Strathewen Primary School

Wednesday 14th May 2025

DATES TO REMEMBER:

Thursday 15th May -	JSC Dress Up Day – 'first letter of your name" dress up – gold coin donation
Friday 16th May -	Interschool Sports – St Andrews Primary School
Monday 19th May -	Cross country training with Mark 9:15am for cross country competitors
Wednesday 21st May -	Sugarloaf Cross Country Trials at Yarrambat Park – 10am start
Friday 23rd May -	Interschool Sports – St Andrews Primary School
Friday 30th May -	Interschool Sports – St Andrews Primary School
Monday 2nd June -	Song Room sessions with Dan – day change
Tuesday 3rd June	Grade 3-6 First Aid training workshop through our Bushfire Education Partnership. Prompt after school pick-up required due to all staff attending Doreen PS First Aid training evening at 4pm
Monday 23rd June	Pupil Free Day at SPS – Report Writing Day

SAVE THE DATE – Sunday Oct 26th – SPS fundraising role – car parking support at the Kinglake Market

We acknowledge the traditional Owners of the land on which we stand and pay our respects to the Elders, past, present and emerging.
We honour and respect the histories, cultures, knowledge and perspectives of First Nations peoples
We value the guidance of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples as we support and create opportunities for the future custodians- the children
Let us always remember that First Nation children played, danced, sang and learned on this place they called home

By now everyone in our community knows of the tragic passing of Jane's husband Paul on Monday morning. Our thoughts and love go out to Jane at this incredibly sad time. Paul was not only a wonderful husband, parent and grandparent he was also a great friend of SPS in so many ways. We are all still coming to terms with the loss of such a kind and generous man however, we are very fortunate to have many physical reminders of Paul's talents as a tradesman around our school, including our beautiful fairy garden gate. Paul will be greatly missed, and our deepest condolences go to Jane, Emilie, Matt, Bree, Blake and Macy.

Students were informed yesterday, and we also had a senior education leader and psychologist on hand to support us. Students have also been reassured that they can talk to staff at any time if they have any questions and/or worries. During this time, we will continue to run the senior program as usual. When we have replacement staff in the senior classroom, they will be teachers the children are familiar with and who will continue teaching Jane's program.

We have had many, many parents and friends of our school touch base with us over the last few days to offer condolences and support in any way they can. We are heartened by the outpouring of concern and will pass these messages and offers on to Jane.

Don’t forget it is Dress-Up Day fundraiser tomorrow

Come dressed as something that begins with
the first letter of your name
Gold coin donation

M

Mouse
Moose
Monkey
Mermaid
Musician
Moana

B

Batman
Butterfly
Bug
Bee
Bunny
Ballarina
Butcher

Do you have any spare 5c coins hanging around? We’d love you to add them to our silver coin tube collection in the hallway, so that we

Grade 3-6 Interschool Sport- Term 2

We’re off to St Andrews PS on Friday morning for interschool sport. Four small schools- SPS, Arthurs Creek, Christmas Hills and St Andrews, will be combining to form teams and playing a four week rotation of competition in flag football (non-contact), netball and a version of Hot Shots tennis on the adjacent courts. We’ll select sports this week, so that we have numbers and we’re ready to go.
We’ll play our four rounds (May 9th, 116th, 23rd, 30th May), with the possibility of extending this further.
Assistance with parent transport each Friday will be greatly appreciated.
We’ll leave school just after 9am and return to school by 11am.
Deb will have a transport roster on the go at the office if you’re able to assist.

Grade 3-6

Sovereign Hill Camp

Monday August 4th- Friday August 8th

We’ll be staying at the Sovereign Hill Camp venue and basing ourselves there for a week of historic exploration, adventure and amazing opportunities. We have a number of educational workshops booked in and we anticipate a week of immersive activities and experiences.

The complete itinerary and forms will be sent home shortly.
The camp cost for this year is $695 per student, which confirms that camp costs have increased since 2024. After our community survey last year, the unanimous vote was to continue with our week-long camp program for grade 3-6 and that’s what we’re doing.

