

Melrose Park Public School

'Learning and Growing Together'

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Newsletter Term 1 Week 1

29 January 2020

Welcome, welcome, welcome!

Welcome back to our returning students for 2020. It was great to see everyone today and so wonderful to be greeted with smiles, happiness and stories of holiday adventures.

Welcome to our new students and families who commence at Melrose Park PS. I am sure you will be warmly welcomed into our school community. We have the best parent community and staff who are always willing to help and support you.

Welcome to our new Kindergarten families. Kindergarten students commence on Friday. We invite our new Kindergarten parents to a morning tea in the hall once students have moved into classrooms. This will be from 9.00 – 9.45am.

We know that across NSW and the rest of Australia, devastating bushfires have affected our communities, families, schools - and more.

The bushfire crisis has deeply affected us all, and for many, it has been life-changing and many have been directly or indirectly affected by the devastating bushfires that continue to ravage the country.

If you or your extended family /friends have been caught up in any emergency or stressful situation, please let the school know. We would like to be able to support all our students here at school.

As we move forward together, I know the school year will also bring with it some new and exciting developments. This year I look forward with you, to celebrating the incredible achievements of our students and the school's 75th Anniversary. Next week I will send out more information about the activities for the term ahead.

I have attached information from the Department of Education regarding the Novel Coronavirus and bush fire support.

Updates and further information can be found on the school's website.

www.melrosepk-p.schools.nsw.edu.au/news

Notes going home today:

Swim Carnival Thursday 6 February (Years 3-6) - Note to be returned by Monday 3 Feb

Year 6 T-shirt order form – Form to be returned by Friday 31 January

Novel Coronavirus - Updated advice ahead of school returning

The NSW Department of Education is working with NSW Health to monitor and respond to the unfolding international Novel Coronavirus situation.

The NSW Government has today requested that children who have visited China in the last two weeks not attend school or childcare services until 14 days have lapsed from their date of departure from China.

Health Minister Brad Hazzard and Education Minister Sarah Mitchell said although the risk to children is very low, the NSW Government has taken this step as a precautionary measure.

"I've been advised that it's not medically necessary, but the NSW Government has acted in line with community expectations to ensure the safest possible environment for our students," Mr Hazzard said.

"The internationally recognised incubation period for the coronavirus is 14 days, so this is the logical timeframe to ask students to refrain from attending school. After this time, there is no risk.

"Advice about not attending school has already been provided to any close contacts of confirmed cases."

The Commonwealth Department of Health has confirmed that all passengers disembarking from planes from China are being given comprehensive information about coronavirus in both English and Mandarin.

NSW Health has been contacting passengers who were on the same planes as confirmed cases to provide appropriate advice and has processes in place to identify any close contacts of cases confirmed in Australia.

Ms Mitchell said the Department of Education has issued guidance to schools and childcare services across NSW on protocols in the event of a child becoming sick.

"Although the risk remains very low for children, we believe it is the right thing to do to take this extra step and will continue to update the community with advice," Ms Mitchell said.

There are currently four confirmed cases of novel coronavirus in NSW. All cases had travelled to Wuhan, China or had contact with a confirmed case in China.

Parents with concerns can contact their local Public Health Unit on 1300 066 055 for advice or visit the dedicated NSW Health information page [External link](http://www.health.nsw.gov.au/infectious/diseases/pages/coronavirus.aspx).
www.health.nsw.gov.au/infectious/diseases/pages/coronavirus.aspx.

Anyone who develops a fever, cough, sore throat or shortness of breath within 14 days of travel to Hubei or contact with a person with confirmed coronavirus, should immediately isolate themselves from other people, contact their GP or local emergency department or call the health direct helpline 1800 022 222.

Bushfire Support - Information for parents

The recent fires across a large part of NSW have affected our students and schools in different ways. It is important to recognise that almost all distress or behavioural change following such an event is normal. There is no such thing as a typical reaction.

Children react in different ways depending on age and personality. Some may show much distress, or they may ask many questions and appear preoccupied with the event. Some of these reactions may appear immediately but others may not show themselves for weeks or even months later.

Some reactions may include sleep disturbances, regressive behaviour (thumb sucking), nightmares, fear of the dark, clinging to parents/carers, loss or increase in appetite, physical complaints that have no medical basis, aggressive behaviour, competition with sibling for parental attention, withdrawal and/or loss of interest in regular activities.

Children look to the significant adults in their lives for guidance on how to manage their reactions. Parents and teachers can help children cope by remaining calm and reassuring them that they will be all right.

Importantly most children are resilient and return to their previous level of functioning over time.

How you can support your child

- Monitor how much your child is being exposed to television/social media stories regarding the fires; children can be distressed by watching repeated images. Explain to them that news reports will repeat images and stories and it may not be a good idea to keep watching.
- Find out what your child's understanding of the event is and correct misunderstandings or confusion.
- Include your child in making plans.
- Support your child to stay connected to friends.
- Keep to your regular routines and activities as much as possible

Where to get help If students would like to speak with someone anonymously, confidential sources are:

- Kids Helpline – 1800 55 1800 – kidshelpline.com.au External link
- Headspace – 1800 650 890 – eheadspace.org.au