



THE WHITTY NEWS

WELCOME BACK

It's been great to see everyone's smiling faces and hear about your holiday adventures. We can't believe how much our students have grown in such a short period of time. It was hard to recognise some of our crew! We have jumped straight into a range of learning experiences in our own classrooms and together in Buddies. This week we focused on modelling our school values—Respect, Empathy & Curiosity.

We've also dived into our specialist program, continuing our Italian learning with Signora Acca; diving into performing arts with Miss Feldtmann and unlocking our design and construction skills in STEM with Tammy. We also had a visit from our new library teacher, Bernie. We have our first library sessions next week, and this week, we welcome Rachel Hogan back to our school as our visiting art teacher in the MAC van.

We're looking forward to another action packed year with a range of **EXCEPTIONAL EDUCATIONAL EXPERIENCES**—fun for all! Our teachers have already been planning a range of excursions, incursions and camps to complement our classroom learning. They enjoyed meeting with our cluster colleagues to complete first aid training and our teachers met in teams last Wednesday to plan our next maths unit.

This semester, students are jet setting, our theme is Race Around the World! We can't wait to learn more about different cultures leading to our Olympic celebration in July.

This morning parents helped us attack the wild weeds taking over our vegie patch. Throughout the year we'll be upgrading our vegetable patch to include wicking beds... and we're hoping to follow through on Jill's wonderful idea to transform our current vegetable patch into an orchard. We'd love your help if you'd like to come and play!

We welcome you to join us as we
learn, play and grow together.

The Year Ahead

It's already shaping up to be a very busy year. We will create a term overview to help you keep track... in the meantime, we've outlined the key dates for term 1.



Dates to remember:	
Italian (F-2) 2.00pm - 3.00pm	Every Tuesday
Italian (3-6) 2.00pm - 3.00pm	Every Wednesday
Performing Arts & Science (F-6) Middle and afternoon sessions	Every Friday
STEM (F-6) Middle and afternoon sessions	Every Friday
In the Groove—African Drumming F-2 10.15am (45min); 3-6 11.30am (1hr)	Every Monday (for 8 weeks)
Visual Art (F-6) Middle and afternoon sessions	Fortnightly Thursdays (Beginning this week)
My Future Academy (F-6) 3-6 9.00am; F-2 10.00am (both 1hr)	Fortnightly Fridays (Beginning this week)
Library (F-6) Middle and afternoon sessions	Fortnightly Wednesdays (Beginning Wk 3)
School Council Nominations Close 4.00pm	Tuesday 13 February
Cooking (5/6) 12.00pm - 3.00pm	Tuesday 21 February
OHSC 'Come & Try' Night—FREE!!! 3.30pm - 5.30pm	Wednesday 14 February
Welcome Picnic From 5.30pm	Wednesday 14 February
School Council 6.30pm	Tuesday 20 February
WDPS Curriculum Day (no school for students)	Friday 1 March
Cooking (5/6) 12.00pm - 3.00pm	Tuesday 5 March
Labour Day Public Holiday	Monday 11 March
School Council AGM 6.30pm	Tuesday 19 March
Student Learning Conversations Dates and times to be confirmed	Week 8 Mon 18 Mar to Fri 22 Mar
Cooking (5/6) 12.00pm - 3.00pm	Tuesday 26 March
Last Day of Term 1	Thursday 28 March 2:30pm Finish
First Day of Term 2	Monday 15 April

2024 STAFF

Being a part of the Whitfield team is a bundle of fun! This year, our students are in the excellent hands of very talented staff members.

Di Feldtmann: F-2 Classroom

Georgia Bettio: 3-6 Classroom

Peg Halbwidl: Tutor Learning and Italian

Di Feldtmann: Performing Arts & Science

Jill Schiller/Rani Symes: F-2 Classroom Support & SAKG

Jane Andrews: Business Manager

Haley Cook: Mental Health and Wellbeing Leader

Amaya Moule: Trainee F-2 Classroom

Jess Young: OSHC Coordinator

Shaun Ablazej: Technician

Bernadette Blance-Palmer: MARC Van (Library)

Rachel Hogan: MAC Van (Art)

Georgia Mahoney: My future Academy (formerly Bluearth)

Bri Slattery: In the Groove

Tara Coburn: Cleaning

We are also supported by our vibrant school councillors led by President, Ben Jenkins.

