

**Corona virus update Monday 16/3/2020**

Dear Families,  
  
Due to the rapidly changing advice about the Corona virus and the measures being taken the following will provide some updated information. From Tuesday 17thMarch, the following will be put in place:  
   
School Events:  
At this stage, schools are not being closed however in relation to the Governments decision that non-essential, organised gatherings of over 500 people should not proceed, any school event that involves attendance by community members who are not students or staff and where total attendance will exceed 500 will not proceed.  
   
As a precautionary measure, we will be restricting the comings and goings of extra people into our school at this time. We will therefore not have classroom helpers or volunteers attending from Tuesday 17th March until further notice. Your help is always appreciated but at this time we have decided that it is in the best interest of all concerned to restrict non-essential visits.  
   
We encourage you not to be coming into the school grounds/classrooms where not essential and where possible keeping presence at the school such as at drop off/pick up times to a minimum.  Please utilise the other forms of communication i.e. email and phone.

Parent Teacher Interviews  
Face to face Parent Teacher (Tell Us) Interviews have been cancelled.  However, phone interviews will be held on Tuesday and Wednesday evening next week. Staff will call you on the phone numbers listed on Compass. Their phones will be set to private. Please be ready to receive your teachers call at the booked time.    
   
 The following upcoming events have been cancelled or postponed:

* Assembly will be cancelled until further notice.  Values awards will be read over the loudspeaker.
* All external school excursions and sporting events will be postponed until further notice.
* All open learning celebrations celebration is cancelled
* Harmony Day/Day of Action Against Bullying –however students are still encouraged to wear. orange to recognise the day and will still participate in activities in the classroom
* Breakfast club will be closed until further notice.

Student Illness  
This is the time of year for an increase in common illness such as colds and flu.  Please DO NOT send your child to school if they are sick.  If your child is visibly sick during the day, we will call you to pick them up.  Staff members who are unwell are also asked to stay home until they feel better, so you may see an increase in staff absences, rather than them soldiering on with medication as they would have in previous years.

If you have knowledge of exposure to COVID 19 or the risk of exposure impacting on the DMPS community, it is vital you report that to the school office immediately.  Any students returning from overseas and their family members are required to self-isolate according to updated government guidelines.  Importantly, any relatives or friends of students who are returning from overseas travel and are required to self-isolate must not visit the school to pick up children or for any other reason.

Parent Communication  
DHHS and DET send updates and instructions on a daily basis and we are required to follow all recommendations and implement the necessary required actions. We will keep you all updated with any news as we receive this information.  
Be aware our office staff will try to assist and inform you in urgent situations but please try to keep general enquiries to a minimum and use newsletters and compass updates for latest information. The phone lines can be easily over whelmed at times like this.

In School Measures  
All classrooms will continue working with the students to build their understanding of good hygiene, including hand washing and strategies to limit spreading germs such as coughing into their elbow. We will continue to work on any further measure we can take to keep the school at a highest level of hygiene.  
  
School Attendance  
Please continue to send your child to school throughout this time. The Government’s advice has been clear: school is an essential activity for children to attend. We don’t know how long we might be in this state of vigilance and containment: keeping your child at home through it could, realistically, mean non-attendance at school for a matter of months, not weeks. So please, as long as school is open, continue to send your children and maintain as much as possible, as sense of normalcy.  
  
There is no question some students will be feeling anxious about the current events. We will be working in classrooms to assist students and where possible provide parents with advice. Try to focus on what we know and can control.  
   
Please see the attached document – Helping Children COVID 19 – published by Ambulance Victoria that has some helpful tips for discussing the situation with your children.  
Also the following link is a short video for parents outlining ways to discuss the situation with your child:

[https://schooltv.me/wellbeing\_news/special-report-coronavirus](https://aus01.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fschooltv.me%2Fwellbeing_news%2Fspecial-report-coronavirus&data=02%7C01%7Cjeffery.alissa.e%40edumail.vic.gov.au%7Cf85458324cab4802442a08d7c7a93944%7Cd96cb3371a8744cfb69b3cec334a4c1f%7C0%7C0%7C637197402446451216&sdata=Xcz85BPGfXXZPZ7WU6y7x%2B%2Ff4XTnjqoh%2Fo6%2B0aOcIo4%3D&reserved=0)

I would like to thank our school community for their ongoing support as we work together to help everyone be calm, reassured and informed.

Warm regards, Rachel

Rachel Rasmussen

Principal | Debney Meadows Primary School

**Work Hard** **and** **Be Kind**😃

