

Dear Families

Welcome to the 2021 school year. We hope that the vacation period has been relaxing, successful and rewarding and that you are ready to join us on an exciting journey this year.

After a disruptive 2020 we're keen to get back to doing what we do best- creating great learning opportunities in a supportive and engaging school environment. And we can't wait to work for, and with, you throughout 2021.

Our school will continue to grow and develop. Our staff and students will continue to learn and together we will aim high and achieve great things. We will see mistakes and failures as opportunities for growth and focus on being respectful, kind and determined.

2021 WILL be a GREAT year!

On Thursday we welcome 100 new Prep students and during January we had a few new families enrol with us- bringing our student numbers to 448.

We also welcome 2 new or returning staff members Dinelle Bates (Year 4) and Lachlan Howes (Year 5/6)

The calendar ticking over to 2021 has not eradicated the need to implement COVID safe practices here at school. We remain keen and committed to ensuring all of our students and community members stay safe and much of the information included below contains important details about how, together, we can achieve this. Please take a few moments to familiarise yourself with these strategies and systems- almost all of which were in place at times throughout last year.

#### Entrance to school grounds

*Congestion within the school and at entry points should be avoided where feasible by adjusting drop-off and pick-up processes, signage and one-way flow of individuals in more confined spaces such as locker bays and canteens.*

Our school gates will be unlocked at 8:40am each morning and staff will be on duty from 8:45am

We Request that students and parents/carers of the following Year Levels enter through their designated gate: By opening as many entry and exit points to the school as is safe, and allocating staff to ensure students are safely supervised we are hoping that students and parents feel safe and confident with their arrival/departure from school- and at the same time helping with physical distancing measures.

- **Foundation** students please enter and depart through the gate located on Edithvale Road closest to the school Hall- the same gate used for transition sessions at the end of 2020
- **Year 1** students please enter and depart through the gate located on Edithvale Road closest to French Avenue
- **Year 2** students please enter and depart through the gate located at Haig Avenue.
- **Year 3** students please enter and depart through the gates located at on Edithvale Road nearest the school crossing
- **Years 4 and 5/6** students please enter and depart through the gates located on French Avenue.

#### Structure of our school day

This year, and in line with the Department's priorities (Happy, Active and Healthy students, Learning Catch Up and Extension and Connected schools) we have created a new timetable. Each grade's specific timetable will be made available shortly and ALL Year levels will follow the times listed below. The timetable ensures that EVERY classroom teacher will be with their class at the start and end of each day to support our goals of developing literacy skills and knowledge as well as maintaining a focus on students' wellbeing.

9:00 – 9:20 Phonics based Reading

9:20- Literacy, Numeracy, Inquiry, Science, Specialist etc classes

11:00- Recess

11:45- Literacy, Numeracy, Inquiry, Science, Specialist etc classes

1:25- Lunch

2:10- Literacy, Numeracy, Inquiry, Science, Specialist etc classes

3:00- Wellbeing

3:30- Dismissal

### Visitors to school premises (including interschool activities)

Visitors to school grounds must comply with physical distancing and face mask recommendations and practise good hand hygiene.

There is no requirement to limit the number or type of visitors to school premises, however the density limit of 1 person per 2 square metres should be applied to any spaces and activities being attended by parent/carers and other visitors indoors.

To support contact tracing, we are mandated to keep a record of all staff, students and visitors who attend on-site for more than 15 minutes. Schools must record the name, contact details, date, and time of attendance at school, as well as the areas of the school that the person attended.

We will be using a QR Code Service, developed by the State Government, which is free to use and can assist us with requirements to keep these records. If you are planning to be on-site for 15 minutes or more, please scan the QR image with your smart phone or enter our school's unique 6 character location code. These will be displayed throughout the school.

### Assemblies, award ceremonies and other large gatherings

If an event is held **with external guests** (parents/carers/visitors) then the overall attendee limit (inclusive of guests, staff and students) must be based on available floor space of the venue; with the density limit of one person per two square metres applied. This means that for us, any assembly held indoors can only be attended by students and staff.

Outdoor assemblies can be attended by parents/carers- noting the need to wear masks where socially distancing cannot be maintained.

### Stay home when unwell

- 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 and students remain at home and get tested, even with the mildest of symptoms. *Students and staff should continue to be vigilant and remain home if unwell. Further information can be found in the attached pdf **'Managing unwell students'***

### Management of an unwell student

It is important that any student who becomes unwell while at school gets tested and returns home.

