



AINSLIE AUDIO TRANSCRIPT

Middle/Senior (Year 5/6) Return to School Chat - 20 October 2021 (MP3, 16min 40sec running time, 23MB) – Harry Muir with Faith Bentley

HM: Welcome to all of our Ainslie School families. My name is Harry Muir and today I will be talking to the Exec Teachers at Ainslie school to get their insight on what the return to face to face learning will be. So Faith, how are you today?

FB: I'm good thanks Harry and it's so lovely to be meeting with you face to face.

HM: It's good to be back definitely. So I guess going off that first of all how you going, how's the 5/6s feeling about returning to school and face to face learning?

FB: Feeling really good. I mean, I think as we've listened to the feedback from students and families, you know there's a bit of hype around the return to school and what that's going to look like. It's been an absolute privilege to work alongside the teaching team and students to set up, I guess, what it's going to look like and get their perspective on what they're needing, and you know, what they need to know about. So this is another little point of connection to be able to honour that process too but, overall looking forward to it.

HM: Awesome, yeah very exciting times. So I guess all the different year groups have different return dates – what's the return dates going to look like for 5/6?

FB: So, not that I'm counting but we are six days away from our return with our year sixes. So Monday the 25th of October we're expecting our year six students back and week five on the 1st of November we are expecting our year fives back. Now in saying that Harry, you know we also know that some families may choose to keep young people home at the moment, which we obviously respect and we'll support those students who are needing that too.

HM: Love that, cannot wait, counting down the days too, Faith. So ACT Health has given guidelines to all schools about what is sort of expected when we are returning. What will Ainslie school and especially 5/6s be implementing in terms of those guidelines.

FB: Yeah sure, I mean, the communication has been absolutely outstanding as far as what to expect but there's a lovely one pager that I want to share with the community that just sort of highlights those baseline risk controls and now we start talking about the guidelines – we're talking about mask wearing, we're talking about, you know, the signs that are visible around the school, the sanitising stations, and there is the Canberra check-in app which certainly all adults coming into the school, obviously staff and any other grownups coming in, will need to make sure that they're signing in through the Canberra Check-in app. There's the physical distancing, now whilst it's not mandatory for young people to do that obviously we'll be encouraging that to keep our people as safe as possible and certainly, as you and I are right now very far away from each other, making sure we're doing that distancing to. I don't know if you're feeling a bit cold at the moment Harry, all windows are open and it's amazing just how much ventilation is coming through this room as we speak. I've got my jacket on and I'm feeling the air flow. We've got the sanitising stations as you enter each room and that kind of personal hygiene. I guess the visual comms but also the continuing habits that we'll be trying to form and support students with throughout each day to make sure we're on top of all of those things. Some great questions from young people that I had this morning were "what happens if you need to go to the front office for some reason?" Whilst we'll be reducing that movement through the school, if a child needs first aid they get to go to the first aid. And as far as moving around the school, I'll share it more with you in a moment.

HM: Yeah awesome, I guess leading on from that in terms of the regular routines from day today what are some of the routines that the kids might expect when they return.

FB: Well the things that they can expect were communicated in the communications home to families and it's such a lovely document because really what it does, and even as a team we've been planning and thinking about that return, it just reassures even us about, "ah, great you know, this is what it looks like". The things that will be familiar will be the asynchronous learning platform opportunities. So we know that Japanese and some of our specialist things around music will still continue to be given asynchronously. The 5/6 Team have talked in depth about how do we ensure students continue to lead their own learning. So we've been talking about, you know, how do we support students to have their own personalised daily schedule so, like, they do at the moment. And keep in mind that about 20% of our cohort have actually indicated 'Nah, just tell me what we're doing' so you know there's really a scope to personalise here. What we're envisioning is students having visible their daily schedule. The learning opportunities, whilst will continue to use Google Classroom as a platform, that does not mean that that correlates to everyone working on the computer all day. You know, they can sort of understand the learning task and then they can move away from computer to do that. Given our outdoor learning spaces are going to become even more important you know there's no reason why, weather permitting, students won't be

