

Dear Parents, Guardians and Students,

I was waiting to hear the PMs decision today on the MCO extension before I write to you about how we will proceed with our Term III. Of course, the indicators in terms of numbers of covid-19 cases rising had been there, but a small part within me was hopeful that the lock down would end and normalcy would return. In any case we heard today that the **MCO extension is till 28 April for now.**

Online Classes in Term III

Our Term III, according to our calendar, is scheduled to start on **20 April.** We will continue to use, Teamie and Meet for our lessons, from that day onwards, with the PE, Art and Music teachers also joining in. At the end of Term II, when teachers had online classes it was mostly revision work as we were nearing our end of term. We will need students to be more focused and dedicated this term as online learning continues. I understand that some families are having challenges with respect to online lessons, as devices (PC/tablet/laptop) may be shared by all members of the family. In that case, work done on the online meet class will be put up on Teamie for students to access when they can. Please do communicate with your teachers regarding this issue for any extra help needed.

Parents Teachers Day

Our Parents Teachers Day was scheduled to be on 24 April. But since the MCO has been extended further by two weeks till 28 April, we will have to shift the date. This will be informed later when we have more clarity on the matter. A few parents have enquired if the Term II Transcripts would be available online, I am afraid we would not be able to provide you with a soft copy of it. The class teachers have already prepared the transcripts based on the grades for Term II. These are ready to be printed and signed whenever the MCO is lifted. However you may communicate with your child's teacher via Teamie to see if your child is performing well.

These are unprecedented times and everything that we consider normal has been challenged. Adapt, we must to this situation and hope that it will end soon with minimal impact to all, economically and emotionally. I have attached an article written by Ms Karishma Alwani, our SEN teacher, on how to explain the MCO to your children. Please have a read.

Requests for Fee Discounts for Term III

I have received a few emails from parents asking if Tanarata will be offering discounts to Term III fees. I understand that household incomes might have been impacted as all businesses have either slowed down or closed temporarily. We are still discussing how we can help our parents and students in easing their pain. We will get back to you on this in due course. At this point in time have more pressing issues as May - June IGCSE exams have been cancelled. Our school leavers are at a very difficult juncture in their lives and we are trying to ensure that evidence based grading as suggested by Cambridge Assessments is as fair for them as possible.

I hope all of you are continuing to stay calm and safe at home.

Best Regards,

Barnali Guha

Helping My Child Understand the Pandemic

Karisma P. Alwani, (BSc., Dip. Special Needs) SEN Teacher, Malaysia

Covid-19, till date, has been a pandemic that has changed the world for everyone; adults and children alike. What we once knew and took for granted like walks in the park, driving to the grocery store or going to a friend's house, now seems to some extent, to be a distant memory. As everyone waits anxiously for what comes after April 14th, the uncertainty leads to anxious feelings. This uncertainty has many parents and guardians wondering how much they should be discussing with their children. How much is too much? And how do I approach the topic without creating greater anxiety in my child?

The first, and most important question: **Should I talk to my child about what is going on?** The answer to this is **yes**. Children pick up on a lot more than we give them credit for. With access to the internet and various social media platforms, it is important that we discuss the outbreak and the Movement Control Order. It allows us to discredit fake news that they may have heard or read. It also allows you and your child to share feelings and concerns regarding the virus.

When do I talk to my child? Finding the right time and place to talk to your child is crucial. **Pick a time when your child is most alert, morning preferably, and a time when you are calm and have an hour or more free in your schedule.** Choosing a time that allows you to discuss as much as you can and a time when your child is most receptive to information allows you as the parent or guardian to clear any misunderstandings that your child may have. Having a discussion with your child about the outbreak that does not seem rushed or uninterrupted will let you understand what they already know about the virus and their concerns in greater detail. For many young children, it allows for them to get all their "why" questions answered.

The third important question, **how much should I discuss?** Taking that each child is different, regardless of their age or learning abilities, some children may have a better grasp on concepts than others. Hence, **discussing what you as the parent or guardian feels is age appropriate and addressing facts in a way that your child can understand would be the best route to take.** Building on prior knowledge of the virus would also be a good approach.

Below is a chart listing facts to be discussed, ways to reduce anxiety and other discussions you should have with your child.

What my child should know about the virus	Reducing anxiety	Other Discussions
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •What is Covid-19? •How it spreads. •Steps to take to prevent it (washing hands, using hand sanitizer, wearing a mask, etc) •Symptoms •When to call for help •Who to call for help •What is a Movement Control Order? Why is it important? •Why they extended the MCO. •Reasons children have to stay home and learn online. •What the government, doctors, nurses, police, etc are doing to help. •The term social distancing. •Fake news about the virus. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Discuss what everyone at home is doing to stop the spread of the virus. •Remind them that people do recover and talk about how many people have survived. •Discuss and continually remind them how this pandemic will pass. •How they will be able to get back to their old routines once the government allows it. •Remind them that you are there to answer any questions they have. •That fear is something that everyone has and it's okay to be scared or anxious. •Play games with them or do an activity of their choice when they seem to be anxious or out of sorts. •Talk about the positives- how they have more time with you, their online interactions with teachers and classmates, time with siblings, etc •Avoid conversations about the virus before bedtime. •Maintain a routine. •Help them create a "fun things to do" list that they can refer to when they are bored. •Set up a timetable so they clearly know when they will be studying, when you will be playing games or doing activities together, having meals, etc. •Watch their favourite movies or shows together. •Be honest and use a calm tone when discussing facts and information. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •If a child has a parent or guardian who is a front liner, discuss what they are doing and why they need to be away during the given time. •If a child has a parent, guardian or sibling who has the virus, discuss what the doctors and nurses are doing to help and why they will not be able to visit this person at the hospital.

As parents and guardians, it is upsetting that our children have to be faced with the current reality of a pandemic. During these tough times, we are the vessels that will help them to

understand what is going on. Being honest with our children and allowing them to express their feelings is the only thing we can do to help them and ourselves. Remember that through you your children will understand what is going on, through your actions they will understand what to do and through your feelings and guidance they will find possibilities and positivity during this time.

Links to articles that focus on discussing the pandemic with your child.

1. Coronavirus (COVID-19): How to Talk to Your Child by [Jennifer Shroff Pendley, PhD](#).
2. 6 ways parents can support their kids through the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) outbreak

<https://www.unicef.org/malaysia/stories/6-ways-parents-can-support-their-kids-through-coronavirus-disease-covid-19-outbreak>

3. Helping Children Cope With Changes Resulting From COVID-19

https://www.nasponline.org/resources-and-publications/resources-and-podcasts/school-climate-safety-and-crisis/health-crisis-resources/helping-children-cope-with-changes-resulting-from-covid-19?ck_subscriber_id=342989428%a0

4. Talking to Children about COVID-19 (novel coronavirus)

<https://www.brighthorizons.com/family-resources/talking-to-children-about-covid19>