

"The whole of life  
belongs to God."



# St Columba's School

Engaging • Inspiring • Empowering

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Friday February 5, 2021

Dear Families,

And with that the first full week for students comes to an end. It has been incredible to be back on site with a full cohort of students and staff, maybe a little busy as well. There's been a couple of little hiccups with COVID but that's going to happen this year and we will manage them as they come.

The student's have all settled incredibly well and are loving their new learning spaces, normally we would encourage parents to come in and experience the new setups in person, unfortunately that still isn't possible. We are working on putting some films together so that parents can see the spaces in action again and as restrictions shift we hope to be able to do small group walkthroughs later in the year. A big thank you to our parent community for your efforts at drop off time, the kiss and go is working well and students are settling into the day with little to no separation issues across the year levels.

No sooner have we started back than our head is in 2022, enrolments for Foundation open next Monday, we will put information out around the new process' through all our usual channels.

**This year all families including existing ones** will need to complete an enrolment expression of interest through our new centralised enrolment form. This will be live on the CEB website <https://ceob.edu.au/> from Monday.

We would also normally be looking at our parent information evenings at this point of the year, but again have had to adapt with onsite restrictions. This year, Learning Communities will be recording their information sessions and making them available to parents, and then hosting a live Q&A session the following week. This still gives our families the relevant information for their year levels and also an opportunity to ask and relevant questions of teachers. We'll put further details of times for these out next week. Also keep an eye out for Sacramental program information, with limited events in 2020 the sequence for this year's Sacraments has shifted.

A reminder (despite today's thunderstorm) that all students must wear a hat or they cannot participate in outdoor activities. This includes break times, Physical Education lessons and any excursions. If you need a new hat please contact the office to organise a uniform order.

This year we are working with SIMON to increase the use of our Parent Access Module (PAM), this will see a shift in a number of current practices and the eventual phasing out of Skoolbag as a communication app - we recognise a number of parents have technical difficulties with Skoolbag and are looking for an alternative model. As part of this work we will also be moving to a digital first aid recording system so please ensure your current email and contact details in

PAM are accurate. Another part of this shift will see the incorporation of the school calendar and daily messages into the Parent Access Module. The goal is to create a single point of contact for our families to find the information they require. In order for this to be successful we will need parents to regularly check their accounts in order to get the latest information and dates. As things get up and running we will run some information sessions for families on the relevant changes and how you might best use the new tools.

World Internet Safety Day (Feb 11) is next week and this is a timely reminder to families to assist their children with being internet safe. Staff will be running eSafety sessions with students over the coming weeks as they begin making use of technology in the classroom. As a school our students are generally respectful and responsible with their use of technology while at school, where we often see issues arising is outside of school use of apps and messaging services. The eSafety commission has a number of resources available for families to support them in tackling these issues and being proactive with their children's internet access. The page can be found at <https://www.esafety.gov.au/parents>

We are still waiting for final details about the governments 'tutoring' program and what it will look like within the school. Once we have this confirmed we will be in touch with any eligible families.

There are still snippets of talk in the media about 'lost learning' last year, nothing was lost for our students. Other than the fact you can't lose something you didn't have. Our academic assessments show that on average, students made normal progression and in addition to this the skills, habits and behaviours they have developed are priceless. Learning is not a linear progression and students don't have one chance to learn everything, we start where our students are at and we move on from there.

Last year also highlighted the importance of strong school home relationships and working in partnership to provide the best opportunities for the students in our care. We encourage all families to keep in regular contact with their children's teachers around any issues. We would ask families to be respectful of teachers' lives outside of school and limit communication to work hours (8:30-5:00), being aware that emails may take up to 48 hrs to respond to. If you need to meet face to face with staff can you please contact them and organise an appropriate time to meet.

Again a big thank you to our school community for all the effort you put in last year and we are so happy to see everyone back this year. We look forward to an incredible year ahead and lots of great adventures

Regards

Handwritten signatures of Bambi Afford and Shaun Mohr in black ink.

Bambi Afford & Shaun Mohr

Co Principals