



AINSLIE AUDIO TRANSCRIPT

Middle (Year 3/4) Return to School Chat - 22 October 2021 (MP3, 13min 40sec running time, 19.7MB) – Harry Muir with Sarah-Jane Brown

HM: Alright. Hello to all the Ainslie school families. Today I will be speaking with the year 3/4 executive teacher, Sarah-Jane. How are you today?

SJ: I am fantastic Harry. Very happy to be here.

HM: Awesome. How you feeling about the return to school for the 3/4s, you and the 3/4 Team - you guys excited?

SJ: Look Harry, we are so ready. We are so excited the whole team is just buzzing around today getting organised and ready, and have been buzzing around all week getting places and spaces set up to make sure that everyone's safe for our return.

HM: Awesome, very good. And leading on from that, what are the return dates?

SJ: So the 3/4s will return on Monday the 1st of November.

HM: Cool. So 3/4s together so they're not staggered like other year groups?

SJ: No. We're not staggered. We all get to come back together which is pretty awesome.

HM: Very good. So when you guys are returning, the ACT health guidelines have given us some things that we need to follow. How will us at Ainslie school, and in particular 3/4s, be implementing that?

SJ: So you'll hear a lot of talk Harry about 'bubbles'. There is a lot of talk about bubbles at Ainslie school and we've got the different cohort bubbles. So our 3/4s will be staying in our bubbles and we've got some maps that we'll be sending out about the areas where the 3/4 kids will be staying during the day and that's just to minimise movement around the school. And they're the two ends were going to be focusing on with the kids and they're going to hear us say a lot about minimising movement. Minimise movement, Harry. And so you know, we'll have some very clear areas where the kids will be able to be just to be to keep them separate from other cohorts. And, you know, stop that intermingling which is sort of great, because although we will be separated from our, you know, family members it is absolutely to keep us all safe.

SJ: With the routines, we'll have routines that are not new. We've gotten used to sanitising our hands when we enter our classroom anyway. But we'll be even more vigilant than usual and we will be sanitising on entry and exit every time we enter an indoor space and exit out to the outdoor space. We are encouraging students in 3/4 to wear masks. It's not compulsory, adults absolutely must wear masks and we'll be modelling that to children. We'll be doing a little bit of a chat about how we wear a mask so that it's, you know, appropriate and doing what it's supposed to do which is to stop the spread of germs.

SJ: On that note about the spread of germs, that was a good segue into that - thanks Harry, I've been working on my radio skills. We've been working on messaging to kids that if they're not coming, about not coming to school, if they're feeling unwell, and letting an adult know if during the day they start to feel unwell. Because we've definitely got some routines in place to support children if they are feeling unwell.

SJ: Now on the point of some ventilation, the kids are going to notice there'll be windows open that have not been opened before in the 3/4 space so that is to support the requirements for ventilation and keeping that lovely fresh air flowing through the building. And kids might notice when they come back to school it's going to look a little bit different in the classrooms. We are going to have some physical distancing of desks and their rooms might have a little less furniture in them to make space, but we will be sending home some sneaky pics for families so they can have a little sneak peek at that before the kids come back to school.

HM: I think you covered everything there, gosh.

SJ: We've done a lot of thinking, Harry, there's been a lot of things to consider and you know we always are, you know, mindful of making sure that we're adhering to those ACT health guidelines. They're our rules, we follow those rules - we don't make our own. And, you know, that's what we'll be doing here at Ainslie.

HM: Yeah, very good. With leading on with the, I guess, there in-school routine, regular routines that we have, so what are some of those things that the kids might expect when we are returning such as, you know, drop offs, pickups, maybe the library even, or school canteen.

SJ: Yeah, sure. Look it will be different and before, again I'm going back to that the 'B' word, the bubble, the kids will be orientated in into their bubble areas so they know exactly where they need to meet. Our primary meeting place will be the basketball court on the senior Oval and that is where kids will, when they arrive in the morning they'll go straight to that space. Not enter the building, and that's going to be a bit new for some kids. So there won't be any coming into the building and dropping bags off. We'll have some cones out there and kids can leave their bags in their lines and stay in our 3/4 bubble area out there. And the same in the afternoon, kids will be brought out to that area by their teachers and they'll be dismissed from the outdoor area so that's something that's new for kids. The other thing is we're having some different break times. So before we used to have recess at 11 but now we're having recess at 10:30 until 11:30 (**EDIT: Podcast recording incorrectly says 11.30. Recess is 10:30 until 11am**) and we're having lunch from 12:30 to 1:30 and that's just so that we're having a different break to all of the other cohorts. All the teachers have coordinated so that we have different break times so there's not that chance of, you know, other children from other bubbles coming into our bubble.

HM: No bubble popping.

