



AINSLIE AUDIO TRANSCRIPT

Junior (Year 1/2) Return to School Chat - 20 October 2021 (MP3, 7min 30sec running time, 10MB) – Harry Muir with Carolyn Macleod

HM: Hello Ainslie school community my name is Harry Muir and today we will be speaking with the 1/2 exec Carolyn Macleod so, Carolyn, how are you today?

CM: I'm fine thank you.

HM: Awesome great to have you here for a chat. So I guess first of all how you going and how is the 1/2 team feeling about the students returning to school?

CM: Well I'm going well, I can't wait to see people in person, and I'm saying that for the team as well. We have been doing lots of planning and getting very excited about all the wonderful things that we've got planned for our children returning face to face, even if you're not because I know a couple aren't we have still got some great things for them as well. But you know we just want the weather to be a bit nicer.

HM: Yes, who knows just typical Canberra weather isn't it. Yeah well I'm sure that the all the students are excited to be back at school too. In saying that what are the dates that this is starting?

CM: The 1/2s will be starting together and that will be next Monday the 25th of October.

HM: Counting down the days. So with that return to school what are, with ACT health guidelines, have some, obviously some things that they put in place. So what are some things that Ainslie school will be doing when implementing those guidelines?

CM: So we're following the ACT Health an ACT Directorate guidelines and we've been working on this for a couple of weeks now so we can get it right for our community to keep everyone safe and everyone healthy but also everyone happy as well. So we have done a slideshow like a social story and we've started showing that with our kids online, and onsite as well as we do have some kids here, and it goes through all the different ways of how we're going to learn at school this term.

While we're face to face so it's talking about the 1/2 bubble, so we're limiting movement and limiting those traffic areas with other teams and minimising other visitors onsite as well. So we know that's different with you know, pick up and drop off, but we are encouraging that we only having essential workers within buildings and classrooms. So in the social story it has really detailed areas of where the kids are lining up, where the kids parents can stand with socially distancing, the processes of being picked up by car or dropped off or if you cycle to school or if you walk so it's really clear about what are the expectations because we want to make sure everyone is safe.

HM: Awesome so if they, if parents have any more questions, they can just check out that social story that the 1/2s put together.

CM: Yeah, we'll be posting it on Seesaw at the end of the week but we really want our kids to own it so we want to go through it with our kids so they can communicate with their families about what the expectations are.

HM: Lovely, so everyone's on the same page - love it. So when everyone is back to school, what are some of like the regular routines the kids might expect when they are here. So you touched on pickups and drop offs, what are things, you know, around school - school break, so recess, lunch, other school programmes or library sessions.

CM: So, we aren't using the library as a whole school thing like last term like library sessions each week but our teachers are borrowing books to have class libraries. But if kids are really wanting a certain series or a certain book let their teachers know because will go and borrow it so that means that we're minimising the movement around school again. They will see also that all adults are wearing masks, so you know, we are smiling under the mask so please smile back at us.

And we are encouraging students 3 to 6 to wear masks. But it's not mandatory, and if there are children in 1/2 who would like to wear masks and that's OK with parents that's fine. We'll monitor but we're not saying "you need to put it on" if they take it off at school because it's not a requirement. And on the playground we'll be wearing a mask as well but also remember it's hats on hats on. So we will need hats.

HM: Yes, yeah even though it's raining at the moment you still gotta keep the hat on.

CM: Yeah, there is still a UV rating even if it's glary. And there are staggered breaks as well. So our breaks are the same as normal so 11:00 until 11:30 and then 1 to 2 and is the same as kindy but we're using different parts of the playground so there's no crossover.

HM: So the 1/2's area for recess where will they be?

CM: We are always going to be in the junior playground in the top Oval. And the spaces in between so at the outside stage area but not going in the tennis court and between the buildings where the handball courts are that's like a free zone area because that is access to the toilets.

HM: So potential crossover between grades.

CM: Yeah so to avoid all of that, or to minimise that I should say, no one plays in those areas because everyone is accessing toilets from the same point.

HM: I guess the main points for junior playground and the top oval, correct?

CM: And that's where our line up areas are as well.

HM: Yup, awesome.

CM: And also what was going say about the Bubbles is that there is a limited canteen menu and lunches are online. Because we're not doing money at school, so the canteen is going to look a bit different.

HM: So limited menu and ordering online. OK sweet thank you for that. I guess to wrap up it's obviously very challenging time for everyone right now so you know students, teachers, families, everyone I guess, the whole country in a way. So what would you like to say to the families and the students that we'll support everyone back to school. How would we go about supporting everyone when we come back to school.

CM: Look, we want students return to create a cohesive, a calm, a collaborative and caring learning environment. Our main priority in week one is to really to reconnect. You know work out what are the needs. You know of families, of students, we've all had different experiences. We've been in lockdown and with remote learning so we know that we're all coming from different places. Yes we got some rich and purposeful learning experiences, however, what we really are focusing on is wellbeing, and connection and all of those other parts will fall into place because that's what we need first. I think the message is that "trust us" because we've got your child's best interest in hand. And also the families as well but it is a balance between wellbeing of staffs, students and families and that's working together to maintain that so we can, you know, go into the future because we don't know what that holds.

HM: Yeah exactly right. What you're saying is that, you know, we're all very excited to see the students back and we'll do everything we can to make them happy and feel welcome again. So Carolyn, thank you for giving up your time to have a chance and yeah but all very excited to see the students thank you again.

CM: Thank you.