

Dear Parents and Carers

On behalf of our school, I want to say a big thank you to all our students, parents and carers for your continued resilience and support throughout this year. I know remote and flexible learning has not always been easy, but through our collective efforts, our students have continued to make valuable progress in their learning. You can be confident that our school will support any student who has fallen behind to catch up.

Term 4 is important for every Victorian student, and our teachers will strive to deliver high-quality learning for everyone. Whether we're teaching remotely or face-to-face, our focus for Term 4 is on making sure that every student is supported in their wellbeing, learning and transition needs.

The Victorian Government has outlined the staged return to on-site schooling for all students as part of its gradual roadmap towards reopening.

## Term 4 on-site schooling arrangements for students

Following advice of the Victorian Chief Health Officer, the Victorian Government has released a staged approach for students to return to on-site schooling.

The purpose of the plan is to get students back in the classroom as soon and as safely as possible without putting at risk all that has been achieved through the period of restrictions to reduce the spread of coronavirus (COVID-19).

For our school, the following arrangements apply:

### **5–9 October (first week of Term 4)**

- remote and flexible learning will continue for all students
- on-site supervision for children of permitted workers and vulnerable students will continue to be provided, consistent with existing guidelines.

### **From 12 October (second week of Term 4)**

- students in Prep to Year 6 will return to on-site schooling. The existing remote learning program will not continue for these year levels

Students and staff who live in metropolitan Melbourne and are enrolled in or work in a school in regional Victoria will be able to attend on-site consistent with the arrangements above.

## Outside school hours care and vacation care

During the staged return, outside school hours care will be available to students attending for on-site supervision and progressively for the relevant year levels returning to on-site schooling.

## Health and safety measures

The Term 3 remote and flexible learning arrangements were put in place to significantly reduce the movement of more than one million students and their families across Victoria, to help slow the spread of coronavirus (COVID-19). Thanks to you and your family for contributing to this on behalf of our school community.

As on-site schooling resumes, we will continue to have in place strong measures to protect the health and safety of students, staff, families and the community. This includes staggering start and finish times, restricting parent access to school grounds and continued emphasis on hand hygiene and physical distancing where possible.

Please give particular attention to reducing the risks associated with congregation at school gates and taking steps to contribute to physical distancing within the school.

Whether your children are returning to face-to-face learning or will be continuing with remote and flexible learning for a short period, please be assured we will be focused on three key priorities in Term 4:

### **1. Mental health and Wellbeing**

Our highest priority will be the wellbeing, particularly the mental health, of every student and member of staff. This means effectively mobilising all available resources to support our most vulnerable students and enabling staff to access the relevant support services.

### **2. Learning and Excellence**

Some of our students have thrived in the remote and flexible learning environment, others have maintained their learning progress, and some have fallen behind, despite their best efforts and those of their families and teachers. Our priority will be supporting both those who need it to catch up and those who have progressed to continue to extend their learning.

### **3. Transitions**

We will make every effort to ensure successful transitions for children moving from kindergarten into Prep, the Year 6s moving into Year 7, and the Year 12s moving into employment or further education and training.

We know some families are worried that their child may have to repeat a year due to the disruptions of coronavirus (COVID-19). There is little evidence to support the benefits of repeating a year to catch up. Instead, schools will use teaching strategies that draw on the best evidence available to help students meet their learning needs.

Parents, families and carers can be confident that the best option for almost every child is to stay with their peer group, whether that is moving from kindergarten into Prep, moving from Year 6 into Year 7 at secondary school, or students moving up any year level in between.

Our school, working with you, has shown it can be flexible and adaptable in responding to the challenges of coronavirus (COVID-19) and will continue to meet student needs as we look towards the end of the 2020 school year and ahead to 2021.

### Community Feedback

A big thank you to the parent community for providing feedback in relation to our planning for a return to on-site learning next week. We received 334 responses which was wonderful. Below is some of the data received:

As we plan for a return back to face-to-face teaching, which drop off and pick up process would work best for you and your family?

[More Details](#)

● Same approach as previous (Y...	272
● Alphabetical Surname drop of...	30
● Other	29



To support staggered drop offs, please indicate the times that work for your family?

[More Details](#)

from 8:30am	154
from 8:45am	117
from 9am	41
Other	16



To support staggered pick up, please indicate the times that work for your family?

[More Details](#)

