



Leo's in Lockdown



Letter No 14 - Covid-19 Update

3 September 2021

Dear St Leo's Community,

As we enter the last two weeks of Term III 2021 - put simply a Term that many of us will never forget. But more about our achievements and challenges in Week 10!

Happy Father's Day to all our fathers and our father figures. Some student representatives have put together a [short video](#) for you all to watch. Thank you to these students for their time and efforts.

Today at lunchtime Rev Gomez led us in prayer from the College Chapel in a short Fathers' Day Liturgy of the Word. Thank you to those that joined in. At the end there were a few 'Dad jokes'. And yes, they were definitely dad jokes! Enjoy this Sunday!



Most families should now have been contacted by phone (in the first instance) by our wonderful support staff to check in and to see how you are doing as we come up to the end of this Term. Your feedback is welcomed and is acted upon. It seems that many families have found a routine that fits with their own needs and context and even though it is not perfect, are managing by 'just getting on with it'.

Congratulations to our Year 12 students who completed their Alternative Assessment Tasks (Trials) last Wednesday. Our Year 11 students (soon to be Year 12) are preparing for their End of Preliminary Course Assessments commencing next Friday.

Our new 2021-22 Student Leadership Team has been leading the organisation of next Wednesday's [RU OK? Day activities](#). Please [watch the video](#) they have put together. In this current climate, it is important we are all aware of not only our own state of mental health, but that of others as well.



Are Our Students Learning?

Over these past two weeks, our Senior and Middle leaders have been discussing and providing examples around the question of *have our students been learning and how do we know - what evidence are we using?* Some parents have also asked if their young people are learning at the same rate as they would in a face-to face situation.

In the past fortnight the 2021 NAPLAN results have been released at a national level. Below is an excerpt from the CEO of ACARA (Australian, Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority, the body that looks after NAPLAN), Mr David de Carvalho stated:

In reflecting on this year's results, ACARA CEO David de Carvalho was impressed that the pandemic and educational disruptions appeared to have little bearing on overall student achievement.

"These results will be welcomed by governments, schools, parents and carers as a first national insight into the educational impact of the pandemic," he said. "It's reassuring to see that overall, our students' literacy and numeracy standards have not significantly suffered, despite the major disruptions of COVID-19 and remote learning. "However, this does not mean there has been no impact on specific students or demographic groups."

These results show that despite the major disruptions around Covid19 in 2020 and even early 2021, growth in the areas of numeracy and literacy (that NAPLAN measures) showed positive trends across the country. (The details for individual schools have not as yet been released).

Dr Andrew Fraser, Student Achievement Lead at CSBB (Catholic School Broken Bay) has also conducted a review of research around this issue. This was primarily based around the Victorian experience of remote learning during their extended lockdown earlier than our present time.

Dr Fraser has found that the expected consequence of the disruption to schooling appears **not** to be supported by empirical evidence (Gore, Fray, Miller, Harris & Taggart, 2021). The challenges and risks appear to lie in pre-existing conditions that impact on learning generally: vulnerable and at-risk students, equity concerns and factors, and students with disabilities.

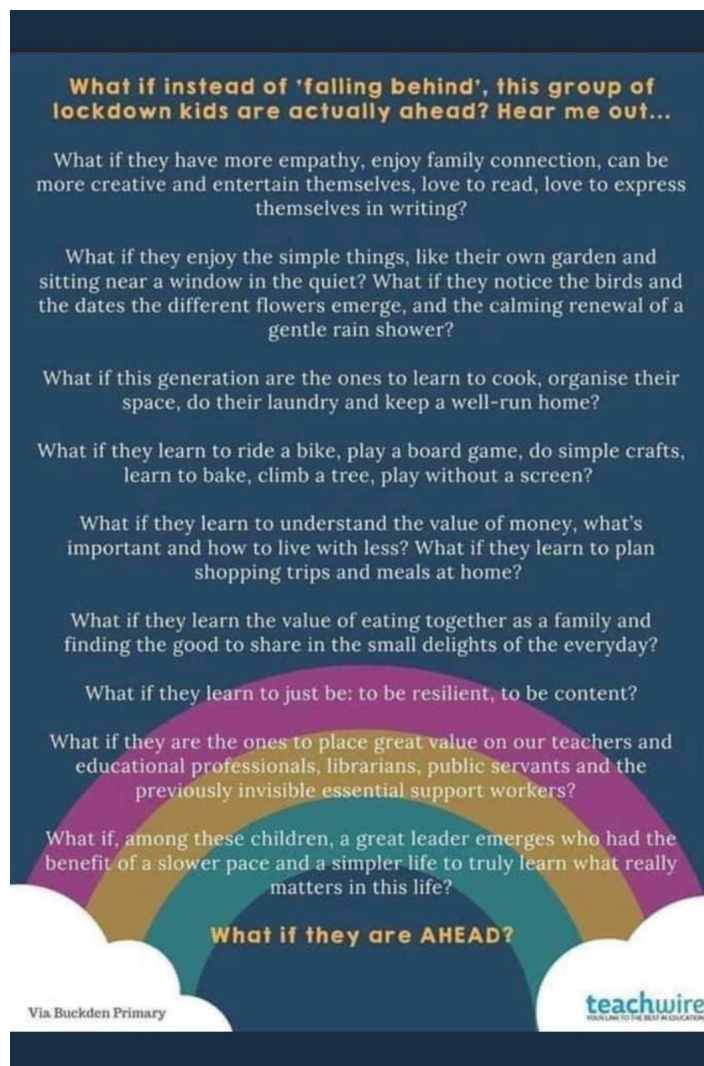
At our local level here at St Leo's our experience would also support those findings. Many of our students are developing new skills or skills that were *underutilised* in the previous face to face contact. Some of these skills would be around developing *organisation*, *self motivation* and *self directed learning*.