- Students experiencing compatible symptoms with coronavirus (COVID-19), such as fever, cough or sore throat, will be isolated in an appropriate space with suitable supervision and students should be collected by a parent or carer as soon as possible. Urgent medical attention should be sought where indicated. It is not suitable for an unwell student to travel home unsupervised.
- Health care plans, where relevant, should be updated to provide additional advice on monitoring and identification of the unwell child in the context of coronavirus (COVID-19).
- If a staff member is unsure whether a student is unwell they will contact the parent or carer to discuss any concerns, and taking a precautionary approach, request the parent or carer to collect their child if concerns remain.
- Where students have been tested, they must isolate until they receive their test result.
- Students are generally not required to present a medical certificate stating they are fit to return to an education setting after a period of illness, students should not return until symptoms resolve.

## Practise good hygiene

All staff, students and visitors to schools should undertake regular hand hygiene, particularly on arrival to school, before and after eating, after blowing their nose, coughing, sneezing or using the toilet. Staff should direct or supervise young students where required.

Sharing of food is **not** recommended. Where this occurs, individual portions should be encouraged alongside strict hand hygiene.

## Ensure physical distancing

A variety of strategies to support physical distancing among all students and staff should be pursued, where possible.

To reduce the congregation of adults around the school and reduce congestion we respectfully request that the strategies we have in place such as the use of multiple entry/exit points and creating spaces for egress in different areas of the school are adopted by all members of our community.

## Face masks in schools

As per the directions of the Victorian Chief Health Officer, the following actions are mandatory.

- Face masks to be worn by individuals aged 12 years and older when on public transport and school buses – unless you have a lawful exemption.
- Individuals aged 12 years and older must always carry a face mask.

## Face masks and hot weather

It is important to follow the Victorian Chief Health Officer's directions on wearing face masks, and there are steps that can be taken to improve comfort during warmer weather:

- Keep hydrated with water.
- Use a single-use mask, or a reusable face mask made from 100 per cent cotton, for increased breathability.
- Wash your reusable mask frequently to maintain effectiveness and bring a spare so you can change your mask if it gets damp or wet.
- Take mask breaks throughout the day, when you're in settings that do not require them to be worn.

## Hand Hygiene

Hand sanitiser will be made available at entry points to classrooms. Age-appropriate education and reminders about hand hygiene will be provided to our students

## COVIDSafe activities

***Some school-based activities may need to be altered, deferred or delivered remotely to reduce coronavirus (COVID-19) transmission risk.***

*Where appropriate and weather permitting, opportunities for outdoor learning and working will be considered as alternatives to interactions indoors due to improved ventilation.*

## Mobile phone policy

It is critical that students and staff understand that the Department's Student Mobile Phone Policy remains in place to ensure appropriate use of technology (see attached pdf).

The policy helps create a safe environment for students to learn without distractions or inappropriate mobile phone use (such as cyberbullying), as well as greater opportunities for social interaction and physical activity during recess and lunchtimes.

Schools are managed environments that include records of student, staff and visitor attendance, which can support contact tracing. Phones can be turned on before and after school, with the COVIDSafe app activated when school finishes.

Schools should remind staff and students to clean their phones regularly.

### Hats

- A reminder that hats are compulsory here at Edithvale Primary School in Terms 1 and 4. We are a Sunsmart School and although the weather may be cool, the UV levels are still high so please remember to use sun protection each day during the sun protection times – not just on hot or sunny days. Children not wearing hats will need to stay in the eating areas during play times. They will also need to sit in a shaded area when their class is participating in sport activities if they do not have a broad brimmed hat.

### Breakfast Club

- We're excited to announce that our breakfast club will continue again throughout 2021. This will be based in the Science Room in our new STEM centre. Breakfast Club will be open to all students from 8:30am each morning and students can enter through the gate located at on Edithvale Road nearest the school crossing. This Program is open to ALL students and is FREE. It will continue in 2021 and food provided includes bread, cereal and fruit.

### Emergency Safety Drills

- During the term we will be conducting a number of Lock Down and Evacuation drills as part of our Emergency Management Plan- in line with DET guidelines. We will provide plenty of notice when these will be occurring to ensure students are fully aware of what they will be asked to do in a safe and supported manner.