TERM 1 DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No school for Preps</td>
<td>on any Wednesday throughout February</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30 January - 7 February</td>
<td>Preps dismissed at 2.00pm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 – 14 February</td>
<td>2014 School Council nominations accepted</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wednesday, 5 February</td>
<td>Instrumental music lessons commence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monday, 10 February</td>
<td>Preps’ first full day at school</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wednesday, 12 February</td>
<td>Whole school assemblies begin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17 – 21 February</td>
<td>Class meetings to be held</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monday, 17 February</td>
<td>School Council meeting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Friday, 28 February</td>
<td>Final day for discounted school fees</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wednesday, 5 March</td>
<td>First school assembly for Preps</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monday, 10 March</td>
<td>Labour Day holiday</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Friday, 28 March</td>
<td>Twilight market</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monday, 4 April</td>
<td>Last day of Term 1: 1.30pm dismissal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tuesday, 22 April</td>
<td>Term 2 commences</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tuesday, 16 April</td>
<td>School photo day</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

FROM THE PRINCIPAL...

Dear Parents, Carers and Friends

All families are receiving a hard copy of this newsletter.

Welcome back to Briar Hill Primary School, for 2014! I trust that your break was safe and restful, and hope that you are ready for the exciting journey ahead. I wish you the very best for the coming year, and trust that it will bring you fulfilment, as you experience the joy of your child’s learning.

By the time you read this, all children will have experienced their first school day for 2014, and we are confident that they will be off to a great educational start!

We have several new children and families joining us for the first time this year, so on behalf of the staff, the school council and the school community, I would like to extend a warm welcome to all. I know our new families will be embraced and supported as they settle into our school.

I would especially like to welcome our new Preps and their families to the Briar Hill Primary School community. Many of you already have children at our school, but I welcome you all, and thank you for the trust you have given us, to guide and educate your children.

As you well realise, primary school is an important chapter in your child’s education. You can learn more about enrolment, attendance, costs, homework, what your child will learn and how to get involved, by visiting the DEECD (Department of Education and Early Childhood Development) website, at http://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/parents/primary/Pages/default.aspx.

The DEECD provides tips and information on topics relating to starting school, such as the importance of play and learning to read and write. Links to further resources and online content are also included to help you support your child’s learning journey. These can be found at http://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/parents/primary/Pages/p4p.aspx.

WORKING TOGETHER

As you have probably already figured out, our little school has a big heart, and by working together, we can achieve incredible things. In one parent’s words: “There is a good feeling out there – people want to come here because of what we offer.”

However, simply being here is not what it’s about. You need to be an active member of our dynamic community, to truly experience its rewards. Put in. Put your hand up to help. Show empathy for others. Make an extra effort to change the way we can do things better, together. The communal responsibility we all take is significant.

This is particularly important when it comes to the health of our children. For this reason, I ask you to take special note of the information at the end of this newsletter about anaphylaxis, a life threatening condition that directly affects a small number of children at Briar Hill Primary School.

Obviously, the parents of these children need to be constantly vigilant, in order to ensure that they minimise the risk of exposure to allergens that can cause an anaphylactic reaction in their child/ren. But this also implies that we are ALL aware and alert, to play a proactive role in preventing the presence of triggers.

For us, we need to ensure that our school is PEANUT FREE. This means no peanuts or peanut products are permitted. Other types of nuts and seeds are not problematic, and thus are perfectly safe to send to school.

We thank you for your anticipated consideration and support of the health needs of all of our children.

Learning with head, heart and hands

CONTACT US: 03 9435 1633 or briar.hill.ps@edumail.vic.gov.au
**SCHOOL TERM DATES - 2014**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Term</th>
<th>Dates</th>
<th>Weeks</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Term 1</td>
<td>28 January to 4 April</td>
<td>(10 weeks)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Term 2</td>
<td>22 April to 27 June</td>
<td>(10 weeks)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Term 3</td>
<td>14 July to 19 September</td>
<td>(10 weeks)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Term 4</td>
<td>6 October to 19 December</td>
<td>(11 weeks)</td>
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**STUDENT FREE DAYS**

To inform your planning for 2014, the following three days will be student free. These days assist teachers by providing both professional development and report writing opportunities.

