

## **Welcome Back- Cooper Hill- 1/6/20**

Good morning all staff, students, viewers, and college community.

Welcome back everyone! These past few weeks have been an emotional rollercoaster and has revealed the true resilience of our college community. Boys from all years, 7-12 have handled the situation so well, along with the teaching staff that have offered their support and guidance throughout this entire transition to online learning.

We are not yet back to normal, nor will we be for a while. Despite this though, the college has actively sought out the best methods in helping students return to the closest thing to normality possible. The transition back to full time, face-to face learning has been received extremely well by the senior boys and a newfound appreciation for in-class learning has been revealed. As we've all seen in the Welcome Back video with the outstanding acting, I think Mr. Ronchetti is glad to have us back as well.

For the next step, we must all be willing to adapt to our current situation and pull as many positives out of it as we can. Along with this, we all have a key role to play in each other's safety. Physical distancing where possible and sanitisation will be occurring throughout the school day. Directional arrows to minimise congestion around the college is still present, and movement music will still be used- with a new opportunity where we get to choose the music this time.

Personally, coming back to school has been the best thing for my study habits and mental health. Seeing your mates, talking to the teachers again and having set times for classes is what a majority of us are not only used to, but prefer in order to stay productive.

For the younger boys of the college, I would like to congratulate you all on your handling of the situation. It must have been hard, especially in years of early friendship developments and study habits to keep motivated and social. I really respect the resilience and strength in all the boys who were able to adapt to the change and maintain being focused on their personal goals.

That said, for any of the boys who found this time extremely difficult, that's okay. I know I felt very demotivated and in a rut. It has been a difficult time with a lot of change and a lot of pressure to stay on top of your goals. Use the opportunities

now to ease back into the classroom and find your footing again. I would also like to add that for any boys that found this time to be tougher than a majority, or just need some time to reset and ease back in, the colleges counselling services are available and are ready to listen. Our mental health is just as important as our physical health.

I hope that everyone finds being back full time beneficial and fun. Be present and appreciate the friendships, relationships, and education you all have. I would once again like to thank everyone for their patience and wish every single person, especially the wider St. Dominic's College community a warm welcome back. It's great seeing everyone back.

Keep your heads up high, focus on your goals, ask for support when you need it and enjoy your time back at the college.

Thank you.