As Dr Fraser has written "...Rather than framing the concern as lag in learning and loss of learning, it may be better to focus our attention on what students are learning and what can be learnt in these conditions..."

I think we would all agree that learning in a home based learning environment *is different* to what it is face to face.

Through the **HBL+ program**, and in conjunction with our **Learning Support** staff we are targeting our students that require extra support in their learning. From the research these students are the ones that may be more vulnerable in Home Based Learning.

Over the next few weeks I will showcase some of the work that is being produced by students with the curriculum being delivered in a Home Based environment.



Our reporting at this end of this term for students in Years Intake 2021 to Year 10 - [will be based on this rubric](#).

Linked here is a [visual graphic \(infographic of Dr Andrew Fraser's Review Paper\)](#). Well worth a look!

Maybe an activity for the students and parents/guardians - would be for your young person to have a conversation with yourselves about where they see themselves on this rubric for each of their subjects and compare that with how their teachers have seen it.



Year 12 Update

Last evening I hosted a meeting for all Year 12 students and their parents/guardians. It was great to have just over 100 people in the Zoom audience. We discussed the way forward following their just completed *Alternative Assessment Tasks* to the start of their HSC Exams listed for 9 November. A model was presented - [Our Journey to Mt Kosciuszko](#), about what these 11 weeks would look and more importantly feel like. Consultation around this model is open till 10am on Monday.



A Message for Father's Day

This weekend as we celebrate Father's Day, we give thanks for all the father figures in our lives and pray for God's blessing upon them as they live out this pivotal role. Please enjoy this video with some of our students saying why they are grateful for their Dad, as a message of gratitude to all dads and father figures in our community. Here are some thoughts from a few of our students in a [Father's Day message video](#).

Here also is the [Father's Day Prayer](#) used during our Liturgy of the Word today:

Loving God, Jesus taught us to call you 'Father' as a reminder of your great love for us.

We give you thanks today for our fathers, grandfathers, uncles, and all father-figures who nurture and guide us with wisdom.

Grant them the courage of St Joseph who remained faithfully by Mary's side, guiding and protecting the child Jesus and dreaming for him a better future.

We pray for God's wisdom, blessing and guidance in the lives of these fathers today and every day. Amen.



Timetable for Week 9

Please find the new [Timetable for Week 9](#).

This Week: Wear Yellow for R U OK? Day!

Next Wednesday (8 Sept), we will be holding a Virtual Mufti Day for R U OK? Day with all students (and staff) encouraged to **wear yellow** and join in the activities during Mentor and Period 1 on this day via Zoom.

[Watch our RU OK? Day video](#) and check Google Classroom for more details soon. We also encourage all students to explore www.ruok.org.au.



Pastoral Care & Wellbeing



Year 9 Camp (Term 4)

Due to COVID-19 restrictions continuing, unfortunately we will not be able to proceed with the Year 9 camp that was scheduled for October. Parents and carers who receive a school fee invoice for their Year 9 child, please disregard the 'School Camp' amount and withhold paying that portion of the fees.

Should you have any questions in relation to this, please do not hesitate to [contact the College](#).

Family Welfare Checks

As part of the College's commitment to supporting our families during this challenging time, our wonderful Administration Team is in the process of making contact with all parents/carers to 'check-in', on behalf of Mr Gleeson, and to see if there is anything that the College can do to further help their child or family. If the Admin Team was unable to speak with you, they have either left a voicemail message or have followed-up with an email. If you would like to reach out to the College for support, [please do so](#).

Student Wellbeing Surveys

We continue to survey students each Tuesday morning to check-in on their mental health and wellbeing. Over the course of time however, the number of students completing the survey has declined. This survey is not compulsory but can we please ask you to speak with your young person about this and encourage them to complete the survey, especially if they are struggling and would like some additional support.

Wellbeing Resources

Our [Wellbeing Resource Pack \(V3\)](#) is available with resources and tools to help us all maintain positive mental health. Of course, if a student is in need of pastoral help and support, they can reach out at any time to their Mentor Teacher, Learning Support Case Manager, Year Leader or the Director of Pastoral Care and Wellbeing [Mr Nathan Smith](#) at any time.