- **Monday, 28 April**  
  *(This is the day after the ANZAC Day long weekend)*
- **Tuesday, 10 June**  
  *(This is the day after the Queen’s birthday long weekend)*
- **Monday, 4 November**  
  *(This is the day before Melbourne Cup Day)*

**THE SCHOOL TIMETABLE**

- 8.45am: School yard supervision commences
- 8.55am: First bell to line up with the class
- 9.00am – 11.00am: Learning block 1
- 11.00am -11.30am: Morning play
- 11.30 – 1.30pm: Learning block 2
- 1.30pm – 1.40pm: Children eat lunch in the classroom
- 1.40pm – 2.30pm: Lunch play
- 2.30pm – 3.30pm: Learning block 3
- 3.30pm: Bell – dismissal
- 3.45pm: Bell – School yard supervision ends

**THE 2014 SCHOOL TEAM**

I wish to warmly welcome all new and returning staff members:

*Dionne Brown* – Dionne will teach Class 1, alongside Natalie. Her most recent teaching experience is at the Melbourne Rudolf Steiner School.

I think I speak for all staff when I say that I look forward to working with Dionne throughout 2014.

- Prep M: Mara Lupieri
- Prep K: Kurt Shean
- Year 1: Natalie Will
- Year 1: Dionne Brown
- Year 2: Meg Shaw
- Year 3: Kate Rees
- Year 4: Roger Richards
- Year 5: Cathy Yeoman
- Year 6: Alison Butterworth (M, Tu & W)
- Year 6: Anna Foletta (Th & F)
- Enviro Sci: Rhonda King

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Position</th>
<th>Name</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Japanese &amp; Library/ICT</td>
<td>Mihoko Une</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Office support &amp; Teacher Aide</td>
<td>Karen Hatfield</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher Aide</td>
<td>Deanne Sutherland</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher Aide</td>
<td>Judith Endries Hoffmann</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Business Manager</td>
<td>Mary Butterworth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Instrumental Music</td>
<td>Mary Wright</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eurythmy</td>
<td>Kate Graves</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cleaner</td>
<td>Eric Bidgood</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Principal</td>
<td>Meron Drummond</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**FAMILY STATEMENTS**

Family statements are the invoices for school charges, which are sent to all families. You will receive your statement in the post within the next few days.

**IN NEED OF FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE?**

The Education Maintenance Allowance (EMA) helps to cover the costs related to your child’s schooling. The EMA provides families on a low income with financial assistance to support their child’s education up to the age of 16.

You need to submit your EMA application to your child’s school by **Friday, 28 February 2014**, to be eligible.

Application forms and eligibility requirements are available from the school office.


**CALM SCHOOLS = CALM KIDS**

Both research and the wisdom of experience tell us that when children develop and maintain a positive attachment to school, and gain an engagement in, and enthusiasm for learning, they do so much better in their lives.

In this regard, both *calm schools* and *calm classrooms* contribute significantly. For this reason, the teachers and I are very keen to stress several *preconditions for learning*:

- **A quiet start to the day**: Creating a quiet space before school, in the corridors and classrooms, assists teachers to thoroughly prepare and welcome their class in an orderly, organised way.
- **Clear communication**: It is important that parents and children understand the rationale behind our approaches, so that support for these will be strong.
- **Drop off and pick up expectations**: Every teacher will have spoken to her/his class about morning and afternoon routines, and every child will know that s/he:
  - should line up when the first bell sounds
  - should remain outside with her/his bag, until the teacher arrives in the morning.
  - will be dismissed to the same area at home time.

We have put these expectations in place from ‘Day 1’, and we thank you for your anticipated support. The school will be a better place for these actions, and our children’s opportunities far greater.
PICK-UP AND DROP-OFF TIMES
To avoid congestion, distraction and most importantly, to ensure the safety of everyone in the school community, you are requested to wait outside the building with your child, at the class assembly area, in the mornings, and to collect your child outside the building at dismissal times.

You will appreciate that the first duty of teachers is to their children, so we ask parents to be respectful of this by arranging conversations, messages etc outside instructional times.

BEFORE & AFTER SCHOOL CARE
We are pleased to announce that the Briar Hill Primary School Outside School Hours Care (OSHC) Program will continue to offer before school and after school care in 2014.

The program will be run in the new OSHC room (the classroom closest to the office).

The program will run during each school term, from Monday to Friday, as follows:
- Before School Care: 7.00am – 8.45am
- After School Care: 3.30pm - 6.00pm

No school holiday care will be available.

There are currently 15 places available for both the morning and afternoon sessions each day.

Our Outside School Hours Care staff consists of Jodie Hector, our new Nominated Supervisor, and Rachel Watson, who is our Assistant. We’re very pleased that they’ve remained with the BHPS team, and we are sure they will both continue to do a wonderful job!

Please note that your child MUST be enrolled before s/he can attend Outside School Hours Care program. Enrolment forms are available from the school office.

