

Forbes High School Newsletter



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Term 1 - Week 9

Friday 27 March, 2020

Stay Calm and be Safe

Firstly, I want to thank all our staff, students, parents and carers for their collective teamwork as we work together to protect the safety of our students, staff, families and more effectively the broader community. We take advice from experts in NSW Government including NSW Department of Education and NSW Health and this week we confidently encouraged all parents/carers to keep their children at home as a responsible action to protect our community and contribute as a whole society to flat line the spread of COVID-19 in our country. There is no need to panic, despite being in unprecedented times for schools and society, but I do remind our young people and families it is critical to follow government and school advice and that whilst learning at home, we all need to self-isolate, practice good hygiene and social distancing. I encourage all students to stay home and continue learning, sustain social interaction with close family sensibly and make sure you include one hour of exercise practised daily safely.

Communication between School and Family

We have sent out a link to a survey by way of letter as well as SMS that is designed for families to update their contact details, in addition we request student mobile numbers to keep everyone updated as our situation evolves. If you have not received this information, I welcome you to contact the office to do this. We plan to ensure we make periodic phone calls home to promote positive wellbeing with our students and families.

I ask all parents/carers and students to frequently look at our Facebook, School Website, emails and SMS to get the latest updates and information as the COVID – 19 situation evolves.

In the meantime, Parent/Carer and community information on the latest updates can be accessed from <https://education.nsw.gov.au/public-schools/school-safety/novel-coronavirus/covid19-further-information>. The Department has also created resources for parents, teachers and other community members to support young people learning from home at <https://education.nsw.gov.au/teaching-and-learning/curriculum/learning-from-home>.

Learning at Home

I take this opportunity to thank our teaching staff who have worked diligently and with determination to create common learning packages for our students to continue learning at home for the rest of this term. These have been distributed last Friday. I encourage students to use their timetable as a guide to determine how long and which package to be working on to pace their learning. Students are also encouraged to follow teacher directions as instructed via the various platforms mentioned above. At this stage, students are expected to complete the learning packages for each Key Learning Area by the end of this term. If students do this they are deemed on track with their learning. We are keeping it simple to ensure student success. The last day of this term is Thursday 9 April 2020, if you do not have internet and have not received a learning package, then call the school to arrange a pick-up time.



Ms Safija Bristina
Principal

NOTICE

All appointments for the remainder of Term 1 will be conducted by phone. Please contact the office on 02 6852 2666 to book an appointment with the Principal.



STUDENTS!

Students should check their school emails daily. Students will receive a Student Procedures Handbook for Learning at Home next week.

FHS - News



27% of students collect learning packages in person last Friday maintaining social distancing in a happy, calm and confident manner. All other students received packages online. Awesome effort by our parents, students and staff.

If the situation is not resolved before the start of term two, we will be in touch and we will use other online platforms to engage and interact with our students. Our students are already familiar with many applications such as Google Classroom. Our School Learning Support Officers also contacted every family last week to determine access to technology and internet in readiness to roll out a more comprehensive and interactive online learning model if the situation continues. Stay tuned as we take advice from Government bodies.

I have included a checklist for parents/carers and students to use as they set up an appropriate place in the home to learn. I have also included a flyer that reminds students of the expectation of school values to be upheld whilst they are working at home. Our students should demonstrate respect, responsibility, honesty and do their best at all times.

NAPLAN 2020

NAPLAN has been cancelled this year to allow staff time to prepare online learning for our students. Nevertheless, this assessment was always designed to be a diagnostic tool to support teachers to develop programs to take student learning to the next level. We have other internal standardised assessment to do this and we welcome this decision.

Assessments

NESA has stated the HSC is going ahead. They have also reassured all schools that every Year 12 student can get an HSC this year. Similarly, those students can use this certificate to gain access to university, further education and employment, no student will be disadvantaged. So, in the interest of keeping our students positive and calm as we transition into learning from home, I have flexibly postponed all current and future assessments for the rest of this term. I will keep everyone updated as this situation evolves. In the meantime, it is very important for students to complete work at home and pace themselves. Students can submit work if they completed it and reduce workload stress, however, if students submit work at a later date they will not be penalised. The internal school assessment may change in term two to suit our student needs. I do want to emphasise it is critical for all students to ensure their teachers get completed packages next term so that the samples of work can be used for alternative assessment. Remind your children, if they complete the learning packages then they are deemed on track for success.

Flexible Working Arrangements for Staff

As of this week our school supported staff to work from home for the purpose of supporting our country to control the spread of COVID-19. We are being positive and proactive in supporting our community to return to normal routine faster. Nevertheless, each day at school we will always have a Senior Executive on site, a team of teachers, administration staff and School Learning Support Officers to support continuous learning for our students. Despite most students learning from home, we are still open to serve our vulnerable students and those students who have parents working in essential services. We are hiring casual staff to supervise this small cohort of students.

