



St Mary's Newsletter

WELCOME TO WEEK 9

Today I write to you all with a heavy heart as we end our first term abruptly and in such uncertain times. I understand the unrest that everyone must be feeling but please know that the St Mary's community will be here in support of our learners and our families with whatever lies ahead.

Over the coming weeks the extent of the Coronavirus will unfold as will the changes to our livelihood and choices of how we live. I do hope that all of our families do whatever it takes to keep one another safe and well and for this short time do what is asked of us from our government leaders. Please make choices for your children that does not compromise the health of anyone in our community. Please keep your children at home, supervised and happy. This is a time for families to have quality time and minimise all socialisation.

We are unsure at this stage as to what schooling will look like in Term 2. St Mary's will continue to communicate with our families via School Stream, email and Seesaw regularly throughout the holidays so we are all informed. We do know that Monday 23rd March 2020 (today) is the last day of term 1 and our learners are required to stay at home for now. Staff will be collaborating behind the scenes to prepare for the possibility of remote learning come term 2. Any changes have not been confirmed to date, yet we have been asked to prepare. Our learners devices will be made available for families if we launch remote schooling, please only access this option if needed. Information was being sought from our families on School Stream today. Devices will be available for pick up on Wednesday 25th March between 12pm - 2pm from the LOTE room.

As today we break for the holidays, no official learning is expected to come home from the school however our staff have prepared home learning packs for your children if you wish. Additional readers will come home as per a usual holiday time. Some of this learning may carry over to the beginning of term 2 however we will keep you informed and supported consistently. If learning does become remote, further learning packs will be available for pick up next term if required. Literacy and numeracy books have also come home today, please use them for school supported learning only.

Outside of this crisis St Mary's has still managed to have a wonderfully successful term. We have 24 Preps who have learnt so much about life at school, we have had great achievement in our internal and external swimming, opened our Magdalen Building and amazing Year 5/6 learning space and welcomed our new Bishop to our wonderful school. We have had the largest enrollment at St Mary's to date and I would say that is reflective of the community we nurture and the great education we provide. I think now more than ever we can be grateful for all of this.

At this unprecedented time we will all be faced with challenges that we have possibly never had to consider. If at anytime people need support that can be accessed through our school and our networks, please contact me via email. My prayers and thoughts are with everyone and I hope we are all back to the community as we know it soon.

God Bless - Jasmine Ryan (Principal)

principal@smcohuna.catholic.edu.au

DATES AHEAD

- 14th April - Term 2 begins for staff only
- 15th April - Term 2 begins for Learners



St Mary's is a Child Safe School.

We promote the safety, wellbeing and inclusion of all children.

Community Supports

In times of uncertainty like these we cannot prepare or predict what our families needs may be. Please ensure you contact Jasmine or Sacha via email if at anytime school can offer support of families, mental health and well being.

Many other services that may be of help at this time are listed below:

Kids Helpline:

1800 551 800

Parent Helpline:

132 289

Lifeline:

131 114

Coronavirus Hot line:

1800 675 398

Cohuna Neighbourhood House:

5456 4666 (Open Mon - Fri 10am - 3-pm appt only)



A PRAYER

Lord Jesus Christ,

You taught us to love our neighbour, and to care for those in need as if we were caring for you. In this time of anxiety, give us strength to comfort the fearful, to tend the sick, and to assure the isolated of our love, and your love, for your name's sake.

Amen



St Mary's acknowledges and pays respects to the traditional custodians of the land on which we meet; the Barrapa Rappa People, and pay respects to elders both past and present.



Support Local....They always support us

School communities do not flourish without their local communities support. Today we did the call around to as many of our local businesses as possible to see how they will operate in these times. Please see below how many of the businesses are operating and do all that you can to support them too...

Leitchville Hotel:	Offering take away meals / coffee / bottle shop facilities available: 5456 7233
Farmarcy Cafe:	Open for take away food / coffee: 5456 3302
Cohuna Butchers:	Open for business as usual: 5456 2327
Redgum Leitchville Bakery:	Open for business as usual: 5456 7913
IGA Supermarket:	Open for business as usual with some item restrictions to allow shared access
Cohuns Sports:	Open for business as usual: 5456 2752
Gifts & Things:	Open for business as usual: 5456 4686

Our Parish also closed for now...

As many of you would now be aware the St Mary's Parish has also closed. The St Mary's Church, St Patrick's Kerang and Pyramid Hill are all closed for masses and any public congregation. If anyone is wanting to receive the blessed Eucharist, the sacrament of reconciliation, the anointing of the sick or a home visit please contact Father Novie - 0450 185 021

The collaborative parish bulletin will be shared with our school community weekly.



