



Our Lady of the Sacred Heart School Merbein

Reg. No. 1277

8th April, 2020

Dear Parents and Families,

As most of you would have heard yesterday, all Victorian schools will now be moving to remote learning for Term Two. At OLSH, we have prepared ourselves as best we can for this transition and will continue to establish and develop the best ways to support students and parents through this new and uncertain time.

Over the next few days you will receive correspondence from the school regarding the online learning that has been set up for our students. It is vitally important that you read all correspondence carefully and ask questions if you are unsure of procedures. I will be available on the school number throughout the next few days and over the Easter break if needed.

It has been made clear by the Minister for Education, James Merlino, and the state Premier Daniel Andrews, **that if students are able to stay at home for learning then they must stay at home.** There are some exceptions to this directive, these being:

Children who are not able to be supervised at home and on days when no other arrangements can be made. This includes children of parents who cannot work from home (essential services workers) and vulnerable children, such as:

- children in out-of-home care
- children deemed by Child Protection and/or Family Services to be at risk of harm
- children identified by the school as vulnerable (including via referral from a family violence agency, homelessness or youth justice service, mental health or other health service, and children with a disability).

Over the next day, the school will contact parents of children who may fall into these categories. If parents are absolutely unable to provide care for their children, then the same remote learning for those who are able to stay at home will be provided within the school environment. **Please note:** there are no exceptions to the above criteria and the school may require documentation to support a parent's reasons for sending their child to school.

For students who are in need of care, a skeleton staff will be established to provide support, assistance and care to the children as they complete their learning. This will include teachers and Learning Support Officers. We are aware that some students may not need to be at school every day depending on the work arrangements of parents. This will need to be **communicated clearly** to the school so that appropriate supervision arrangements can be made.

It has certainly been a very interesting and anxious time for schools, parents and students over the past few weeks, but I am certain that we can work through this challenge together as a strong school community and support each other to make the best of what will be a very unusual school term!

Please stay alert for more information via email, SMS and the Skoolbag App.

Yours sincerely,

Narelle Gallagher

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