



Diary Dates

SEP	
Fri 17	Last Day of Term 2:30pm Dismissal
OCT	
Mon 4	Term 4 Begins



We are a
Victorian **premiers'**
reading
challenge
school

Term Dates 2021

Term 1: 28 Jan - 1 April
Term 2: 19 Apr - 25 June
Term 3: 12 July - 17 Sept
Term 4: 4 Oct - 17 Dec

Message from the Principal

This is the final newsletter for Term 3 2021 as we prepare for the school holiday break. We hope that this will be a time where families and staff can slow down and enjoy the warmer weather and great outdoors as well as a break from daily screen time. And of course, the exciting AFL Grand Final will be played out between Melbourne and the Western Bulldogs during the holidays, even if it is in another state for one more year. As a school we will celebrate the Grand Final tomorrow and all students are welcome to wear their team colours or free dress clothes as part of Fantastic Friday.

At the time of writing this newsletter we are not yet sure of the conditions under which the school will be operating in Term Four 2021. As such the school leadership and staff are preparing for a number of possible scenarios, which includes but is not limited to:

- a return to onsite learning
- a graduated return to onsite learning
- a continuance of the remote and flexible program

As you could imagine there are many factors and considerations which must be taken into account with each of these scenarios. Please be assured that our focus will continue to be on supporting student attendance, learning, engagement, and wellbeing.

This Term I have been very proud of the way that our students have participated and engaged in the daily online lessons and activities that have been offered. It has certainly been a test of everyone's endurance, perseverance, and ability to adapt to this most unusual online environment. We have however noticed that as the term has progressed some students have been engaging less fully than what would be expected. I would like to take this opportunity to remind families that all students should be online and engaging with their teachers, peers and content during scheduled lessons each day. The students should also be submitting appropriate work at the right time. Finally, and most importantly students should be communicating with and seeking help from the teacher when required. The home school partnership has never been more important and by working together we will continue to ensure that all our students continue to learn and grow during this difficult time.

One of the highlights on our calendar each fortnight is the school assembly so ably overseen by Sonia one of our amazing Grade 6 Teachers. This has been a wonderful time to hear about the many programs and activities happening across the school and to celebrate the work of our students from Foundation to Year 6. Students have presented written

stories, calculations, artwork, animations, inquiry project work and images and videos of athletic, artistic, social and academic pursuits. Many thanks go to everyone that has contributed to our assemblies and we look forward to seeing more great work next term.

The PTA have done a great job this term creating and running events that kept us connected and made us all smile. The team has again come up with a way of keeping students engaged in some holiday fun with the design a Dream House activity with details included in this newsletter. If you are still looking of for ideas DET has provided some school holiday activities at the following web address www.together.vic.gov.au/plan-a-fun-day-for-your-kids-at-home which your child might find interesting. In addition, your child could visit the [Primary Students - FUSE](#) – website for more interesting educational activities.

As we close off the term, I want to again thank all the students, families and staff for the stellar job you have done this term. In my mind the care, compassion and concern that has been shown for one another during these difficult times is that which makes our Kewmmunity so very special. A final reminder that we will have assembly at 2.00pm and there will be an early dismissal at 2.30pm.

Pete deWacht
Principal

Message from the Assistant Principal

WEBINAR ON HOW FAMILIES CAN ADAPT TO LOCKDOWNS TOGETHER HOSTED BY DR MICHAEL CARR-GREGG

I attended the webinar hosted by Dr Michael Carr-Gregg on riding the Coronacoaster and I had the KPS parents in mind. I took copious notes and I thought I'd summarise them, hoping that some advice from Michael might help during these challenging times.

