



# Birregurra Primary School Newsletter

## 'Living & Learning Together'

Term 1, Week 1 – 31<sup>st</sup> January 2024

### From the Principal's Desk



*Birregurra Primary School is a child safe organisation which welcomes all children, young people and their families.*

*We are committed to providing environments where our students are safe and feel safe, where their participation is valued, their views are respected, and their voices are heard about decisions that affect their lives. Our child safe policies, strategies and practices are inclusive of the needs of all children and students.*

*We have no tolerance for child abuse and take proactive steps to identify and manage any risks of harm to students in our school environments. Particular attention is given to the child safety needs of Aboriginal students, those from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, international students, students with disabilities, those unable to live at home, children and young people who identify as LGBTQ+ and other students experiencing risk or vulnerability. Child safety is a shared responsibility.*

#### Our Vision

*An inclusive community that supports and encourages a love of learning and the skills and mindset to thrive.*

#### Our School Values

**Community** - growing positive partnerships between school, home and the broader community

**Aspire** - setting goals and purposefully working towards their achievement

**Respect** - for self, others, learning and our environment

**Excellence** - striving for the highest personal achievement in all aspects of schooling.

A warm and heartfelt welcome to all BPS families as we embark on the 2024 school year. I hope your summer break was wonderful, filled with relaxation and cherished moments with family and friends, leaving you energised and ready for the upcoming school year.

A special welcome to our new students and their families. Today marked the commencement of the primary school journey for 16 preps and it was wonderful to see parents celebrate this very special start to primary education for their children. Alongside our new preps, we extend a warm welcome to Logan (Year 4), Byron (Year 3), and Kate (Year 2). We trust that you will settle in quickly and feel part of the Birregurra PS family. We are honoured to be part of your children's educational journey.

It's always wonderful at the start of the year to see the children renewing friendships, settling into new classrooms, getting to know their new teachers and participating in engaging learning activities that the teachers have prepared over the holidays for them. I commend our teachers for the work they have done over the holidays to ensure a positive start to the school year.

### Holiday Works

Over the summer holidays we had some works completed around the school. Two portables received a fresh internal coat of paint, creating a much cleaner and brighter space for our staff and students to teach and learn. Carpets in all portables were steam cleaned and a new mesh fence was installed along Beal Street replacing the old farm fence. While we were able to grow some grass over the holidays, the grounds where the old building used to be will be a focus for this term.



### Drop Off & Pick Up Times

Please see below some important information to keep everyone safe when dropping off and picking up your child/ren.

➤ Drop off and pick up times are very busy times at our school. The back car park is a particularly busy place. We encourage all parents to drop off and pick up as quickly as you can each morning and afternoon to free up parks for other families.

School Councillors – Rob Lidgerwood (President) Luke Fitzpatrick, Claire Leeson, Abbey Gannon, Kelly Dodds, Emma Mezzatesta, Emily McDonald, Alistair Burrell, Brendan King.

- If students are being picked up by car, they should remain within the school premises until their transportation arrives. After leaving the school grounds, please make sure they proceed promptly to their designated car and enter it. It is crucial to avoid unsupervised running between or behind parked cars, as this poses a safety concern.
- Students and parents moving to cars should use the nature strip or circular footpath to access their cars. Parents and/or students crossing the centre of the car park are at risk of being hit by moving cars.
- If you are walking, we ask that you please refrain from standing on the path that leads to the back gate as this is the main exit for lots of our students on bikes and scooters and it can get very congested at times.
- If you, or your child are riding scooters or bikes to school, it is a requirement that you **all** wear helmets. It is really important that we model the expected road safety laws and behaviours to our students.
- Classes start at 9am sharp. We would appreciate it if children can arrive at school between 8.40am and 9am. We understand that sometimes things don't always go to plan however late arrivals can disrupt student learning time.
- Students arriving after 9am should report to the office first to sign in as a late arrival.
- Please note that the school yard is not supervised until 8.40am each morning. We ask that students arrive after this time. If a student needs to arrive before this time for some reason, please contact us to let us know. Before school care is available through TheirCare, please visit [www.theircare.com.au](http://www.theircare.com.au)!
- School finishes for students at 3.15pm. It would be greatly appreciated if you could ensure you are here at this time, if you are picking your child/ren up. Remember, if you are late, give us a call. We are always willing to help out. The students will be supervised in the main building until you arrive.
- All dogs are to be kept on a leash and preferably kept out of the school grounds. If your child would like to bring a pet for a visit, please discuss this with the class teacher.