We recommend that families consider a payment plan over the months ahead to ease the last minute financial burden. Many families have some remaining School Savings Bonus funds remaining in their accounts for this year, which can be put towards the cost of camp. Check in with Deb to see what your Savings Bonus balance is or to discuss a payment plan- bank transfer or cash to the office.

Our school bank details are:
Commonwealth Bank
Account name: Strathewen Primary School
BSB- 063185
Account No: 1134 6441

Cross Country

Some of the grade 3-6 students are currently training to participate in the Sugarloaf Cross Country at Yarrambat Park next Wednesday the 21st of February. Thanks to Mark Peel for running a few practise training runs. Permission notes for this event will be sent home tomorrow. Good luck to all the students competing next week!

In the Art Room

Matilda for her wonderful effort at Cross Country training

Felix for his great concentration in class and efforts to complete all work

Margaret for her attempts to sound out words when writing

Van for his enthusiasm and leadership in drumming sessions

Child safety and wellbeing at Strathewen Primary School: information for families and the school community

Strathewen Primary School is committed to providing an environment where students are safe and feel safe.

Our child safety framework includes policies, codes and procedures that explain how we support and maintain the safety and wellbeing of our students and protect them from harm. These documents are available on our website: http://strathewenps.vic.edu.au/

We are also committed to continuous improvement of our child safety framework. We are currently reviewing our child safety policies and practices to ensure they are up-to-date and effective.

Our students and families are important partners in this process. We welcome your feedback or ideas on ways we can improve our approach to child safety and wellbeing.

If you have any suggestions or comments, please contact Jane Hayward, our school principal on 9714 8278.

Behind the scenes…

- On Monday we had Paul Dana – electrician come and replaced front light globes
- On Tuesday we had an inspection of our roof area in relation to the Shelter in Place audit
- The Mother's Day raffle was drawn on last Friday. Congratulations to the Price, Augustine and Tweddle families

RESILIENCE
RIGHTS &
RESPECTFUL
RELATIONSHIPS

Resilience, Rights and Respectful Relationships Program

The RR program begins in the first year of school and continues from there. Some topics covered in the junior classroom include:

- ways we help to make a safe and happy class
- acts of friendship, with a focus on empathy
- acts of kindness
- personal and cultural strengths
- knowing and showing respect
- respecting and valuing difference
- positive coping- cheering up and calming down

CASH FOR CONTAINERS VICTORIA

Did you know that our Junior School Council collects and returns cans and bottles through the 10c Cash for Containers program?
Deb regularly returns our bags/boxes of collected cans and bottles and we've already raised $24 this year.
If you're not collecting and returning your own eligible containers, we'd love to have them.
JSC funds go towards chosen student leadership projects each year and also support the educational sponsorship of Cinta and Mang Adi in Bali.

CHILD SAFE: *Strathewen 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 respected, and their voices are heard. 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 environments. Child safety is a shared responsibility.*

www.bluelight.org.au
PROUDLY RUN BY LOCAL
POLICE & VOLUNTEERS
Blue Light
No EFTPOS Available
DIAMOND CREEK
Blue Light Disco
16TH MAY
7 - 9.30PM | 8 to 13 YEAR OLDS | $8 ENTRY
Diamond Creek Community Centre
28 Main Hurstbridge Road, Diamond Creek
Contact: Sergeant Jo Jamieson 9438 8300
Please ensure children have an emergency number on them
DIAMONDCREEKBLUELIGHTDISCO
Diamond Creek Blue Light Disco

Children and Grief
(Primary School, ages 6–12)

Following the death of someone close, parents are often concerned about how to best support and meet the needs of their children. Like adults, children experience, express and process grief in a variety of ways depending on their age, stage of development, personality, family culture, understanding of death, past experiences of loss and the context of their bereavement. When considering how best to provide support, the child's unique grieving needs should also be considered.

This information sheet is designed to help parents, caregivers and teachers to understand and help primary-school-aged children navigate their grief experience.

A primary-school-aged child's understanding of death

Children of primary school age are beginning to understand the concept that death is permanent, though younger school-aged children may engage in 'magical' thinking, trying to outwit death. Due to a limited understanding of death, primary-school-aged children may also have an increased fear in regards to their own death or feel responsible for the deceased's death.

