

School Council Newsletter

Summer edition

"Learning with Head, Heart and Hands"

The gift of light we thankfully take,
But shall it not be alone for our sake.

The more we give light, one to the other
It shines and it spreads and glows still further.

Until every spark by friends set aflame,
Until every heart with joy to proclaim.

In the depths of our souls,
A shining sun glows.



The year of kindness

Another year of hopping and skipping through the pandemic and it finally caught us in the end ... It has not been an easy year but we can still look back and find joy in what we were able to do together. Classes 3 and 4 made it to camp last month and had a wonderful time at Camp Oasis. Classes 5 and 6 were lucky to enjoy their camp earlier in the year as well. We held our Athletics day, Greek Olympics, Farm excursion, and had our first assembly after lock down. Our lovely school community have been very creative this year, once again juggling remote learning, work, back to school and everything else the pandemic has brought. The one thing that has held true is our community spirit and the love that we share with open hearts. We have seen the kindness of our school community - many families gave so that others could receive in their time of need. We have helped fill each other's cups when needed, and our children have given this year their best.

We are sending our love to all the families affected by the outbreak this week. School Council is there to help and support our community, please do not hesitate to reach out.

A look inside our school grounds ...

Have you walked through our school grounds this term? The beautiful veggie garden has been thriving and providing Betty with an abundance of ingredients to use in cooking with our children. A big thank you to Rin for her undivided commitment to making our school grounds such a beautiful and inviting space for all ages to enjoy. Here is a glimpse of our school grounds.





Multipurpose Room Update

School Council have approved the quote and contractor for the multipurpose room upgrade! Works will commence in the January school holidays, and hopefully we will see some exciting changes when we return to school in the new year. Simon Bird and Rowan Kayll have been working very hard to make this project take shape ... COVID restrictions over the past two years have not made this an easy undertaking, hence we are very pleased to inform the community that we will soon be inviting you all to our improved multipurpose room!



Spring Fair and Chai Friday

We look forward to being able to organise our much- loved Spring Fair and Chai Fridays next year. Thank you to all who have contributed to Chai Fridays this year and for all the community support we have received. These events always bring a happy vibe and smiles to the faces of our children. Watch this space for more updates in the new year!



Farewell Grade 6 students and parents

The end of the school year is always bittersweet as we bid farewell to our Class 6 students. This year we haven't been able to farewell them in the usual tradition, but we certainly hope that our Class 6s know how much they have been loved by their fellow students as well as their teachers! We are all so proud of our graduates and wish them the very best as they step into a new phase of their learning in high school.

School council is particularly sad to farewell several past and present members who have been an integral part of our community for many years now.

Chris Bruce and Tina Bruce have been a strong and stable support for our school community for many years. Tina, previously on School Council, played an integral part in starting up the Chai Friday tradition, which has been an event we look forward to every term and that brings our community together in a special way. Chris, who has been on school council for the last 3 years, has written and updated many policies for our school over the years. He has also been the tireless MC at the Spring Fair and is a motivating and entertaining person to be around. . We cannot tell you how much we will miss you! ! Thank you for all your help and support over the years!

Michelle Collins, the kind heart of our school council and the best representative of our school community will be parting ways from us this year. Michelle's musical contributions to our school plays and performances are just one of the many gifts we have received. Our chalkboard artist will be very much missed every time we look at one of her works around the school. Michelle has gained the trust of the community over the years and has been instrumental in creating a positive relationship between the school council and our school community. We have all relied very heavily on Michelle's help and understanding of our school. We cannot thank you enough Michelle for your contributions over the years, you will be dearly missed.

Claire O'Sullivan, former School Council president, will also be leaving us this year. Our school has renewed energy and stability as a result of Claire's leadership. The impact of Claire's energy, enthusiasm, and deep commitment to the school and our children's well being will continue well beyond her time here. We wish you the very best Claire and will miss you more than you will know!

Grade 6 Parent reflections, 2021

Briar Hill really helped nurture my typically academic- focused daughter into a creative well rounded artistic (yet still academic) individual. She has found her footing in imagination and enjoyed singing, drawing, wet on wet painting, making lanterns, sewing and knitting.

