



# Minlaton District School

*'By Deeds Not Words'*

Issue 6  
7<sup>th</sup> April 2020

Ph: (08)8853 2346 Fax: (08) 8853 2531 <http://www.minlatonds.sa.edu.au/>



That we live in unprecedented times is a bit of a cliché that has been doing the rounds recently, but I have to admit that it does sum up our current situation. Today as I write, our staff team, teachers and SSOs are upskilling themselves on the use of a variety of platforms that will allow us to connect with our students from the beginning of Term 2 as we embark on our remote learning journey. What unfolds from Monday April 26<sup>th</sup> will be quite a different learning environment for our whole school community. Invariably we will get things wrong, there will be things that won't work, we will all be anxious, and we will wish dearly that we could go back to the way it was before Covid-19. However, we will also embrace the new challenges that confront us; we'll learn from our mistakes, resolve the

issues that arise, we will become comfortable with a new mode of learning and teaching and we will begin to see opportunities for the future. Like our students, we will engage our Growth Mindset and show resilience in the face of change; and who knows what wonderful things we can achieve?

The situation as at April 7<sup>th</sup>, is that our Prime Minister is asking everyone who can stay at home, to stay at home. This means that if you have the capacity to support your child/children to engage in their learning at home, you should do so. For those students who don't have devices, we will lend a school device. If your home has limited or no internet access our Department is working with Telstra for ways to support you. While I don't yet have the specific details of how this might unfold, your provision of information via the surveys and follow up phone calls in the past fortnight will allow me to contact those who require this support.

On Wednesday we will be sending home our MDS Remote Learning document via email. This is a guide for parents and students about how we will operate learning at MDS for Term 2. Soon we will also be asking our **Primary parents to collect 'learning packs'** which have been created for R – 5 students for the start of Term 2 (check Dojo for details). This collection will take place from the front entrance of the library and will be staggered to ensure that we don't inadvertently break the rules around physical distancing. It is important that you do not begin the work in these packs over the 'holiday break' as the explicit teaching which supports the material will be delivered next term either via Zoom or Class Dojo. Staff will upload specific Week 1 instructions on Dojo for Primary and Daymap for Middle and Senior students on Sunday April 25<sup>th</sup> in preparation for the beginning of Term 2.

For our Middle and Senior students, in many ways it is business as usual. Daymap will still contain all of the information about the teaching and learning program and our students will use it in much the same way that they use it now. The key difference for students will be in the 'face to face video collaborations' that teachers will invite students to join during the learning week using either the Zoom or Microsoft Teams platforms. We will upload student tutorials for accessing Zoom and Teams on the MDS website and via Daymap during the second week of the school holidays and students will receive invitations via their Learnlink email to access these online platforms.

I need to be very clear that all students, whether they are at home or attending school because their parents are working in essential roles, will be accessing their learning through remote means. This means a different timetable, different expectations, new ways of connecting and sharing with their teachers and support staff. We

need to be realistic about what we can deliver, start slowly and build our expectations as our school community's capacity grows.

For parents at home, you are not teachers and we do not expect you to teach.

Your role is to:

- care for your child, and provide them with support and encouragement,
- have oversight of their engagement in the learning that is being provided by making sure they have the right environment and are prepared for learning,
- ensure that they take the recommended breaks and spend time away from screens engaging in physical activity
- maintain your connection with the school by monitoring your emails, [Class Dojo for Primary parents and Daymap for our Middle and Secondary parents].

You can appreciate that this is a demanding time for our staff. Your child will have a timetable which shows them when their 'lessons' are scheduled and when they need to be 'in face to face collaboration'. Students are encouraged to seek support from their teachers during their scheduled lessons and teachers will follow up requests for assistance during some of their Non Instruction Time (NIT). It is important that students and/or parents do not expect immediate responses from teachers. I have provided a very clear instruction to staff that they limit their correspondence with students and parents to within the normal parameters of a 'school day', and I respectfully suggest that students and parents also follow this guideline.

Before I close my remarks this fortnight I would like to acknowledge and thank staff members who will not be returning next term. Claudia Agnew has been working in our Middle and Senior years this term while Sarah Rothe has been on leave and Beth Badman has been working in the Primary years. Thank you both for engaging our children in some wonderful learning; it's been a real joy to have you as part of the MDS team. As many parents would already be aware, Katie Hocking is heading off to prepare for the birth of her first child and we wish both Katie and Stuart all the best as they begin the biggest and most important job in the world – parenthood. I am delighted to announce that Susie Reynolds is returning to MDS and will take over Katie's 2/3 class in Term 2. Susie has been with us this week as we prepare for our 'new world order' and will be in contact via Dojo with her class and parents soon.

Events in the world in recent months have required us all to shift our usual mode of operation in all aspects of our lives. The signs are promising that if we all adhere strictly to the recommendations around distancing, hygiene and staying at home, it is possible that we will reduce the impact of Covid-19 on our population.

I wish you all well and look forward to some serious crossing waving as soon as it's declared safe for you all to be back! Ali

## Storytime Online

Staff at MDS have been finding new ways to make sure students have been getting at least one story read to them each day by posting daily online picture book readings to the School and Library Facebook pages. Our resident guru Aaron has trained up Rick, Kate and Candy on the technical side of editing these videos and so far we've had nothing but positive feedback, both from our own community and further afield – with some videos up to over 2000 views! We encourage all parents to follow these pages and show your kids their daily story. Parents are also encouraged to read regular stories to their children and of course, to listen to their children read. We would love to see some storytelling videos coming from home too! If you are happy to do this you may consider posting videos of your child or a parent reading, either on social media, or post it on Class Dojo for your teacher to see. Please indicate to your teacher if you would like them to share these with the rest of the class.

"Hilarious! All the boys loved it." Steph

"Toby was asking for his library story time tonight. It has become part of our isolation night time routine. Everyone was dancing and singing along. Keep them coming." Beth

"Loved it! Working from home has its benefits.....I can watch all these awesome libraries storytimes without having to have a child with me. Great start to my work day". Susan

"I watched it from the beginning to the end even though it's not aimed for my age bracket!!! 😊 awesome job 😊." Tammy

If you would like to watch our daily stories, head to either the library Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/MinlatonLibrary/> or the school page:

<https://www.facebook.com/minlatonds/>

We hope you and your children have enjoyed these videos and we look forward to continuing this program while so many of our students are at home, Mr Cook.



## The Bee Hotel

Year 1/2's have been studying agriculture and the processes of growing and preparing food for our plate (eating). Without the assistance of native bees our crops and gardens would be less productive. So, being the kind and thoughtful community we are, the R-3 children helped Jodi and I make a sustainable native bee hotel out of recycled and natural materials. Now these beautiful creatures will feel even more at home in our garden. Vacancies are now available. Ms Badman



*Farewell for now Miss Hocking,  
Best wishes from all at MDS*