

Dear parents/carers

As we begin a new week and Australia continues its battle with the Coronavirus, and we manage the impact Stage 3 restrictions have had on our daily lives, I'm reminded of the quote by Helen Keller:

“Optimism is the faith that leads to achievement. Nothing can be done without hope and confidence.”

The Covid-19 stage 3 restrictions present challenges at a personal level where: social activities are curtailed, you may be caring for young children whilst helping school-aged children with school work, you are supporting teenage children, you may be apart from older children, you are unable to see elderly parents, unable to attend gyms etc.

Be assured that Casterton Secondary College staff are meeting the daily challenges of remote flexible learning. Although the planning/and correction of student work for remote learning is challenging and the daily remote contact with classes/students is sometimes interrupted when the internet drops out, please know that staff are committed to ensuring your child/children are being supported to achieve success.

I am proud of the high level of cooperation, shared responsibility and collegiate support of CSC staff. The school is taking a staged positive approach to remote online learning and I believe we are successfully supporting our students with their learning whilst the quality of teaching and learning is not being compromised, due to the individual and collective efforts of staff, parents and students.

Below is some information from the DET website you may find useful.

How you can support your child

You can support your child by:

- having a routine and setting expectations
- making sure your child has a space to work in,
- providing a level of supervision suitable to your child's stage of development and individual needs
- monitoring communications from teachers
- checking in with your child often to help them manage and pace their work
- monitoring how much time your child is spending online

Setting up a learning environment

Every home is different but it's important to provide a quiet and comfortable space in which to learn.

Where possible, extended learning should take place in a space your family shares. For example, a lounge room or dining room. These spaces are preferable over a bedroom, where your child can feel isolated and supervision can be more challenging.

It should be a place:

- that can be quiet at times
- that has a strong internet signal, if possible
- where you or another adult is present as you would normally when your child is online, dependent on age

Establishing routines and expectations

Start and end each day with a check-in to help your child:

- clarify and understand the instructions they get from their teachers
- help them organise themselves and set priorities for their learning at home
- A healthy daily routine is great for mental and physical health, as well as concentration and learning
- Encourage regular exercise breaks. This might mean going for a walk, using exercise DVDs and apps, dancing, floor exercises or using home exercise equipment
- Encourage healthy eating habits and make sure they drink enough water

Communicating with your child

We encourage you to start and finish each day with a simple check-in. These check-ins can be a regular part of each day.

Morning Check-ins

In the morning, ask:

- What are you learning today?
- What are your learning targets or goals?
- How will you be spending your time?
- What resources do you need?
- What support do you need?

Afternoon check-ins

In the afternoon, ask:

- What did you learn today?
- What was challenging? You could come up with a way to deal with the same problem if it comes up again.
- Consider three things that went well today. Why were they good?
- Are you ok? Do you need to ask your teacher for something? Do you need help with something to make tomorrow more successful?

The link to the **Covid-19 – Victorian Department of Health and Human Services Health Information site.**

<https://www.dhhs.vic.gov.au/coronavirus>

The school continues to provide support through:

- IT support is provided by Aaron McKinnon
- Members of leadership are available during the day to answer questions and chat
- Front office staff are available to respond to queries, etc.
- You can send messages through XUNO to CSC staff – you will receive a response within 24 hours
- The CSC Website which provides user guides relating to online learning and a dedicated Covid-19 link.

Leadership Team: Meridith Walker (Principal); John Webb (Assistant Principal); Jo McKenzie (Director of Teaching and Learning); Carina Barton (Middle School Leader); Renae Newell (Senior School Leader) and Renee Jukes (Business Manager).

It is gratifying to be part of a school community that remains positive and optimistic. I am confident that the structures the school has in place to support remote online learning will ensure a smooth transition to on-site learning when the Victorian Chief Medical Officer and Government deems it safe to return.

Take care and warmest regards
Meridith