



PRINCIPAL REPORT – WEEK 3 TERM 4 2019

Earlier this week our School Council came together for our monthly meeting, and during this time several school policies were ratified. For those unaware, every school is required to have certain policies in place as a minimum requirement, with these determined by the Department of Education and Training (DET). This month, our Homework, Yard Duty and Supervision, Volunteers, and Parent Payment policies were reviewed and updated, with each of these available on our website and from our General Office for your perusal.

To highlight several key points relating to these policies, I would like to inform parents that in order for our school to comply with the Child Safe Standards, all volunteers at our school will be required to have a Working With Children Check (WWCC). These can be obtained for free from <https://www.workingwithchildren.vic.gov.au/>. Balancing our obligations and desire to keep our children safe, whilst also making it as easy as possible for volunteers to assist at our school, is a tricky balance. On behalf of our School Council, I hope you can appreciate our thinking and approach towards implementing this policy.

Further to the above, DET require schools to communicate the Parent Payment policy six weeks prior to the following year, to support families plan and budget for an expensive time of the year. A condensed version of this policy will be distributed to all families of 2020 enrolments in the coming weeks, though if you wish to view the policy in full, this too can be obtained via our website or General Office.

In the media of late has been the discussion about Victorian Government schools banning mobile phones from children whilst at school. A policy for this will be developed and communicated in due course, though please be forewarned of our obligations to meet these requirements. I have attached additional information about this policy to this newsletter, as provided by the DET.

Friday 25 October marks World Teachers Day, and I wanted to publicly acknowledge the hardworking and dedicated teachers at Traralgon South Primary School. Their genuine care for your children and passion for doing the very best they can often go overlooked, and we are lucky to have such a fantastic bunch here at our school.

Finally, please be reminded that our final two student free days for 2019 are scheduled in this term. These will be on Monday 4 November (note Tuesday 5 November is the Melbourne Cup Day public holiday) for report writing, and Friday 15 November for staff professional development.

Take care,

Joel Blythman

Prep-2 Swimming Program

Week 3	Monday 21st October Wednesday 23rd October Thursday 24th October (Final)
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DATES TO REMEMBER		
25 th Oct	Fri	Grades Prep and 1 - Possum Magic show in Traralgon (A.M.)
		JSC Colour Me Happy! Fun-Run - 3:00pm
		Years 5 & 6 - Camp forms and \$50 deposit due in
4 th Nov	Mon	Student Free Day - Report Writing
5 th Nov	Tue	Public Holiday - Melbourne Cup Day
15 th Nov	Fri	Curriculum Day - Staff Professional Development - No students at school
19 th Nov	Tue	Years 3-6 Water Safety Awareness Program
27 th - 29 th Nov	Wed - Fri	Years 5 & 6 Melbourne Camp
12 th Dec	Thu	Grade 6 Graduation
17 th Dec	Tue	End of Year School Concert

RSL REMEMBRANCE DAY

Once again we will be supporting the RSL's Remembrance Day Poppy Appeal. Items are priced at \$1, \$2, \$3, \$4, \$5 or \$10 each. Our School Captains will be selling these via the classrooms.



Event Date

OCT
25

Money Due

NOV
01

Order Prizes By

NOV
06

This Friday afternoon at 3:00pm
Family supporters welcome!!!

On 26 June 2019, the Minister for Education, the Hon. James Merlino MP, announced a new mobile phone policy for every government school in Victoria.

The new mobile phone policy comes into effect from Term 1, 2020, and requires that students who choose to bring mobile phones to school must have them switched off and securely put away during school hours.

The role of technology

We live in an exciting and technology-rich world and mobile phones are an important modern day communication tool. The school acknowledges that access to a mobile phone by children is important to many of our families in providing a sense of safety for their child while travelling to and from school, and for confirming or changing after school arrangements.

Managing the impact of mobile phones

Mobile phones often create disruptions and distractions in classrooms. Establishing a 'mobile phone free zone' helps teachers to establish and maintain a focused and productive teaching and learning environment.

Research has found that mobile phones can be disruptive in classrooms and open to misuse at school (e.g. accessing inappropriate content, cyberbullying, and unauthorised photography). Additionally, research shows that the unregulated presence of mobile phones in classrooms can undermine students' capacity to think, learn, remember, pay attention and regulate emotion. A summary of recent, relevant research is available on the Department of Education and Training's [website](#).

At recess and lunchtime our school also values the opportunity for students to communicate with each other face-to-face or be involved in activities rather than being focused on a device, particularly when using the device to engage with social media.

The new policy does acknowledge that technology is increasingly impacting the way in which students learn and communicate. Therefore, when a student has been given explicit permission to access and use such devices to enhance learning by the classroom teacher, mobile phones will be permitted for that specific purpose.

For a small number of students with particular health needs, an exception to the policy may be granted. Please contact the school if you would like to discuss this.

I encourage each member of our school community to read the new policy which is available on our website. This policy outlines the school's expectations of staff, parents/carers, and students regarding the safe and appropriate use of mobile phones by students at school.

Emergency situations

In the event of an emergency or if you need to contact your child, I ask that families contact the staff in the school office who will pass on a message as needed. The school acknowledges that this new policy may require some adjustments. As such, I ask for the support of all our families, staff and students in its implementation.

Key elements of the mobile phone policy:

- A new mobile phone policy comes into effect from Term 1, 2020.
- Students will be required to switch off and store phones securely from the first bell until the last bell each day.
- Families should contact the school office should you need to pass an urgent message to your children.