

NEWSLETTER

Thursday 26th March 2020



Important Dates

Tuesday 14th April

Curriculum Day – No Students at school

Wednesday 15th April

Students return to learning

This is a slightly different newsletter due to the slightly different world we are currently living in. There are a lot of words! Grab a cup of tea and read through at your leisure.

Jen

Coronavirus COVID-19 Update

We thank you for your support over the last few weeks as we communicated and responded to updated advice. I thank our staff for their dedication to their roles as educators and the way they are supporting the wellbeing needs of students, families, and each other.

I would like to add my voice to the conversation that we must all play our personal part in adhering to the guidelines communicated by the Chief Medical Officer. There are a multitude of resources online from the Royal Children's Hospital, Headspace and countless others to support you with having these difficult to understand conversations with your children.

At this stage, we are preparing for the likely situation that at least some part of Term Two will be delivered flexibly through 'Learning at Home' programs. We have chosen to use Google Classroom as a platform for this. You should have received more information on this via compass. We chose this platform as we already access the suite of google apps to work collaboratively as staff, it is a free service to schools, and it is work that will enhance our in-school learning when we return to regular programming. We will provide more information on what 'Learning at Home' looks like as we approach Term Two.

The parent and educator communities have really banded together to share resources and ideas for at home learning. Sharing is invaluable, however, in some cases it can add to parental guilt of not doing enough, and add stress to families who are working from home. Please rest assured that in the case of remote learning, your child will receive instructional lesson launches from their regular classroom teacher each day. We will be following DET guidelines as they are published to ensure a quality program can be delivered as effectively as possible. If you would like to enhance the program with your own activities and are in a position to do so, please do! If you need to focus on your own work or maintain your own mental health, please do! We've got this! For now, please enjoy your break together as a family...as best you can!

All important information will be shared via Compass. Please consider following the Facebook page to connect with us more informally and to maintain the strength of our FPS community as a social network also. I will upload a short video most days that you can choose to share with your children if you wish. Our staff have set up a private FPS staff group so we can stay connected with each other also.

At this stage, camps and excursions are cancelled or postponed for the foreseeable future. We will continue to provide updates relating to all school events as they approach.

Curriculum Days

School council have approved our two curriculum days for the year to take place on Friday, August 28 (Term 3, Week 7) and Monday, November 2 (Term 4, Week 5 – Cup Day Eve). At this early stage, we anticipate that we will use these days to work on the development of our Maths curriculum.

School Council

In previous newsletters and compass posts, I welcomed our 2020 School Council and we have now elected our formal positions within council. Our newly appointed School Council President, Ray Varone, will elaborate further in a later section of this newsletter. I would like to acknowledge the incredible work from David Hook as our President prior to this and offer our appreciation of his continued support, historical knowledge and expertise when we have sought assistance. I would also like to offer my very sincere thanks to Ray for her role as Interim School President in David's absence and look forward to continuing our work together in her official role of School Council President. Congratulations Ray!

Bilingual Update

I am acutely aware of the history of this matter and the emotional investment that has been made by many of you. I have spent considerable time building my personal knowledge around the benefits of bilingual education, and the challenges and operational considerations of implementing a bilingual model. By the first week of Term Two, I hope to have finalised a report to the community that summarises all the important information relating to our learning and future thinking. It will detail the stages of information giving and consultation with the community. The current health crisis has added a layer of complexity to this process, however, I am confident that we can find ways to ensure we still have clear channels of communication between each other to enable us to move ahead and create a clear plan for 2021 and beyond.

Progress against School Goals

We are progressing well against our 2020 Annual Implementation Plan (AIP). I will share below some of the work we have been doing in relation to our AIP goals

Goal 1 - Building a Professional Learning Culture

Our goal for all of our professional learning is to walk away with everyone being able to clearly articulate 'How we do things around here.' Consistency and documented shared practices are vital to school improvement. This term we addressed some urgent needs such as staff welfare and engagement, set-up operations, and roles and responsibilities. We have started work around the right to be safe and the right to learn and have many long term and immediate things in place to teach and reinforce positive behaviour including the introduction of processes such as the 4Rs and 4Fs which were communicated home via compass and Facebook. The improvements are already being noticed by students and staff. Next term we will be exploring the driving question 'What is good planning?' and by the end of the term we will have co-created an evidence-based, data driven school wide approach to planning. In Term 3 and 4, we will begin our work on our fourth AIP goal of creating a Guaranteed and Viable Curriculum in Mathematics.

Goal 2 - Parents as Partners

The work in Term 1 has focussed on building positive relationships between the community and the school leadership. We have worked hard to communicate grounds for any decision-making and to communicate transparently and honestly about any issues or challenges that we face. There is much work still to do here, however, anecdotally I have received explicit feedback by many in the community that people are feeling positive about the school and the new leadership. Likewise, staff are speaking positively about our parent community and we are focussing on the ways we communicate home. This work will continue throughout the year. In Term 2, we will begin our work on co-developing a Statement of Values to guide the way we all interact with each other. Parents are feeling comfortable to speak with leadership about any concerns they have in person, by phone or email. The FPS Social club is doing fantastic work with fundraising, generating school participation and had an incredibly positive response for class reps.