## Student Attendance

It is important that your child/ren come to school as often as possible. If they are late or absent, they miss crucial learning time. I understand that there are valid reasons for your child not being at school, but please try to ensure that their absences are not frequent or for trivial reasons. If possible, consider scheduling appointments outside of school hours. Of course, if your child is unwell, it is necessary for them to stay at home.

Department regulations require our school to know where your child is each day. Please notify the school each **morning** if your child is not going to be at school. You can do this via:

- A phone call to school
- An email to the school email address [Birregurra.ps@education.vic.gov.au](mailto:Birregurra.ps@education.vic.gov.au)
- Message via XUNO or SeeSaw (these seem to be a very effective means of notification)

If you know your child is going to have an extended absence (ongoing illness or family holiday), please let us know so that teachers can organise an Absence Learning Plan. Thanks for your support with this!

## XUNO App

XUNO is our school's main communication app. New families to our school should have received a welcome email. Please ensure you have connected to this in order to receive important updates and information. It is also used to book appointments and fill in permission forms. If you have any trouble connecting, please contact the office.

## Student Dress Code Policy

At BPS we believe that a uniform promotes a sense of belonging, equality and school pride. Student equality and safety are the guiding principles of the BPS Student Dress Code. The Student Dress policy and guidelines have been developed to ensure equality among students and that students are dressed appropriately and safely for school activities. I encourage you to take the time to read our Student Dress Code policy available on our school website or by clicking on the following link. [Birregurra PS Student Dress Code policy](#)

Please be aware that shoulder length or longer hair is to be tied back to help restrict the spread of nits and lice and for student safety. Students will be provided with a hair tie if they come to school without their hair tied back.

## Named Clothing

Parents are asked to ensure that clothing is clearly named. If you have second hand clothes, please check that the name has been changed. If clothes are correctly named, we have some hope of returning items to the correct owners.

## Welcome to Our New Staff!

I'd like to take the opportunity to welcome Miss Airlie Birch (3/4A), Mrs Gemma Welsh (Prep specialist), Mr Jack Simpson (Music) and Mrs Michaela Sultmann (Education Support) to Birregurra Primary School for 2024. These new team members bring with them a wealth of knowledge and skills in the education sector. We are excited to have some new faces at our school and look forward to teaching and learning alongside these professionals. Learn more about our new team members here:

**Name:** Jack Simpson

**Number of years in education:** 3 years.

**What is one of your hidden talents?** I can play piano. This is something I learnt when I was a student at Birregurra Primary School!

**What would the students be surprised to find out about you?** I was taught to fly aeroplanes when I was younger.

**What makes a good day at school?** A good day at school is one where everyone gets along and works together in the learning process.

**If you could pass on any wisdom to your students, what would you share?** Embrace all your learning opportunities and show respect to those around you. It will help you now and in the future!

**How do you remember your students' names?** I ask my students questions about themselves and aim to incorporate their interests into my teaching.

**What is your first memory from your school days?** I remember walking down to the local community health centre for pancake day!

**How do you think students will remember you?** I think my students will remember how I make learning a hands-on process. 'Learning by doing' is a great way to learn all about music.

**Name:** Airlie Birch

**Number of years in education:** 21 years

**What is one of your hidden talents?** I was a competitive swimmer growing up.

**What would the students be surprised to find out about you?** I don't like pizza.

**What makes a good day at school?** A good day at school is where every student feels like they belong, are seen and heard by their teachers and peers and are challenged by a curriculum that connects them to new ideas and ways of thinking about their world.

