

Head of Prep: James Cross

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THE JOY OF LEARNING

21 April 2020

Dear Oakhill Parents, Guardians, Caregivers and Staff

I trust that this message finds you and your loved ones safe, happy and healthy.

During these extraordinary times I would like to take this opportunity to thank you, the parents, for your extraordinary efforts in helping to make this lockdown period as tenable and as productive as possible. As much as the staff have been hard at work preparing and delivering the remote learning or online programme, we want to recognize the huge role that the parents play in making this possible. Never before has there been such a need and such an opportunity for collaboration between parents, teachers and children. You are doing a sterling job and our teachers and I would like to applaud you and thank you most sincerely for your critical contribution.

We continue to learn and adapt to our current reality and your feedback has been most beneficial in helping us refine the experience for you and your children. There will still be some frustration and difficulty as we continue on this path for now but we are, as a school, also very excited about the many opportunities and experiences we are exploring as part of our teaching and learning.

As we know, online teaching and learning comes with its own set of challenges; however, please be reminded that our helpful IT team is on hand to provide the necessary support during office hours (8am- 4pm). In addition, the [Oakhill Online Hub \(click here for more info\)](#) also provides a wealth of curated resources to assist with any IT issues that you and your child may experience. For any support related to devices, such as how-to hotspot from a phone to a computer, problems with switching on a device, WIFI, etc, please contact:

- Andries de Beer (IT Administrator) 079 9121090 or email [a.debeer@oakhill.co.za](mailto:a.debeer@oakhill.co.za).
- Arthur Vhiza (IT Technician) 083 215 6541 or email [a.vhiza@oakhill.co.za](mailto:a.vhiza@oakhill.co.za).

For support related to the Google for Education Apps please visit the Oakhill Online Hub to submit an online request ([click here to link to the request form](#)) for support or [click here to book a one-on-one calendar session](#) with Dylan Langheim (Ed Tech Director).

As teachers (as I am sure you are) we are desperately missing the human engagement with the children and the Oakhill families. Our online or remote interactions with your children remind us of the wonderful privilege we have as teachers and provide us with extra motivation, purpose and energy.

In an effort to reclaim lost teaching time we will be continuing with our online programme during the upcoming public holidays on Monday the 27th of April and Friday the 1st of May (should the lockdown be



extended). We will, however, take time out to mark and acknowledge the significance of these days during the school day.

I would like to share this message from Emily King Ph.D. that she has entitled a Public Service Announcement:

***Parents: What we are being asked to do is not humanly possible. There is a reason we are either a working parent, a stay-at-home parent, or a part-time working parent.***

***Working, parenting and teaching are three different jobs that cannot be done at the same time.***

***When you have to pick, because at some point you will, choose connection. Pick playing a game over arguing about an academic assignment. Pick teaching your child to do laundry rather than feeling frustrated that they aren't helping. Pick laughing and snuggling and reminding them that they are safe.***

***If you are stressed, lower your expectation where you can and virtually reach out for social connection. We are in this together to stay well. That means mentally too.***

As we grapple with pressures, expectations and the concern for our own well being and the well being of others, I would like to share one of my favourite quotes from Theodore Roosevelt that is most pertinent at this moment in time.

***“Do what you can, with what you have, where you are.”***

You are doing a superhuman job and I thank you most sincerely on behalf of our school and your children (just in case they have forgotten to do so themselves).

We are also very mindful of the significant financial and social pressures that our families are experiencing in these uncertain times and we wish you strength and wisdom as you negotiate these additional challenges.

May you all stay safe, happy and healthy and we look forward to seeing you in person on our campus as soon as is responsibly possible.

Kindest regards

James Cross