoops and exercise to movement. Remember that any activity that gets kids arms and legs moving is beneficial to their physical and mental health. Amp up the fun factor by incorporating music, dancing to online videos and playing simple indoor games.

Instil good mental health habits

As the old saying goes 'prevention is better than a cure', which is pertinent if your child is prone to anxiety and depression. With routine preventative measures such as playing and talking face to face with friends on hold, consider introducing regular mindfulness and breathing into your daily routine. At Parenting Ideas we recommend the resources at smilingminds.com.au as they cater for mindfulness for all groups and at any level. Schedule times for kids to digitally connect with friends so that they don't experience the effects of isolation.

Know when to steer clear

It's hard for family members who are used to doing things on their own to suddenly be thrust together in each other's company for extended periods of time. Many family holidays end in sibling squabbles because family members aren't used to spending so much time together in the same space. Encourage kids to spend some time alone each day so they can relax, reflect and draw on their own emotional resources. Time alone is an under-rated contributor to a child's resilience and mental health.

And know when to come together

While time alone is important it's also essential for your family to come together to connect, to have fun and to enjoy each other's company. Work out your regular family rituals and make these non-negotiable. Evening meals, family discussions and at least one weekly movie or entertainment activity give children and parents the opportunity to come together on a regular basis.

This time spent with your family inside the cocoon at first may be difficult, as it requires changes of habit and behaviour from everyone. There are many positives to close quarter living brought about by COVID-19. Families now get a chance to connect with each in real time and bond with each other in deep, meaningful ways.

Parents also get the chance to establish the positive behavioural and mental health habits in their children that has so often been made difficult by the insanely busy lifestyle that we've all been living for some time now.

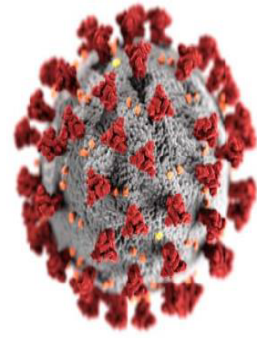
The roller coaster has stopped. It's now time adjust to a slower pace and have the types of conversations and pleasurable times with kids that have meaning, have impact and leave lasting memories.



Michael Grose

Michael Grose, founder of Parenting Ideas, is one of Australia's leading parenting educators. He's an award-winning speaker and the author of 12 books for parents including *Spoonfed Generation*, and the bestselling *Why First Borns Rule the World and Last Borns Want to Change It*. Michael is a former teacher with 15 years experience, and has 30 years experience in parenting education. He also holds a Master of Educational Studies from Monash University specialising in parenting education.

Too sick for school? (COVID-19)



- All Unwell students MUST stay home
- Please do not send your child to school if they are experiencing ANY of these symptoms- coughing, runny nose, sore throat, fever, aches and pain, headache, shortness of breath or loss of sense of smell or taste
- If your child has complex medical needs or a compromised immune system please see your medical practitioner to seek advice on return to school prior to your child's return
- If your child is experiencing symptoms of COVID-19 please seek medical opinion from your medical practitioner or the National Coronavirus (COVID-19) Helpline 1800 020 080, the line operates 24 hours a day, seven days a week
- Please notify the school immediately if your child has been diagnosed with COVID-19 or has been in close contact with a confirmed case