**If you could pass on any wisdom to your students, what would you share?** Always, always be you 😊

**How do you remember your students' names?** I create an A4 piece of paper with individual photos/student names and memorise them within the first week of school.

**What is your first memory from your school days?** I really enjoyed reading when I was little. My prep teacher would take me to the library at lunchtime to find books that I loved to read.

**How do you think students will remember you?** I think students will remember that I always took the time to understand/support their academic needs as well as their social, emotional and physical needs too.

**Name:** Gemma Welsh

**Number of years in education:** This is my first year, I have just graduated uni!

**What is one of your hidden talents?** Fishing

**What would the students be surprised to find out about you?** I sometimes struggle with my left and right 😊

**What makes a good day at school?** When there's laughter while learning and everyone is happy to come back the next day.

**If you could pass on any wisdom to your students, what would you share?** It's okay not to understand everything. Be brave and curious, ask questions, we're all learning!

**How do you remember your students' names?** I don't really have a strategy, I'm usually pretty good at remembering names.

**What is your first memory from your school days?** I went to a tiny primary school, there were only 2 of us in Prep and my teachers name was Mrs Brainy.

**How do you think students will remember you?** Potentially for my messy handwriting, but hopefully they remember a teacher who had fun and loved learning with them.

**Name:** Michaela Sultmann

**Number of years in education:** 30 years

**What is one of your hidden talents?** Printmaking

**What would the students be surprised to find out about you?** I might be old, but I am a pretty handy snowboarder!

**What makes a good day at school?** Seeing students excited about learning - experiencing success in their learning - as they dare to try something new, master a skill they have been working on etc and knowing that my actions have helped in some way - made their day brighter.

**If you could pass on any wisdom to your students, what would you share?** There are no such things as mistakes, they are learning moments and they are great, because they give you the opportunity to try something a different way!

**How do you remember your students' names?** Practice, practice, practice - say their name a lot! I always introduce myself and ask them their name, make sure to say it back to them, e.g. 'It's nice to meet you...' if in doubt I will ask if I have pronounced it correctly / try spell it out loud using sounds etc. Importantly, when I see students, I am sure to say hello and call them by their name - and if I can't remember I apologise, blame it on being 'old' and start again 😊

**What is your first memory from your school days?** Sitting under the shade of a big old gum tree, at lunch time with friends and gardening! Every class had their own rows to look after in a vegetable patch in the field across from the school.

**How do you think students will remember you?** I hope they remember me as kind, someone who listened, and could make them laugh - not afraid to be a bit silly.

## Staff Wellbeing

Staff work life balance is a priority at BPS. Our staff are incredibly present with all students when they are at school. They work hard to make sure students are engaged in their learning, safe and cared for. At the end of each school day our staff go home to their families to be present with them and to recharge so they can work at their best for your children. We ask that you please support staff work life balance by avoiding contact through Seesaw/XUNO before 8am and after 5pm and please refrain from contacting staff on their private phones. If an urgent matter arises, you are welcome to contact me through a message on XUNO or an email to [jessica.kattwinkel@education.vic.gov.au](mailto:jessica.kattwinkel@education.vic.gov.au). We also invite concerns/queries. We will always listen and work out the best plan to move forward.

## Updated Asthma, Allergy & Anaphylaxis Plans

Each year we require parents/carers to provide an updated Asthma, Allergy and/or Anaphylaxis plans. The most recent information ensures that we follow plans accordingly. If your child's plan is more than 12 months old, we ask that you please provide an updated plan as soon as possible. We also require an in-date reliever and/or Epipen/Anapen to be kept at school. If you are unsure of the expiry date of your child's medication, please contact the office.

If your child has an Asthma, Allergy and/or Anaphylaxis Plan and you have not notified the school of this, please do so as soon as possible.

## Medications

Any medication that your child needs whilst at school needs to be bought to the office by an adult and appropriate paperwork completed. If you have any questions, please see Mrs Leigh in the office.

## Assembly

In 2024, assembly will be held on a Friday afternoon on a fortnightly basis during the even weeks of Term 1. Our first assembly will be held on **Friday 9<sup>th</sup> February** at 2:45pm. All are welcome to attend.

