Welcome back to 2015 at Bittern Primary School! We have an exciting year ahead of us with some great activities already planned beginning with school participation in the Western Port Festival on Saturday 21st February. All local schools are invited to walk in the parade as part of the celebration usually dressed up following the theme for the festival; more information will follow.

We are very fortunate to welcome three new staff members and one ‘old’ staff member to Bittern Primary School, Sophia Grant, grade 1/2 teacher, Liam Rylance, grade 3/4 teacher, Sandra Christie, Art and Science. Last but not least, Karen Hustwaite returns as the Prep teacher. We extend a warm Bittern welcome to the new staff and to all our new families and Prep students who have just begun their primary school educational journey.

The preps have settled in really well to school life adjusting to school routines including when it is appropriate to eat. A bit like us adjusting to not being able to eat whenever we like during the holidays!!!! We have been very lucky so far that our new students have not had to start school in extreme heat. In saying that we are fortunate enough to have air conditioners in all classrooms in case of inclement weather.

Through uniformity, a child's safety is reinforced. In promoting the school logo, the uniform identifies the student as part of the school. This reinforces a child’s pride as well as allowing people to identify them as a member of that school.

A uniform helps children to form a bond of togetherness that may not exist without a uniform. As a sun smart school we insist that all students wear a school hat in terms 1 and 4.

Wearing school uniform has many benefits. We all know that some of the most important characteristics children need are self-confidence, a sense of belonging, safety and being comfortable – both physically and emotionally. A child’s self-confidence is reinforced by the pride they have in looking and feeling good in the uniforms they wear. Feeling good will also help them perform better. If a child feels that they look the best they can, they will be more relaxed and therefore more receptive to learning. Uniforms promote unity. When children wear the same garments there is less competition and have a smaller chance of being singled out. Wearing similar clothes in the same colours unites children – it creates a true team environment.

**SPORTS TOPS**

Mr E. has certainly created a whirlwind with the introduction of sports tops for students. It provides Bittern PS students with a sense of pride and ownership when dressed in similar sports outfits. Teams look far more cohesive and part of a group when wearing a uniform; imagine the local footy and netball teams without a specific uniform! Thanks again Mr E.

We are continuing our ‘Walk to School’ program on the last Friday of every month during 2015 due to the success of the activity last year. We meet at the Bittern station at 8.30 on the last Friday of the month and walk to school together. This is a great way for parents, students and teachers to participate in a whole school event and have a ‘get to know you’ chat along the way. On arrival at school students are provided with fruit and yoghurt and parents can purchase a coffee at the coffee van.
This week we were once again reminded about what a fabulous community we have at Bittern Primary School. It is great to know that community members are constantly watching out for our students lending a helping hand where needed. Thanks for your support.

CANTEEN
No canteen this semester except Friday Hot Dog Day, if you are able to offer assistance with the hot dogs please put your name down on the office roster.

PLEASE NOTE: On days where there will be an expected temperature of over 30 degrees there will be icy poles available at lunchtimes. The grade 6 leadership team will supervise this activity and the profits made will go to subsidising the grade 6 graduation.

Bittern Primary Immersion Program
For the first two weeks of the year all classes will be participating in the BPS Immersion program which aims to establish a Positive Learning Environment. The aim of the program is to increase student engagement by establishing a productive environment for learning, free from disruption.

Background
A key starting point for effective learning to occur is the establishment of a learning environment free from disruption. Hattie’s (2009) research into the effects on student achievement show that reducing disruptive behaviour in a class can have enormous effects on student achievement.

In order to create this environment, the immersion program for 2015 outlines some of the key teacher actions that need to take place to establish a productive learning environment. The learning environment refers to the physical, emotional and cognitive environment in which learning takes place.

Each class will follow the similar procedures to establish a classroom learning plan that outlines how learning occurs in all groups in 2015. A student-centred, personalised approach to this process means that student voice is critical to this process. Ask you children about some of the activities that they have participated in during the week to co-operate and work as a team.

CONSENT FORMS
Next week we will be sending home a ‘pack’ that includes a range of consent forms for various things such as local excursion forms where parents can sign for the year for neighbourhood excursions such as walking to the station, to the reserve or tennis courts, to save signing all the time. Obviously if students were going on a bus for a significant distance away individual permission forms are a must. Contract forms for internet and social media will also be among the pack amongst other things.

CHANGE OF DISMISSAL TIME
It has been noticed that many negative incidents occur towards the end of lunchtime, particularly in the last 15 minutes. ALL staff are on duty as soon as the music is playing 5 minutes before the end of lunchtime to monitor the way students line up. For some students 50 minutes in the yard is too long to spend in an unstructured environment. To alleviate this problem the school will provide a series of lunchtime clubs starting in the next few weeks for students to engage with. As well as putting the clubs strategy in place and after surveying other schools who have had similar issues it seems that a popular solution is to take 15 minutes off outside lunchtime, returning to class at 2.15 rather than 2.30pm lunchtime. Dismissal time would be at 3.15 rather than 3.30pm. This has been very successful in limiting some antisocial behaviour at other schools.

If this is to go ahead, the Before and After School Care hours will be adjusted accordingly. Please see Lyn if this is going to be an issue for you.

