PRINCIPAL’S COMMENTS

WELCOME
As every new year arrives, I cannot help but get excited as to what excellent opportunities the year will offer us. So many adventures, surprises and journeys are waiting for each one of us.

Our first adventure is going back to school! Our second is meeting old friends, making new friends, meeting new teachers, old teachers (no, not in age but yes there some of them here!) and investigating your child’s classroom, the playgrounds and corridors to see what is new, fun or different.

Welcome back to all of our returning students and families, and a special welcome to any new parents and students to Ballam Park Primary School. We sincerely hope you enjoy your time here (as we expect you will). Please feel free to come and see us with any concerns or positives you may have.

Foundation students will attend their first full week of school (including Wednesdays) commencing Monday, 13th February.

NEW STAFF
We would like to extend a big welcome to our three new teaching staff members — Miss Sarah Milne (1/2B ), Miss Jessica Carter (5/6D), Miss Rachael Arkley (5/6A); Mr. Jeff Smit (Assistant Principal) and Mr. Scott Graham (Computer/Technology Technician).

PARENT INFORMATION SESSIONS
Please keep an eye on this newsletter and other notices, as dates will be available shortly.

A BUSY SUMMER AT BALLAM PARK PS
You may or may not have noticed that we have been busy over the holidays with a few obvious changes and many small, almost invisible changes!

• We have had a number of termite damaged and rotten windows replaced and painted.
• The Level 1/2 and 3/4 students’ bag lockers that are in the corridor have been painted and attached to the walls so they look like they’re built in. This will offer a hygienic and tidier appearance.
• A Matchbox car and truck ‘Pit’ has been constructed in the Foundation play area. This will have timetabled sessions for all levels and only children who enjoy playing with their toy cars etc. will be permitted in the ‘Pit’.
• A ‘Hut Building’ area has been created for students who enjoy using their hands. Again, this will have timetabled sessions with a designated number of students permitted into the area at one time. A ‘Non Negotiable’ contract will need to be signed by those participants.
• Sections of termite damaged floorboards have been replaced, meaning new carpet has been laid in those areas.
• Mrs. Street has a brand new office.

John Mace
Principal
Bell and Learning Times

8:50 am – 9:00 am

The bell will sound briefly at **8:50 am**.
The teachers will open their doors from this time, allowing students to enter prior to the 9:00 am bell.
This will assist in:
  * Class preparation for the day
  * Building relationships
  * Parents will be able to have a ‘brief’ conversation with the teacher.
  * Please note that this is **not** a time for an interview.
  * Learning time should have commenced at 9:00 am.

| Session 1 | 9:00 am – 11:00 am |-| Learning |
| Recess: | 11:00 am – 11:30 am |
| Session 2 | 11:30 am – 1:30 pm |-| Learning |
| Lunch: | 1:30 pm – 2:30 pm |
| Session 3 | 2:30 pm – 3:30 pm |-| Learning |

**Every day counts – school attendance**

We all want our children to get a great education, and the building blocks for a great education begin with students coming to school **each and every day**.
Missing school can have a major impact on a child’s future – a student missing one day a fortnight will miss four full weeks by the end of the year. By Year 10, they’ll have missed more than a year of school.
There is no safe number of days for missing school – each day a student misses puts them behind, and can affect their educational outcomes.
Coming to school every day is vital but, if for any reason your child **must** miss school, there are things we can do together to ensure they don’t fall behind:

1. Speak with your classroom teacher and find out what work your child needs to do to keep up.
2. Develop an Absence Learning Plan with your teacher and ensure your child completes the plan.

Remember, every day counts. If your child must miss school, please speak with your classroom teacher as early as possible.
If you’re having attendance issues with your child, please let your classroom teacher know so we can work together to get your child to school every day.

ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL’S COMMENTS

Hello everyone. Hope you all had a wonderful summer break and enjoyed some fun family times.

A little about me... I love my sports. I am currently still playing cricket and recently retired from playing hockey after 35 years. Yes, age caught up with me in that sport. I enjoy watching the Hawks in the AFL and Manly in the NRL. Spending time with my family, whether that is watching my daughters play sport or kicking back down at the beach, is something I always look forward to doing.

I am truly enthused about the opportunity BPPS has given me to be the Assistant Principal of the school. In a short time, it is clear the staff are very enthusiastic about their role in improving student academic outcomes and also their wellbeing.

It was wonderful to see so many smiles on the children’s faces on day one. I look forward to meeting you over the coming weeks.

