



# Dandenong North Primary School

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Dear Parents and Carers,

I am sorry to have to repeat what you are probably already aware of – that is that the present Lockdown is going to continue for all of us at least until the beginning of Term 4 – the 4<sup>th</sup>. October. This will include the scheduled Term 3 break, September 20 to October 4.

This is very upsetting for yourselves, your children and our staff. We agonise about what our students are missing out on and what we can do to improve their lives on a daily basis. We particularly wish our Afghani families well as they try to process the dire situation many of their families and other relatives are facing in Afghanistan.

Thanks to Alia Hussain who is working with our Parent group to try to help as many people as possible to deal with the red-tape needed to try to get visas for family members or relatives to escape from the Taliban.

Unfortunately, it would appear that the case numbers in Victoria are going up rather than down. New South Wales provides us with a glimpse of what Victoria may be like if the Department of health and Human Services cannot oversee a return to zero within the next 5 weeks.

With increased case numbers comes increased risks to us all. It is extremely important for parents or carers to be vigilant with the onset of any “unwellness” in their children. This is not a time to “dismiss” sniffles or “sore-throats” as “nothing”. If we were to find that a child or parent tested positive to COVID and had been within the school grounds while infectious, we would be shut down completely for 14 days. That would not be fair for the parents, carers and students who had been “doing the right thing”. So, please be vigilant and if your child is not well, at least keep them at home to be comfortable but, preferably, have your family doctor check them out.

Vaccination is the only plan that either level of Government has to allow all of us to get back to something like “normal”. I believe it will be important to get as many students aged 5 to 12 vaccinated as possible once the adult population is vaccinated to 70 to 80%. When the time comes – probably early in 2022 - I would urge parents and carers to take an early opportunity to get their child/children vaccinated. It turns out that the Delta strain of the virus can easily transmit child to child or child to adult. Vaccination won't stop all of the transmissions, but will prevent those who become infected from requiring hospitalization and/or ventilation.

It goes without saying that the anguish and anxiety that many children ( and adults ) feel due to Lockdown and the Pandemic, generally, is more pronounced than what people were feeling during even, World War II. It is up to us as adults to all do everything in our power to improve the lives of our students – even if that means acting rather than believing that everything will eventually be O.K.

Children of parents who are essential workers can still attend school during this extended lockdown period, providing they can provide an “Authorised Provider and Authorised Worker Permit”. Such a permit provides evidence of compliance with the Chief medical Officer's restrictions and requirements.

One final note, social distancing, personal hygiene and mask-wearing restrictions still apply as a condition of parents entering the school grounds. Please do not be offended if you are directed or asked in relation to compliance with these DHHS imposed conditions, as all of our staff are authorised to ensure compliance with “the rules”, keeping our bit of Victoria safe for ALL of our kids.

Kevin Mackay,

Principal 3/9/2021