Welcome Feedback

Our team at school is currently working on creating a platform for our parents/carers and students to submit feedback so that we can improve at home learning. If you have any concerns I welcome you to contact the school and speak to a Deputy Principal or myself if required.

Basic Hygiene

Students are encouraged to practise basic hygiene and self-isolation so that we can restore normal routine sooner. If we all do as instructed by our Prime Minister we will have contributed to ending the pandemic sooner. I have included a poster that can be used at home with your children to remind them of the expectations here at school.

Autumn Break

Despite the unusual restrictions in place, I wish all our families, staff and students a happy break. This is a wonderful opportunity to do the simple things in life with our immediate family. Board games, puzzles and the like are great activities that the whole family can enjoy as we prepare to stay home for the holidays. Thank you for your amazing support and I look forward to working with you all as a team.

NSW Department of Education



Learning environment checklist

In setting up this space the following should be considered:

- Is the area free of distraction?
- Is there excessive noise in the area?
- Are there trip hazards in the area?
- Is the area exposed to direct glare or reflections?
- Does the area have sufficient power points available?
- Is equipment (extension cords etc.) in good, safe, working condition?
- Is there a proper desk and chair and other necessary equipment (light, stationery and devices)?
- Is the chair adjusted correctly?
 - Feet should be flat on the floor and knees bent at right angles with thighs parallel to the floor.
 - The chair backrest should support the lower back and allow your child to sit upright.
 - The chair should move freely and not be restricted by hazards such as mats and power cords.
 - Chair arm rests should be removed or lowered when typing.
- Is the computer adjusted correctly?
 - The screen should be positioned directly in front of your child.
 - The screen should be at a distance where your child can see clearly and easily without straining. The top of the screen should be slightly lower than eye level.
 - The keyboard should be positioned at a distance where elbows are close to your child's body and their shoulders should be relaxed.
 - The mouse should be placed directly next to the keyboard.
- Are their most frequently used items within easy reach from a seated position?



Guidelines for Online Learning Platforms

Updated 26.3.2020

At Forbes High School we value respectful, responsible and honest communication. We expect the students will be doing their best at all times. Expectations of student behaviour and participation in online learning platforms must be consistent with these expectations.

Whilst participating in online learning platforms school behaviour procedures still apply. If students engage in inappropriate behaviour school staff will follow up as applicable.

Please be mindful that staff will only be available to respond to student email/online learning platform enquiries between 8.30am and 3.30pm school days.

As a guide please refer to the NSW Department of Education link below followed by 5 top tips for online communication.

[Digital Citizenship](#)

- 1. Be respectful.** While it is easier to say hurtful or disrespectful things without standing face-to-face with someone, it is important to remember that your classmates and teachers are real people who are affected by the words you say and write. It is essential to keep in mind the feelings and opinions of others, even if they differ from your own.
- 2. Be aware of strong language, all caps, and exclamation points.** It is easy for written text to be misread and misunderstood. Have you ever sent a text message with good intent but your recipient thought you were being rude? If so, then you've experienced this firsthand. By being cognizant of strong language, you can identify potential confusions before sending messages. ***Tip: Read everything out loud before you send it.***
- 3. Be careful with humor and sarcasm.** Certainly, you shouldn't avoid being funny. We love to see your personality shine through in online classes. Many of our teachers are exceptionally funny too. But like mentioned in Rule #2, make sure that it is clear you are being funny and not being rude. Emoticons and smileys can be helpful when conveying humor or sarcasm so that it is read correctly. Just remember to keep the smiley faces away from academic papers.
- 4. Yes, grammar and spelling matter.** While texting, textspeak can be great for your friends. In an educational setting (even online) however, keep it formal. Your written communication should be professional and reflect proper writing style. Save written shortcuts and less than stellar grammar for Snapchat if you must, but follow grammar rules for school.
- 5. Cite your sources.** Whenever you are sharing an idea that originated from someone else (even if it is not word for word), it is good practice to cite that source. This applies to discussion forums too. If you read a great thought in your text, share it, but be sure you let your audience know where you saw it first.

(Albion et al)



Practise simple hygiene by washing hands regularly



1 Wet hands



2 Apply soap



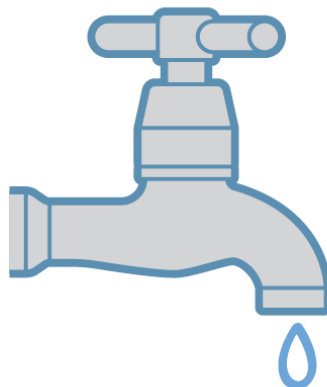
3 Lather & scrub



4 Rinse hands



5 Turn off tap



6 Dry hands



Spend 20 seconds washing your hands.

Protect yourself from viruses



Clean your hands with soap and water, or hand sanitiser.



Cover your nose and mouth when you cough or sneeze.



Avoid close contact with anyone with cold or flu-like symptoms.



Stay home if you are sick.



Find the facts

health.nsw.gov.au/coronavirus