



12 April 2020

Dear parents and carers,

As you are aware, the situation regarding coronavirus (COVID-19) continues to evolve. I hope that you have been able to enjoy what may have been a very different Easter break and are staying safe.

On behalf of School Council and myself, I wanted to take this time to write to you outlining what will be taking place for Term 2 at Alamanda College. As the Victorian Government has now advised, all schools will move to remote and flexible learning which is a **very clear directive by the Victorian Government based on the advice of the Chief Health Officer** and one that we must follow.

For us, as parents/careers, this means that our children must learn from home except for one of the following;

- Children on days where they are not able to be supervised at home and no other arrangements can be made. **If you are working from home then your children are being supervised and will be learning from home,**
- Children in out-of-home care, or
- Children deemed vulnerable by the school or have additional needs requiring further support.

If you are a parent/career that will need to send your child to school you will need to complete the attached 'On-site attendance form' and return it to school by 3.00pm on Monday, 13 April. Upon review and approval of the form you will be notified by the school along with the process of bringing your child to school. The form will need to be completed for each week your child needs to be at school. The reason for this is that teachers will be running their virtual classrooms from home and the school needs to ensure that there are the appropriate staff at school to supervise.

It is important to note that the school is required to follow the social distancing policy with on-site learning class sizes set at 1 staff to 8 students and the more staff

that are at school to supervise puts pressure on resources so please only children who fit into one of the above situations should attend school.

This will be different and challenging at times for us as parents, but the good news for Alamanda students is that the school already works in a digital space and the transition will be easier for them as they move into a virtual classroom. Those few children that will be on-site learning at school will also be in the virtual classroom. I am sure children have already been connecting through technology to stay in touch with one another during the holidays. The school is working through a process to help those students that do not have their own device at home. Please contact the office directly.

This is not distance learning where parents/careers become the teacher. The school day will remain very similar, with all students connecting to their classroom each morning where they will do a roll call and then complete their daily classes including speciality classes with recess and lunchtimes. Our role as parents is to make sure that they are ready each morning with snack and lunch and not in the backyard or on the couch when they should be in class. All we can do at this time is support the school and our children by trying our best, encouraging respect for learning and our teachers and trying to stay relaxed. I know at times it will be tempting to want to send your children to school because of the pressure of having them at home all the time but we can't do this because we will put too much of a strain on teachers and take a spot from a child who genuinely needs it. We may have teething problems while we all get used to this big change but we will get through it together.

I would also like to point out that the school's grounds are closed and limited to school staff, students only when attending on-site learning and contractors such as cleaners and maintenance workers.

All of the staff at Alamanda in the last 3 weeks have been working hard knowing that there was a strong possibility of this happening to ensure that our children start term 2 on the right foot and I thank them for everything that they have done.

It's going to be critically important that we work very closely together to ensure that we provide the very best possible support for the ongoing wellbeing and learning of our children and as a community. The Alamanda College community is a special one and I know that we can do this. There may be a few issues as we work through this but be patient and let's stick together.

Yours sincerely,

**Jason Rowe**

School Council President



12 April 2020

Dear Parents and Caregivers,

On Thursday evening, I received the update from DET **re: Remote Learning Guidelines April 9, 2020 forward**. I have taken the time required today and yesterday (with leaders) to read all the information provided.

There is a clear message from the DET and the Minister James Merlino and the Premier Daniel Andrews – **“All children MUST be learning from home, except children on days when they are not able to be supervised at home and no other arrangements can be made”**.

Some important points to discuss:

**Devices:**

We have requested staff to let our ICT team (and myself) know if families need a loan device (iPad/MacBook). To support the capacity for all families to have devices, we have purchased 110 devices. My ICT staff will arrange appointments for collection and parents will be asked/required to sign a loan agreement. This contact will take place on Monday and Tuesday – of this week – we are presently discussing best pick up or delivery options.

**It is important to understand the following points:**

- If your child/children attends school for supervision he/she will continue to follow the same remote and flexible program provided by the class teacher via their device brought to school from home; that is the same remote learning program is followed by all students, whether learning from home or when supervised at school.
- Supervision will be provided by a volunteer teacher and/or education support staff member, not necessarily your child’s teacher.
- If your request for on-site attendance is approved, arrangements will initially be put in place for Week 1 and you will fill in a request for attendance form each week due on Thursday 3.00pm. Alamanda College will confirm your place on Friday of

each week. Attendance form will be available on our website online, or on your SchoolBox communication page.