CLASS MEETINGS
Class meetings for all year levels will be held in Week 3, between Monday, 17 February - Friday, 21 February.

These meetings allow teachers to speak about their programs and their aspirations for their grade, and will enable you to ask questions and clarify your understandings.

Please note that the meetings will not provide the opportunity to speak to teachers about individual children. Rather, separate meeting times should be scheduled if you wish to speak to teachers in more depth about your child’s learning needs.

Further information will be sent home shortly.

SCHOOL COUNCIL ELECTIONS 2014
Next week, I will call for nominations for the Briar Hill Primary School Council, for which there are three vacancies in 2014/15. Please refer to page 6 of this newsletter, for further information.

SWIMMING PROGRAM
As part of the delivery of our Physical Education program at Briar Hill Primary School, we will be running a whole school swimming program, in which we expect all children to participate.

The program will be held at Yarra Swim School, and will be run at different times and in different ways, to target the needs of children in each level of the school, as follows:

- **Years 3 & 4 - Term 2**
  - 8 x 45 minute lessons, commencing on Wednesday, 30 April

- **Years 5 & 6 - Term 3**
  - 6 x 60 minute lessons, commencing on Wednesday, 23 July

- **Preps, Years 1 & 2 - Term 4**
  - 8 x 45 minute lessons, commencing on Monday, 13 October

Please note these dates in your diary, for future reference.

The total cost of all swimming lessons and bus transport is $100.00. This charge is payable as part of your school fees. Specific information will be sent home prior to each term’s program.

LABEL ALL BELONGINGS
Uniform items, lunch boxes, shoes and bags are expensive and easily lost – and one BHPS jumper looks much the same as the other 200!

Therefore, please ensure all removable items of clothing are clearly identified with your child’s name, so that they can be returned to their owner if necessary.

However, more importantly, please encourage your child to be accountable for looking after their own belongings. Hundreds of dollars’ worth of items turn up in lost property each week, and are never reclaimed. Obviously, some families have money to burn!

Please ask your child to check lost property for any items they may have mislaid.

PARKING AROUND THE SCHOOL
All drivers need to be aware of parking restrictions around the school. Banyule Council Officers regularly patrol the streets adjacent to schools and infringement notices may be issued.

When dropping off and picking up your children in either Gladstone or Beaconsfield Roads, please ensure that you remain aware of the need for safety of ALL children and the rights of ALL neighbours.

Please DO NOT PARK ON NEIGHBOURS’ NATURE STRIPS.

Please note that the car park at the rear of the school is for staff parking only. Parents should not arrange to pick up or drop off their children in this area, as doing so creates a significant risk to student safety.
SCHOOL ASSEMBLY

From Wednesday, 12 February, our whole school assemblies will be held on Wednesday afternoons at 3.00pm, in the multipurpose room. All parents are invited to attend.

The purpose of these assemblies is to showcase the range of our children’s abilities and achievements, as well as to provide a public forum for communication sharing. The children play a significant role in these assemblies.

BE SUNSMART: NO HAT = NO PLAY

The school’s SunSmart policy clearly sets out that all students must wear a wide brimmed school hat or bucket hat during Term 1. Parents are requested to support our policy by ensuring that children to wear hats as required.

Students and parents must understand that NO HAT = NO PLAY.

Suitable hats can be purchased from the school.

Please note that baseball caps and narrow brimmed trilby-style hats are unsuitable for school and should not to be worn.

The warm weather is also a really good opportunity for you to discuss important healthy behaviours, such as sun screen use and drinking plenty of water, and to practise and model these.

PUNCTUALITY & REGULAR ATTENDANCE

Schooling is compulsory for children and young people aged from 6 – 17 years unless an exemption from attendance has been granted. Parents have a legal obligation to ensure that children are at school every day on time, unless illness prevents attendance.

In the case of illness or unavoidable absence, the school must be notified on the day of absence, and an absence note sent on the return of the child to school. The school has a mandated legal duty to monitor student absence.

Please remember that habitual lateness is cumulative, and can cause weeks of absence from school over time. Furthermore, late arrivals are very disruptive to other students and teachers.

Attending school regularly is a factor that greatly influences success in life, so why wouldn’t you do what’s right for your child, by ensuring they attend each day, on time?

STUDENT LEADERSHIP

Senior school students will once again have the opportunity to be involved in leadership programs at Briar Hill Primary School:

- **Junior School Council:** This representative body promotes ‘student voice’ at Briar Hill Primary School. Members will participate in a junior leadership conference at the Melbourne Conference Centre in March. In 2014, the JSC will be led by Cathy, Anna and Alison.

