PRINCIPAL’S BLOG

Dear Parents and Friends

Welcome!!!

Welcome to all our new Foundies. This week has seen both groups at school and together and learning their routine in class time and building their relationships with their buddies and each other.

Welcome to all new families to the school. We hope you come to love our community as much as we do! New families joining us this year are the Kelly, Crocco, Cullen, Garriga Palau, Goldsztein, Hauptmann, O’Connor, Papazoglou, Rudakov, Sykes, Coutts, Drezga, McGuigan, Ogden, Spencer, Walters and Wood.

Ferny Creek PS Whole School Picnic

We are holding our second whole school picnic tomorrow. Last year we had the best possible day of fun to celebrate the end of our ‘A Valued Start Program’. We feel it is a great way to celebrate the conclusion of this first two weeks. The day will (approximately) be;

9.30 am Walk to Ferny Creek Reserve
10am Free play
10.30am Play lunch together as a whole school
11am Year 6 students lead their house in a fun games session
11.45am Whole School activity on oval
12pm Lunch together as a whole school
1.00pm Walk back to school
(Foundations students picked up from Reserve)
1.30pm Arrive back at school

Parents are very welcome to join us for the day!

Agreed Practices – the big changes!

Last year we moved from having over 40 agreed practices to about 20 ‘non-negotiables’. This change came about from our whole school review at the end of 2014. Our non-negotiables are statements that apply to staff, students and parents/carers. Key non-negotiables parents need to be aware of for 2016 are:

Together we make a Difference!
1. Two sessions of Literacy activities 4 times a week and one session of Mathematics activities 5 times a week.
2. Teachers will teach to our Instructional model in all Literacy and Mathematics sessions.
3. A clear student and focused Learning Goal will be explained to students for every Literacy and Mathematics session.
4. Common planning time within school time is to be used for team planning. One other after school meeting is to be used for full team meetings, curriculum meetings or specific professional learning. All teams plan all curriculum areas together. If there is no priority agenda the team will run a moderation session.
5. All class teachers will have on display, and explain clearly, the day at a glance to their class each morning.
6. All grades spend the last 10 minutes at the end of each day on reflection.
7. Restorative Practices will be used for student behaviour and well-being issues.
8. Each Specialist will have a uniform and consistent set of rules, consequences and rewards.
9. All students will have access to fresh fruit or vegetables as desired in the morning teaching block. All students will have, at all times, access to, and be encouraged to use, water.
10. Lateness and absence of children is to be strongly discouraged.
11. When a student is away for the second consecutive day the class teacher will phone home.
12. Each class to send a fortnightly bulletin home which is stored on the school intranet.
13. No staff member is to use any electronic device, e.g. mobile phone, laptop, for private purposes during any class times.

School Council Election
Nominations are open from next Monday for the 2016 School Council. There are four parent and three staff vacancies for this next two year period. Parents whose two year period is up may of course be nominated again. There is an information notice posted in the office foyer. Please ask Jill for the forms you need if you wish to nominate a person or nominate yourself. There will also be nominations called for one Department position on School Council.

**Monday 15th Feb**
Call for nominations – Please see the office for a nomination form.

**Monday 22nd Feb**
Close of nominations.

**Wednesday 24th Feb**
Candidates posted outside office.

**Monday 29th Feb**
Ballot Papers available if an election is necessary.

**Monday 7th March**
Close of Ballot.

**Tuesday 8th March**
Declaration of poll.

**Tuesday 22nd March**
First new Council meeting.

Year Level Information Evenings and Parent to Teacher Conference
A very important school activity in February is for us to communicate very clearly the expectations and goals of each grade in the school. To do this we will be having Information Evening meetings on **Tuesday 16th February** (after the conclusion of our First Ten Days Program) for Years 3 to Year 6 and on **Wednesday 17th February** for Years 1 and 2. This session will outline all the requirements, expectations and needs for that particular year level. Sessions begin at 7.00pm. They will run for approximately one hour each.

We are also holding our very important **Meet the Parents sessions**. There is great value in receiving feedback and having teachers meet
their student’s parents and learn a little bit more about them. An information notice will be sent home soon and is to be completed by all families. It is useful for us even if you still need to meet the teachers, and may be used if you feel there is no need for a face to face exchange with your child’s teacher. We are holding this on Wednesday 24th February. This is to be attended only if you feel you need to talk to your child’s teacher about any issues that will, or may impact on their learning this year. Our new Foundation students do not need to attend this session as you have already given our teachers detailed feedback.

A list of times for each class will be available to at the Information Evenings and then in our school foyer. Please try to fill in a time if you need to meet with your child’s teacher.

