



Red Hill Consolidated School



25th March, 2020

SCHOOL VISION

Through the Contemporary Learning Experience framework we will provide a rich learning environment that is student centred, technology enriched, question driven, skills based and contextually relevant. We will promote creativity and provide every opportunity for students to develop the essential skills to be active participants in a global community.



Term Dates

Term 1

January 29 to March 27

Term 2

April 15 to June 26

Term 3

July 13 to September 18

Term 4

October 5 to December 18

Term 2 Dates

April 14 - Student Free Day

April 15 - First Day of Term 2
(possibly remote)

5 June—Student Free Day

8 June Queen’s Birthday Public
Holiday

Dear families and friends,

We had a slightly different end to the term, didn't we? I would like to thank you all for your support and encouragement and congratulate all of our students for showing such resilience. Can I also acknowledge the amazing work of our staff throughout this term and over the past few weeks? Our teachers and education support staff have been busy preparing for remote learning, organising home packs, cleaning, attending additional meetings and briefings all while continuing to teach and care for students. Thank you everyone! It is times like this when it becomes so obvious that we are all part of such a wonderful community.

Speaking of teachers, I would like to wish Maddy Darling the very best as she finishes up this week as her due date draws closer and she begins her family leave. Maddy is a brilliant and caring educator and she is adored by the students in her class. We all know that Maddy will be an amazing mum. Kris Hickson will be replacing Maddy in 2R for the rest of the year. Kris has spent the last few years teaching in the Australian School in Malaysia. He is an experienced teacher with a passion for inquiry education. I would like to warmly welcome Kris in to our community.



Unfortunately we were forced to cancel our Grade 6 Circus Performance this week. Our Grade 6 team have been working towards this all term, learning a wide range of circus arts, and I know that many of them were disappointed. Again, they showed great resilience and bounced back, understanding that this could not be avoided. However, as a compromise, last Tuesday our

Circus Performance was filmed and lots and lots of photographs were taken of the children in action, which will be shared with families in the near future. I would like to thank Bronwyn and Marco from Soul Circus for putting together such a unique and valuable experience for our Grade 6 kids. I would also like to thank Liz Clancy and Brandan Malone who volunteered their time and expertise to film and photograph this performance.

I am sure that you are all aware of our readiness to go remote in the case of school closures next term. All teachers will be using Class Dojo as a remote learning and communication platform, combined with Zoom video conferencing and good old fashion email. Teachers have been using this week to continue to familiarise themselves with these tools and other online education



resources. Teachers have spent time this week planning a balance of online and offline activities for next term. We are conscious that students should not be on a screen all day long and that some families share devices between siblings. By the end of this week, you should receive a detailed home learning guide to provide you with some guidance on supporting your child's education at home. This will include how to access the tools we will be using, what is expected and links to other resources. There is no expectation that students are completing school work this week. I would encourage all parents to create an account on Class Dojo and download Zoom on their devices. Some communication will be sent out this week on the Class Dojo School Story for anyone wanting ideas for home.

Given that large gatherings have been banned, our last assembly for the term went ahead online. This was a lot of fun and it was a great chance to connect as a whole school. It also gave us all a chance to test out our expertise in video conferencing. All classes were able to log in and we even worked out how to cross to our specialist teachers and leaders in the gymnasium.

There is no better time than now to talk to your children about staying safe and responsible online. If we transition to remote learning, our students will be spending significantly more time online and on a screens, increasing the risks to our students. I would strongly suggest all households formalising a user agreement or rules on using technology and schedule a screen free day or times. It is essential to monitor and supervise your children when online to ensure they are not accessing inappropriate content or being exposed to unwanted contact. Managing screen time will be a challenge and getting outdoors and active will be important. Limiting non-essential screen time is encouraged. Please also talk to your children about "netiquette"; thinking before they post and remaining responsible during video conferences. It's not just our students who should be aware of online safety. Scammers see the current situation as an opportunity and there is an increase of online hoaxes and scams. Please be extra vigilant with your online security during these times. More advice and information about keeping safe during COVID-19 can be found at <https://www.esafety.gov.au/about-us/blog?topics%5B0%5D=534>.

I know many of our students and families are concerned about our feathered friends in our aviary if schools are closed. The president of the Mornington Peninsula Aviculture Society has agreed to collect our birds over the next few days to ensure they are cared for over the school holidays and if schools are closed. He will then return our birds when everything goes back to normal.

These are challenging and unprecedented times. Please take care and look after yourself and your loved ones. I strongly urge all families to follow the advice from our medical professionals and leaders in regards to social isolation and distancing. Use technology to stay connected to friends and relatives and make sure you're all eating well and exercising. And role model and practise mindfulness and gratitude. Above all, although this may be hard at times, enjoy this time with your precious children. If you are finding it difficult, please reach out. There are some great supports out there for all ages:

Kids Help Line - <https://kidshelpline.com.au/>

Headspace - <https://headspace.org.au/>

Beyond Blue - <https://www.beyondblue.org.au/>

And finally this week, I have asked the staff at RHCS to ensure they take a much needed break over the school holidays. This includes taking a break from checking their school emails. If you urgently need to get in touch over the break, please write to the school email address at red.hill.cs@edumail.vic.gov.au. This address will continue to be checked regularly. I will also continue to provide updates as they come, especially if I receive news about school closures.

Please stay safe, well and healthy and I look forward to seeing you all when this thing is over.

Be kind, be grateful and be mindful! - Gus Wettenhall

