Dear Parents and Friends,

A special welcome is extended to all our new families attending Ferny Creek for the first time.

A special welcome to our newest staff members, Samantha Gray (4/5) and Jodie Benedick (Foundation) Welcome back to Brian Graham (1/2) after his 12 months teaching in Canada.

This year will again be a terrific year for our school. We are now entering the second year of our new 4 year strategic cycle. Staff have spent a lot of time last week planning our year. At the moment we are particularly focusing on our two-week A Valued Start Program and setting up the school structure to best deliver our Strategic Plan’s Goals in our second year. Congratulations to staff and parents for the part they have played to ensure such a smooth start to the year. The work many staff and parents did for the school over the holidays has been amazing.

The children have settled happily into their new classes and will be enjoying and benefitting from our ‘A Valued Start’ over the next week or so. A very special welcome to our new Foundation students who are starting their school life this year. Tomorrow is the first day they are all at school for the first time. Staff are looking forward to a very exciting year of teaching and learning with all your children. We will focusing on creating rigour and routines that will hold us in good stead for the remainder of the year. A reminder too that we will be spending time over these days focusing on our mantra, ‘Together We make a Difference’ and our school values of respect, inclusion and pride.

As a feature of this unit of work we have again decided to hold a whole school picnic on Friday 12th February (next week). More information will be sent home soon but this will be a wonderful way to get the school ‘together’ so soon in the school year.
The Year Ahead

As mentioned above. We are into Year 2 of our new Strategic Plan. We are developing concise and specific goals, strategies and targets for our first year. Our four key goals from which we develop our annual strategies are:

1. To maximise the learning growth of every student in all learning domains with a strong F-6 focus on literacy, particularly writing and spelling and all strands of mathematics.
2. To build a rich, relevant, challenging and stimulating learning environment that promotes consistently high levels of student engagement.
3. To enhance student wellbeing and resilience in a supportive learning community that fosters the school’s values and which promotes and nurtures the social, emotional and physical development of all students.
4. To optimise the allocation of resources (human, financial, time, space and materials) to maximise the learning outcomes for all students.

Our steps to achieve this are clear and are on display on the noticeboard outside the Uniform Shop.

We are also proud that we are able to maintain our Quicksmart Maths program in the Senior School, our Reading Improvement Program in Level 2 and our Reading Enrichment program in level 3. These are formal programs that enrich what teachers already do in the classroom with our lower and upper achieving students. We are also continuing our gifted and talented WiseOnes and Thinking Outside the Box Programs this year.

Bushfire Awareness

Please be assured that the school is ready for whatever this term throws at us as far as fire risk is concerned. As was the case last year, the school will receive 4 days warning of possible closure. The final decision will be early on the fourth day and will allow us to contact all in the community and confirm that the school is closed (or not). I will also be running emergency drills in the first two weeks to ensure all staff and students understand their roles in the case of an emergency.

Parent to Teacher Conference and Grade Level Information Evenings

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 for our Years 3 to 6 and Wednesday 17th February for Years 1 to 2. We have staggered these into two times so that you have a chance that your family can be catered for. These sessions will outline all the requirements, expectations and needs for that particular year level.

You will receive, in the near future, information about our very important Parent Teacher Conference. We are holding this on Tuesday 23rd February. There is great value in having parent to teacher information exchange sessions as the more information we gather about your children at the start of the year the quicker we can cater for their individual needs. **This is 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.
Parenting Issues
It seems that around the end of January our print media publishes many articles about teaching and parenting. One article I did find interesting was by Dr. Gregory Ramey. His article is about the 10 Do's and Don'ts on Parenting:

Some people live their lives looking at the rear-view mirror, regretting the past rather than enjoying the present or anticipating the future.

Here are the most frequently mentioned regrets I’ve heard from parents in my office.

1. **Spent too little time with the kids.** Overwhelmed with meeting the expectations of so many people, some parents never just enjoy their children. Relax and appreciate today.

2. **Spent too much time with the kids.** At the other extreme, overprotective parents who are consumed with their children’s lives realise they have neglected themselves, their spouse and other important relationships. Kids are important, but don’t let them control your life.

