

28<sup>th</sup> January, 2021



Dear Parents and Carers,

Welcome back to the 2021 school year. I hope everyone has had a relaxing and restful summer vacation with family, friends, and loved ones. Our staff have been busy planning today to ensure we provide an outstanding program for the children.

I am looking forward to a fabulous year ahead. I would particularly like to welcome students and families who are new to the Mount Eliza Primary School (MEPS) community and look forward to getting to know you and your child/ren over the next few weeks.

School starts on Thursday 29 January, with gates open at 8.30am. Prior to this time, students are not permitted on site as there is no playground supervision until 8.30am. New families are welcome to meet in the office and children will be accompanied to their class by one of our specialist teachers. We will not be having a staggered start or finish to the day; school begins promptly at 8.45am and dismissal is at 3.15pm.

### **Staffing News**

We welcome a number of new MEPS staff in 2021, including: Grade 4 teacher, Mr Jack Lolait; Grade 5 teacher, Mr Matt Barrett; and Grade 6 teacher, Mrs Fiona Schulinus. We also welcome back Mrs Carly Forbes from parental leave.

For 2021, I continue to look forward to working with the MEPS Executive Team to set the direction and goals for the school - Ms Bev Harvey (Assistant Principal), Mrs Lisa Grgic (Leading Teacher), Mrs Michelle Polley and Ms Hayley Gregory (Learning Specialists).

### **Tutoring Initiative**

One of our top priorities for the year is to respond to the disruption of 2020 by working to ensure that all students who need additional assistance to 'catch up' on learning that they may have missed, get tailored and targeted help through the new Tutor Learning Initiative, led by Mrs Julie Purcell and Ms Christie Brown. The additional resources made available through the significant new funding directed to this program provide us with an unprecedented opportunity to meet the learning needs of our students.

### **COVIDSafe**

While it is wonderful news that we return to on-site learning from day one this year, we all remain vigilant in maintaining COVIDSafe environments. Actions such as staying home when unwell, performing regular hand hygiene, wearing a mask when required and maintaining adult physical distance are simple measures, but are of the utmost importance.

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That said, it is exciting to once again allow all students and staff to experience the full richness of school. Especially important are going to be those aspects that were so difficult to maintain through last year, including participation in performing arts, sport, practical activities in science and technology, school performances, and camps and excursions. We learnt a lot about what we are capable of last year, as MEPS staff, students and parent successfully innovated and adapted like never before. The lessons learned from 2020, will stand us in great stead for the year ahead.

Parents are finally welcome onsite to say hello but DET advise that due to ongoing COVID restrictions **parents are unable to remain for longer than 15 minutes unless officially signed in for contact tracing purposes.** Please consider the amazing progress the children made last year in terms of independence and consider continuing with the 'Kiss and Go' option at the front gate; there will always be a staff member there to welcome the children. If parking, please remember that parking spaces are limited and we have been advised that Council Inspectors will be returning to their normal routine.

### Parent Events

A **Parent Information Evening** will be held on Thursday 4 February at 7:00pm via Zoom. A link will be shared with the community shortly. At this event, we will be highlighting our key foci for 2021, sharing our vision for the year and discussing some important logistics.

During week 3 (8 - 12 February), we will host the **Parent to Teacher Exchange Meetings** where you are invited to schedule an online appointment so that you can inform the class teacher of any relevant background information that might be pertinent to his/her learning. Please note that this is not an interview to discuss progress or academic achievement. Appointments will be made available soon.

We are so excited to welcome you back to school and for the opportunities that the 2021 school year brings. I wish you all well for the year ahead and look forward to continuing this journey with you and your family.

Kind regards,

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*'Labor cum amor' ———— 'Work with love'*