Student Notices - Reminders

Mentor Period - A gentle reminder that Mentor period commences today at **8:35am**. All 7-11 students are expected to attend these important 'connection' sessions with your Mentors to relax and have an informal talk with your peers.

Year 12 - all Year 12 students are now expected to attend scheduled Zoom lessons for the remainder of Term III. These lessons will be important to attend as it relates to specific feedback from the recent assessments and feed-forward strategies in preparing for the final HSC exams.

Year 11 - Preliminary HSC online assessments

A reminder that The final Preliminary HSC assessments will commence **Friday 10 September** (Week 9) and conclude **Friday 17 September in Week 10** (inclusive). Regular Year 11 Zoom classes will not be conducted during this assessment - as per usual practice. Further details including the assessment timetable, dates/timings, and online expectations are now available via the Year 11 Google classroom page and Compass.

Zoom Protocols

A few gentle reminders:

- Please ensure that you are appropriately dressed in College tracksuit/Year 12 jersey and that your background is suitable;
- Please remember to remain within the Zoom session for the entirety of the lesson;

- Students need to activate their camera and show their face when requested by the teacher;
- Please remember to actively engage with the teacher during the whole lesson.

For Students Attending Onsite - Face Masks & Check-in

It is most important that ALL students who visit the campus wear a face mask in line with NSW Health requirements. Students are also expected to check-in via front reception (see Mrs Bodle) and via Student Services (see Mrs Raso) before they commence their Zoom lessons in the Aquinas Resource Centre, alternate assessments, or major work projects in the Mary MacKillop Centre.

Zoom Attendance

It is expected that all students consistently attend their scheduled Zoom lesson - if there are technical difficulties please email your respective teacher via your DBB account to keep them updated. Please also encourage your parents/carers to continue to use the **Compass Attendance Note** platform to lodge any absences for medical, family, and/or internet/WiFi reasons.

Pathways & Careers - Aviation Careers

For those interested in a high-flying career, there will be an online presentation on **Aviation Careers and launch of the 2022 Women Pilot Scholarship** next **Friday, 10 September at 2pm**. [Read more...](#)



Lockdown Video Competition

The 'Youth Voices' COVID-19 video competition for high school students' closes at 5pm on Friday, 17 September and invites students to produce and submit videos on one of the following topics:

1. COVID-19 Vaccinations: encouraging people to protect themselves
2. Looking after your wellbeing during the pandemic
3. Tackling COVID-19 misinformation and myths.

[Read competition details.](#)



Reminder: The Leo's in Lockdown Activity Challenge

It's not too late to join the **Leo's in Lockdown Activity Challenge** - a set of fun challenges for all students to participate in. From bottle flipping to cooking, juggling to paper aeroplane making, students can do them as one-off challenges, a few times or daily.

The more activities they try, the more points their House will receive, and better chance they have of winning one of our participation prizes! To begin the challenge, students can simply download the [Tally Sheet](#). Instructions/details have been posted on their Google Classroom pages. Students should contact [Mr Kember](#) if they have any questions.



To celebrate the start of the Paralympics, and to just keep busy and fit in lockdown, we invite you to join our...

Leo's in Lockdown 2021 Activity Challenge

Participate in a series of fun challenges, from bottle flipping to cooking, juggling to paper aeroplane making - and earn House points!

Do them as one-off challenges, a few times or daily while the Paralympics are on to show your improvement.

The more activities, the more points your House will receive, and you better chance of winning one of our participation prizes!

To begin the challenge, simply download the [Tally Sheet](#) with instructions!
Any questions? Email Mr Kember.

Liverpool Football Academy Home Training Program

The lights, the crowd, that famous anthem as you walk onto the grounds of Anfield - a dream of so many boys and girls around the world. Anfield was rocking last Saturday night when the Reds faced Chelsea in one of the matches of the season so far.



So what do you have in common with the current Liverpool players? That's right, they all started at local ovals practicing skills and working on their game. Our current situation may not be ideal, but it gives you ample opportunity to get down and work on that agility, turning skills, and this week's focus - that all important first touch, just like current midfield maestro Fabinho.

This week's program also explores the importance of sleep and nutrition for athletic performance. Try the new recipe, Cherry Clafoutis, and then after washing up use that tea towel for Andreas Kornmayer's core session. Good luck and remember to send some videos or pictures of yourselves doing the sessions!

Here is the Liverpool Football [Week 7 Program](#).



Reminder: School Fee Assistance

Again a reminder that fee assistance is available to families who may need help with school fees. Contact the **CSBB Fee Liaison Team** via schoolfees@dbb.org.au or 9847 0728.

All College communications concerning Covid-19 (i.e. **Letters Nos 1-13**) are also listed on the [Remote Learning page of the College website for your reference](#).

We are very conscious of the impact this lockdown will have on our staff, students and families. We are in regular contact with Catholic Schools NSW and will keep you updated as further information is available.

Thank you for your support of our school. Our prayers are with you and please stay safe!



Tony Gleeson
Principal