**Bushfire Awareness**

The Department of Education and Training (DET) in association with Emergency Management Victoria have worked closely to develop new policy that will ensure Victorian schools are prepared for bushfire season. **Currently when a Code Red Fire Danger Rating (FDR) day has been determined, schools on the Bushfire At Risk Register (BARR), that’s us, are required to pre-emptively close.**

Now, under a new policy developed by DET certain schools in exceptional circumstances may also pre-emptively close or relocate on days where an Extreme FDR day has been forecast. A decision to close will only be made in extreme circumstances and through close consultation with the DET and advice from Emergency Management Victoria.

Parents will be notified of any closure or relocation by 3.00pm the day prior to the forecast Extreme (FDR) day. **Our highest priority is the safety of all of our students and staff,** and the Department and Emergency Management Victoria have worked closely on this policy to ensure that all schools are prepared for the bushfire season.

**Some Safety and Traffic Issues. Let’s be keen in 2016.**

**Car Park:**
If you are parking across the road in our car park, you are reminded to **reverse into your car spot.** This way, you have a clear view of the children as you leave the car park. Also, a reminder not to park on the roadway anywhere near the crossing. Please be aware there is also new road signage in this area. Diane and people using the crossing need clear vision both ways.

**Playing in the Carpark**
Students are **not allowed to play in the carpark before or after school.** Tell your child(ren) to **wait inside the school fence** until they are picked up.

**Walking Through Staff Car Park:**
No children or families should walk through the staff car park. Cars are coming and going all day and the risk to save a few seconds is just not worth it.

**40 kph Speed Limit:**
A reminder that we have a **40kph speed limit** out the front of the school **24 hours a day.** As we are encouraging use of our school grounds and facilities during out of school hours, we can have children and families crossing the road at any time.
Billy Cart Derby
The Billy Cart Derby has been pencilled in for Friday 26th February. Please keep this date free in your diaries.

Hats Reminder
As Ferny Creek is a SunSmart school, all students are required to wear a Ferny Creek hat every recess and lunchtime during Term 1. Hats can be purchased at the Uniform Shop or fill in an order form at our office.

Visitor Badges
A reminder to check in at the office when you arrive to help in classes or the playground. It is imperative that we know who is in the school at all times.

Again, thank you for a great start to the school year. It has been wonderful to visit grades and wander around and chat to both children and parents. We look forward to a wonderful and enriching year of learning and teaching as well as a sense of enjoyment in being part of Ferny Creek Primary School.

Have a wonderful week,
Matthew

School Captains and House Captains will be presented with their badges at a special assembly on Friday 11th March.
In 2016, we’re taking students on an outback adventure through the Canyon of Savings and have eight new reward items to choose from our Outback Savers range!

More information will be given during Assembly on Friday 19 February, and there will be a Commonwealth Bank representative to assist with opening new accounts. So bring in your forms and ID on Friday of next week.

**Useful information**
- School Banking Day is **Tuesday** (please place bank books in your class’s grey bag by 9am)
- Your child may hand in bank books for younger or older siblings
- If you wish to open a Dollarmites account for your child/ren, the quickest way is to take your form and ID to a Commonwealth Bank branch, or bring along your form and ID to the Assembly on Friday 19 Feb.
- Only deposits made at school earn tokens and commission for the school. Collect 10 tokens to claim a reward. Each deposit earns you one token.

**2016 Term 1 reward items:**
- Flying Snake Tail
- Wildlife Writer Set

**Outback Savers can go wild at Australia Zoo**
The School Banking program can help put young Australians on the path to good savings habits. And with this year’s Grand Prize Competition it might even put them on a path to Australia Zoo, where they’ll meet Bindi and Robert Irwin (not to mention koalas, wombats and wallabies) as part of the wildest family adventure you can imagine.

**How to Enter**
Every student who makes 15 or more School Banking deposits by the end of Term 3, 2016 will automatically go into the draw to win a family trip for two adults and three children to meet the Irwins at Australia Zoo. Full details of the competition are available at commbank.com.au/schoolbanking

**Savings Tips**
Teaching your children to save is important, but what is the best way to go about it? One tip is to help them set their own savings goal. By choosing their own goal they will be more motivated. Plus, it will help make it a fun experience for them. Read on for more tips at commbank.com.au/savingsgoals

Lease Robinson – School Banking Coordinator
**What’s On Next Week?**

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<tr>
<th>Monday 15th</th>
<th>Tuesday 16th</th>
<th>Wednesday 17th</th>
<th>Thursday 18th</th>
<th>Friday 19th</th>
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<td>Join us for lots of fun as we explore the far reaches of the night sky by creating our own star constellations.</td>
<td>Soar through the sky on your very own UFO that we will be making with paper plates! I wonder how far yours will fly.</td>
<td>Practice your slow motion running today as you participate in our hilarious Astronaut Races.</td>
<td>Googly eyes, 3 arms and 7 legs?! Use your imagination to create your own unique crazy alien today.</td>
<td>The moment we’ve all been waiting for… Don’t miss our super duper Space Race today!</td>
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**Kids Corner**

Luca and Lachlan made their own characters out of paper!