out in the identified spaces which will come out on the site map for, you know, what does our 5/6 bubble look like. And those who need more guidance and support on how to navigate their learning day that support, you know, will certainly be there. Especially given once we were on site we'll have teachers around. We really look forward to, yeah, there's a lot of trust, Harry, that's been built over this time. Young people have really stepped up into space and showing that they, given the opportunity, they can, you know, really lead how they want their learning to look. We still, I mean the best part about returning is the workshops we can offer and explicit teaching learning sessions on, you know today we're doing a **BIDMAS** and come in & sign on to learn all about your next steps in your thinking. I know that Seb is super excited to offer his maths game workshops each day and yeah there be lots of lovely little routines which we haven't had the, you know, haven't been able to do I guess, that will certainly be available as students are returning.

HM: Definitely. I guess, as you're saying about the 5-6 bubble, what and how that go with I guess, drop offs and pickups.

FB: Of course, yes so the cohort generally tend to walk and ride and I think this is a time where, you know, using Active Streets is another really strong consideration as we're trying to think about reducing the number of people coming on the site. If our bigger kids, our more senior students can be walking and riding safely and using Active Streets, the entry points really are, if students are riding in from say, Elder St, the back of the school, straight to the black cage storage area, put their bike away and then directly into where the ramp is and use it to access our classrooms. These students are being dropped off at the front is that, sort of, kiss and drop off, and the most direct path in is the path that runs parallel from the basketball court, **the senior side (basketball court)**. So if they're coming in from from that space to enter that way and straight into our classroom spaces. And of course some students do cut across the senior oval which is also really appropriate for that. And seeing the dropping off, this morning a Senior actually said to me "what if we do have other siblings, we're not supposed to be mixing in cohorts but we usually meet together to get picked up?" and so that was a good point I thought. So there needs to be a conversation around, you know, where are we going to meet that doesn't put us in one of the other bubbles. Start talking more about some mutual spaces in the evenings, in the mornings, to make sure families are feeling, yeah...especially younger siblings, I can imagine that they need to know that their big siblings can come past and get them at the end of the day. But finding ways to manage that were not crossing into bubbles.

HM: There's been some recent communication coming out around that. I guess when we are at school day to day and we're having, you know, our lunchtime breaks and we just saw Ari walk past us before so, what's going to in terms of breaks, and you know, with the canteen as well.

FB: Yeah sure, so as the communication indicated to families we will be doing stagger break times and that's about reducing the number of young people out on the playground at one time. So we're going try a long break, so lunch break if you like, from 11:00 AM till 12 till midday, and that then going to trial a short break in the afternoon or recess break from 1:30 till two and that really assists us with the shared spaces we have with 3/4 because their break times would be different to that. And also the Oishi canteen is resuming but will look a bit different. Families will need to order online and there'll be, sort of a more like, a reduced menu I guess in that sense. There's some exciting things happening around Fuel for Thought that more information will be coming out throughout the week, so very exciting.

HM: I guess with the whole outdoor learning spaces in sharing any spaces in sharing that in terms of maybe library sessions as well as anything else you want to sort of add on to that the 5/6s will be doing?

FB: Yeah sure, and you just prompted me, someone asked me this morning, "**will we be able to use the bubblers?**" And yeah so the bubblers won't be a shared space. It'll be a no go zone. So certainly encouraging and you know, students will need to bring a water bottle at school to make sure they, Yep, just using their own water bottle. And that also reminds me, hats is going to be really important. Its still hats on it is, well it promises to get warmer. We know that the UV is still extremely high even when it's not super warm. So you know, make sure we've got hats to be able to use those outdoor spaces, own water bottles and also, I guess, there's not really a lot of reason for young people in 5/6 to be going into the main building. So one of the students in my class actually came up with the idea that instead of going into the main building to get a late pass when you arrived actually just coming straight to class and, the classroom teachers will touch base with the office to make sure their attendances are recorded.