Dr Carr-Gregg explained why this lockdown has been hard psychologically:

- This is the 1st time that this generation has been asked to sacrifice individual wellbeing for the community
- There is the cumulative effects of lockdowns
- There is a perceived lost of rhythm and structure

Michael has 12 strategies that he says we need to focus on to help the children:

1. **Remain optimistic:** Tell the kids that vaccination rate is increasing; there will be a time when restrictions will be eased; we know as a family we can do this; we have done it before and we can do it again. You can use examples from across the world like in Europe where life is back to 'COVID normal'; children are at school; families are having dinner in restaurants.
2. **Keep the lines of communication open:** Children just want to be heard. Start by asking them questions to understand what they know and provide them with facts without alarming them. Ask them: "Help me understand how you are feeling"
3. **Modelling the right narrative:** Modelling is not the best way to teach; it is the only way to teach. At the moment families are spending 24/7 together and the narrative we use in front of them has an impact. Be alert not alarmed and turn the news off. The good news is the majority of people are coping ok.
4. **Set the emotional tone:** Acknowledge the children's feelings of disappointment and Michael says not to dawdle in the negativity. Don't get caught up in those catastrophic thoughts. Name the catastrophic thoughts and help the children change their thought pattern.
5. **Develop a sense of belonging:** Develop new traditions that will strengthen the family unit such as take away Tuesdays, movie night Wednesdays. 10 minutes before lunch, do some air punching and kicking as a family – it releases endorphins which are happy hormones.
6. **Maintain routines:** Eat meals at the same time; start the online learning at 9:00; at the end of the day, the family goes for a walk together; have a good night sleep. This gives a sense of security for the children.

7. **Listen to music:** Ask the children to create a COVID playlist with upbeat songs. Listen to them when the children need a boost of positivity. Research shows that music makes people feel better and increases their happy mood.
8. **Acts of kindness:** It is easy to get caught up in the “us” when we face challenges. What can the children and the family do for someone else? For example, an act of kindness for someone; write a card for an elderly neighbour who might be living alone saying “we are thinking of you”. Do their grocery shopping.
9. **Gratitude:** Even if we are in a middle of a pandemic, we have so many great things to be grateful for. Encourage the children to write 3 things they are grateful for: a kind family that loves them, being free to walk down the street, good health.
10. **Give each other hugs:** It helps reduce stress as it reduces the production of cortisol (stress hormone).
11. **Challenge:** Learn something new. When are we going to have so much free time on our hands to learn something new! Learn a new language online, learn how to paint.
12. **There are lots of positives about COVID:** Pause to focus on our life, family, health. Do we have to sit for 1 hour in traffic or work from home and have better family/work life lifestyle? Families are learning how to play piano with Harry Connick Junior. Children and parents are learning to be creative.

CONTROLLING OUR THOUGHTS

When we face a crisis, fear and anxiety are inevitable and it is quite normal. Our mind tells us scary stories and it fills in the gap with catastrophic stories which predicts the worse. Michael suggested the activity below to complete with your child/ren:

Draw a small circle and in the circle, using colourful textas, brainstorm all things that you can control such as sleeping, exercising, going for a bike ride, having quality time with the family etc.

On the outside of the circle, list things that you cannot control therefore have to let go of such as not seeing family members, COVID, home schooling etc. The aim of this is to let go of the feelings and thoughts associated with the things that we cannot control and focus on the things we can control.



CLEVER ANALOGY ABOUT HOW TO CONTROL THE NEGATIVE THOUGHTS

If you are waiting for a bus and it turns up with negative advertising and you don't like it, you can wait for the next one. If the next bus has positive advertising and it makes you happy or smile, you will board that bus. It is the same with your thoughts. Ignore the negative thoughts. Name the thought, notice it (how does it make your feel) then diffuse it, pop it like a soap bubble. Don't be a slave to your thoughts.

A question that Michael posed and got me thinking: What is your ritual? What will your children remember about the COVID period and will tell their children when they become parents?

Will it be: "Our house was chaotic and I was not happy"?

Or will it be: ‘it was hardest thing I’ve had to do but we were all ok. I got to spend more time with my family, doing fun stuff and learnt how to juggle’?

We control our actions, our thoughts and behaviours not the other way round.

HOW TO MOTIVATE THE CHILDREN TO DO SCHOOL WORK?

- Explain the why to them. If they understand why they are doing a particular task, they will most likely do it.
- Put a timer on for example for 20 mins. Take a break then come back to it; it could be as simple as doing some stretches. This makes our brain work properly.
- Celebrate the wins: the students track their progress. For example, they receive feedback from their teachers on tasks completed.