And who said you shouldn’t play with your food? **Summer** made a delicious vegetable face!

We all went searching for tadpoles in the frog pond!

We saw two!

Our Junior Leaders were: Ashley, Keeva and Summer. Congratulations guys! Great job.

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**After The Bell News**

**IMPORTANT:** The grace period for re-enrolment for 2016 ends on 12/2/16; after that, you MUST be enrolled for 2016 or Care can no longer be offered, unfortunately.

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**Cooking Club**

On Friday we’ll be making Fruit Rockets! What will yours look like?

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**Reminder**

Don’t forget to bring your hat to after school care during term one!

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**Feedback**

We welcome any feedback or suggestion of things that your children are interested in so that we can develop the program to meet the needs of you and your children.

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**Enrolment and Bookings**

We always welcome new faces to Before and After Care! 2016 Enrolments can be completed online or by downloading a paper version, or you can pick one up at the OSHCare room. Should you need any assistance with the online process, feel free to come and see us and will be happy to help you out with the process.

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**Contacts**

Booking/Cancelation: enrolment@afterthebell.com.au

OSHC: 0428 258 940

Karli – Program Leader

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**Joke of the Week**

This weeks joke comes from Mr A in 3/4C (Can you guess who it is?)

Q: Why did the M&M go to school?

A: To become a smartie…
CAMPS, SPORTS AND EXCURSIONS FUND (CSEF) APPLICATION FORM

School Name

School REF ID

Parent/legal guardian details

Surname

First name

Address

Town/suburb __________________ State ______________ Postcode ____________

Contact number __________________

Centrelink pensioner concession OR Health care card number (CRN)

☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ – ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ – ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ – ☐ OR

☐ Foster parent* OR ☐ Veterans affairs pensioner

*Foster Parents must provide a copy of the temporary care order letter from the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS).

Student details

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<th>Child’s surname</th>
<th>Child’s first name</th>
<th>Student ID</th>
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I authorise the Department of Education and Training (DET) to use Centrelink Confirmation eServices to perform an enquiry of my Centrelink customer details and concession card status in order to enable the business to determine if I qualify for a concession, rebate or service. I also authorise the Australian Government Department of Human Services (DHS) to provide the results of that enquiry to DET.

I understand that:

• DHS will use information I have provided to DET to confirm my eligibility for the Camps, Sports and Excursions Fund and will disclose to DET personal information including my name, address, payment and concession card type and status.

• this consent, once signed, remains valid while my child is enrolled at a registered Victorian school unless I withdraw it by contacting the school.

• I can obtain proof of my circumstances/details from DHS and provide it to DET so that my eligibility for the Camps, Sports and Excursions Fund can be determined.

• if I withdraw my consent or do not alternatively provide proof of my circumstances/details, I may not be eligible for the Camps, Sports and Excursions Fund provided by DET.

• information regarding my eligibility for the Camps, Sports and Excursions Fund may be disclosed to the Victorian Department of Health and Human Services and/or State Schools’ Relief for the purpose of evaluating concession card services or confirming eligibility for assistance.

You are able to request access to the personal information that we hold about you, and to request that any errors be corrected, by contacting your child’s school.

Signature of applicant ___________________________ Date __ / __ / _____.
CSEF ELIGIBILITY

Below is the criteria used to determine a student’s eligibility for the Camps, Sports and Excursions Fund (CSEF).

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;

a) 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

b) Be a temporary foster parent, and;

c) Submit an application to the school by the due date.

* A special consideration eligibility category also exists. For more information, see: www.education.vic.gov.au/csef

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 (27 January 2016) or term two (11 April 2016).

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.

• Secondary school student rate: $225 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.

For ungraded students, the rate payable is determined by the student’s date of birth. For more information, see: www.education.vic.gov.au/csef

Year 7 government school students who are CSEF recipients are also eligible for a uniform voucher. Secondary schools are required to make applications on behalf of parents so please register your interest at the school.

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.

Queries relating to CSEF eligibility and payments should be directed to the school.