

Diary Dates

Sunday 27th October

Working Bee

Thursday 31st Oct, Friday 1st Nov

Prep Orientation (1st of 4 weeks)

Wednesday 6th Nov

Whole school and group photos

Tuesday Nov 12th

OXFAM Concert

Saturday 16th Nov

Birralee Camping Night

Thursday 21st Nov

PFA Meeting Pancake Parlour

Monday 25th – Friday 29th Nov

Grade 5/6 Camp

Tuesday 3rd Dec

Senior Soiree

Thursday 5th – Friday 6th Dec

Grade 3 Camp

Tues 3rd & Tues 7th Dec

Whole school transition

Tuesday 7th Dec

Grade 7 Transition Day

Wednesday 11th Dec

Carols evening

Friday 13th Dec

Grade 6 Transition Evening

Friday 20th Dec

End of Term 4 1:30pm dismissal

2020

Wednesday 29th Jan

Grade 1 – 6 start

Thursday 30th Jan – Preps start

PRINCIPAL'S REPORT – October 24th 2019

Enrolments for Next Year

Our enrolments for next year are very strong. I am predicting we will increase to around 570 students from the current 539.

Our class structures for next year will be:

Prep x 4

Year 1 x 4

Year 2 x 4

Year 3 x 4

Year 4 x 4

Year 5 x 3

Year 6 x 2

This brings us to 25 classes with an extra Year 5 class, up from 24 classes this year.

I am at present working on school budgets for 2020. The budget is very complex and involves amongst many items, staffing. All schools receive a budget based on student enrolments. Even a small movement in the number of children can mean a quite a change in the budget. At the moment staff planning for next year is based on my enrolment estimate. If you have not yet enrolled your child please do so straight away so that I can count the enrolment in our numbers, we think we have all siblings but you never know...

Equally, if your child will be leaving Birralee, please tell us immediately. I know of one child at school who says she has a scholarship to a private school next year and that she is definitely leaving, but I am yet to be notified by the parents. I wonder how many more students are in this category, so please contact us ASAP if your child will be attending another school in 2020.

Smart Watches, Mobile Phones and other similar devices, at school

We have a policy at school on communication devices covering mobile phones, smart watches and any other device that can message, phone, or take photos. The reference to these devices is covered in our Photographing, Filming and Recording Students policy under the section: Student use of personal devices. It states:

Quote of the Week

'If the only tool you have is a hammer, you tend to see every problem as a nail.' Abraham Maslow

Word of the Week

Misology (noun): hatred of reason, discussion or knowledge

Students are not permitted to use personal photographic or filming devices at school or during excursions, at camps or during school visits (neither cameras, iPads, smartphones nor smartwatches), without the express permission of a teacher, the Principal or Assistant Principal. If students bring such devices to school, they will be required to hand them in to their class teacher for storage until the end of the day. The school is not responsible for the security or maintenance of these devices whilst at school.

Today a smartwatch capable of taking photographs and fitted with a sim card was confiscated from a student in class. The student was not truthful about its features. For this student to comply with our current policy, he should have handed this in to his teacher at the beginning of the day. He was distracting others in the class using features on his watch. We have had occasions earlier in the year where students have been messaging each other in class time. I have also had in the past, a Year 6 student ring his parents on his mobile phone because he wasn't happy with a decision made at school by his teacher. The first we knew of this was when his parent (who did not know all of the facts) rang the school to complain about his son's teacher.

As of next year it will be government policy that these devices MUST be deposited in a lockable and secure location prior to school and may only be retrieved at the end of the day. Smart watches and other like devices (that can message, take photos, email etc.) fall into this category.

Having a childhood – it only comes around once!

I have serious concerns that many of our students are missing out on doing what children are meant to do: enjoy their childhood. I have numerous reports of children telling me that they can't follow up on something at school e.g. practise a song for choir, because they have too much homework or they are attending one of the many after-school activities that has been scheduled for them.

I had a parent come to me many years ago to complain about a project her son had been asked to do a little research on at home. She wanted her son to be excused. When I asked why, the mother proceeded to list after-school and evening activities that covered Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday and Friday! The child also had sport and academic coaching on Saturday as well as Sunday School and church on Sunday. I was flabbergasted and asked, 'When does he get to be a child? When does he climb a tree, ride his bike, read for fun, or kick a footy?' the mother's reply was that she wanted him to do well academically...

Only yesterday, one of our former students told me she didn't like secondary school. When questioned she complained of feeling tired all the time because she has so much homework. She told me she frequently went to bed at midnight or even 1:00am at times! This is clearly dangerous to her health and it is my belief her parents should step in to ensure she is asleep no later than 9:00 to 9:30pm - in line with health guidelines. If she is indeed receiving so much homework taking that amount of time, her parents should take up the issue with her secondary school. This young woman is not having an enjoyable childhood and it is a terrible shame and we, as a society, wonder what some of the reasons are for increasing anxiety levels in our young people. Well here is one reason right here – no down-time and incredible pressure to do more, often coming directly from school as well as parents.

Please do some research on excessive homework, lack of down time and think to yourself, 'Do I want my child to have an enjoyable childhood?' In your research you may even find as I have, that there is a positive academic outcome when students are not timetabled within an inch of their lives and are allowed to be children. As I said in the heading, childhood only comes around once!