SCHOOL COUNCIL
Interested in finding more about how the school runs? We have several vacancies on School Council this year with some representatives finishing their term of office. Meetings are held twice a term in the staff room starting at 6.00pm concluding at 8.00pm at the latest. It’s a great opportunity to gain an insight into the successes and challenges faced by schools.

Watch this space for more details.

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:

- 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.

- 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.

- 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 the annual school council elections.

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 close.

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 if a ballot is required

Contact Lyn for further information.

FREE TABLES & CHAIRS
Free to a good home, suitable for a kid’s playroom, bedroom or cubby house. If interested please see Kay ASAP

OSH CLUB 2015
All bookings for 2015 are now open.
For enquiries please –

Phone: (03) 8564 902
Email: Georgia@oshclub.com.au

CANTEEN
Please note there will be no regular canteen this year. Hot dogs will still be available on a Friday as a fundraiser for the school with special lunches throughout the year for example a soup and roll day or a pizza day.
DON’T FORGET HOT DOGS THIS FRIDAY

HOT DOGS!!
Hot dogs will be available this Friday, at a cost of $2.50.
If you would like your child/ren to purchase a hot dog, please complete the order form and return it to school this Friday, together with the correct money.

PLEASE NOTE – THE CANTEEN IS NOT OPEN ON HOT DOG DAY

<X--------------------------HOT DOG ORDER FORM
I would like to order _____ hot dogs @$2.50
NAME: _________________  GRADE: ___
Please find enclosed $_________________ 
<X--------------------------HOT DOG ORDER FORM
I would like to order _____ hot dogs @$2.50
NAME: _________________  GRADE: ___
Please find enclosed $_________________ 
<X--------------------------HOT DOG ORDER FORM
I would like to order _____ hot dogs @$2.50
NAME: _________________  GRADE: ___
Please find enclosed $_________________ 

CAR PARKING
Driving past any school at drop off and pick up times is historically problematic!!!!!! We need to be patient and mindful of our students’ safety when arriving and leaving school. Please note that the staff car park is out of bounds to parents, as we often have teachers coming and going for meetings and appointments. Children are not permitted to walk through the car park for obvious safety reasons. Please encourage your child/children to use the designated footpaths coming to and from school. Please note that the paths and driveways (including the driveway at the old school residence/canteen) are not car parks and should be kept free for pedestrians.

2015 FEES

Please be advised that all school contribution payments are now due, and payment as soon as possible would be greatly appreciated, but must be finalised by the end of term one. If you are unsure of the amount owing, please contact the school office.

straight orthodontics
MENTONE | FRANKSTON SOUTH 9585 8000
Develop the confidence of a winning smile
Crooked teeth? Get advice from a specialist orthodontist today. No referral needed. Free initial visit.

Hastings Junior Football Club
REGISTRATION
Under 10’s-17’s
Friday 6th Feb 5pm~ 7pm
Sunday 8th Feb 11am ~ 1pm
155 Marine pde Hastings
Junior oval canteen (to the left)
FREE BBQ
$150 single player
$210 family
Fees paid by April 30th
payment plans available. conditions apply
Players will receive
* Playing shorts
* Socks
* Training top
President: James -0428994733
Secretary: Cassie -0431113373
Mega Kidz Entertainment Zone ($10 day pass)
Mega BBQ
Bring your own picnic

FOR EVENT INFO & TICKET SALES VISIT
WWW.TRYBOOKING.COM/DZFR

For more information please visit our website
www.settlersrungcc.com.au or contact Settlers Run
Golf & Country Club on 03 9795 6472

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EMERGENCY ALERT. BE WARNED. BE INFORMED.

If there is a bushfire, flood, severe storm or other major emergency near you, the emergency services may choose to warn you by text to your mobile or a voice message to your home phone.

Emergency Alert is the national telephone warning system. It uses the address where your phone is registered and the actual location of your mobile to reach you:
- when your home or school is near an emergency
- when you are travelling with your mobile near an emergency.

When the emergency services use the telephone warning system:
- a home phone within the warning area may receive a recorded voice message that begins with "Emergency, Emergency", and/or
- a mobile phone that is switched on and in an area of mobile coverage may receive a text message.

The service is free and you do not need to register.

The warning message will tell you:
- which emergency service sent the message: eg CFA
- about the emergency and where it is
- what you should do to stay safe
- where you can get more information.

All telephone warnings come from the official number:
+61 444 444 444

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Example Text Alert

From: +61 444 444 444
EMERGENCY WARNING FROM CFA
Fire in Poatina Road area. Visitors to Grampians National Park should leave now. Check local radio or visit: emergency.vic.gov.au

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Talk to your child about the Emergency Alert system.
If they receive a warning message on the home phone or a warning text on their personal mobile, encourage them to stay calm and show or repeat the message to a responsible adult they know, such as a relative or teacher.

If adults are not around, encourage them to follow the action given in the alert.

For more information about the system, visit emergencyalert.gov.au and watch the video (it's in 30 languages).

In an emergency, do not rely just on your telephone for a warning:
- Stay aware of your surroundings
- Listen to local radio
- Visit emergency.vic.gov.au
- Download the FireReady app
- Go to facebook.com/cfa VIC
- Follow @CFA_Updates on Twitter

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EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT VICTORIA