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Week 10 Term 1 Newsletter

## FROM THE PRINCIPAL

*Diary of a Principal in the COVID-19 World.... Where are the Children?*

*Monday 30<sup>th</sup> March* Dear Diary, On the weekend I found an old school copy of Aldous Huxley's *Brave New World* that I think I read when I was in Grade 10. I have been quoting the title 'Brave New World' lately to describe the current situation we are facing. I thought I would read the book again, but have only just begun. I am still waking each day with some disbelief about the COVID-19 pandemic world we are living in. I wonder how all our St Pat's kids are each day, and how their families are making the most of each day together. One of the teaching teams is in 'planning' today, working together to make Term 2 exciting and challenging for the students. I saw this picture on social media and it struck a chord:



*Tuesday 31<sup>st</sup> March* Today I have heard from Catholic Education about the plans that will support our staff to develop their skills to provide remote learning. Next week is now a Professional Learning week, we will be learning about Microsoft Teams and moving all our current online teaching and learning platforms and resources to this space. I think this will be well

received by the teachers, we have been concerned about safety for everyone online. Another teaching team has had a full day of planning today - they are embracing this 'new world' with courage and hope. I stop to give thanks for the teachers and support staff at St Patrick's, I feel blessed to work with them!

*Wednesday 1<sup>st</sup> April* OK so it's not an April fool's day joke, our kids are mainly missing – out there in their homes with their remote learning stations organised and ready for another day of learning. Fortuitously I had to speak with a parent today by phone, so I asked to speak to the children as well. Ah, the joy to hear their friendly voices as they tell me some aspects of life and learning they are experiencing. I look forward to enacting the Term 2 plan to phone a few families each day to say hello to the children and to find out how they are. The third of 4 planning meetings happened today, so nice to see a group of teachers and support staff every day and to hear their stories of remote teaching and learning and see their enthusiasm regarding planning for next term.

*Thursday 2<sup>nd</sup> April,* The fourth and final planning team are meeting at school with Mrs Perryman today again it is good to see the team on site, great things coming next term! Playground duty has never been so important in my day! I have come to know more about the small group of children who are completing their remote learning at school this week, only 10 children here today. I have most enjoyed the skipping challenge – and yes I had a turn too - much to the surprise of the children! Watching the children learn how to jump the rope, how to 'run-in,' how to do 'peppers,' everyone learning to turn the rope. Small joys sustain me. It is a good time to reflect on why I am a teacher.

*Friday 3<sup>rd</sup> April* not surprisingly I find that I am still learning how to be a 'remote' principal to many of our students and families. This has been another interesting week for me as leader of St Patrick's primary school. Where are the children? How are the children? How are they connecting with others? As the days pass my recognition grows regarding how much I am missing our children expressing their learning, their joys, their surprises, their news, and their challenges! I miss seeing our staff every day and wonder about their days of remote teaching. I miss the

impromptu catch up with so many of our parents at the gate each afternoon. The social interactions that school provides are missing from my life. To hear a little news I sent a request to our staff to answer the question:

What is one surprising aspect of the move to remote teaching and learning for you?

These are some responses....

I have enjoyed it when the children upload a photo of their pet, a favourite toy or some art work. I especially love hearing them read. I am so proud of their efforts. What amazing children (and parents!).

I am enjoying some of the student's comments on seesaw, they are just delightful. Eg: "and here are my chooks, their names are....."

I am learning more about my students ... different aspects of their lives, strengths I hadn't noticed before and their ability to adapt.

I am surprised by how much I miss the normal noise of school!

I was impressed by the way some students used their musical knowledge of the rhythm they had all learnt on the marimba and transferred it onto other instruments like the guitar and recorder.

I am really enjoying the time that I am interacting with each child and engaging them in their learning in a more personalised way. I feel like I'm engaging more with parents too.

How fun it is to see videos of my wonderful Kindergarteners learning at home!

I am amazed by the resourcefulness and creativity shown by the students when presenting responses to their tasks online.

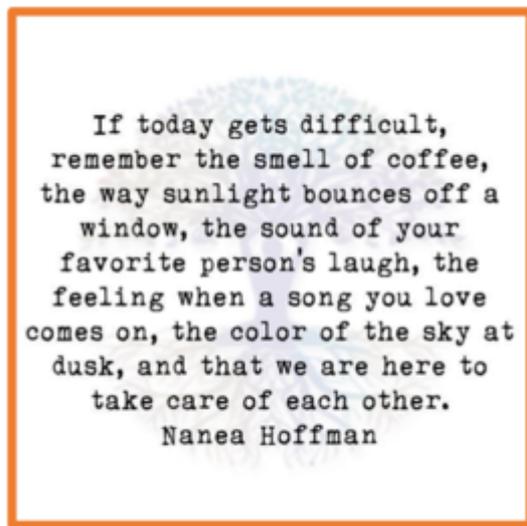
One surprising aspect for me how quickly everyone – teachers and families alike - have learnt to use the online learning space. I am enjoying seeing the students engage from home and learning more about their family and home lives!

Our students are learning to become more accountable for their own learning and accepting where they are at in terms of understanding and demonstration of skills. Through online learning our students are not having to compare their work with other students. This could be very positive for our students.

I am very happy with the way my students have adapted to our new way of remote teaching and learning. I am enjoying them reading aloud to me through the video link.

*Diary*, I count my blessings each day and send blessings to all for a restful weekend with some fresh air and sunshine and love.

Jo



## PARISH NEWS

Times for the live stream Masses during holy week.

Please [Click here](#) for live stream or search

[https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC\\_IP75FT2djL7Oowe5WUrhQ](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC_IP75FT2djL7Oowe5WUrhQ)

HOLY WEEK SERVICES	
LIVE STREAM ONLY	
 <b>Palm Sunday</b> 5th April 9:30am Via YouTube	 <b>Holy Thursday</b> 9th April 7pm Via YouTube
 <b>Good Friday</b> 10th April 3pm Via YouTube	 <b>Holy Saturday</b> Easter Vigil 11th April 7pm Via YouTube