- **The Green Team:** The Green Team is the leadership component of our Environmental Science program. Members will be given opportunities to participate in conferences and to lead school initiatives. In 2014, the program will be led by Rhonda.

Student elections will soon be held to determine membership of each of these groups.

Other student leadership opportunities will be investigated and/or further developed in 2014:

- Sports leadership
- Library/ICT leadership

We look forward to the exciting opportunities these programs will present.

FREE FRUIT FRIDAY

A huge thanks goes to Stella Mulder, who organised the supply and preparation of fruit last year.

Stella is willing to continue this service to us this year, but we would welcome any volunteers who would be available to assist her.

Please contact the office if you are able to help.

SCHOOL BANKING

Student banking with the Eltham branch of the Bendigo Bank will commence within the next few weeks.

More information about this, and about how to start an account for your child, will be sent home soon. Watch this space!

THE SCHOOL NEWSLETTER

So often we hear comments from parents who complain about not knowing what's going on at school. Furthermore, some children and families miss out on opportunities because they simply have no idea about forthcoming school events.

However, it’s very easy to keep in touch – simply read the school newsletter! It’s the most reliable way for us to communicate with the whole school community, and we always do our best to include relevant news and articles on a weekly basis. Therefore, it is recommended that you take the time to read it regularly.

Teachers, children and families can also contribute to the newsletter, so please speak to us if you wish to do so.

Advertising, at set rates for businesses, is also available, and this assists us to cover paper and printing costs.

In short, there is always lots to read, lots to know and lots to think about, so here we go, with the first edition for 2014!

The newsletter is published weekly and is usually sent home each Thursday with the eldest child in each family. Alternatively, families may elect to access their school newsletter online, through the school website at www.briar-hill-ps.vic.edu.au.

A COMMITMENT

Learning with head, heart and hands

CONTACT US: ☎ 03 9435 1633 or 📧 briar.hill-ps@edumail.vic.gov.au
One may wonder why this message is hidden on page 5 of the newsletter, when it could very well be argued that it contains the most important words to be said at this time.

Those of you who follow the school’s Facebook page will possibly have already seen words that were published on January 26 - Australia Day. They reflected the clear intent of the school to plan and implement a number of strategies to bring about an embedded recognition and respect for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander (ATSI) Australians. It also reflects our real desire to teach our students to care for our land with the same unconditional love and responsibility that our indigenous people have done for tens of thousands of years.

On this note, I just love the following words of Michael Leunig, who sums up my sentiments so well:

“While there is much to be sceptical or divided about in the nation and its human history, there remains an abiding deeper truth and beauty in the nature of the continent itself; the amazing landforms and the astounding plants and creatures, great and small, that constitute an extraordinary spirit of country. If there be a sound basis for an intelligent love of country in a globalising and environmentally degraded world, then respect and affection for the unique and precious natural estate of Australia might be a unifying social principle and a coherent way to hold and share…”

Our school actions will begin with a ceremonial ‘Welcome to Country’ within the next couple of weeks, in which all children from Prep to Year 6 will be involved, with Aboriginal elder, Ian Hunter.


FINALLY…

Our values
The values of our school community are reflected in our behaviour and our decisions, and shape our interactions.
- Be KIND to yourself
- Be KIND to others
- Be KIND to the environment
- Be the learning KIND
- Be the achieving KIND
- Be the community KIND

We intend to share this framework more fully with the school community in 2014, and to seek your feedback.

With warm regards,

Meron  ☺
Meron Drummond,
Principal

SAVE TREES!

Go to: http://www.briar-hill-ps.vic.edu.au/

The BHPS newsletter is available on our school website each week. You can register for the alert by going to our website (URL above), clicking on ‘Newsletters’, then ‘Subscribe to Newsletter’. You will automatically be on the list!

Alternatively, simply fill out and return the form below, to receive a weekly email, alerting you that the newsletter is online.

Either of the above actions will mean you will not receive a hard copy of the newsletter via your child.

However, rest assured that if you do not have Internet access, or simply wish to continue receiving a hardcopy, we will continue to send you one!

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BHPS online newsletter alert

Parent’s name: ........................................

Eldest child’s name: ...................................

Eldest child’s class: ...................................

Your email address:

..........................................................

..........................................................

..........................................................

Signature: ..............................................
SCHOOL COUNCIL ELECTIONS 2014

Please read the following information carefully.

