

Afrikaans volg – 9 Julie



BELVEDERE SCHOOL

NEWSLETTER - 8 JULY 2020

Belvedere School Closed for Sanitising

8 July 2020

Dear Parents, Guardians and Learners

As we communicated to you in our messages via SMS, WhatsApp Groups and hard-copy letter this afternoon; one of our staff members has tested positive for COVID-19. Thank you, on their behalf, for the positive out-pouring of prayers and good wishes to them and their family.

After a visit from the Department of Basic Education and the Department of Health, and an investigation by both departments and the COVID-19 Committee, we can state the following with certainty; the Staff Member in question was not at school this week, so **Grade 10, Grade 11, Year 3 and Year 2 Learners that returned to school this week, were not in contact with this Staff Member.**

In order for the COVID-19 to pass from person to person, close contact is required. Close contact is defined as:

- ☉ Not wearing any Personal Protection Equipment (PPE)
- ☉ Being within 1.5m of another person for longer than 15 minutes.
- ☉ Sharing of equipment

We have no evidence that our Staff Member engaged in any activity as described above with our Learners. All of our Staff Members are equipped with PPE and have access to hand and surface sanitisers in classrooms, centres, the administration building, at the entrance gate and in the Therapy Centre buildings. All our staff and Learners go through a screening process before they enter the school and are required to sanitise hands upon entering any building, classroom or centre. All our classrooms are sanitised each day after school. So how did a Staff Member contract the virus? The answer is that they could have got it anywhere they have been in the last week to 10 days.

What must our School do now?

- ☉ Inform our District, the Department of Basic Education and the Health Department, our Staff our Parents and Guardians, and our Learners. This has been done.
- ☉ Arrange for the school to be deep-cleaned and sanitised from top to bottom. This is happening tomorrow the 9th of July 2020.
- ☉ Wait 24 hours before the school can be re-opened. We will open it again on Monday the 13th of July 2020.
- ☉ Conform to the Belvedere Stigmatisation Policy, Department of Basic Education employment regulations and the Department of Health regulations. This means that we are not going to reveal the name of this Staff Member, with or without their permission, because we may not do so. If it was your child who had tested positive for COVID-19 you would not want us to reveal their names. You would expect us to protect them and you from being stigmatised or victimised. We accept that you want to protect yourselves and your children by knowing whether you must worry or not.

What do we as Grade 12, WOW and Year 4 parents do now?

Our COVID-19 committee sent out this information as soon as we were able to, so that those of you who are at risk yourselves or who have older family members, or at risk family members, at home, could make the necessary arrangements to limit contact before your child arrived at home this afternoon.

- ☉ We need to monitor our children for any 'flu symptoms; headache, sinus pain, running noses, a tight chest, coughing, sneezing, shortness of breath, loss of taste or smell, body or joint aches, or a fever. Contact your doctor or the COVID-19 number; 0 800 029 999 for advice, instructions and information. Our staff member became symptomatic on Thursday with a headache associated with sinus, but no other symptoms. So we must be vigilant for symptoms over the next few days in our children who were at school last week.
- ☉ If we are in doubt about our children having COVID-19, as they may be asymptomatic (have no symptoms) but still pass on the virus, we can have them tested.
- ☉ We must inform the school immediately that we, a close family member or person who lives with us, a colleague we have been in close contact with or when we are advised to self-quarantine. We must keep our children at home if they have been in contact with a person who has been diagnosed with COVID-19 or if we have been.
- ☉ We must inform the school, in writing, at lizel@belvedereschool.co.za or admin@belvedereschool.co.za if we wish to keep our children at home and we must agree to ensure that we will make sure our children do the work at home.
- ☉ We must wash hands and sanitise surfaces we touch often at home. We must wash our children's clothes everyday and dry them in the sun.
- ☉ We must remain open to the possibility that we or our children may contract this virus and plan for it as far as we are able.
- ☉ We must not panic. We must ensure that we are informed and obligated to making the best decisions for our families.
- ☉ We must know that our school is doing all that it can to provide an education to our children under very difficult and limiting circumstances.

Any queries and questions we have not answered? Please contact me on the number or email address below.

Parents and Guardians, we are with you in this and will keep you informed of any further developments. Please be safe and warm.

Yours in education,

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COVID-19 Committee
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Mr Hannes Du Plessis
Principal

COVID-19 Committee, SMT and SGB.