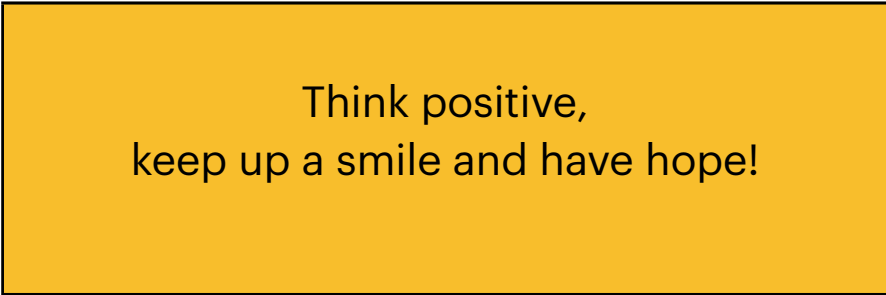




DATES TO REMEMBER 2020



Wednesday 15 April
First Day of Term 2



PRINCIPAL'S REPORT

Letter to Students

In light of the rather abrupt finish to the term, I wanted to reach out to you to encourage you to think positive, keep up a smile and have hope.

Please read the following letter and the accompanying two documents "The EHS Student" and "Wellbeing Update"

Good afternoon students,

In light of the current situation, it has not been possible to finish the Term in our usual way. With a large number of students not at school on Monday, the busyness of the day to get things happening and addressing the normal day-to-day demands, I did not have the opportunity to wish you well during this extended break nor to highlight some areas that I believe are important for you to consider.

I know that none of us would have wanted to see happen what is happening at the moment, the world in distress. However, this is where we are at and we are in it. The best thing we can all do is ensure that we work together and collaborate with the Government and health authorities, adhere to the requests and sanctions that have been put in place in order to ensure that we move through this disruption as quickly as we can.

As members of the Eltham High School community, we have a duty to uphold our school value of Social and Environmental Responsibility, to take personal action to ensure not only our own safety, health and wellbeing but also that of those around us.

Whilst I know that your parents have ultimate responsibility for you and for your overall health and wellbeing, for the moment, I actually want to take them out of this picture and work with you.

I know that as Eltham High School students, you are developing the skills, the resilience and the strength to take over the responsibility for your own thoughts and actions. I know that you will be able to adhere to the demands of government and health authorities and that you will do your very best to disrupt the disruption.

I am attaching for you "The EHS Student" document that will help guide your behaviours in order to maintain positive relationships as well as focus on your learning. This document will also be of great help to you should we need to move to remote learning.

When our Premier, Daniel Andrews, addressed the State in relation to an early start to the term break, he said that these holidays are not going to be the usual holidays that you have experienced in the past. Nothing could be so true.

I am sure that some of you sighed with relief in knowing that you were able to remain at home from Tuesday onwards. Whilst this may have sounded great initially, the realisation that it is going to be a holiday like you have never experienced before may gradually weigh down on you, and you may start to feel things that you have never felt before.

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APRIL

Wednesday 15

- First day of Term 2

The expectations around social isolation are serious, so it is not appropriate to be hanging around with your friends in each other's homes or other enclosed spaces. If you are going to physically catch up with your friends, whilst discouraged, an open space is preferable to an indoor space or enclosed area and even then, you need to adhere to the distancing rule of 1.5 meters away from other people.

You cannot be gathering in shopping centres or the skate park. There will be no going to the movies or sports venues and you even need to be mindful of visiting family especially if there are people in your family who are more vulnerable or at a higher risk such as the elderly and those who may have poor health.

I know that it is all looking a bit grim, but having said that, it does not have to be. You can still be in contact with your family and friends. Perhaps your connections through social media can be fully justified in this instance. However, please remember to use it for good and always to consider your safety when online. Be sure not to engage in any behaviour that may be considered bullying or harassment and if you see any of this behaviour call it out for what it is and try to put a stop to it. As a rule, remember never to make a comment online that you would never make to a person face-to-face.

If over the break, you start to feel down or experience feelings that you have never experienced before, please do not ignore these. As a first option, I would suggest that you speak to your parents if you feel that you can. Further to this you can access Louise Heathcote, Student Services Leader on 0417 364 940 or at hea@elthamhs.vic.edu.au

You may also have a look at the support provided by Blackdog Institute at <https://www.blackdoginstitute.org.au/getting-help/self-help-tools-apps/bite-back> as well as accessing any of the other resources that appear in the attached "Wellbeing Update" document.

It is important to keep positive, calm and connected: we are all in this together. Knowing that whilst you may be doing it tough, all of your friends and family members are also doing it tough will help remind you that you are not in this alone.

