

NEWSLETTER 30 January 2024

Dates for your Diary

JAN	Wed	31	Foundation Day off			
FEB	Fri	2	Italian	Fri	2	Swimming
	Tue	6	Music	Tue	6	Cooking Grade 4/5/6
	Wed	7	Foundation Day Off	Wed	7	Library
	Fri	9	Italian	Fri	9	NO Swimming
	Fri	9	Family BBQ 6:30pm	Mon	12	Art
	Tue	13	Music	Wed	14	Foundation Day Off
	Fri	16	Italian	Fri	16	Swimming
	Tue	20	Music	Wed	21	Foundation Day Off
	Wed	21	Library	Fri	23	Italian
	Fri	23	Swimming	Mon	26	Art
	Tue	27	Music	Tue	27	Prep Information session
	Tue	27	Cooking Grade 4/5/6	Wed	28	Foundation Day Off
26 Feb – 1 March Grade 6 Cluster Camp						
MAR	Fri	1	Italian	Fri	1	Swimming

Dear Parents,

Welcome back to another year. We have many great things happening here this year once again – the staff were busy yesterday planning our themes, camps, curriculum and much more. In general, another busy, but very exciting year.

Welcome

Firstly I would like to extend a very warm welcome to our new Foundation students. Starting school for the very first time we have:

Rosie Clancy
Archie Gourlay

We look forward to continuing a long lasting relationship with them, their family and all the Greta Valley Primary School community.



**WELCOME TO GRETA VALLEY
PRIMARY SCHOOL!**

Staffing

We're all back and refreshed and ready to go!!!!

Our 2024 staff is as follows:

Foundation/1/2 – Ms Jen Hamilton

Grade 3/4/5/6 - Howard Gibson

Music - Ms Leonie Brien

Italian - Ms Peg Halbwidl

Art - Ms Sandra Moore

Library - Ms Bernadette Blance-Plamer

Cooking - Ms Janet Cameron

Business Manager/Education Support –Ms
Tanya Boyle

OSHC – Ms Rani Symes

The Library Van will continue to service us fortnightly on a Wednesday and the Art Van will visit us every second Monday. Italian and Music are weekly on Friday and Tuesdays respectively. The Grade 4/5/6 children will go cooking three times a term for the whole day to Edi Upper Primary School commencing Tuesday, 6 February. Keep an eye on the calendar at the top of each newsletter to see what is happening.

We are still searching for another teacher to support me in the Grade 3/4/5/6 classroom. The position has once again been advertised. Unfortunately we're not the only school in Victoria having difficulty fulfilling vacancies. Until such time that we make an appointment, I will be teaching fulltime so please be mindful of this if you are ringing to speak with me.

Thank you

Thank you to the Cunneen, Dinning, Nicholls, Orr and Shepherd families who assisted in keeping our gardens and lawns watered over the holidays.

On Sunday Mark and Janelle Osborne and Jo and John Lambert spent the day reconstructing the front area of the school. Gone is the gazebo and in with some seating around the tree and some new play

equipment. There is still some work to be done when the weather is more conducive to planting out the garden beds, but overall it is a huge improvement. A massive thanks to these four – and to Mark's dingo for doing much of the hard work!

All your efforts are much appreciated.



Code Red Procedures

With the bushfire season well and truly upon us, this is a timely reminder to you of our procedures on days that are declared as Code Red. Our school is on the Bushfire At Risk (BAR) register and as such on days of Code Red there will be **NO** school operating. Nobody is allowed to be on the premises on these days. Please take the time to read through the attached flyer which gives more detail and if you have any queries please feel free to contact me.

Bus Timetable

A bus timetable was sent home at the end of last year. Please let us know if you need a new one. A reminder that unless we have been notified of any alteration to your child's normal designated bus stop, then that is where they will be dropped off. We cannot rely on your child telling us that 'mum or dad is picking them up' or 'mum said I'm to go to my friend's house'. Please either send a note or ring us.

Foundation Information Session

Each year we hold an information session for our Foundation parents. The key focus of the session is to inform you particularly about our teaching of literacy and numeracy, and how you can assist at home, along with some other general information about your child's first year of school. This is a great opportunity for you to learn some valuable information. Jen will be in touch with these parents shortly regarding a date and time, but we are looking at Thursday 22nd February at this stage.