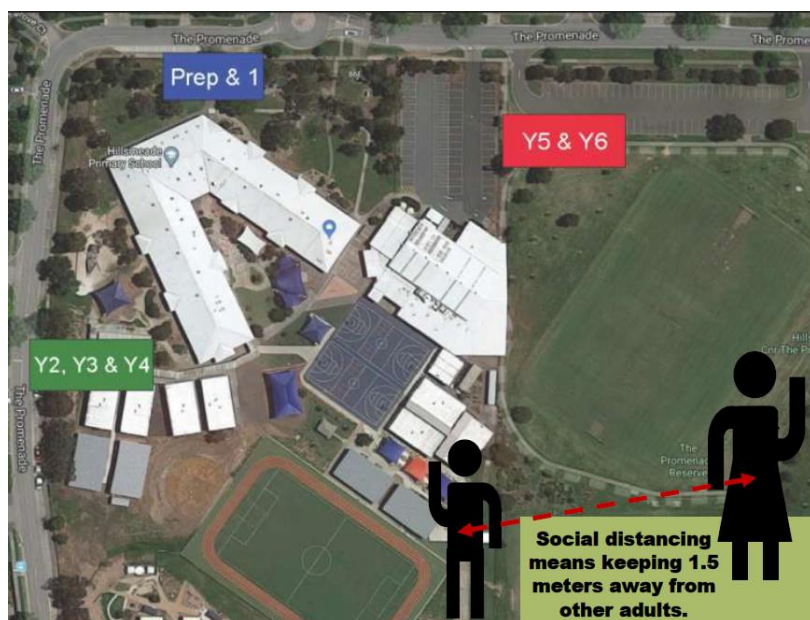
from 2:45pm	55
from 3pm	51
from 3:15pm	88
from 3:30pm	135



Thank you for providing feedback to support the planned response to return in Term 4.

## Arrival Entry Points

Next week (beginning Monday the 12<sup>th</sup> of October) we will continue utilising the below gates (the same as previously) for staggered arrival at school. **From 8:30am** students are to enter school using the below gates:



### Preps and Year 1:

The front two gates.

### Year 2, Year 3 and Year 4:

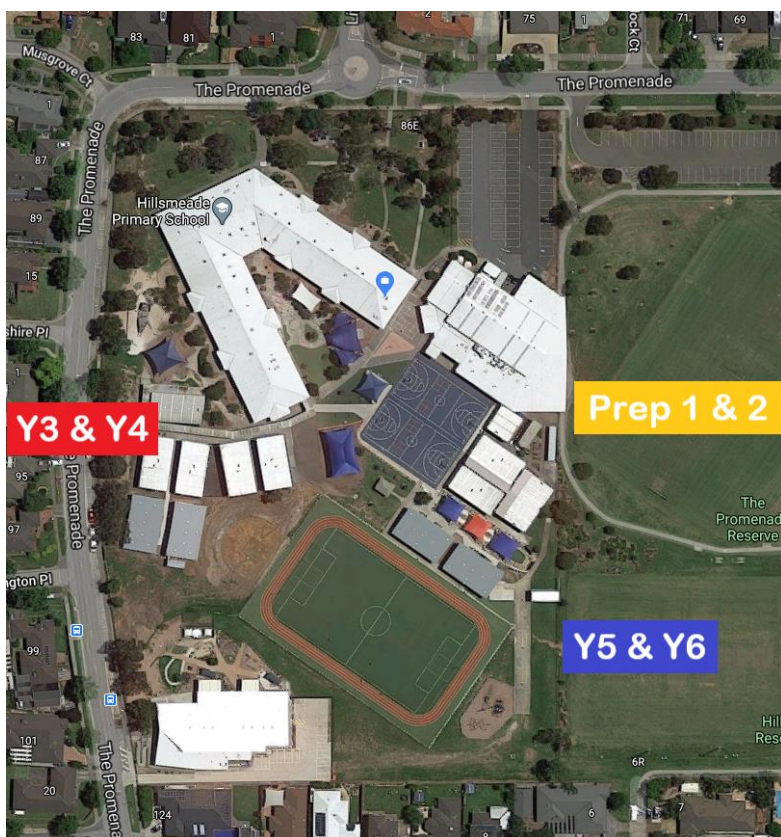
The gates near the pirate ship.

### Year 5 and Year 6:

The soccer oval entry, nearest the car park.

## Departure Exit Points

Pick-up was quite congested and based on feedback received we will be changing the pick-up points for students to support parents and carers in social distancing at the end of the day. The pick-up points will be from 3:15pm and will utilise the following areas:



### **Prep, Year 1 and Year 2:**

Exit via the music room gate, via soccer oval. Parents should wait socially distanced on the soccer oval.

### **Year 3 and Year 4**

Exit via the pirate ship gates. Parents should wait socially distanced outside the school fence line.

### **Year 5 and Year 6**

Exit via the Year 5/6 playground gate. Parents should wait socially distanced on the soccer oval.

The eldest child will collect younger siblings and exit through the gate of the eldest child. Students who ride to school will be able to also enter and exit through their Year level gate. Based on feedback students will be able to leave at 3:15pm to support less congestion.

Out of School Hours Care will continue to operate. If you need to confirm your child's attendance at OSHC please contact [oshc@hillsmeade.vic.edu.au](mailto:oshc@hillsmeade.vic.edu.au)

We will be using a staggered recess and lunchtime to support physical distancing.

A reminder that students can wear face masks at school if they choose to. There is hand sanitiser in each classroom, and soap in every wet area. Students will be encouraged to practice good hygiene, with regular hand washing throughout the day and on arrival at school. Mandatory temperature testing of all students on arrival to school will not be required in Term 4.

Parents and carers are required to wear a face mask and adhere to social distancing guidance (1.5 metres between each other as far as practicable) at the start and end of the school day.

We are really looking forward to having students back in attendance on site next week. Again, thank you for your continued support, effort and resilience.



Kind regards

**Jodie Bray**

Principal  
Hillsmeade Primary School