Unfortunately Jill has injured her back, while she is away, Rani Symes has kindly stepped in Tuesday to Thursday mornings. Rani is the OSHC Coordinator at Greta Valley. Welcome to the Whitfield Team, Rani!



COOKING

Our cooking program has changed again this year. We are waiting to confirm details with Myrree PS. Our senior students will be visiting the Edi kitchen three times each term for half a day.

In addition, Jill/Haley will continue to lead our kitchen program at school, and I will be keeping an eye on the veggie patch with the help of Jess and the OSHC kids. Please let us know if you would like to join in the fun.

SCHOOL COUNCIL ELECTIONS

The School Council election process for 2023 has commenced. Parents are encouraged to consider nominating to become a member. A letter outlining election information is attached was sent home last week. Please contact me if you have any questions... We're a very friendly group and have loads of fun together!

Please note, the closing date for nominations is **Tuesday 12 February at 4pm.**

KEEPING IN TOUCH

AT WDPS we value the strong partnerships we have with parents and members of our community. We provide a range of formal and informal opportunities for you to share your child's learning journey throughout the year.

In terms 1 and 3 we will host learning conversations. Learning conversations are a wonderful time for you to chat with your child's teacher about their progress, plan goals for future learning and share ideas about how you can help them at home.

Formal written reports will be sent home at the end of each semester, in June and December.

You are more than welcome to touch base and arrange a meeting time with us if you would like to discuss your child's learning or wellbeing at any stage throughout the year.

WELCOME PICNIC

In week 3, we will be hosting our annual Welcome Picnic. This year, students will be inviting you to join them in the classroom where they'll explore wellbeing, literacy and numeracy tasks together! Be prepared for a challenge!

HOMEWORK UPDATE

As we prepare for another year of EXCEPTIONAL EDUCATIONAL EXPERIENCES in 2023, we would like to share our homework expectations. Our Homework Policy is available on our school website and is written in line with DET guidelines and research into the benefits/challenges of homework in primary school.

In brief, our focus is on promoting a love of learning, learning through everyday activities and encouraging students to teach back what they have learned at school to consolidate their skills and understanding. To help them on their way, students will be encouraged to read every day and play maths games! Teachers might also encourage them to practise word work - which may include high frequency words or spelling words.

Reading

We want our students to develop a love of reading and read Just Right books regularly. Students are encouraged to practise their reading goals, build their reading stamina and share their thoughts, ideas and questions with you. Beginning readers are encouraged to read for around 10 minutes and our older students are encouraged to read for at least 20 minutes. This can be a fabulous opportunity to connect with your child and explore wonderful adventures or learn new things together. Listening to reading is also very powerful. It's okay to share the load and read with or to your child. Please help students by recording home reading in their yellow or green reading journal.

Maths

The King Valley Cluster schools are working together to help students develop a love of maths. For homework this year, our students will be encouraged to practise their skills by teaching you the maths games they have learnt at school (teachers will provide materials and support to help out). This will help our students develop fluency and understanding and give you an insight into their classroom learning.

Please feel free to contact us if you would like any further information.

SUN SAFETY

Staying safe in the sun is a number one priority. A combination of sun protection measures is recommended for all skin types when UV levels reach 3 or higher. At these levels, damage can occur to the skin and eyes, without being seen or felt.

To minimise the risks to both staff and students arising from exposure to UV we are implementing a range of measures. These include:

- encouraging students to play in our many shaded areas (A new shade sail will be installed over the playground in the next few weeks.);
- applying sunscreen and wearing protective clothing (We provide broad brimmed hats to all Foundation students. 50+ sunscreen is also available and we encourage students to apply this before heading outside. Please let us know if your child is allergic to sunscreen and/or if you would prefer to supply your own.

We also require students to wear broad brimmed hats and encourage them to wear sunglasses.



OSHC AFTER SCHOOL PROGRAM

Come and join the fun!

Our OSHC doors are open! I've heard wonderfully positive feedback about all the fun some of our students had last week, hanging out with Jess in OSHC!

They had to get super creative when we realised there was no way they could get into the OSHC room - the builders have taken the steps and deck away! Instead, they went for a nature walk, discovered eggs in the chook house and decided to make pancakes for afternoon tea. Maya found a feather on her journey, and turned it into an ink pen—so creative. Tully is keen to build huts and Jimmy Findlay has offered his support.