OUR LEARNING

JUNIOR TEAM

The Prep learners are continuing to focus on counting to 20. They are learning to order numbers and recognise what these numbers look like. The Preps have been learning to identify beginning sounds in words, by naming the letter and making it sound. All Prep learners should be very proud of their efforts this term.

The year 1/2 learners have had a great term! We have learnt how to work together as a team, and have become more collaborative within our learning. Last week we finished our Canva presentation on St Benedict and Bede Polding! Well done on a fantastic first term of school. We can not wait to see how much you grow as learners next term!

SENIOR TEAM

In the Year 3/4 classroom, our learners have been very enthusiastic and dedicated in publishing and illustrating their narratives. All learners have demonstrated what a good narrative looks like. In reading, we have read a variety of different texts that connect to Indigenous Australia, the tribes within our region and the importance of the Murray River. In Mathematics, we are continuing to extend our understanding of numbers. We all enjoyed the celebration of Harmony Day.

In Year 5/6, our learners are busy publishing their fantasy narratives. We are focusing on our editing skills ensuring we are applying appropriate punctuation and conventions. In reading, we read many shared texts that explored the connections between Indigenous Australians countries. We recognised the different countries within Victoria and were able to understand the importance of Kow Swamp and the Murray River. In Mathematics, we are beginning to grow our understanding of subtraction.

All learners had a fantastic Harmony Day where we participated in rotational activities that explored inclusion and culture around our world.

BIRTHDAYS



- Heath Spalding - 19th March
- Holly Travena - 19th March
- Henry Gaiter - 20th March
- Kane Mihailovic - 20th March
- Kieran Jameson - 23rd March

P & F CHOCOLATE FUNDRAISER

We are happy for parents to deposit the money for the chocolates directly into the school bank account (in fact we encourage it!). Details are :-

NAB BSB 083-543

Acc. No. 457171993

Please remember to add your name as a reference.





Dear parents and guardians,

23rd March 2020

I write to you to confirm that our school will follow the recommendation from the Victorian Government and the Chief Medical Officer that school holidays commence from Tuesday 24 March.

As a result, Monday 23 March will be the final day of classes for Term 1, 2020.

Students have been asked to ensure they take all of their school books and stationery home at the conclusion of classes today.

Devices will be ready for those who have informed us on School Stream for collection on Wednesday 25th March between 12pm-2pm from the LOTE Room

If applicable to your school:

For those parents who are currently working in **essential services** (ambulance, fire, hospitals, medical profession etc), the school will be providing supervision for their children during school hours for the remainder of this week. If you are intending to send your child to school, could you please notify the school as to the essential service you are involved with along with your child's name, this will allow us to have adequate supervision during the day.

We expect that Term 2 will begin on Tuesday 14 April, which is a student-free day, with students returning as scheduled on Wednesday 15 April.

Any changes to these dates will be guided by the ongoing advice of the Chief Health Officer, and will be communicated to parents.

DHHS has a number of resources on their website, which explain the virus, detail risk reduction practices and behaviours and answer frequently asked questions. The website address is www.dhhs.vic.gov.au/coronavirus.

You can also find information about Catholic education's response at <http://www.cecv.catholic.edu.au/Coronavirus-information-for-parents>.

In the meantime, we thank all in our community for your ongoing understanding as we seek to keep our school communities safe.

Further updates will be provided if there are additional changes.

If you have any queries or concerns, please contact the school directly.

Yours sincerely

Jasmine Ryan
Principal

Mark Watkins - Supporting one of our own...

I am lucky to live and work in a community where people are truly there for one another. I am lucky that I have the support and access to a generous community in many times of need. I am also lucky that I have been able to know the Watkins family as long as I have lived here, our children play together.

I am writing to our community today in hope that any support you can provide you will. In times of hardship of drought and virus the reality of asking for further support is complex. I do know that this family has a real life hero behind their story and collectively as a family have fought extremely hard and independently for such a long time.

Please take the time to read Mark's story and give what you can even if only small. I am continually approached by my community and asked what we can do and at this point in time this is what we can do!

On a further level the support we can offer the Watkins family will be discussed at the Board and P&F level because I know it is the unified power of our community that can offer true hope and difference.

The link below will allow you top access Mark's story as well as know that funds raised go directly to the medication that is needed. This is not a *Go Fund* me page rather than a direct contribution to possibly life saving medication.

The Watkins' journey is at a cross road and I hope and pray that St Mary's can support the family in their time of need.

Jasmine Ryan

<https://treat.rarecancers.org.au/campaign/2095/helping-mark-watkins>

