



Principal – Matt Pearce

5644 Calder Highway BIG HILL 3555
(Cnr Calder Hwy & McInnes St, BIG HILL)

PHONE: (03) 5447 7022

EMAIL: big.hill.ps@edumail.vic.gov.au

ABN 25 904 985 694

Dear parents and carers,

18/09/2020

On behalf of our school, I want to say a big thank you to all our students, parents and carers for your continued resilience and support during Term 3. I know remote and flexible learning has not always been easy, but through our collective efforts, our students have continued to make valuable progress in their learning. You can be confident that our school will support any student who has fallen behind to catch up.

Term 4 is important for every Victorian student, and our teachers will strive to deliver high-quality learning for everyone. With us returning to face-to-face, our focus for Term 4 is on making sure that every student is supported in their wellbeing, learning and transition needs. The Victorian Government has outlined the staged return to on site schooling as part of its gradual roadmap towards reopening.

As you would be well aware, the Victorian Government announced that regional and rural communities will progress to the Third Step of the roadmap for reopening, that came into place at 11:59pm on Wednesday, 16th September 2020.

Students enrolled in Prep to Year 6 in stand-alone primary schools will return to on site learning from Monday, 5th October. This mean's for us at Big Hill PS, we get to start Term 4 with everyone back on site, face-to-face learning.

Health and safety measures

The Term 3 remote and flexible learning arrangements were put in place to significantly reduce the movement of more than one million students and their families across Victoria, to help slow the spread of coronavirus (COVID-19). Thanks to you and your family for contributing to this on behalf of our school community.

As on site schooling resumes, we will continue to have in place strong measures to protect the health and safety of students, staff, families and the community. This includes staggering finish times, restricting parent access to school grounds and continued emphasis on hand hygiene and physical distancing where possible.

As your child returns to face-to-face learning, please be assured we will be focused on three key priorities in Term 4:

Mental health and wellbeing

Our highest priority will be the wellbeing, particularly the mental health, of every student and member of staff. This means effectively mobilising all available resources to support our most vulnerable students and enabling staff to access the relevant support services.

Learning and excellence

Some of our students have thrived in the remote and flexible learning environment, others have maintained their learning progress, and some have fallen behind, despite their best efforts and those of their families and teachers. Our priority will be supporting both those who need it to catch up and those who have progressed to continue to extend their learning. As mentioned already, we will have a focus on THE BASICS – Literacy, Numeracy, Physical Education and Interpersonal and Intrapersonal skills.

Transitions

We will make every effort to ensure successful transitions for children moving from kindergarten into Prep and the Year 6's moving into Year 7.

We know some families are worried that their child may have to repeat a year due to the disruptions of coronavirus (COVID-19). There is little evidence to support the benefits of repeating a year to catch up. Instead, schools will use teaching strategies that draw on the best evidence available to help students meet their learning needs.

Parents, families and carers can be confident that the best option for almost every child is to stay with their peer group, whether that is moving from kindergarten into Prep, or moving from Year 6 into Year 7 at secondary school, or students moving up any year level in between.

Our school, working with you, has shown it can be flexible and adaptable in responding to the challenges of coronavirus (COVID-19) and will continue to meet student needs as we look towards the end of the 2020 school year and ahead to 2021.

Kind regards

Matt Pearce

Principal