3. **Treated all of the children equally.** Parents of multiple children often realise too late that it makes more sense to treat each youngster according to their needs, not what was done with other siblings. Don’t try to justify your actions with your other children. You know what’s best for them, and that is all you need to say.

4. **Focused on silly things.** What’s really important to you? Being a great parent is all about doing those things that foster a superb relationship with your child. It’s about trust, communication and respect. When you focus on what matters, it’s suddenly easier to avoid overreacting to the minor irritations that are an inevitable part of being a parent.

5. **Concerned with planning for tomorrow.** Some parents become overly absorbed with only doing things today that will help their children tomorrow. Participation in any sport or hobby is carefully planned out to help their child advance to another goal, rather than enjoyed for its own sake.

6. **Too busy.** The way you spend your time reflects what matters to you. It’s hard for me to understand those parents who complain constantly about being too busy, yet do nothing to take control of their lives. The result is frenetic and often mindless activities, rather than involvement in things that foster mindful reflection and meaningful relationships.

7. **Ignored my spouse.** Your spouse needs your time, attention, and love. Your partner should be your highest priority. Good parents generally have great relationships with their partners.

8. **Too anxious.** Stop being so concerned about being the perfect parent. Do your best, seek help if needed, and then stop worrying. Enjoy your child’s giggles, stories, and unique perspectives on life.

9. **Made things too complicated.** Raising children is about loving abundantly, setting clear rules, implementing consequences consistently and fostering honest communication. It’s just not that complicated. Keep it simple.

10. **Ignored myself.** You can’t be a good parent, partner, or person if you don’t take good care of yourself.

Dr. Gregory Ramey is the executive director of Dayton (Ohio) Children Hospital’s Pediatric Center for Mental Health Resources

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**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 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. I 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

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Apple AC Wall Plug Power Adapter
Exchange / Recall Program

On 29th January 2016 Apple announced a voluntary recall / exchange program for Australian wall plug adapters provided with iPhones, iPads and Laptops sold within Australia between 2003 to 2016.

CompNow is offering a free exchange morning for Ferny Creek Parents/Students (regardless of where they are purchased)

Date: Friday 5th February
Time: 8:30am to 9:30am
Location: School office.

There has been a few incidents reported to Apple of the adapters breaking and becoming a possible safety risk. So play it safe and have your adapters swapped for free.

We only require the plug part of the iPhone, iPad or Apple laptop power adapter. These will be swapped on the spot for you.

CompNow can provide this service to other schools or businesses.
Visit www.compnow.com.au to find out more.

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Olinda Auskick
Olinda Recreation Reserve
Starts Sat. 16th April at 9:00am
Contact Darren – 0400 470 290

Wristbands with raffle numbers are available at Ferny Creek Primary School office.
Specialist News

The Specialist programs run primarily on a Tuesday and Wednesday each week.

P.E

Term 1 is a busy term with students focusing on athletics in preparation for the House Sports in Week 7. Please ensure your child is wearing appropriate footwear on specialist days. If your child cannot tie their own shoelaces please either teach them how or put them in Velcro style runners.

Riding school bus is starting again this Friday. If you have any questions please see Doug.

Japanese

Welcome back for Term 1. This term the students continue learning about the language and culture of Japan. There is a UDEC Japanese trip available for Grade 5/6 students. If you are interested please attend the information evening at Upwey High School at 7.30pm on Wednesday 10th February.

Toshi

Choir

Choir is back up and running on Tuesday the 16th of February. Students form Grades 2-6 who are interested in becoming choir members are welcome to attend a 3 week trial period before making the commitment to stick with it for the year. Choir will run from 10.30 – 11am on Tuesday mornings, meaning that students will spend half of their play time having fun and singing in the music room. If you want to be the next Taylor Swift or Justin Bieber, this could be the perfect place to start!
Performing Arts

This term we will be participating in an exciting cross-arts unit of work about Puppets. Students will work on creating puppets in Visual Arts and then create puppet shows in Performing Arts. If any students have any puppets that they would like to bring into school to share, please bring them into Performing Arts class. This will assist us in discussions on different types of puppets (marionettes, shadow puppets, hand puppets etc).