Talking to primary-school-aged children about death

Although it is natural to want to protect children from hurt or upset, it is important that you take the time to talk and listen to them following the death of someone close. Answer their questions about death in an honest and consistent way without glossing over the truth or minimising the impact of what has happened by saying that 'everything is fine'.

Begin by asking what they already know. Children are more perceptive than we give them credit for, and may already have picked up on and formed their own opinion around what has happened. When explaining the situation to them, it is important that you tell them the facts in a simple and age-appropriate way, e.g. 'Grandma has died and will not return'. Children often take things literally, and saying things like 'Grandma has gone to sleep', or 'Grandma went to hospital and isn't coming home', can be confusing and lead to unnecessary fears, e.g. they may become afraid of going to sleep or visiting hospital.

It is also important to explain why their loved one died, e.g. 'Mark died because his body stopped working, this means he can no longer breathe, eat or feel hot or cold'. This will reassure children that the death wasn't a result of anything they said or did.

Common signs of grief in primary-school-aged children

Children, like adults, will vary in their responses to death and dying; however, there are some common factors that may affect them.

Children of primary school age may:

- experience a difficult transition period, want to see death as reversible and believe death only happens to other people
- be very curious about death and burial rituals and ask detailed questions
- imagine death as a bogeyman or ghost
- play games pretending to die
- be angry over the death and focus their anger at certain people or anyone involved with the death, e.g. doctors, parents
- take time to absorb the reality of what has happened and might not appear to be immediately affected by the death
- be quick to blame themselves
- experience disturbed sleep, decreased appetite, poor school performance or have physical reactions, e.g. headaches

- worry about who will look after them if a parent or other caregiver dies
- take on a parenting role to younger siblings
- 'act out' feelings rather than talk about them
- be concerned about what their peers think and might be anxious about being seen as 'different'
- feel isolated, because no-one else they know has had a similar experience.

Helping children to navigate their grief experience

Listen and talk with them

Children need time and to feel safe in order to express how they are feeling. Be prepared to revisit conversations a number of times, as children need time to process information. Be patient, open, honest and consistent with your responses. Reassure them that grief is normal, and it is okay to be upset about what has happened.

Include them

Include children in decision-making when appropriate; for example, give your child the choice as to whether or not they would like to participate in the funeral or any other mourning rituals. Rather than making suggestions, speak with them about their ideas of ways they would like to remember their loved one.

Provide safety and security

Death can threaten a child's sense of safety and control. It is vital that the child's physical and emotional needs are met to support them in adapting to the loss. Try to maintain routines and firm, but fair, boundaries as much as possible.

Provide opportunities for expression

Many children respond well to creative outlets, and there are a range of activities that you can do with children to encourage them to process and express their grief, including:

- drawing and painting
- reading and storytelling
- writing poetry or letters to the person who has died
- craft activities, e.g. make a memory box or collage
- music and dance.

Allow for a range of responses to loss

Grief is individual and personal, and accordingly children may grieve in ways that are different to adults, siblings or schoolmates. Some children are more social and verbally expressive, while others are more private and talk less. Some children spend time talking about their feelings, while others manage their grief by doing things.

Provide opportunities for memorialisation and connection

Offer opportunities for them to maintain links to the deceased through memorialisation and connection, e.g. visiting the grave, reflecting on memories and participating in rituals of remembrance.

Support yourself

You won't be in any position to provide support if you don't first take care of yourself, both physically and emotionally. If you are struggling, don't be afraid to ask for help, whether that be through family, friends or health professionals.

Seeking help

With good information, love and support, children can learn to understand and work with their grief. However, if you feel that your child needs more assistance than you can provide, don't hesitate to seek further help from a health professional.

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australian centre for grief and bereavement

Australian Centre for Grief and Bereavement
253 Wellington Road Mulgrave VIC 3170
Telephone: (03) 9265 2100
Freecall: 1800 642 066 **Fax:** (03) 9265 2150
Email: info@grief.org.au **Website:** www.grief.org.au
ABN: 22 038 903 478 **ACN:** 159 297 444

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