

# PRINCIPALS MESSAGE

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## Important College Dates

### TERM 3

- 9th Sept GAT
- 18 Sept Last day of Term

### TERM 4

- 5th Oct Term Commencement
- 9th Nov VCE Exams commence
- 10th Nov—Year 7 & 10 Immunisations
- 18 Dec Last day of Term

So much can happen in a week – just look at our building site! When we were closed last week the concrete slab had only just been laid and now the framework for the building gives a real sense of what to expect. Some good news to share as well, Mel Boulton welcomed the safe arrival of her little girl Asha. So nice to be able to share some positives.



I have been overwhelmed this week by the support shown by our families. Your emails of thanks and understanding in such a difficult time has been appreciated. Our school community is amazing! It has been an incredibly trying time for everyone and I need to acknowledge the flexibility and resilience shown by our staff and senior students. They haven't known from one day to the next what is happening as we work through the complicated process of a confirmed COVID-19 case. As you know I am bound by process and this is driven by the Department of Health and Human Services and the Department of Education and Training. Rightly so when community health is involved they take time to ensure that all processes are followed strictly. This can be frustrating for our students, particularly when they are not identified as a close contact but we must do everything that is asked of us. We don't want anything to jeopardise the process, and potentially cause a longer closure.

We have taken the opportunity to assess our on site processes to ensure the safety of staff and students when they return. This of course is will be adjusted again when the junior students return. Strategies include:

- Entrance only and exit only doors in VCE Centre
- Eating outside only unless the weather is inclement
- Masks worn at all times as per government requirements
- Allocated rooms open during breaks with limitations
  - 10 per room
  - Sign in sheet
  - Social distancing compulsory
- Students to take all of their resources home and bring in what is required for the day.
- No locker access, students will keep their bags with them to access resources
- Phones turned off while on site and kept in bags

The VCE Centre was identified by students and staff as one of the biggest risk areas. It is overcrowded and students tend to hover talking to their friends. The best way to deal with this was to temporarily remove the risk. From our experience of our recent closure we have also decided it is best practice to have all books and resources at home. A school closure can occur at any time during the day or night. We were lucky, students had a few minutes to take resources home. Other schools haven't been so fortunate. Teaching staff have also been advised to take resources home as well.

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### Statement of Commitment

DVC is committed to Child Safety. We want children to be safe, happy and empowered. We support and respect children, as well as staff and volunteers.

## PRINCIPALS MESSAGE (cont)

Unfortunately, we cannot be complacent and we cannot assume that this will not happen again. We can however be as well prepared as possible.

Understandably over the coming weeks there are going to be student and staff absences. Where possible staff will continue to teach their classes remotely and senior classes will be covered with a replacement teacher potentially with the teacher giving instructions remotely. For students who are absent due to illness or parent choice, work will be placed on COMPASS to ensure that they can keep up with their studies. DET expectations is that staff teach VCE/VET/VCAL students on site and that they are not to teach via dual platforms. I support this expectation. Through all of this, I must consider and protect the welfare of every member of the school community, as well as follow DET expectations.

Enjoy the weekend and for those of us who have had to be in lockdown, enjoy and be grateful that we can now go out and enjoy a walk in this beautiful weather.

**Allison Bennett**  
**Principal**

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