



Moulamein Public School

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2021 Term 3 Week 1

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Principal Messages

Welcome back to Term 3 everyone! We are very happy to be in the position of starting the term off with face-to-face teaching and learning this week. We hope everyone had a lovely break. I know teachers have spent time planning great units of work for this term.

Due to NSW Health guidelines, we do need to make changes to our programs and procedures until further notice.

Public Health Orders introduced during the school holidays require all staff and any visitors to use the QR codes to check in and out of school premises. This is in line with practices for all workplaces across NSW.

Any student, with any symptoms, or who is feeling unwell, should not attend school and should take a COVID test immediately. Anyone who has been off sick from school will be required to return a negative COVID test before being permitted to return to school. Students and staff who have attended any venue of concern identified by NSW Health should follow NSW Health advice

Key Information:

- Students in K-6 are not required to wear masks
- Parents are responsible for social distancing at pick-up and drop-off areas
- Staff will help escort your child into the school ground each morning
- No parents can enter the classrooms or grounds.
- Parents can visit the office for urgent matters, but we prefer that you call instead.
- All parents entering the office must wear a mask and use a QR code to sign in
- All excursions are cancelled until further notice
- Swimming is postponed again
- Music classes are now cancelled with the Murray River Conservatorium due to health restrictions (Singing, chanting, group repetition and choirs are not permitted inside)
- Inter-school, inter-regional and intrastate activities and events, such as gala days and sporting carnivals, can continue with other regional schools, with COVID-safe practices in place
- P & C meetings may continue within health guidelines
- Assemblies are now for students only, no visitors.

We will continue to need to make updates and changes, along with current health advice. Thank you for assistance in helping us to follow the guidelines

Canteen

The canteen is currently non-operational. The P&C have again tried to get the canteen up and running but due to the lack of volunteers it cannot continue. Thank you to the P & C for giving it a go.

The school aims to have a full kitchen operational soon and will be cooking with the students and Year 6 will have the opportunity to run days as well. Sausage sizzles provided by staff, with the support of the P & C will still be something to look forward to as well. There is a saying that I carried with me for many years....*if you miss out on the slippery dip, you can have a turn on the merry-go-round.* My Kindergarten teacher taught that to me and I think it is a great mindset to have in life. Staff are looking forward to providing extra learning opportunities with our new kitchen soon.

Food Deliveries for Students

Please ensure you send your children with lunch to school each day. We are not able to accept food deliveries anymore because staff cannot handle food for students. Students are not able to collect it from the office because they are not able to enter areas where they have a high chance of interacting with the public. We would appreciate your support in this matter.

Wongi Contribution

We will now be contributing to the WONGI fortnightly, with our school newsletter changing to an odd week publication, instead of weekly.

Current Enrolment

We currently have 66 students enrolled and our numbers continue to increase. This is great news for our school and staffing. With more students, our funding also increases, along with our teaching allocation. Schools are so important in small communities and it is great to see ours steadily increasing, bucking the trend!

Staff spend a day with Michael Hawton!

Yesterday, staff participated in a workshop with Michael Hawton. With increased anxiety in students across all schools and mental health challenges, teachers and staff need to equip students with the language to be able to talk about emotions and how they are feeling early on in life. Managing emotions is difficult for children. Recent brain research is showing the importance of giving children practice to managing their emotions and therefore behaviour. Our school is currently reviewing our behaviour management system and wanted to tap into the latest research before making changes and implementing a K-6 welfare and wellbeing system.

Michael is a registered Australian psychologist, trained teacher, author of *Talk Less Listen More* and *Engaging Adolescents*, international speaker, media commentator, and a father of two.

With 30 years' experience working with children and families including in his private practice, working with the United Nations in Seychelles, and preparing child welfare reports for the Family Court, Michael is one of Australia's foremost experts in managing difficult behaviours in children, adolescents and adults.

Featuring regularly as a panel guest advisor on shows such as *Today*, *Sunrise* and more, Michael teaches teachers, family workers, early years educators and parents based the latest research in behavioural science, covering a range of topics such as positive cultural change in schools, improving self-regulation in children, reducing anxiety in children and managing tricky adolescent behaviours.



The staff will now be using the latest research and this workshop to write a new Welfare Policy, which includes emotional regulation training for students and behaviour management. Our goal is to set them up for success by building emotional resourcefulness.

I will be adding relevant articles and advice from Michael in our newsletter from time to time. We will also be seeking interested parents who would like to join a parent workshop in Term 4. He is an amazing presenter and has lots of great tips for parents and carers.

Three tips for helping children deal with frightening world events

By Michael Hawton, Child Psychologist (MAPS) and Parentshop founder.

As events of violence and terrorism are apparently being more regularly reported, an increasing number of children are being affected by exposure to these frightening stories. Many parents are wondering what they can do to protect their children from the effects of vicarious anxiety provoked by these media reports.

We need to recognise that we (parents) have the fully-adult, psychological minds and that we are able to plan, reason and organise our thoughts better than children who do not yet have fully developed minds; they won't have this mature mind until they reach their early twenties. Our children's minds then, are more prone to get distressed when they are exposed to frightening events compared to adults – particularly where they see images of people who are upset, scared and crying.

If part of our job as parents is to protect our children's well-being then we need to shield them from heavily publicised world events that might cause them fear and worry. As children hear more and more about distressing things, repetitive 'hearing' or 'viewing' can accumulate stress in their minds. Anxiety can build in other words.

TIP 1. Once you've seen or heard a frightening world event, don't keep watching it over and over. Turn the TV off or turn the radio to another station. Try to minimize your children's exposure to the news of these events. Be especially aware that images seen on television (or video footage on online media platforms) have a particularly powerful effect on children, especially very young children. If you do need news updates, then maybe read about it privately online.

TIP 2. Try to minimize your children's exposure to the news of these events

If they say they are worried about what they have seen my second tip is try and hear their feelings before moving on to another topic. You can listen to them by simply acknowledging what you believe they might be experiencing. Through this acknowledgement, you're giving them congruent emotional feedback, which is an essential element of helping children grow their emotional intelligence. Remember your acknowledgment of how they are feeling is not your agreement about how they are seeing things. Just tune-in to what they are saying and where you can, make statements about what you observe – 'So, seeing those people made you feel pretty worried that it could happen here' or 'If I saw something like that I think I would be upset too'.

TIP 3. Help your children get things in proportion

Help your children get things in proportion. In Australia and New Zealand we live in very safe societies. Without being Pollyanna about it, children need to be reminded that the news – particularly overseas news – represents only a tiny small slice of what is going on in the world. For better or worse, the news tends to focus on the destructive, frightening and violent events which makes the news, well, news! As adults, we know that it's not a balanced picture of the world. Let your children know that where you live has been and will continue to be a generally safe place and that there are structures in place to keep everyone that way. Explain that the news event they may have seen is not happening everywhere. If it is something that happened overseas, explain that it is not happening in our country, our city or our neighbourhood.

Mr Mason

Mr Mason will be continuing to work at our school this term to support students in K-6 for learning support. Students will be supported in class and also withdrawn to participate in remedial working groups.