MICHAEL’S ADVICE FOR PARENTS:

- The principle of parenting doesn’t change because of COVID. Continue to have consequences for sustained rebellion and parents should not put up with disrespectful behaviour whether we are in or not in lockdown.
- Still set boundaries and still say no. For example: “no you can’t go for a sleep over; it’s against the law”.
- Adults have a developmental perspective: The children/teenagers don’t understand life. Parents do. Give them a different perspective.
- As parents, we are not good at giving ourselves praise. He used the analogy of putting our own oxygen mask first when we are on a plane before we can help someone else.
- Fill your body with nutritional food such as blueberries, tuna, avocados, nuts.
- Reach out to family and friends. Connection and a sense of belonging are so important for our mental health.
- Prioritise your basic needs as well such as exercise and keep active everyday.
- De-escalate from time to time: For example, inhale like you would when you smell a perfumed flower and exhale like you would when you blow out a candle. For breathing to be effective in reducing stress it needs to be done 20 times; do some relaxation stretches, meditation, yoga. All these will reduce cortisol which is the stress hormone.
- Cultivate compassion. Help someone else. Write a thank you note for someone.
- With the use of social media, rekindle a connection from your childhood or from a previous job: connect with someone you haven’t spoken to and it could be across the world.

Parents are worried about screen time: Michael says that quality content and parents are co-watching with their children is different to a child locked up in their room for hours playing a game.

His advice is devices should be used in a public space like the lounge room as people never use their device inappropriately in a public place.

Children who have a good track record in making the right decisions will make the correct choices. Those that a track record of making inappropriate decisions need to be monitored more closely.



Research shared by Michael Carr-Gregg

I hope that the advice given by Michael explains, alleviates some of the concerns you might have with how to explain these challenging times to your children. They are re-writing history and this too shall pass.

Please enjoy the well-deserved 2 weeks of holidays. I hope you get to take a breather as you have been working hard supporting your children with their education and their mental health as well as juggling the household, your work and your own wellbeing.

Please encourage your children to try a new challenge, new talent, new hobby which they can teach to their peers when we are back on-site.

We will see you soon.

Peggy Mourelatos
Assistant Principal



This is an image I saw on social media and it resonated with me

SCHOOL HOLIDAY Program

18 September to 3 October 2021

We have loads of fun and interactive activities planned for young people these September school holidays!

Bookings essential
Scan to see the full program



www.boroondara.vic.gov.au/school-holidays





2022 KINDERGARTEN VACANCIES

Come and join Davis Street Kindergarten in 2022! Our talented and highly skilled team are committed to providing inspiring & educational programs for children. Limited vacancies exist in some of our groups. Check out our website www.davisstreetkindergarten.org.au and please send an email for further information to

enrolments@davisstreetkindergarten.org.au



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SUMMER SEASON STARTING 9 OCTOBER 2021 (SUBJECT TO RESTRICTIONS!)
INFORMATION ON HOW TO REGISTER ONLINE AT WWW.KEWLAC.ORG.AU OR
CONTACT US AT PRESIDENT@KEWLAC.ORG.AU

Join us each Saturday from 8.15am at
Stradbroke Park Lower Oval, Cnr Harp
and Burke Rds, Kew East
FREE "Come and Try" option available
(for newcomers only)



BOROONDARA FAMILIES

Growing Together



INFO
SESSION

The secrets of happy children

8pm to 9.30pm, Wednesday 27 October 2021

Steve Biddulph is a psychologist, bestselling author and one of the world's best known parent educators. Join us in watching Steve's comprehensive, entertaining and warm hearted overview of childhood from baby to adulthood, pre-filmed in front of a live audience. Steve will offer practical information and cover:

- Analysing your parenting style and how to find the right balance
- What discipline really is and how kids grow to be independent
- Building positive mental health in your family.

Tickets: \$10 per household

Book online at:
www.boroondara.vic.gov.au/parent-info



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