

Study in quarantine

Boarding students hit the books in Howard Springs



Sixteen year 7 students from the Melbourne Indigenous Transition School are in quarantine at Howard Springs, to be released in time for the school holidays. Picture: Melbourne Indigenous Transition School

RAPHAELLA SAROUKOS

A COHORT of Territory kids attending boarding school in Melbourne are completing their last weeks of term 2 in Howard Springs, to be with their families for the mid-year school holidays.

Sixteen year 7 students from the Melbourne Indigenous Transition School (MITS) and seven staff are in their first week of quarantine at Howard Springs.

The students, from a variety of Territory communities including Maningrida, Elcho Island, the Tiwi Islands, Emu Point, Ngukurr and Kalkarindji, timed their quarantine stay in order to complete their final weeks of term 2 before their "bush break".

There are also several MITS alumni students in quarantine.

Assistant principal Brad Carmody, who is one of the school staff in Howard

Springs, said the students did lessons from about 8.30am until 1.30pm, after which they enjoyed free time.

Mr Carmody explained the students were split into four groups throughout the day and continued their normal lessons, after which they played games, exercised and read.

"Instead of being in our classroom, we've got a group of four on four different dongas or on the little picnic

tables," he said. Mr Carmody said the students were eager to see their families.

"I think they're quite relieved to know that when they're finished here they're actually going home, and they still get their three-week holiday, their big bush break," he said.

Students Luke Mclean, 12, from Jabiru and Katelyn Austin, 12, from Batchelor said learning while in quarantine was a unique experience.

"We're outside learning most of the day ... it's good to feel the air," Luke said.

"It feels a bit weird since we're not in the classroom," said Katelyn.

MITS executive director Edward Tudor said the students were proud to be keeping their communities safe.

"They will be great advocates for Covid-safe practices when they return home because they've experienced them in Melbourne," he said.