HM: Sounds like your class is full of ideas.

FB: They are. Actually would be lost without them. And entering to the bathrooms from outside is another key thing. Not having that movement inside if we can avoid it. Yeah, does that sort of wrap everything up right?

HM: To wrap everything up in a way, is there anything you want to say to your families and the students about, you know, obviously, it's trying times for everyone at the moment involved. So, what is something that, you know I guess, the school or the 5/6s will do to support the transition back to school.

FB: Yeah, I think the first thing that makes me think of **is the forum we** had recently with families and carers and you know, the key thing there is, we really value your support and your connection. You know, that that kind of, if there's something that your young person is worried about, if there's something that, you know, we need to reassure in a different way, or you know we're so here for all of that. It's for us, we're really thinking about how learning works and just because we're returning from home learning to on-site learning, we still know that some structure, a little time for formal learning and an abundance of playing/connecting is really going to be anchoring us in the way that we provide learning opportunities for students. Health and well being, as you, that has and always will be our number one priority, looking out for our young people and how they're going. When you ask students, and you know the daily questions have been going out have been asking questions, like what are you looking forward to the most about returning and almost every single child has said "connecting with my friends, seeing my mates" and so you know, I don't want to dismiss the social well being opportunity that we have here to bring young people back in and help them, because this is a big time country and the learning opportunities will be meaningful and there will be, you know, the context is real and if you think about our key inquiry question is this term, Harry, it's "how can we thrive during change" I think given what's happening around us and, you know, as year sixes are gearing up for seven, and new 5s to year 6, there's so much in that, you know, in the opportunity we're going to have sit together to be able to support students in that way.

HM: Yeah awesome, lovely answer there Faith. And to the all 5/6s, on behalf of all the school I'm excited to see you from the same bubble or different bubble. It will be good to see all the students return back to Ainslie school.

FB: Thanks for that and thought I'd better throw in at the end there, that the message around "if you're not well, don't come to work"

HM: Exactly right, exactly right. Thank you.

FB: Thank you for your time Harry.

FB: Knock knock

HM: Who's there

FB: Faith.

HM: Faith who.

FB: Faith who forgot to mention a few things.

HM: I was going to say, I did notice how there are some books up around your room, what's the go with that in terms of, you know, library and stuff like that.

FB: Well in keeping to our bubble, Harry, we have decided as a team to make sure we have really built on our classroom libraries so when you come in you can see there is a lovely collection of books from the library I was in a conversation this morning on Google Meet with some students who said "can you make sure you get some more bad guys books" and these books and that books, so yeah trying to really build the resources to have across the four classroom spaces so that we can really honour, you know, that reduced movement across the school.

HM: I guess also, speaking of books, in a way electronically, what about Chromebooks what's the go with bringing their Chromebooks back.

FB: I think with the move towards, I mean we do anyway, but really trying to personalise learning and allow young people to have their daily schedules outlined by them, bringing their Chromebooks is gonna be pretty key to that because, even though we won't be expecting students and we'd certainly encourage them not to be on the computer all day, having access to Chromebooks is gonna be really important. So unless they want to try and navigate the day without them, they definitely need to bring them with the charger ideally.

HM: Was anything else you want to cover - yes the mask.

FB: They kind of came up, but we didn't **go into** great detail. This is an important one because I know young people are super aware and they know what's what and whilst they're not mandatory for years 3 to 6 they will be encouraged for years three to six. We'll have bins with closed lids, we'll have lots of prompts and, you know, as you and I are modelling, grownups will be wearing them indoors at the very least. So four hourly sanitising before putting them on, after touching the mask, and also just making sure we're keeping each other safe.

HM: Good. Is that everything, did we cover everything now,

FB: Let's not say everything, certainly reach out if you'd like to talk more.

HM: Yeah awesome well I hope you have a great rest of the afternoon thank

FB: Thank you Harry