The following article appeared on the ABC website two days ago and makes for interesting reading:
<https://www.abc.net.au/news/2019-10-19/opportunity-class-nsw-children-coaching-colleges-tuition-holiday/11604608>

OXFAM Concert

On Tuesday November 12th the Junior Choir, Senior Choir and Band will perform at the OXFAM concert at Box Hill Town Hall. Performers must be at the venue by 6:30pm. My advice is for parents to arrive early if they can – parking can be problematic.

Please find below a link to purchase tickets for parents and supporters. Please also note that performers do NOT require a ticket.

<https://www.trybooking.com/BFZTO>

Venue: Box Hill Town Hall: Starting Time is 7.00pm. Please ensure that all performers arrive by 6.30pm. We aim to finish by 9.15pm.

Adequate Sleep

When children come to school excessively tired, (see my article on childhood above) it impacts heavily on their ability to take in new information, to think clearly and to concentrate. Increasingly, we often have very tired children at school – this means their academic performance and general enjoyment at school is suffering. Children at Primary school require at least 10 to 12 hours of sleep each night – this means most should be in bed by 7 or 8 o'clock each night to ensure adequate rest. We always had a rule in our house that the night before school, Sunday to Thursday was 'in bed by 7:30pm' (8:30 by grade 6) and the only later to bed nights were Fridays or Saturdays. Please ensure your child is in bed in time especially before a school day, to ensure adequate sleep, we will then have much more receptive learners at school!

Ashley Ryan
Principal

Assembly

Senior School assembly will be taking place this week. **Grade 3H** will be performing. Assembly starts at 2:40pm in the hall. All welcome to attend.

Play is the Way Award Winners

Prep V: Ethan
Prep H: Marcus
Prep G: Narin & Mila
Prep P: Lydia & Angeline
1BL: Kai & Anthony
1N: Yue
1M: Catherine
1T: Irvin
2N: Zubeida & Joy
2B: Rhani & Theeksyana
2C: Bo Yang
2L: Ryan & Chloe

Mandarin: Theeksyana (2B)
P.E.: Lachie (1T)
Library: Katie (2L)
STEM: Dengguoer (2C)

Golden Platypus: 4B
House Award: ENDEAVOUR

Book Club

Please submit Book Club orders by Friday 25th October.

School Athletics

Andrew and Ishara headed off to the Regional Athletics Meet last week after qualifying at Division Athletics the week before. Well done to both students for making it to Regionals in their selected events. It's a fantastic achievement just to make it to that level of competition. Congratulations to Ishara who qualified to move on to compete at State in the 100m and Long Jump today. We look forward to hearing the results!

Deb Richards
Physical Education Teacher

Working Bee Sunday 27th October 9am to 12pm

Each year the resources committee organises a few working bees to assist the school with odd projects and initiatives to make our kids school and experience as positive as we can. Apart from being of enormous help to the school – it's a chance for parents, teachers and families to be an integral part of their own environment – fostering respect, charity and a sense of community.

On the day, we will split volunteers into work teams and hope to achieve the following outcomes:

- TREE PLANTING – Planting new trees near the Grade 6 portables area
- GARDENING – Weeding and Cleaning up the school ground



The more people that show up the more we can get done! Please add the date into your calendar. Everyone is welcome to attend – children love to help and/or just play with their friends.

If you have them – please bring gloves, general gardening tools (shovel, rake etc.).

The Registration form is now open via <https://signup.com/client/invitation2/secure/3012654/false#/invitation>

If you are unable to attend but would like to donate towards the working bee fund this can be done at the office or via direct deposit:

- BSB: 063 210
- Account: 10022649
- (Please quote student name and WB as reference)

Resources Committee

Cookie Dough Fundraiser

Choc Chunk, Gingerbread, Strawberry Cheesecake, Anzac Biscuits. There is even Doggie Dough for your furry family members!

Be sure to register and get your orders in.

You can create an online fundraising page to share with your friends and family for support.

To register

- Go to www.cookie-dough.com.au

- Click on "Register" on top right hand corner of the screen
- Fill in the details on the page and press "Register"
- Fill in student and school details.
- Share with family and friends who can place their order online

Happy fundraising!

PFA

Battery Recycling

Your kids might've told you that there are some bins living in their classroom. These bins are from Battery World! In them, you can place all the batteries you own that don't work anymore. Clock batteries, watch batteries, phone batteries, and any other battery if they fit. If you do bring any larger batteries like laptop batteries then you can bring them to the front office and they'll do the rest. Battery World's purpose for giving us these bins is so we can start recycling batteries instead of letting them land in landfill. Many batteries contain lithium, which when exposed to water, catches on fire or explodes & if it catches on fire you can't put it out. So, if you don't want fires in landfill which cannot be put out, then you should ask your kids to put batteries into these battery bins.

Thank you

Recycling Oral Care Waste 2019

In an effort to look after our planet and environment, our school is again participating in the recycling program run by Colgate, Chemist Warehouse and TerraCycle called the 'Colgate Community Garden Challenge'.

Collect oral care waste such as toothpaste tubes, toothbrushes, floss packets and containers, toothbrushes packaging etc. The recycling box is located at the school office.

Every piece of oral care waste collected will count towards our total Garden Points. The more waste we collect as a school community, the more chances we have to win!

You can also increase our points by voting online for our school at:

<https://www.terracycle.com.au/en-AU/brigades/colgategarden>