Next week, I will be calling for nominations for election to our School Council for 2014. With the terms of some parent representatives coming to an end, there will be three vacancies for parent representatives on this important decision making body.

What is a school council and what does it do?
All government schools in Victoria have a school council. They are legally formed bodies that are given powers to set the key directions of a school within centrally provided guidelines. In doing this, a school council is able to directly influence the quality of education that the school provides for its students.

Who is on the school council?
There are three possible categories of membership:

1. A mandated, elected Parent category.
   More than one third of the total members must be from this category. Department of Education and Early Childhood Development (DEECD) employees can be Parent members at their child’s school as long as they are not employed at the school.

2. A mandated, elected DEECD employee category.
   Members of this category may make up no more than one third of the total membership of school council. The Principal of the school is automatically one of these members.

3. An optional Community member category.
   Its members are appointed by a decision of the council because of their special skills, interests or experiences. DEECD employees are not eligible to be Community members.

The term of office for all members is two years. Half the members must retire each year, creating vacancies for each annual School Council election.

Why is Parent membership so important?
Parents on school councils provide important viewpoints and have valuable skills that can help shape the direction of the school. Those parents who become active on a school council find their involvement satisfying in itself and may also find that their children feel a greater sense of belonging.

How can you become involved?
The most obvious way is to vote in the elections, which are held in Term 1 each year. However, ballots are only held if more people nominate as candidates than there are positions vacant.

In view of this, you might seriously consider
- standing for election as a member of the school council
- encouraging another person to stand for election.

Do I need special experience to be on school council?
No. What you do need is an interest in your child’s school and the desire to work in partnership with others to help shape the school’s future.

What do you need to do to stand for election?
The Principal will issue a notice and call for nominations following the commencement of Term 1 each year. All school council elections must be completed by the end of March.

If you decide to stand for election, you can arrange for someone to nominate you as a candidate or you can nominate yourself in the Parent category.

DEECD employees whose child is enrolled in a school in which they are not employed are eligible to nominate as parents for the school council where their child is enrolled.

Once the nomination form is completed, return it to the Principal within the time stated on the notice of election. You will receive a Nomination Form Receipt in the mail following the receipt of your completed nomination.

If there are more nominations received than there are vacancies on council, a ballot will be conducted during the two weeks after the call for nominations has closed.

Remember…
- Ask at the school for help if you would like to stand for election and are not sure what to do
- Consider standing for election to council this year
- Be sure to vote in the elections.

Please contact the Principal for further information.
ANAPHYLAXIS MANAGEMENT
This information is for all members of the school community.

What is anaphylaxis?
Anaphylaxis is a severe and sudden allergic reaction when a person is exposed to an allergen. Some symptoms of anaphylaxis include swelling of the lips, face and eyes, difficulty breathing, abdominal pain and/or vomiting and loss of consciousness.

The most common allergens in children are eggs, peanuts, tree nuts (e.g. cashews), cow’s milk, fish and shellfish, wheat, soy, certain insect stings and medications.

We are committed to providing a safe and supportive environment in which children diagnosed at risk of anaphylaxis can participate equally in all aspects of their schooling.

Anaphylaxis can be life threatening, but with proper management and prevention strategies in place the risks can be substantially reduced.

What is the school’s responsibility to a child who is at risk of Anaphylaxis?
The school must:
- have an anaphylaxis management policy
- be trained in how to recognise and respond to an anaphylactic reaction
- know the students who are at risk of anaphylaxis
- work with parents to develop individual Anaphylaxis Management Plans for students diagnosed at risk of anaphylaxis
- have in place a communication plan to provide information to staff, students and parents about anaphylaxis and the school's anaphylaxis management policy

What is the responsibility of the parents/guardians of children diagnosed at risk of anaphylaxis?
The parent/guardian must:
- inform the school staff of the diagnosis and its causes
- work with the school to develop an individual Anaphylaxis Management Plan for their child (in consultation with the child’s doctor)
- provide an Anaphylaxis Action Plan for the child, with an up to date photograph
- supply the school with the child’s auto injector pen (e.g. Epipen®) and ensure it has not expired
- inform the school if your child’s medical condition changes

What is YOUR responsibility?
We all need to work together to minimise the risk of exposure to allergens that may cause harm to children diagnosed at risk of anaphylaxis. For this reason, we ask you to carefully consider what you include in your own child’s school lunch and snacks. This might be as simple as avoiding the inclusion of some common foods.

NO PEANUTS OR PEANUT PRODUCTS ARE PERMITTED AT SCHOOL.

We thank you for your support and cooperation in observing this important request.

Do you need more information about Anaphylaxis?