Jess is super keen to invite members of our community in to join the fun, so if you have a special talent or interest, please get in touch so we can make a plan!

Our after school program is a wonderful opportunity for our students to come along, join in the fun and try something new in a supportive learning environment. Jess Young will be running special activities on Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday from 3.30pm to 6.00pm.

Please contact us to make a booking (school 0428 298 286 or OSHC 0448 298 467).

Jess added...

"Over the next few weeks, we'll continue to enjoy making little bases around the school while the OSHC room is getting access upgrades. Making comfy inviting bases in the art studio, filling our wicking beds, scouting for sites for our 'bush hut', making papier mache creations and "about me" line making are all on the agenda!"

Loads of Fun in Week 1!

I've been told to reduce the number of photos in the newsletter so I'll just include a few pics to show you how much fun we've been having. I'll get Shaun to upload more to the website later in the week :)







THUMBS UP! Congratulations Joah, Nina & Archie K!

Last week we were learning about our school values: Respect, Empathy & Curiosity. We've had a wonderful start so I had a very difficult decision to make!

I loved the way Joah, Nina and Archie K have thrown everything in modelling our values with pride. They've been curious and kind, leading the way to encourage others and help our team succeed!

Top job guys! Thank you!



Welcome to teaching, Georgia! Georgia is super excited about the year ahead and had a wonderful time setting up the classroom and getting to know her students even more last week... we're very lucky!

YARD DUTY & SUPERVISION

Student safety at WDPS is our highest priority and the safe and appropriate supervision of students is an important element of our duty of care to students. Part of this duty is ensuring parents and students are aware of our student supervision arrangements before and after school.

Before school: School grounds are supervised each day from **8:45am**. Students are encouraged to come in, say 'hi' and pop their bag on their hook before heading out to play.

After school: School grounds are supervised until **3:45pm**.

*Students on school grounds outside these times will **not** be supervised (unless they are attending OSHC).*

Parents/carers are requested to ensure that students do not attend school outside of these supervised times unless they are attending after school care, or a prearranged supervised activity (eg sport skills session with Kaye).

Families are encouraged to contact our OSHC coordinator, Jess Young, for more information about after school care facilities available to our school community or if you would like any further information about our student supervision arrangements.

OSHC mobile: 0448298467

For a copy of our school's Yard Duty and Supervision Policy please refer to our school website:

www.whitfieldps.vic.edu.au

Welcome Picnic!

You're invited to join us for
our annual Welcome Picnic
under the Bell Tree on
Wednesday 14 February
from 5.30pm

Our teachers have planned
a wonderful night of fun
to hook you in and kick
2024 off with a bang!

You're welcome to join us for a pic-
nic tea from 5.30pm followed by
some fun activities.

Please bring a picnic and picnic rug.



I am super excited to take on the role of OSHC coordinator in 2024. Big thanks to Pam for her many many years of care and dedication to the Whitfield OSHC program. We will endeavour to balance our time between rest and relaxation after a busy time at school and lots of offerings of stimulating and fresh activities. I am an advocate for allowing kids to tinker, to have plenty of time and opportunity to experiment and practice different skills and processes. I am hoping we can use the OSHC program to create some really amazing ongoing projects that we'll work on together throughout the terms. We will also brainstorm some skills we would like to build to inspire more workshops, excursions and invited guests, especially during school holiday times. Some initial ideas are: hut building (thanks Tully), repair cafe/bike maintenance (Elwyn), music, campfire day and bush craft, making giant animal beanbags, painting a school mural...

My passions are growing and cooking food, being outdoors, making and fixing things, community connections and the power of play for fostering creativity innovation and imagination. I have a lot of experience doing creative-reuse workshops and nature play at festivals, events and holiday programs, and other workshops such as bookbinding, puppet making, printmaking. I'm really excited to work with the kids and families to build a program that reflects our current interests and needs. I'd love as much feedback from children and parents if you have used OSHC in the past or would like to try it - what would you like to do after school and on the holidays? What do you love about OSHC now? What would you add?

What do you love?

What to keep?

What to add?



Monday-Thursday after school between 3.30-6pm

0448298467 or Jessica.YOUNG2@education.vic.gov.au for bookings and enquiries