During Performing Arts we will also be learning some bush dances in preparation for the upcoming school bush dance on Saturday the 19th of March. Our school will combine with Mt Dandenong P.S for a fun night of dancing, with a bush band who will call the dances on the night. How exciting!

Keep in mind, we also have instrumental teachers available for private lessons in school time. Piano, guitar, drums, singing, flute, sax and clarinet lessons are available,

Melody

Visual Arts

Welcome back to what will be an exciting year of arts learning. Some housekeeping issues are to ensure that your child has an art smock that they can put on themselves with a face cloth or square of towelling attached to it so that they can wipe their hands. Grade 5/6 students will be attending the NGV International Collection in Term 2. This is always a terrific excursion that the students thoroughly enjoy.

All students will be making puppets in Art. To complement the cross-arts unit on Puppetry we will be having a whole school incursion on the 23rd of February. The children will be inspired by a show performed by Dream Puppets.

Helen
There are no Stars of the week for Foundation classes this week.

**Callum O:** For being a very kind and respectful classmate and a fantastic table captain!

**Will C:** For being a great role model to his classmates and working hard to do his very best. Well done Will!

**Noah G:** For making an excellent start to the year with great class behaviour and work.

**Finlay A:** For being a polite and friendly student – keep it up Finlay!

**Ally J:** For a happy and positive start to the year and stepping up to the challenges of Grade 4.

**Indi B:** For a wonderful start to the year and taking pride in everything she does.

**Maia K:** Welcome to Ferny Creek P.S. Well done in settling in so well and making new friends.

**Oliver K:** For a very positive start to Grade 3 and showing PRIDE in his work.

**Mera P:** For sharing her wonderful piece ‘The Worst Holidays Ever’ with the rest of the class. Great job!

**Finn H:** For respectfully sharing ideas and helping others when needed. Well done!

**Meg G:** For your beautifully written Writer’s Notebook piece “The journal to Forget”. Your word choice and the rhythm and flow of the language you used was wonderful!!

**Xavier M:** For the wonderful start you have made to grade five. You have completed all tasks set so far and have worked well with your peers. Keep up the good work!!

**Elska S:** For remembering her responsibilities as school captain without prompting. Well done Elska – great start.

**Zach R:** For the caring and friendly way you took care of Gidi when he was stung by a bee. A great way to start the year.
Player Registration

for Winter 2016

Sassafras Ferny Creek Netball Club is open for registration for our Winter Competition and welcomes any new players.
You don’t need to have any experience, just the will to join in and become part of a team!

Registration: February 6th, 2016 10am to 12pm
Season: Winter season runs from March to mid August (no finals for Under 11s)
  Age: 8 years old to open.
  Training: Teams train at the netball court in Olinda
  Matches: All matches are on Saturdays
  Venue: Mountain District Netball Complex, Ferntree Gully for all matches.

ARE YOU INTERESTED?
Give us a call and we will get you started!

Questions? Contact Ann-Maree Baker on 0418 395 070

Find out more about our club at http://www.foxsportspulse.com/club_info.cgi?c=0-2461-38562-0-0 or Like us on Facebook https://www.facebook.com/Sassafras-Ferny-Creek-Netball-Club

SUNDAY FEBRUARY 14TH

Do you own an off road motorcycle – looking for somewhere to legally ride?
Want to improve your skills while having fun with other enthusiasts?
Have you considered joining a family orientated club that runs great events catering for all ages?

Then you might want to come along to the 2016 MCRCV Come & Try Day to be held on Sunday February 14th at Three Bridges (just out of Yarra Junction).

There’s no cost for the day and there will be special membership deals on offer on the day.

All Riders aged 19 and under are welcome to attend (Age at 1st Jan 2016).

For full details go to the MCRCV website www.mcrcv.com.au and click on the link to the 2016 Come & Try Day.
CAMPS, SPORTS AND EXCURSIONS FUND (CSEF) APPLICATION FORM

[Blank fields for School Name and 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>
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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.