Her love of baking and cooking really flourished within the school. She enjoyed making soup with parent helpers in prep, jam with Archie's Dad, Sam in grade 3 and cooking with Betty in grades 5 & 6.

Our family has always loved music but briar hill primary allowed my daughter to discover her talent in playing viola and reading music. She feels confident to play her instrument in front of grandparents at Soirées and the spring fair.

The excursions helped her build confidence in areas usually foreign to some, including blacksmith, camps and farming.

We, as a family, were able to learn more about Indigenous studies with Kurt than we imagined. Singing songs, learning about traditions, culture and beliefs was a lovely surprise to the program.

Over the years, our daughter has created some lovely treasured items including an igloo, recorder bag, pencil case, an elephant, a doll, a Viking shield, a Viking helmet and many paintings

With the help of Rin, my daughter discovered skills in acting, memorising lines, singing, acting and performing on stage.

Claire has helped our children build circus skills, which other schools rarely provide. Walking on stilts, fire sticks and the art of poi.

We couldn't think of a better way to introduce education to our children.

Thank you Briar Hill Primary for an immersive, well balanced, fun, creative and informative education.

(Anonymous)



With a heart overflowing with gratitude, I say THANK YOU to Briar Hill Primary School.

Thank you for nurturing my son from his first nervous days as a preppie,
to a boy on the brink of teenhood with a world of possibilities ahead of him.

Thank you for instilling in him wonder, imagination, creativity and an inquiring mind.
For developing in him empathy and kindness.

Thank you for valuing him for who he is, and for bringing out the best in him.
For giving him the confidence to be true to himself.

We will be forever shaped by the love and care shown to us at Briar Hill,
and our lives are so enriched because of it.

With deepest appreciation,

Thank you!



To Briar Hill School community,
I would like to share this beautiful poem by Kahlil Gibran.

‘Your children are not your children.
They are the daughters and sons of Life’s longing for itself.
They come through you but not from you,
And though they are with you yet they belong not to you.
You may give them your love but not your thoughts,
For they have their own thoughts.
You may House their bodies but not their souls,
For their souls dwell in the house of tomorrow,
Which you cannot visit, not even in your dreams.
You may strive to be like them,
But seek not to make them like you.
For life goes not backward nor tarries with yesterday.
You are the bows from which your children
As living arrows are sent forth.
The archer sees the mark upon the path of the infinite,
And She bends you with her might
That Her arrows may go swift and far.
Let your bending in the archer’s hand be for gladness;
For even as She loves the arrow that flies,
So She loves also the bow that is stable. ‘

This precious little school with a very big heart has held my daughters through their primary school years, with much love, grace and encouragement. It embodies the head, heart and hand philosophy. Our family feel immense gratitude to the BHPS family.

Catherine Mazzotta



Ode to BHPS

This year marks the end of an 8- year chapter in our family's lives. Briar Hill has been the setting for my girl's formative years, and I feel so grateful for this. I was drawn to the school because it nurtured imagination, wonder and a reverence for childhood. The girls have experienced so much richness and magic at school, which provided them with a holistic and hands on approach to learning that fostered their curiosity and fascination in the world around them. The craft and building projects taught them new skills and a sense of accomplishment. The sense of rhythm and ritual through the days, weeks and years, gave them a sense of security, excitement and anticipation of what was to come as they moved up through the school. The storytelling transformed everyday activities into playful adventures (their recorders were delivered by a pirate in grade 1!) and taught them about creating joy and fun. The sense of community that made events such as the annual Spring Fair happen, showed them what's possible when people come together with a shared vision. Performing in class plays and musical performances has taught them about cooperation, flexibility and the pleasure of collective singing. The teachers showed them love and created a sense of belonging, which provided them with a safe harbour, allowing them to take risks and be brave. The intention and effort invested in creating gorgeous school grounds, gardens and classrooms, that provided the backdrop for their childhood, sparked their imaginations and a deep appreciation of nature. Riding the waves of change when school leadership was transient taught them that challenges are a part of life, they have the ability to influence change and emerge stronger and more resilient.