Hats

A reminder that all children are required to wear a hat while they are outside during Term 1. Please ensure that your child has a hat with his/her name in it.

Medication Plans & Student Details

As you will appreciate, we need to be kept up to date with your relevant details that apply to us. As such, today we have sent home all the records that we currently hold on your children.

Please be sure to check all details – medication, emergency contacts, telephone numbers, etc. We would appreciate all the details being returned to us by no later than **Friday, 9 February**. Please sign and date each page.

Foundation parents will not receive this data as you have all just completed an enrolment form – hopefully your details won't have changed in this short time!

Term Dates

For your diary/calendar the school term dates for 2024 are:

- Term 1 - 29 January to 28 March
- Term 2 - 15 April to 28 June
- Term 3 - 15 July to 20 September
- Term 4 - 7 October to 20 December

Applicable Public Holidays are:

Labour Day	11 March
Anzac Day	25 April
Monarch's Birthday	10 June
Melbourne Cup	5 November

School Council

I will be sending home shortly information regarding the election of Councillors for our School Council. Please read this information carefully when it arrives and if you have any queries feel free to contact me. We have six parents on our School Council – all elected to serve for two years. Elections are held at the start of each year and we have **two** positions vacant this round – one vacancy as a result of Scott Flanigan no longer having students enrolled and one currently held by Janelle Osborne who is eligible for re-election. Council meetings are held twice per term. School Councils play an important role in the operation of a school. More information soon!

Foundation Day Off

A reminder to our Foundation parents that in accordance with Education Department policy our Foundation students are allowed one day off each week for February. We recommend these children have the Wednesday off, simply to break the week up for them. However the choice is basically yours as you will be the best judge of when your child is getting tired and would benefit from the day at home. These will commence this week through to and inclusive of Wednesday 28 February.

Cooking

As mentioned earlier our Grade 4/5/6 students will be participating in the Stephanie Alexander cooking program commencing Tuesday 6 February. This is a tremendous program where students are taught both kitchen skills and food appreciation through the cooking and

sharing of a variety of dishes. We go three times a term and each time is generally for the whole day (leave here 9:15am and return around 2:30pm). If you are interested in coming with us please let me know as we would love to have some extra support - you don't have to be a Grade 4/5/6 parent. Students will need an apron and snacks. Lunch will be what they cook.

Privacy Information

Our school collects, uses, discloses and stores student and parent personal information for standard school functions or where permitted by law, as stated in the Schools' Privacy Policy.

Please take the time to remind yourself of the school's collection statement, found on our website or if you would like a copy please contact me.

Swimming

Our swimming program will be conducted this Term commencing this Friday 2 February and will run weekly until 22 March. Please note that there is **NO swimming on 9 February** as the pool is unavailable that date. These lessons are conducted at the Benalla Aquatic Centre and students are bussed there. Families will be invoiced for this program once we have completed the program.

Thank you

Howard Gibson
Principal

Family BBQ - Friday 9 February

We will have (number) of people attending the BBQ on 9 February.

Signed Family Name:.....

Permission Forms

We have the ability to have just the one permission form signed by you that will cover all local excursions - e.g. swimming to Benalla, excursions to Wangaratta, other King Valley schools and cooking.

We will still notify you when we will be going on an excursion - we just won't need a permission form each time.

Attached is the 2024 LOCAL EXCURSIONS permission form. Please return this asap as we will need it for Friday's swimming. Any queries please feel free to contact me.

Family BBQ

Please mark Friday 9th February in your diary for our annual 'welcome to the new year' BBQ. This will be at the school commencing at 6pm. All meats will be provided, but we ask that you bring either a salad or dessert and your own drinks. This will be followed by our annual water fight! Get in training kids (you need it!). Teachers will be victors again.

To assist with catering can you please complete the slip below indicating how many people will be attending from your family. Also, if anyone is available to help with the cooking from 5:30pm that would be greatly appreciated.