SJ: No, no popping the bubbles, Harry! We're trying to stay well within in that bubble. So the outdoor learning spaces, when we send home the returning to school slideshow, you'll see that there's some photos in there of the outdoor spaces that are just for 3/4s. So we'll be really utilising the whole left side of the Oval. We'll be utilising the playground equipment for 1/2 an hour period a day where we, and no one else, will be using that playground equipment. So we definitely won't be heading up to that [Juniors] end and we won't actually be heading anywhere past those 5/6 buildings there, really. We're really staying up that other end of the school. And there'll be cones and signs and, you know, and we'll walk the kids around that area. We know kids in 3/4 are awesome, they are so on it, Harry, and once we tell them and show them - they will be teaching us where it is that they need to go. And they'll be reminding all of us what we need to do. Pretty awesome kids.

SJ: So, that's the outdoor learning spaces and teachers will be bringing kids out to learn outdoors when we can because of that ventilation, you know. And, you know, being outdoors - great places and spaces to learn, and we've got in the learning programme a lot of things designed that are primarily outdoor activities so that's going to be perfect. Yeah, be nice, great weather, we're coming into summer.

HM: Well, who knows. Might be raining one day, then hot the next day with this Canberra weather.

SJ: Who knows, who knows, but we'll just go with the flow. But on that note Harry, we do have some good wet weather plans. We've got some great breakout spaces and we've got a plan for, you know, where the children will go in our bubble area during wet weather and some little activities that we can do again, if we can't move into outdoor spaces. But we'll talk the kids through that one when we get back.

SJ: The other thing is some questions around library. Just like everything else, absolutely we'll be accessing the library. And we'll be sanitising on the way in and sanitising on the way out. And we won't be up in the library when anyone else is up there. We'll be up there by ourselves in our 3/4 teams, so kids will absolutely still be borrowing from the library, which is great. So I'm pretty sure that was, oh, the active streets focus, Harry. Gosh, how could I forget that chestnut, so we're really encouraging parents and families to negotiate with their kids a set place where they'll be located around the boundary of Ainslie school. You know, we've got the Donaldson Street side, we've got the Sarah-Jane is going to remember the name of that street that's on, ... it's, look it's on my map, Harry! I've even written it on the slide show. It's the Elder St side, the Elder Street side, so that siblings know as well, because there's been a few questions around, "oh I usually pick up my little brother or sister from kindergarten." So kindergarten teams will send out their information about that, and we'll be saying to 3/4s that adults will be able to pick up their kindergartens from their bubble. And 3/4 children will go straight to their meeting point on one of the Active Street sides of the school, where they'll meet their adult with their sibling. So there won't be any crossing over into the bubbles. I'd like to go back through the podcast, Harry, and count how many times I've said the word 'bubble' today! But it's really important and it's a really serious message that we're getting across to kids because it is all about safety and at the end of the day safety and well being of our kids is number one at Ainslie.

HM: Exactly. Sounds like the 3/4s are on top of it and I think, you know, that's where you see how the 3/4 students are always on top of it too. Wrapping up, it's obviously been a challenging time for everyone right now. So what would you like to say to our families and to our students about, you know, what we're going to do to support the transition back to school.

SJ: Absolutely. Look, the whole 3/4 Team, Harry, want to acknowledge that, while we're excited to be learning on-site again from the 1st of November, we know that there are some people who need to continue to learn from home. We want our families in 3/4 to know that, no matter where you are learning, that you will be supported by your teachers, and, you know, that's a really important message. Because we know that there is excitement for those kids who are returning, but we also really really want our kids that are staying at home to know that we are still going to be there. You will still see us on the screen. We will still be connecting with you and your families to make sure you're getting exactly what you need and that you feel connected to all of the people that are back at

school because you know, at the end of the day, well-being is number one with safety. Safety and well-being - number one. We'll be really focusing on what we're calling the 2 Rs, the 2 Ps and the 2 G's.

HM: What are they Sarah-Jane?

SJ: The 2 Rs are Reconnection and Reflection. So, reconnecting with people they haven't seen, and reflecting on their time when they haven't been at school. It's really important in order to look forward we've got to take a little look at what's happened behind us. You know, the other 2Ps really fit in with our, you know, our school values in our pedagogical approach here at Ainslie and that is playful and positive well-being. And again reinforcing those messages of letting kids reconnect through play and re-establish that positive well-being moving forward. Because it has been a challenging time, so moving forward, and that's where the 2 Gs come in, Harry. Gratitude and Goal-setting. We're going to be looking at, we're all transitioning to new grades in seven short weeks when we get back to school. You know, our 3s are moving into Year 4, and our 4s are moving up into the senior school Year 5. So we're going to be looking at being grateful for what's happening, or what we've got in our world, because sometimes it can feel pretty overwhelming everything that's going on in the world. And then setting some really short and simple goals so that we're working towards something for the end of the year, and setting ourselves up for transitioning into our new places and spaces next year. So, the 2 Rs, the 2 Ps and their 2 Gs.

HM: Got it - very catchy. I like it. Well that wraps up everything that I've got to ask you, so Sarah-Jane thanks for giving up your time to chat over this platform. And to all the 3/4s we're all very excited to see you, whether we're in your bubble, or in a different bubble. Thanks Sarah-Jane.

SJ: Thanks Harry.