A smile, a positive attitude and hope will serve us all well in challenging times. This is one of those times. We will get through this even if it will take some time.

As for term 2, you are aware that the first day of term is a student-free day. At this moment I am looking forward to welcoming you all back to school on **Wednesday 15 April**. However, the Government may decide that you cannot come back to school on this day. If this is the case, we will be moving to remote learning.

All your teachers and school support staff are working hard to plan for this should we be directed to make it happen. Should this be the case, I will contact you to let you know.

Further information about remote learning, assessments, submission of work etc. will be provided to you in due course.

In the meantime, I want to wish you the best break you can possibly have.

I know that VCE students will have some work to do over the break but I encourage you to take some time out to rest and relax.

I strongly encourage all of you and in particular our senior students not to worry too much about the immediate future; we will be there beside you to support you to achieve the very best throughout this year. We have your interests at heart and you will not be doing this alone. For now, focus on the present and what you need to do to keep in step. Your teachers have already provided you with guidance and will continue to do so irrespective of the mode of learning we will engage with in term 2.

Have a wonderful Easter and rest assured that I will keep you informed of any updates.

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VINCENT SICARI, Principal

The EHS Student

As an EHS Student I recognise that there are positive consequences for appropriate behaviour and being engaged in my learning, including;

- Feeling valued and cared for, with strong engagement in the school culture
- Personal motivation, resulting in enhanced learning and confidence
- Participation in the academic, social and extra-curricular opportunities of the school.

	MAINTAIN POSITIVE RELATIONSHIPS	FOCUS ON LEARNING
Pursuit of Excellence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We can all learn from one another. • We have high expectations of ourselves and others. • We are mindful of everybody's right to learn. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We demonstrate effort and persistence in all of our work. • We recognise that doing our best takes time and effort, both in and outside of class.
Respect for Diversity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We value being part of a diverse school community. • We show respect to others in our words and in our actions. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We understand that being open-minded allows us to strengthen our own perspectives. • We recognise that everyone learns in their own way.
Social & Environmental Responsibility	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We take responsibility for our own actions. • We care for our environment so that the best learning community exists for us all. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We make sure we are prepared to learn. • We take responsibility for our own learning.
Integrity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We work together to create a positive learning community. • We make decisions based on our values. • We stand up for the rights of all. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We are respectful of the knowledge and ideas of others. • We have the confidence to try new things with our learning.
Individuality	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We are all individuals and know that allowing others to express their individuality is important. • We understand that while we may have different views and opinions, it is important that they are presented in a respectful way. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We set goals for our learning. • We recognise that not everyone learns in the same way or at the same rate. • We know that getting feedback on our work helps us to improve our learning.
Creativity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We are open to new ideas and possibilities. • We recognise that creativity is more likely when relationships are positive. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We know that creativity is a fundamental part of our learning. • We use a range of tools and processes to help us to think creatively. • We are open minded to a problem having more than one solution.

WELLBEING UPDATE

Dear Parents/Guardians and Students,

For the remainder of the week, across the holiday break and into next term as always it is imperative you care for your own mental health as well as that of members of your family. Especially in times of social isolation, we need to be vigilant around the following domains which can impact on our mental health:

- Physical health, nutrition and exercise;
- Social connection and feelings of self-worth;
- Feeling hopeful and optimistic.

I encourage you all to access and read the following article which speaks to managing worry and anxiety in uncertain times there are some super tips and suggestions

https://www.psychologytools.com/assets/covid-19/guide_to_living_with_worry_and_anxiety_amidst_global_uncertainty_en-gb.pdf

Further to this if you are concerned about the mental health of a young person in your household the following web and phone contacts are recommended:

- Headspace Greensborough - 94337200
- Eheadspace - 1800 650 890 (after hours as well) [ehespace.org.au](https://www.headspace.org.au) for online chats/sessions with counsellors
- Kids Help Line - 1800 650 890
- Beyond Blue - 1300 224 636

Recommended Online learning regarding mental health for young people and families –

<https://au.reachout.com/>

<https://www.blackdoginstitute.org.au/getting-help/self-help-tools-apps/bite-back>

Finally, I am contactable and available to students for counselling and advice on my work mobile: 0417 364 940 and email: hea@elthamhs.vic.edu.au

As part of my counselling role if students reach out to me via email or text, they will be able to make an appointment for a video counselling session on their phone or computer via the app ZOOM - <https://zoomappdownload.com/>

Kindest regards,

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LOUISE HEATHCOTE, Student Services Leader