- Each case will be assessed by School Leadership and responded to individually by a member of the Leadership team as soon as practically possible. This week (week 1), it will be on Tuesday, in future weeks on Friday.

### **Learning Outline for Students – Timetables and Schedules:**

- Teachers will be engaging with learning and teaching online from 9.00am to 3.15pm Monday to Friday. On-site learning supervision will be following the same timetable.
- Specialist teachers will deliver their lessons as per the timetable you can find on your SchoolBox communication pages.
- Some of the administration team will be on-site during working hours – the model for all staff is working from home online. Office work hours will be 8.30am-3.30pm Monday to Friday.
- By 9.15am each day, your child will have joined a Webex class chat, roll call and commenced their learning for the day.
- Children will be collected at the front door area of the school at 3.15pm. The class teacher/supervisor will walk the children back to this area.
- Each class has a daily schedule, with recess and lunch breaks. A daily learning schedule will be posted on SchoolBox each evening for the forthcoming day.
- Over the week there may be some structured and unstructured lessons. Be patient – this is new learning for all of us, we are in this together. Your teachers and leaders have invested time and emotional energy into creating a well-rounded remote learning program for your children.
- If you require technical assistance, please call our office on 8376 5200 to make an appointment to see our technician.
- Your children will receive information from their mini school team outlining the details of the entire program over the next weeks.
- Books are available online and please use our e-platform library. We encourage you to read from our online library or borrow audio books. If you have misplaced your code please contact Tegan Rattenbury, Felicity Mayes or Donna McCarthy.

### **Health and Wellbeing:**

Parents are very welcome to contact any member of the Senior Leadership Team – please email Alamanda College on [alamanda.k9@edumail.vic.gov.au](mailto:alamanda.k9@edumail.vic.gov.au).

We will continue to stay connected through newsletters, curriculum overviews, Instagram posts and SchoolBox.

Please remember we are required to maintain social distancing and hygiene routines. Children on-site will be supported through on-site provision to reduce coronavirus (COVID-19) transmissions and promote the safety and wellbeing of the small number of staff, children and young people in attendance.

The guidelines require us to maintain a physical distance of 1.5 metres (although this will not always be practical) but we will endeavour to do our very best. Children and young people will be in classes of a 1:8 ratio, with desks set apart from each other. Children will sit at tables on their own.

- Children will meet in the Great Space in the morning for Week 1 – we will review this in following weeks. Volunteer staff will be waiting to collect their group of students at 9.00am.
- Please note playgrounds cannot be used before or after school. Parents will need to leave children at the front double doors entrance to the main building.

**Parents please note a key message:**

- All staff, children and young people who are unwell must remain at home.
- Hand hygiene, cough etiquette and environmental cleaning are effective ways to reduce transmission of COVID-19.
- Parents/carers of children and young people with complex medical issues should seek medical advice (medical practitioners) to support risk assessments and information decision-making about on-site education is suitable.

**A final word...**

We understand that every family is different, and every family has their own routines. It is up to you how you manage the learning day. Your main goal is to set up the regular routine, so that everyone knows what is happening each day, and where it is happening. Families may like to gather a box of equipment for break times ie. a basketball, tennis ball, skipping rope, scooter. Teachers may set break challenges for these times.

In order to assist families, we have included DET resource pages, offering ideas for routines, spaces and health and wellbeing:

- Information for parents and carers, <https://www.education.vic.gov.au/parents/learning/Pages/home-learning.aspx#link105>

Please find On-site Attendance Form attached (please note this is a confidential form and will only be handled by senior staff). This form must be completed and signed off, every parent completing this on-site request will be contacted either by email or phone call by senior staff.

These are new times for all of us. We appreciate our community spirit and support, together we can continue to share in this unique time, one day we look at this as a remarkable time in history of the world – Term 2 will be different for us all.

Kindest regards and our appreciation is extended to all families, from every Alamanda staff member.

**Lyn Jobson**

Principal