## Parent Information Sessions

At Birregurra PS we strive to keep families informed and value the important partnership between school and home. Therefore, we have scheduled two Parent Information sessions to begin the year. The aim of these sessions is to provide all parents with the opportunity to gain an overview of how the learning program is structured and give examples of how you can work with the school to support your child's learning. It is also a great opportunity for you to ask any questions. Our P-2 Information Session will be held on **Monday 5<sup>th</sup> February** from 6:00-7:00pm. Our 3-6 Information Session will be held the following **Monday 13<sup>th</sup> February** from 6:00-7:00pm. Both sessions will take place in the Multi-Purpose Room. We look forward to seeing you there!

## Welcome BBQ - Wednesday 7th February - 5pm

All BPS families are invited to our annual school Welcome BBQ to be held on **Wednesday 7<sup>th</sup> February at 5:00pm**. This is a great opportunity for our new families to meet existing members of the school community and enjoy an informal catch up. Please see flyer in this newsletter for more details. We look forward to seeing you there!

## Reminders

- PREP students do not come to school on Wednesdays throughout February.
- Our Welcome BBQ is this **Wednesday 7<sup>th</sup> February**

## Thanks

My thanks to our staff who have done a fabulous job in preparing for the return of our students. Our work areas are welcoming and ready for some solid learning. Thanks too, to all of our parents and carers for ensuring students have returned to school ready to learn.

Wishing everyone a wonderful week. If you have any questions, thoughts or concerns please don't hesitate to contact either myself, the office or your child's teacher. Positive home school partnerships and relationships ensure the best possible outcomes for your children. We value your input and are committed to making our school the best it can be – **safe, fair and friendly for everyone.**

Kind Regards,

Jess Kattwinkel & team ☺

## Dates for the diary ...

2024	
Wednesday 31 <sup>st</sup> January	- Term 1, 2024 commences for all students
Monday 5 <sup>th</sup> February	- Prep-Gr 2 Information Session, 6pm-7pm
Wednesday 7 <sup>th</sup> February	- No Preps at school - Welcome BBQ 5pm
Thursday 8 <sup>th</sup> February	- Breakfast Club commences 8.15am in Art Room
Friday 9 <sup>th</sup> February	- Assembly 2.45pm
Monday 12 <sup>th</sup> February	- Gr 3-6 Information Session, 6pm-7pm
Tuesday 13 <sup>th</sup> February	- Parent / Teacher conversations 3:30pm-4:30pm via phone
Wednesday 14 <sup>th</sup> February	- No Preps at school - Parent / Teacher conversations 3:30pm-4:30pm via phone
Tuesday 20 <sup>th</sup> February	- Parent / Teacher conversations 3:30pm-4:30pm via phone
Wednesday 21 <sup>st</sup> February	- No Preps at school - Parent / Teacher conversations 3:30pm-4:30pm via phone
Friday 23 <sup>rd</sup> February	- Assembly 2.45pm
Wednesday 28 <sup>th</sup> February	- No Preps at school
Thursday 29 <sup>th</sup> February	- Polwarth Sports @ Alvie Primary School
Friday 1 <sup>st</sup> March	- PFA Barefoot Bowls, 6pm-9pm

Wishing the following students  
a very Happy Birthday

February

3<sup>rd</sup>

Psalmody T



2024 WELCOME TO SCHOOL

# BBQ



WEDNESDAY  
7TH FEB  
2024  
5:00PM

Please join us to welcome in the 2024 school year at our annual Welcome BBQ! It's a wonderful opportunity to connect with other families and those new to the Birregurra Primary School community.

SAUSAGES,  
SAUCE AND  
BREAD  
PROVIDED,  
BYO DRINKS.

# Birregurra Primary School Barefoot Bowls

Friday 1st March 2024

Birregurra Bowling Club, 58 Roadknight St.

6pm -9pm

BBQ and Bar at Birregurra Bowling Club prices  
BYO Nibbles



[Click here to RSVP](#)  
by 2nd February 2024