Jeff Smit
Assistant Principal
School Council Elections

School Council is a very important part of Victorian Government schools and we value the input from parents and education department employees.

On **Tuesday of next week**, information and nomination forms will be sent home for parents to consider their options.

**School Council Election Process Overview Stages of Election**
The election process needs to start at least 21 days before the poll closing date.

The following are indicative timeline stages of the election process:

- **Stage One**: Setting the Election Framework and Calling for Nominations
- **Stage Two**: Closing and Assessing Nominations and Deciding if Ballot Required
- **Stage Three**: Preparing for Ballot (sending out ballot papers and close of ballot)
- **Stage Four**: Counting Ballot Papers and Declaring Poll
- **Stage Five**: Special and First Council Meetings after the Poll
- **Stage Six**: Post-election Compliance
BOOK LIST & ESSENTIAL STUDENT LEARNING ITEMS 2017

The Book List & Essential Student Learning Items 2017 for each year level were sent home at the end of last year. If you did not receive this list, a copy is available from the office.

PAYMENT IS NOW DUE AND PAYABLE, so if you have not yet paid, please pay now so that your child will receive their books, pencils, etc.

A reminder that there are facilities for EFTPOS, Visa, BPAY and phone credit at the office.

Alternatively, for parents who are eligible, an application for the 2017 BALLAM PARK PS EDUCATION ALLOWANCE SHOULD BE COMPLETED BY FRIDAY, 10TH FEBRUARY 2017.

Foundation – Library Bags

Each of our new Foundation students will receive a new library bag from the Department of Education & Training. The bag contains some information for parents and some helpful items to make the start to school a little easier.

IMPORTANT DATES

FEBRUARY
Mon 6  Foundation students commence
Mon 6  Foundation student School Photos
Mon 13 Foundation students commence full time school
Breakfast Club reopens 8.15am
Tues 14 School Banking resumes for 2017

MARCH
Fri 10  Years 1-6 School Photos
Mon 13  Public Holiday, Labour Day

School term dates 2017

2017
Term 1: 30 January (teachers start) to 31 March *
Term 2: 18 April to 30 June
Term 3: 17 July to 22 September
Term 4: 9 October to 22 December

* The first day of Term 1 is a student-free day in all government schools to allow for appropriate planning to take place for the arrival of students. Each year government schools are provided with four student-free days for professional development, school planning and administration, curriculum development, and student assessment and reporting purposes. The remaining three student-free days are determined by each individual school, so contact your school for details.

** Please check with your school when other student-free days will occur throughout the school year.

NOTIFICATION OF STUDENT ABSENCES

It is requested that parents please ring the school on 9789-5614, prior to 9.30am, to advise if their child will be absent.

It’s Not OK To Be Away from school unless you are unwell.
Camps, sports and excursions fund (CSEF) eligibility

**Criteria 1 – Eligibility**
To be eligible* for the fund, a parent or legal guardian of a student attending a registered Government or non-government Victorian primary or secondary school must:

- on the first day of Term one, or;
- on the first day of Term two;

Be an eligible beneficiary within the meaning of the *State Concessions Act 2004*, that is, be a holder of Veterans Affairs Gold Card or be an eligible Centrelink Health Care Card (HCC) or Pensioner Concession Card (PCC) holder, OR

Be a temporary foster parent, and;

Submit an application to the school by the due date.

Parents who receive a Carer Allowance on behalf of a child, or any other benefit or allowance not income tested by Centrelink, **are not eligible** for the CSEF unless they also comply with one of (a) or (b) above.

**Criteria 2 - Be of school age and attend school in Victoria**
School is compulsory for all Victorian children aged between six and 17 years of age inclusive.

For the purposes of CSEF, students may be eligible for assistance if they attend a Victorian registered primary or secondary school. Typically, these students are aged between five and 18 years inclusive.

CSEF is not payable to students attending pre-school, kindergarten, home schooled, or TAFE.

**Eligibility Date**
For concession card holders CSEF eligibility will be subject to the parent/legal guardian’s concession card being successfully validated with Centrelink on the first day of either term one (30 January 2017) or term two (18 April 2017).

**Payment amounts**

**CSEF payment amount**
The CSEF is an annual payment to the school to be used towards camps, sports and/or excursion expenses for the benefit of the eligible student.

- Primary school student rate: $125 per year.

The CSEF is paid directly to your child’s school and will be allocated by the school towards camps, sports and/or excursion costs for your child.

