



Principal's Update 3: - Friday 6/8/21

Dear Parents and Caregivers,

1. The Lockdown Continues

As you would all know as of last week Sydney will be continuing in Lockdown and Online Learning for at least a further 3 weeks, until Saturday 28/8/21.

We are all hoping that increased vaccination rates that the strict lockdown restriction that we in Western and South Western Sydney are enduring will bring the numbers down.

2. School is Open – But parents need to keep their children at home when ever possible.

A very big thanks to the many families that have been able to keep their children at home and engage in online learning from home.

At Blacktown South PS we have had only small numbers of students attending averaging about 2% of our school population.

We have reduced our staff onsite to only two teachers, an office person and one member of the executive. A maximum of 4 staff.

I appreciate how difficult it has been keeping children at home. I would sincerely like to thanks our whole school community for your support in this area.

3. Online Learning Challenges

Thanks to the many families that have supported their children with online learning. We have a huge number of students who have connected to our online learning activities and Class Zooms.

I need to also acknowledge the strain that managing online learning is having for many families particularly as the duration of this lockdown continues. My teachers and executive have talked with many families who are finding the demands of juggling their children's online learning online, their own online work commitment and the stress of being locked down almost overwhelming.

Mrs Francis, our Deputy Principal, Instructional Leader posted a most important message on our School Facebook last week-

'As this week comes to a close, the BSPS staff would like to say a very big thank you to our students and families for your hard work and patience during these 'unprecedented' times.

Remote learning as a parent can be tough and we appreciate that it isn't always easy to manage the changing restrictions, juggle the household and/or work and have your children learning from home!

We understand that our families are all coping differently and that some days are better than others. We understand it may be stressful at times and encourage our families to take a break if it is all feeling a bit overwhelming and reach out if you need assistance.

I would like to echo Mrs Francis' encouragement to be kind to yourself and your family. To say all our families that your own and your children's mental and physical wellbeing is the most important consideration at the moment. If the circumstances of your family's day or days become overwhelming school work can and should be put aside for a time. If needed, please 'take a break' from online learning.

4. Concerns about Students Missing Important Concepts

Though teachers are teaching new concepts online, please do not stress that your child is falling behind or missing out if they can do all online activities.

When school returns, there will be much opportunity for revision and reteaching of concepts covered while online.

For students who haven't been able to engage online there will be opportunity if needed for those students to work with our Specialist Teachers to help them catch up with things missed.

Mrs Zouriakas, who supervises our Specialist Teachers is already planning for our return and how we can best support any students in need.

5. Australian Principals' Day – 6/8/21

A wonderful video has just been shared with me today to celebrate Australian Principals' Day.

This video featured many beautiful pictures of our BPS students, their beautiful smiling faces and wonderful messages of encouragement and appreciation.

I have been greatly touched boys and girls, parents and staff by the great effort made.

It has absolutely made my day, week and year.

Please stay safe

Andrew Bowmer

Principal – Blacktown South Public School