I am filled with gratitude as we end our Briar Hill chapter. My girls will hold the values they lived at Briar Hill with them forever. To all the families who have shared this chapter with us, it was fun, sometimes messy and hard, but always full of heart! Thank you and all the best for what comes next. Our village has created some excellent humans.

For those who are embarking on their journey ...you will know how lucky you are to have found a school like Briar Hill. Cherish it and enjoy the adventure!

Tina Bruce

Class 6 Graduation Song

This is a song about our time at Briar Hill
Seven years that saw us change and grow,
It's a tale of highs and lows, of laughter, thrills and spills
And we share it with you now before we go ...

We were preppies long ago, and the portable was home,
Our big buddies were as great as buddies get,
We had Mara (*she was awesome*), we had Rachel (*she was great*)
Nap time, cubby wars, and painting wet on wet.

In Class 1 we took our sheepskins into Cath and Helen's rooms
Where we learned to play recorder, *more or less* ...
We had swimming and Chai Friday and put on a circus show
And with gentle birthday spirals we were the blessed.

In Class 2 we danced the Maypole and we tied ourselves in knots
With bright garlands made of flowers in our hair,
And we skipped to Extra lesson, tossing beanbags and rolling balls
While Alison and Jack were kind but fair.

Then our school saw some upheaval, people came and people went,
But our merry band of mischief- makers thrived,
Because after rain comes sunshine, that's what helps to make things grow,
Just like Briar Hill, when Mr Kayll arrived.

In Class 3 we met the Israelites, and slew the mighty Og
And with Mary at the helm we plucked our strings,
Then with Alison we headed off to Adanac for camp
To try all sorts of new exciting things.

Janet turned us into Vikings and we hammered at our shields
As we learned of Loki, Jormungaard and Thor,
With our voices loud as thunder we would sing of gods and war
Our play was quite the highlight of Class 4.

Then the virus took our harmonies and splintered us apart
For a while we had to play our tunes alone,
Muted faces on a screen, home- made masks and hands so clean
We got used to words like "cancel" and "postpone".

Still, we sewed and sequined elephants (though Tayla fixed a few)
And we learned of Ancient Egypt and the Greeks,
We circled round geometry and filmed our Horus play
And each of us prepared a leader's speech.

Tayla took us on as Romans for the circus of Class 6
On our stilts we saw the world from up above,
And our buddies and our teachers and our friends along the way
Taught us tricks and skills and facts, but mostly love

Chorus:

Woven together along the way
Woven together along the way.



Christmas Craft

Christmas is such a wonderful time of year to craft together as a family!

Giving handmade presents or making decorations for the Christmas tree ...start your holidays with some calm family time together.

Here are some ideas that are fun and easy to make.



Some detailed instructions to make a pine cone gnome ornament can be found here

[https:// www. themagiconions. com/ 2013/ 12/ pine- cone- gnome- christmas- ornament. html](https://www.themagiconions.com/2013/12/pine-cone-gnome-christmas-ornament.html)



The detailed instructions to make a felt leaf ornament can be found here

[https:// www. themagiconions. com/ 2015/ 11/ felt- leaf- ornaments- for- felt- leaf- ornaments- crafts- for- thanksgiving. html](https://www.themagiconions.com/2015/11/felt-leaf-ornaments-for-felt-leaf-ornaments-crafts-for-thanksgiving.html)

A Verse for Our Time

We must eradicate from the soul
all fear and terror of what comes towards us out of the future.

We must acquire serenity
in all feelings and sensations about the future.
We must look forward with absolute equanimity
to all that may come,
and we must think only that whatever comes
is given to us by a world direction full of wisdom.

It is part of what we must learn in this age,
namely, to live out of pure trust,
without any security in existence.
Trust in the ever-present help of the spiritual world.

Truly, nothing else will do
if our courage is not to fail us.
Let us discipline our will and let us seek the awakening from within
ourselves.

Every morning and every evening.

-Rudolf Steiner

