



Dear Parents and Carers,

We are aware that some families are concerned about their child's learning progress this year. Some families are also concerned about children not being able to form strong friendships and social connections in a remote and flexible learning environment. Due to these concerns, some families have expressed a desire for their child to repeat a year.

I am writing to alleviate your concerns and to advise you why, for the vast majority of our students, we would not encourage them to repeat a year.

What does the research tell us?

Repeating a year level is only used in exceptional circumstances because, in the majority of cases, it is harmful to a student's chances of academic success. The research tells us that students who repeat a year:

- Make less academic progress on average than students who progress
- Are unlikely to catch up with peers of a similar level
- Can lose confidence in their learning, develop negative attitudes towards school and learning, have low self-esteem, and increased aggressive and disruptive behaviours
- Have an increased risk of not completing school
- Have a decreased likelihood of participating in tertiary education (University, TAFE)

Supporting all students

Our teachers are used to having students with a wide range of ability levels in their classrooms, and they are well experienced when it comes to providing learning activities and opportunities that target their students' differing needs. Therefore, even for those children who may not have made the progress they expected or wanted this year, their teachers will still be able to support them in their regular classrooms along with their peers.

In addition, we are aware of the specific concerns around the development and progression of our Prep and Year 6 students, and are already putting in place plans to ensure that all of our students are adequately supported in their learning moving forward. All of our secondary schools are similarly aware of the need to provide extra support to next year's Year 7 cohorts to support their academic and social development in light of the interruptions they have experienced this year. We are also preparing to provide additional support for next year's Prep students, understanding that their Kindergarten experience may have been impacted during remote and flexible learning.

Where to find out more

If you are concerned about your child's progress, development or social connections, please get in touch with your child's teacher or myself to discuss how we can best support your child in Term 4 and in 2021.

You can also read the Department of Education and Training's policy and research on Repeating a Year Level here: <https://www2.education.vic.gov.au/pal/repeating-year-level/guidance>

Yours sincerely,

Hannah Reid
Principal