



Sheoak Grove Primary School

Newsletter

As you might expect, this edition of our newsletter is dominated by the continued response to COVID-19 and how it is impacting on the way we are delivering education next term.

Term 1, Week 10

Last week the Minister of Education announced that Week 10 (April 6 – 9) is a pupil free week to allow schools to prepare for online and distance learning delivery for students in Term 2.

In our context, this means that only students for whom no safe, viable alternative within the context of the COVID-19 restrictions can be found should be at school next week. Those students who do come to school will be supervised.

Learning at Home - Term 2

As you would know through reading our Connect notices, school will look completely different next term. We will be delivering lessons to your home using a mix of online learning and work packages. There are two online platforms that we ask that you prepare now to get ready:

Connect: The vast majority of parents are now familiar with Connect. Our teachers have contacted most, if not all of you this week to make sure that you can access and use the platform effectively. It probably works best through a web browser, however, you can use it effectively through the Connect Now app. It is free, and it can be downloaded through your app store. The icon looks like this:



All of the learning content that will be stored on Connect will also be mirrored on our school website. Each class will have a page on the site with the content stored just in case Connect becomes slow through peak network times during the week. Our school website is <https://sheoakgroveps.wa.edu.au>. You will be able to find the “At Home Learning” tab under the “For Parents” menu.

Webex: Webex is a web conferencing application that will allow us to hold live sessions for each class and the whole school each week. It will also allow our teachers to video lessons and messages for our students for them to view at any time.

We plan for each class to have two separate hour long live sessions per week with their classroom teacher, as well as live sessions for each specialist teacher across the school. This will give our students the chance to see their teacher and each other. It will give students and parents the chance to ask questions about learning activities, and give us the chance to share and celebrate learning with each other. This will be very important.

We also plan to hold virtual assemblies and story times across each week. These will be important opportunities for our school community to keep connecting. They will also be recorded and be available to view afterward.

Webex can be viewed through a web browser on laptops and PCs, but is also effectively viewed through an app on both of these as well as on mobile devices. Again, it is free, and can be downloaded through your app store. The app icon looks like this:



We chose these platforms because they are free, they are supported by the Department of Education, and they will have a minimal effect on your home data usage. We urge everyone to make sure they can navigate effectively through Connect as soon as it is practically possible. We will be having some webex trials next week to ensure that we can use it effectively in Term 2. No doubt there will be some bugs for us to iron out during this trial process, which is why it is so important for us to implement them before this term ends.

Parent guides for both Connect and webex will be available for parents next week.

Home Networks and Devices

We have had a survey on Connect this week in order to try and tailor our plans for our community. We are aware that different families will have different IT resources in the home. Some children will be sharing devices, some families will be dealing with more than one school and you will have different data plans and connectivity strengths. This magnifies the challenge that we have.

We have had a survey on Connect so that we could collect that data, and our teachers have been having conversations with parents in order to follow those responses up. If you believe you will have overwhelming issues in accessing our online learning components, please be in touch with your child's classroom teacher next week and they will discuss how we can best support your situation.

Work Packages and Learning Resources

Where our students cannot access the online components of our programs for next term, we will be providing work packages. While these do present logistical challenges, we are determined to provide all of our students

with access to the best learning opportunities possible through this time.

Most of our learning programs will be enhanced by having the appropriate learning resources for children to work with. That might mean counters, dice, reading materials, protractors or compasses or resources like that. Where that is the case, these will be available in packs for each child for collection from the front of our school each week. They would be returned to the school the same way when parents come to collect the next pack. Parents will be notified of the availability of these packs as we progress through each week.

At Home Learning Environments

There are many tips available online for parents to consider when setting up optimal environments for students to learn effectively at home. We will have a guide for parents available on Connect today. It was created by one of our awesomely creative teachers, Mrs Paine. It is recorded through webex.

How Long Will This Be For?

While we obviously cannot predict government direction through the COVID-19 crisis, all schools are planning to have their own versions of this available throughout Term 2. It may be the case that we are called back to normal school arrangements earlier, however the Prime Minister has repeatedly stated that social restrictions will be in place long term, and our Department of Education has supported this message. Whatever the short to mid-term situation is, you can be sure that we will be working hard to continue to develop our programs and delivery to best meet the needs of our students.

Parent Communication

As noted in numerous places over the course of this term, Connect is now a crucial part of our communication suite. It will become even more critical through next term. We urge you to check the notices and other areas of connect as regularly as possible.

At the end of this term we will remove our Facebook Messenger capability. Our Facebook page will remain, however we encourage parents to email us at sheoakgrove.ps@education.wa.edu.au phone us on 9523 5400 or visit our webpage at <https://sheoakgroveps.wa.edu.au> as well as visit our connect page regularly.

School Board

Thank you to our School Board for their support of our school during the challenges we have been working through during the second part of this term.

We will be using webex to meet next week before working out an online meeting and agenda schedule through next term.

P&C Easter Raffle



Speaking of being grateful of support, we want to thank our P&C for their wonderful support over the last few weeks too. They have provided a treat for the few students we have had attending this week and a wonderful surprise for our staff. Thank you!

They also conducted our first ever Easter Raffle through very extenuating circumstances and did a wonderful job in raising funds through this too. Thank you to all of our families who donated Easter eggs, and congratulations to the winners of the raffle, which was conducted online earlier this week.

Thank you to every member of our school community for your continued support and understanding through this unprecedented challenge for our school and for schools across our system. A particular thank you to those who have contacted us, sent us messages of support and have demonstrated that support to us in different ways. Our staff and the students who have been here this week have appreciated it very much.

I also want to publicly acknowledge and thank our staff. Each and every one of them in every position in our school is working very hard to solve the challenges that these issues are presenting us. I am very proud to have them here at Sheoak Grove, and I am very thankful for their team spirit and their will to embrace immediate change and innovative solutions.

To all of our students, we miss you, and we can't wait to have you back here at our school! We hope that you are all trying hard to learn at home, and we are really looking forward to seeing you online in Term 2. We know you will be missing your teachers and your friends, and we will be doing as much as we can to keep you connected to everyone as we go. In the meantime, keep listening to Mum and Dad!

COVID-19 is an incredible and daunting challenge for all governments, organizations and families all over the world. I sincerely hope that all of you, your families and extended families across the globe are safe, and that your employment and/or business is unaffected. However, if that isn't the case for you, please let us know if we can support your family in any way.

I am very much looking forward to the day when we can get back to normal, and we can see our Sheoak Grove community back at our fantastic school.

Craig Stanners
Principal