

Dear Parents and Caregivers,

This is a quick update as at 10am on Wednesday 25 March 2020.

General: Beldon PS is operating calmly and smoothly. Our procedures to increase social distancing are being well supported by staff and parents, and the students are doing a great job too! We are trying to have a safe site without making the atmosphere unpleasant for those of us here.

Unfortunately, we have chosen to cease the provision of library books and home readers.

On Monday we had approximately 70% of our students attending. This dropped to 50% on Tuesday and Wednesday. Having fewer students means social distancing is easier to maintain to which our teachers have done a wonderful job of administering.

Thank you to the many parents who have taken the trouble to contact us and inform us that their children will be staying at home. Many parents have included words of thanks, support and encouragement to our staff with this communication, which is appreciated.

Materials to work at home: There has been a plethora of messages to schools from the Department about this measure, some of them contradictory. Clearly our priority is to focus our efforts on the students attending. However, we are aiming to distribute work packages for students working at home from the beginning of next week. Please expect that the work packages will be quite simple, with an emphasis on Literacy and Numeracy. The work package materials are not to be returned to school.

Teachers are tailoring the work pages to provide work for 4 weeks, representing the final two weeks of Term 1 and the first 2 weeks of Term 2. We hope that our government schools will be given greater clarity about how curriculum will be maintained by this time.

We will let you know when you can collect the packages. Please do not come before being advised.

Staffing: The current situation is that NO ONE from our staff is ill from the virus OR undertaking self-isolation due to contact with a person who has a virus. However, we do have a number of staff who may be vulnerable to the virus or may have responsibilities to be at home to care for others. For this reason, you can expect to learn that a number of staff will be on leave in the near future, or may be working from home.

Harmony Dress Up Day: Students and staff are encouraged to “dress up” in recognition of Harmony Day this Friday. It is appropriate to wear something orange in colour, or come in a multicultural costume. We will not be collecting any donations.

Lunch Orders: These will proceed as normal until further notice.

Drink Bottles and Hand Sanitiser: All students should bring a drink bottle to school rather than use the drink fountains. Also, *if possible*, it would be handy if parents were able to provide their children with individual hand sanitiser to ease the pressure on school supplies.

It is clear that the current expectation is that government schools will remain open until the conclusion of Term 1 on Thursday 9 April. There will be educational provision for students in Term 2, but I feel sure that it will not be business as usual. As soon as the scenario for Term 2 becomes clearer, I will share it with you.

Sincerely,

Geoffrey Elliott
Principal