**How to complete the application form**

**NOTE: ALL SECTIONS MUST BE COMPLETED BY PARENT/LEGAL GUARDIAN**

1. Complete the PARENT/LEGAL GUARDIAN DETAILS section.
   Make sure that the Surname, First Name, and Customer Reference Number (CRN) details match those on your concession card. You will also need to provide your concession card to the school.

   If you are claiming as a Foster Parent or a Veteran Affairs Pensioner, you will need to provide a copy of documentation confirming your status as a temporary Foster Parent or provide your Veterans Affairs Pensioner Gold card to the school.

2. Complete the STUDENT/S DETAILS section for students at this school.
3. Sign and date the form and return it to the school office.

CSEF payments cannot be claimed retrospectively for prior years.
Wwworking With Children Check required for parent volunteers at BPPS

WORKING WITH CHILDREN CHECK (WWCC) What is it?

It is a legal requirement that all volunteers and workers involved in any school must have a WWCC. A WWCC can be obtained by completing the online application form at:


1. The applicant completes the online application after logging on.
2. To complete the process, the applicant then takes their required evidence to the Post Office.

When completing your application:

- You must provide true and correct information on the application form.
- You need to provide the Department of Justice with any additional information requested regarding your application or your application will be withdrawn.
- You will be giving the Department permission to obtain information that will help assess your eligibility to hold a WWC Check card.

Before you start child-related work:

You must apply for a WWC Check.

- You need to show your receipt to every organisation who engages you in child-related work.
- Organisations are obliged to make sure people doing child-related work have applied for and passed the WWC Check.
- Organisations are also obliged to make sure their workers are legally permitted to do child-related work while their application is being processed (see the next point)

Undertaking child-related work during the application process

Most people can undertake child-related work while their application is processed.

However you cannot if you:

- Have been charged with or convicted of a serious sexual, violent or drug-related offence known as a Category 1 or Category 2 offence in the Working with Children Act 2005 (the Act).
- Have previously been given a Negative Notice.
- Are subject to orders or reporting obligations under the:
  - Sex Offenders Registration Act 2004
  - Serious Sex Offenders Monitoring Act 2005
  - Serious Sex Offenders (Detention and Supervision) Act 2009
  - have applied for the Check to supervise a child in employment under the Child Employment Act 2003
  - have applied for the Check for work regulated by the Education and Care Services National Law 2010 (Victoria)
  - Some other organisations also require their staff and volunteers to pass the Check before commencing work. You need to check this with your organisation.

IMPORTANT

- There is no charge for Volunteers.

We value parent/carer help in our breakfast mornings, organised days, activities, excursions, incursions, working bees and classroom happenings, but please understand that without a WWCC we cannot include you.

Please see the office or speak to your child’s class teacher if you require assistance to complete this form.

Update your details

It is essential that you always keep your details up to date.

You must advise the Department within 21 days if you change the organisation that engages you in child-related work. You must also notify the Department within 21 days of changes to your personal and contact details.

You can update the following details online through MyCheck:

- Address
- Phone numbers (work, home or mobile)
- E-mail address
- Organisation details
- Occupational codes.
Excerpt from

Bicycle Education and Cycling to School Policy

Rationale/Purpose:
To provide specific direction in relation to students riding bicycles to and from school, during Bicycle Education and for activities such as camp and as a supervised lunchtime activity.

Implementation

• Students in Year 3 will participate in a Bicycle Education Program of between 7 and 10 sessions. Students bringing bikes to school for this program, must be accompanied by an adult for the whole journey in both directions.
• Students in Years 4 to 6 may have opportunities to participate in supervised cycling activities at school, in the adjacent park or when on school camp.
• All students are permitted to cycle to and from school if accompanied by a supervising adult for the whole distance in each direction.
• Students must be in at least Year 4 to be permitted to ride to school unaccompanied by an adult.
• Parents are responsible to making the decision that their child who is in Year 4 or above is or is not capable of riding to and from school safely.
• The school provides an undercover, lock up area for student bicycles. It is kept locked during the school day. The school does not guarantee the security of bikes at school at any time.
• Students must wear a helmet at all times when riding to and from school and must walk their bike when in the school grounds.
• Any bike that is brought to school must be legally roadworthy and safe to ride.
• The school prefers that students do not scoot or skateboard to and from school. If a student skates or scoots to school, all the above stipulations apply as non-negotiable school rules.