UEducate Us

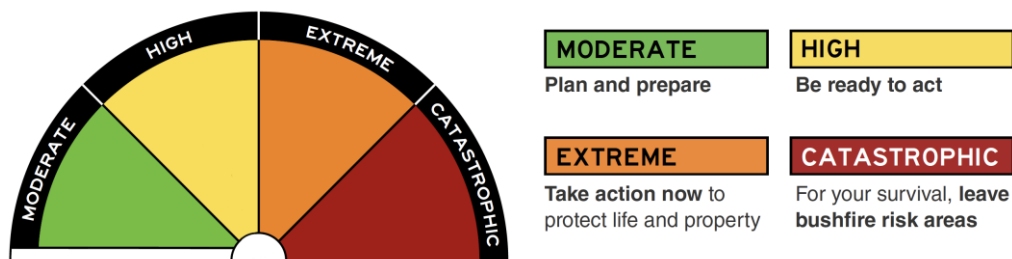
This year we will be using a new School Management System called UEducateUs. This system is designed to make administrating schools and classrooms easier. It will help us track attendance, activities and improve communication between staff, teachers, students and parents. I have enclosed a handbook in

your envelope of goodies that contains details on the platform, how to download and login details for each parent. Please contact Tanya should you have any questions. We will be starting off with attendance and electronic sign-in and will gradually progress as we get to know the system.



Newsletter article: Bushfire At-Risk Register - Schools

School procedures for the bushfire season



Fire danger ratings and warnings are used in Australia to provide clear direction on the safest options for preserving life.

Schools and children's services listed on the DET Bushfire At-Risk Register (BARR) will be closed when a Catastrophic fire danger rating day is determined in their Bureau of Meteorology district. **Our school has been identified as being one of those at high bushfire risk and is listed on the BARR.**

Where possible, we will provide parents with up to four days notice of a potential Catastrophic day closure by letter and SMS message/phone tree. A Catastrophic day will be determined by the Emergency Management Commissioner no later than 1.00 pm the day before the potential closure. Once we are advised of the confirmation of the Catastrophic day we will provide you with advice before the end of the school day.

Once confirmed, the decision to close will not change, regardless of improvements in the weather forecast. This is to avoid confusion and help your family plan alternative care arrangements for your child. It is also important to note that:

- No staff will be on site on days where the school is closed due to a forecast Catastrophic day.
- Out-of-school-hours care will also be cancelled on these days
- School camps will be cancelled if a Catastrophic fire danger rating day is determined for the Bureau of Meteorology district in which the camp is located.
- As a bus co-ordinating school all bus routes will be cancelled.

- Depending on which Bureau of Meteorology district is impacted bus route cancellations may affect our school.

On these Catastrophic days families are encouraged to enact their Bushfire Survival Plan – **on such days children should never be left at home or in the care of older children.**

For those of us living in a bushfire prone area, the Country Fire Authority (CFA) advises that when Catastrophic days are forecast, the safest option is to leave the night before or early on the morning of the Catastrophic day.

As part of preparing our school for potential hazards such as fire, we have updated and completed our Emergency Management Plan, reprioritised any maintenance works that may assist in preparing for the threat of fire and cleared our facility's grounds and gutters.

What can parents do?

- Make sure your family's bushfire survival plan is up-to-date and includes alternative care arrangements in the event that our school is closed.
- Ensure we have your current contact details, including your mobile phone numbers. Keep in touch with us by reading our newsletters and by talking to your child's teacher or any other member of the teaching staff about our emergency management plan.
- Most importantly at this time of year, if you're planning a holiday or short stay in the bush or in a coastal area, you should check warnings in advance of travel and remain vigilant during your stay.
- If your child is old enough, talk to them about bushfires and your family's bushfire survival plan.
- You can access more information about children's services closures on the Department of Education and Training website – see <http://www.education.vic.gov.au/about/programs/health/pages/closures.aspx>

For up-to-date information on this year's fire season see:

- <https://emergency.vic.gov.au>
- Facebook ([facebook.com/cfavic](https://www.facebook.com/cfavic))
- Twitter (twitter.com/CFA_Updates)
- ABC local radio, Sky News and other emergency broadcasters
- VicEmergency Hotline (1800 226 226)