



Respect



Responsibility

Edition 15 – August 5TH 2020



Doing Your Best



Care and Compassion

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Supervision Times: 8:15 Mornings Duty

3.20 -4:00 Afternoon Bus Duty

PRINCIPAL'S REPORT

After 24 hours of preparation we feel we are just about ready to begin Remote and Flexible Learning once again. Thank you to all parents and carers for the understanding you have demonstrated towards the schools capabilities. We will endeavour to connect with each student both academically and emotionally during these six weeks and have thought about a number of new initiatives to make this possible.

This time around the focus is on *Wellbeing*. This message has been reiterated from the government down and something we need to adhere to. To support this theme, we along with a lot of schools in our area would like to introduce Wellbeing Wednesdays. This will be a day where students have the opportunity to focus on fun, optional tasks that support them during isolation. It will provide teachers with some time for staff meetings, professional development, planning time, Webex visits and Seesaw management. Our first Wellbeing Wednesday will start tomorrow and a preview has already been posted on each classes Seesaw page.

So what are the Need to Knows?

- Remote Learning will take place via the Seesaw app.
- Classroom teachers will provide remote learning tasks each day of the working week except Wednesdays.
- The Primary Welfare Officer and Chaplain set optional Wellbeing tasks for Wednesdays.
- No more than Four Learning Notifications will be assigned to students on any given day.
- Tasks for the following day may be previewed the night before if you wish. Some parents made this request to help them prepare.
- Classroom teachers of Grades 3-6 will be available to talk with students via an optional Webex each morning. During this time, students will be able to clarify any tasks, ask questions and connect with teachers and their class.
- Tasks for specialist classes will generally be posted on the days students normally have these classes.
- Home learning packs and devices will be available for pick up at the school office between 9am and 12 noon tomorrow.
- Further instructions regarding packs and other information about classes will be sent via Compass in the coming days.

And finally the most important point....

- **Home learning is not a substitute for learning at school.** It is simply a situation we all find ourselves in because of factors outside our control. As a result, we should not and will not compromise the wellbeing of our staff, students and their families. With home learning you do your best. Like last time, this learning is not assessed.

If you have any further concerns or queries please contact myself or your child's classroom teacher.
Stay safe everyone.

Gene VanderZalm, Principal

NAME CHANGE

While we are selling Meeniyān PS beanies and our new logo is appearing on the newsletter, we are still trading as Tarwin Valley Primary School. There are a number of processes that need to be completed before we can fully transition to Meeniyān Primary School. We will inform the school community when the processes are complete.

CALENDAR

This week 5/8 – 11/8

Aug 5th – Remote Learning Wellbeing
Wednesday

Aug 6th – Remote Learning commences

Upcoming

Aug 25th – School Council, 7pm

Sep 18th – Last day Term 3

NEWSLETTER ITEMS

The newsletter is compiled on Monday afternoons. All items need to be submitted by 1:50pm to be included.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

- 😊 **Edie S** for making connections across all learning areas.
- 😊 **Benjamin L** for using a range of strategies to accurately read and understand an unfamiliar text.
- 😊 **Sarah P** for trying hard when learning was challenging.
- 😊 **Will D** for working hard to complete his descriptive writing paragraph.
- 😊 **Holly M** for persisting, asking questions and improving her understanding in new maths concepts.



SCHOOL COUNCIL UPDATE

It appears that we, at the Meeniyan Primary School Council, were one step ahead of the shift back to remote home learning, with the recent school council meeting held online last Tuesday 28th of July.

As has been the case at recent meetings, quite a large chunk of the meeting was spent discussing the current Covid-19 crisis, and the impacts on the school. What was very clear was that the staff feel strongly that the best place for the kids to learn, and for the teachers to teach, is face-to-face is at school. As a result, there was some clear concern expressed about the potential of a return to remote home learning. However, here we are, less than a week later, facing another stint of learning at home.

As a member of the school council, I would like to acknowledge the impact this has on the whole school community, and offer my heartfelt thanks and appreciation to all the staff at the school for what will no doubt be a whole lot of hard work ensuring our children get the best education possible in difficult circumstances.

One of the joys of being on the school council is being able to volunteer a small amount of time to contribute to the school which provides so much for my kids. Another opportunity to contribute has also recently presented itself, as was discussed at the meeting last week.

You may recall from the June 16th Newsletter that the school is seeking volunteers to assist with the upkeep of the garden bed around the school (not including the vegetable gardens, which are looked after by staff and students.) This would involve a bit of pruning, weeding, sweeping up leaves, planting and general maintenance, and can occur any time of the day or any day of the week.

Being a keen gardener myself, I put my hand up to try to pull a team together, with the idea that if we have five or six people on board it would only be a few hours per month each. And in these times of limited social interaction, it may be possible to gather at the school on a weekend and spend a (socially distanced, outside) few hours together tidying up around the school.

If this sounds like something you would like to be a part of, please let the school know and I will get in touch with you with more details and to line up some times. We may have to juggle things a little bit over the next six weeks of Level 3 restrictions, but hopefully when we come out the other side, we will have a team of volunteers together ready tackle the garden as we come into Spring!

Brad Kijlstra-Shone, Meeniyan Primary School Council

RESPECTFUL RELATIONSHIPS

Boys will be boys...

I remember hearing this phrase growing up, it was often used to validate negative or aggressive behaviour. I heard the world telling my gorgeous gentle funny wise brothers to 'man up', 'toughen up' and my nephew being called a 'hairdresser' because he was scared to climb further up a tree.

My years of working in bars I would see the man who would have one drink and then choose to go home to his family being asked "who wears the pants in your house?"

We default to asking our boys to move the heavy things and help open the jars and we tell them not to cry.

When we unpack this sort of language it becomes clear that we are sending some pretty strong messages about gender stereotypes to our kids. Why can't my brothers cry? Why do they need to be tough all the time? Who says the girls can't open the jar or split the wood? Who says "the pants are in charge" and why does someone even need to be in charge? And can't anybody wear pants anyway?

My nephew is allowed to be scared to climb a tree and calling him a "hairdresser" assumes that he is being a girl, it assumes that boys cannot be hairdressers and that hairdressers are weak because they are girls, it assumes that girls are weak and that it is not masculine to be scared. It assumes that being scared is a sign of weakness.

For a world where women and men are equal we need to challenge these gender stereotypes and unpack this language.

Our boys are allowed to cry, our girls can bring the cows in and pants are practical and warm for anyone who wants to wear them!

Donna Giliam, Primary Welfare Officer