From The Principal

Dear families,

Welcome to the first newsletter of the year and to all of our families at our great school. With the increased risk of bush and grass fires in our area it is timely to remind our parents about our emergency procedures and protocols: If Elphinstone receives a Bushfire Emergency Warning from the CFA we will activate our Emergency Management Plan and Shelter in Place Procedure. This means that students will be sheltered in the main building, under supervision, until the threat has passed or we are instructed by Emergency Services otherwise. We conducted ‘shelter in place’ drill today. The last thing the Emergency services and the Department of Education want is for parents to drive to school and collect children, particularly under an emergency warning. This only endangers your situation and roads and access can become congested. When calling school, please have in mind that staff have many tasks to perform while in an emergency situation and that we do not want to be manning the phones unnecessarily. The safest place in such a situation for your child is at school.

Brendan

School Council Election - I would like to call for nominations for the four parent vacancies that have arisen on School Council. Nomination forms are available from the front foyer and nominations will close at 4.00pm on Thursday 16th February. If an election is required ballot papers will be distributed and the ballot will close on Thursday 23rd February at 4:00pm.

New Website

Our new website will go live as of Friday evening, our newsletter and important dates will be available on this site. Please go to www.elphinestoneps.vic.edu.au/
We will be introducing our phone app in the coming weeks. Stay tuned.

Student Recognition

Curtis McLennan for making all of our students feel included both inside and outside the classroom.
Welcome to some new faces
We welcome Kerrie Martin to our staff who is filling in for Nina in the classroom on Monday to Thursday for the whole term. We also welcome back Ebony Waldron on Monday Tuesday and Friday and Alan Issacs who is a local retired secondary maths teacher. Alan is volunteering to assist in the classroom and will continue with his computer coding classes and chess tuition. Drew Thorpe, our private music teacher is again taking the whole school for music on Thursday afternoon. Leanne will be in the office on a Thursday this year.

Absence Notes
It is a Departmental Law that all absences must be formally reported and be accompanied with an explanation from Parents. Whilst we accept verbal explanations a written one is preferred. Further notes are available in the foyer when you run out. Please save the notes attached to this newsletter and use them if your child is absent.

PEPS (Parents of Elphinstone Primary School) is a group whose main aim is fundraising. Activities throughout the year range from selling veggies from the school garden or veggies from home, lunch days at school, Mother's/Father's Day stalls to organising our xmas raffle. We usually meet a couple of times during a term over a cuppa to have a chat and discuss fundraising ideas. Of course little ones are welcome!

General Information
*Curriculum consumables are supplied and are part of the parent payment.
*Sunscreen is available at school but students are welcome to bring their own. Applying sunscreen before students come to school is a great idea.

Contact Information
Contact Information for families needs to be up to date at all times. Please contact the office with any changes to your circumstances.

Library
Our school is serviced every Wednesday afternoon by a mobile library and teacher Jocelyn Russell and books can be borrowed and returned on this day.

Parent Payments (School Fees)
Our School Council have set this year’s fees at $120 per student. This covers stationary, equipment, printing. Payment of fees are due by 27th March. If you have concerns or wish to discuss any financial issues relating to school fee’s, please speak to Leanne or Brendan anytime.

Conveyance
Families who are eligible for Conveyance Allowance only need to fill out a form once for their child’s primary school years. A new form is needed if you need to add a child.

To be eligible you need to live more than 4.8kms from your nearest school. Forms are available in the office.

Camps, Sports and Excursion Fund
The Camps, Sports and Excursions Fund (CSEF) commenced in 2015 for four years and will provide payments for eligible students to attend camps, sports and excursions. Families holding a valid means-tested concession card or temporary foster parents are eligible to apply. $125 per year is paid for eligible primary school students, with $225 per year paid for eligible secondary school students. A special consideration eligibility category also exists. Payments are made directly to the school and are tied to the student. CSEF applications open from term one 2017. The program will again be promoted to families via school newsletters and websites.

Application forms are available at the office.

Healthy Snacks
We are encouraging all students to bring a healthy snack and bottle of water to class in the morning to be consumed at 10.00am during our Literacy session. The snack should be pre-cut fruit or vegetables in an individual labelled container. “Messy” fruit such as orange segments should not be included in the morning healthy snack as the children will be able to “graze” as they work. Bottles should only contain water and not be frozen or chilled due to the condensation left on the table tops! Of course other drinks such as fruit juice and fruits such as oranges are perfectly fine for recess and lunch breaks.

Elphinstone Primary School Bank Details

MECU
BSB: 313—140
Account No: 1207 878 1
IMPORTANT NOTES FOR 2017

Timetable
The following is a summary of our timetable:

**Every day**
- Literacy with Mr Stewart and Mrs Martin
- Maths Groups from 11.30-12.30pm with Mr Stewart and Mrs Martin

**Tuesday pm**
- PE

**Mon, Tue pm**
- P/2, 3/6 Integrated studies

**Wednesday**
- Library 3/6 @ 11.30am and P/2 @12.15am,

**Thursday**
- Art with Deita and Music with Drew after lunch

Please ensure your child is **dressed for PE on Tuesday and Friday**

Parent Teacher Interviews
We plan to hold parent teacher interviews commencing on Monday 21st February. It would be a great way to formally catch up and discuss and plan your child’s learning throughout the year ahead. Details about the timetable will be placed outside the office next week.

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Diaries
Each student throughout the school has received a diary. It is expected that they be used every night to record reading activity and for parent teacher communication where possible. Diaries will be collected weekly and commented on by your child’s Literacy teacher.

Camps and Excursions
The 3/4 camp is planned for Swan Hill and the 5/6 camp will be at Anglesea. Dates will be confirmed as soon as possible.

Assemblies
We hold our assemblies at 9.00am each Monday to celebrate student achievement both in and out of school, sing the anthem and inform students about upcoming events/activities.

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PEPS PLACE

Hi All

I tell you I wasn’t really ready for back to school but it didn’t take long to get into the swing of things and by all accounts its sounding like an interesting but short term.

For the PEPS news this term we have a booking for a sausage sizzle at Castlemaine newsagency on 17th February. This is our first fundraiser and hopefully as good as the last one. We will put a roster timetable up in the foyer (front of office) for people to put their names down and what food to donate.

The first PEPS meeting is on Tuesday 14th February at 3pm. So bring your ideas and energy for what we can achieve this year.

We have ordered some herbs and vegetables from the garden program at the jail. If anyone wants garden scraps for chooks or farm animals please pull up and take from the garden. Its pretty much cabbage left with lots of bugs!

If the kids haven’t already talked about this we are looking at MURALS in art this term. I will be taking art while Nina is on leave. We are hoping to design a mural to decorate the outside of the art shed. The final design will then be submitted to School Council for approval. We may call on some parents to help with the mural painting, but more on that progress later. So far we have ideas like gold digging, mountains, flowers, animals and even rockets.

Deita
The following business support Elphinstone Primary School. Where possible please support them. Mention their advert as they may have special discounts or offers for readers of this Newsletter.

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