



# The Kilmore International School

Thursday, 30 April 2020

Dear Parents and Guardians,

I am pleased to update you on the school's continuing response to the COVID-19 emergency.

## Remote Learning

For the last two weeks, TKIS has followed the Victorian Government advice that schools should provide remote and flexible learning for the majority of their students, while providing onsite learning for those who have no alternative. I want to thank all our teachers and the IT Help Desk for the creation and delivery of a rich learning environment. The digital learning toolkit on offer – SEQTA, Google Classroom (in the Primary School), Zoom and especially Microsoft Teams – has been transformational for teaching and learning. Through ongoing professional learning, teachers and students have been equipped to use new sites, teaching tools, and technologies for at-home use. As a result, students are developing self-directed learning skills and are sharing information and collaborating with each other and their teachers. There is no doubt that digital learning has the potential to promote deeper learning.

## Mental health support

Each and every one of us, young or old, needs routines and contact with others to sustain our wellbeing. It is normal for children and young people to feel anger and frustration, confusion and even sadness when away from their friends, which is why a prolonged lockdown can have impacts on mental health and wellbeing. This sense of rupture and separation when away from school came through in the recent student survey. Please do not hesitate to contact Philippa Kirwan for online Counselling and Learning Support at [philippa.kirwan@kilmore.vic.edu.au](mailto:philippa.kirwan@kilmore.vic.edu.au). Of course managing screen time, setting age-appropriate boundaries and keeping children safe is essential when they are spending more time online. As you are aware, we have posted e-safety information for students and parents on SEQTA and there are excellent resources and advice available online from the [eSafety Commissioner](#).

## School operations

You will have seen widespread media reporting over the last two days highlighting different approaches by the states and the Commonwealth regarding the possible resumption of normal school operations. In Victoria, the State Government has indicated any easing of restrictions, including any change to school operations, will occur after May 11 when the current state of emergency laws expire and the results of a mass [testing programme](#) become available.

On 29 April 2020 the Australian Government announced that non-government schools will have the option to bring forward their July 2020 recurrent school funding payments as long as schools commit by the end of this week to provide onsite learning to at least half of their students by the end of May. The Victorian Government says this Coronavirus funding offer for independent schools is 'completely inappropriate'. The advice of Independent Schools Victoria is to follow the State Government rules and regulations governing school operations in Victoria based on the consistent advice of Victoria's Chief Health Officer. Accordingly, and after taking advice on the school's financial position, we shall not be seeking a return of face to face teaching at this time.

*"Excellentia Academica Persequenda"*



## Student fees

As shared previously, we very much appreciate the efforts families make in meeting their financial obligations to the school in a timely manner. After reviewing all available financial information, the Board of Directors has resolved to offer all clients a discount on fees for Term 2. A rebate calculated at 10% of net fees will be credited to your account. There will also be a refund of fees for the school bus service and music fees where applicable. If your account is in credit and you wish to accept the rebate as a refund, please contact our Accounts team. I can confirm that we are also actively reviewing the school payroll and systems requirements for eligibility of the Australian Government's JobKeeper wage subsidy scheme. We are aware that for some families, a rebate will not provide sufficient support in the current environment. Please do not hesitate to arrange a confidential discussion with me if you have any questions about your school account.

## International Baccalaureate November 2020 Exams

Dr Siva Kumari, Director General, International Baccalaureate Organisation, confirmed in a letter to schools this week that the November 2020 exams are expected to proceed as planned. In the event that the exam session cannot take place, the IB will use procedures to ensure students can be assessed and awarded the Diploma that reflects their standard of work. As with the May exam session, there may be some adjustment to processes, weighting and timelines for internal assessments (IAs), coursework components for Group 1 (Literature, Language and Literature), theory of knowledge and viva voce completion of the extended essay among other assessments when determining final grades.

## In memoriam

At this time of great sadness for the fallen police officers who were recently killed on active duty protecting the community, I also wish to pay homage to the memory of a long serving member of staff, Ms Andrea Nunn, who passed away last week. Andrea was a dedicated and loyal teacher of German language and held in great esteem and affection by colleagues for her intelligence, wit and humour. Andrea was a gifted violinist and supported students in drama and music performances at TKIS for many years, most memorably in musicals such as *The Pirates of Penzance*. Outstanding results in IB German are testimony to her expertise and role as mentor to students. Our thoughts and prayers are with her family and friends.

## Your feedback

With your support and the full cooperation of our wonderful students and staff, I am very proud of what has been achieved this term. However, as I said in my last letter, it is important we review and evaluate the structure and schedule of our online provision and make adjustments as required to meet the needs of all learners. I have already surveyed staff and students and now seek your immediate [feedback](#) to help us understand parents' perception of our remote learning programme and how we can improve it.

Everyone in Australia is dealing with the unprecedented fallout from the COVID-19 outbreak. Please be reassured that we are doing everything possible to promote student learning and wellbeing. I will of course share with you the reasons for any changes we make to the shape of our remote learning provision at TKIS.

Sincerely,



Andrew Taylor  
Principal