Goal 3 - Footscray Learning Precinct

I have had a number of meetings with our SEIL, John Stone, the FLP director, Angelique Den Brinker, and the precinct Principals, Jessie Hand and Frank Vetere. We have started planning an overview for building teacher capability in STEAM across the precinct and pencilled in a focus on Environmental Sustainability for the upcoming STEAM labs. Janine and Betty's Year 5 class have been involved in weekly labs this term to design a community mural on the outside wall of the new gym at Footscray City PS. They have been collaborating with Street Artists to develop their ideas and will assist with some aspects of the mural creation.

If you need to contact us urgently, please feel free to email me personally at briggs.jenny.r@edumail.vic.gov.au. I will endeavour to enjoy a break with my own family however I will continue to check my email daily. I send positive thoughts to all of you and hope you can find some silver lining in these challenging times, stay safe and connected!

Jen.

FPS Social Club Update

Hello friends!

I hope that you, your families and friends are all staying well during this strange time.

One of the main aims of the FPS Social Club is to contribute to the wellbeing of our school community - now more than ever, this feels like very important work. Everyone is welcome at FPS Social Club and we'd love you to be a part of it (in a big way, or a small way - whatever works for you!). If you'd like more info, or to be added to our email list, please contact us at footscrayprimarysocial@gmail.com

For now, we have a few updates:

Colour Run Update

As you know, we've had to postpone our Colour Run until later in the year.

Given the current situation, our fundraising partner has recommended to us that we should close our online portal soon. They can guarantee supply of all their prizes for now, but they do have concerns about their supply going forward due to the potential closure of businesses. As such, we are going to close the online portal on Monday 30 March. There is absolutely no pressure for any further online donations.

Once the portal closes, children who have collected donations and registered them online will have a week (until Friday 3 April) to select their prizes via their online profile. We will send out reminders about this, so no need to panic!

Prize delivery timing is still to be confirmed, but we will let you know when to expect them as soon as we can.

Year 3/4 Cake and Slime Stall

A recent community highlight was the Grade 3/4 Cake & Slime Stall. Thank you to all the parents and students involved for the delicious array of cakes and crowd pleasing slime that were available on the day. A fantastic total of \$599.80 was raised, which will contribute to our All Aboard fund.

Our All Aboard fund aims to ensure every student can attend excursions and wear appropriate uniform regardless of their financial background. We look forward to our Class Reps being supported in organising further such wonderful events once we return to school!

To keep us connected... An FPS Community Cook Book

We're really keen to help keep our community connected during the time that we are apart, and for our first project we want to compile everyone's favourite and most comforting recipes.

If you have a recipe to include, please email it, and if you're able to, a scan or photo of an illustration to go with it by your kid/s to footscrayprimarysocial@gmail.com before April 10. If you'd like to, it would be great to write a paragraph about why this recipe is special to you - we'd love to use this project as a way to share all our different family cultures and traditions.

We'll then compile all the recipes and send out a PDF to everyone. We hope you'd like to be involved.

Stay safe, stay well, be kind.

With all the best,

Zoë Allnutt and the FPS Social Club

A message from our new School Council President

Dear Footscray Primary School Community,

Last Wednesday we held our first School Council meeting for the year. During that meeting we welcomed new members Meredith Jones, Tim Liston, Emily Roberts and Sally Curmi.

We also elected Office Bearers for the next two years. I was lucky enough to be elected President, with Emily Roberts as Secretary. Continuing their current term is Sarah Strybosch as Vice President and Leah Supple as Treasurer. I feel very privileged to have been voted in by our School Council members and I look forward to working with them, and our wider community, throughout the year.

During our first meeting we defined our subcommittees for the year.

The 2020 Sub-Committees are as follows:-

- Building and Grounds – Chair, Charles Windeyer
- Education – Chair, Jen Briggs
- Bilingual – Chair, Hoang Nguyen
- Finance – Chair, Leah Supple (This committee is not open to the community)
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We will have two action groups that will report to the appropriate Sub-Committee:-

- Reconciliation Action Group (reporting to Education Sub-Committee)
- Wellbeing (to report to appropriate Sub-Committees on a project by project basis)

We also have the newly formed Footscray Primary Social Club that is welcoming new members all the time.

Please reach out to the chair of a subcommittee if any are of interest and you would like to get involved - we would love your help and input.

We also started discussions around our Bilingual program and Jen will provide an update regarding this in due course.

We are currently experiencing a unique and challenging time with the battle against Coronavirus. Please take care of yourselves and your families during this time, stay connected as much as possible using tech, apps and phone etc. I have set-up a few Microsoft Teams virtual catch-ups with various groups of friends this week and the kids are doing the same. Facetime with our family members is also working well.

I acknowledge this is going to be a very difficult, challenging and uncertain time. Jen Briggs has a very strong belief that the school is the hub of the community, and I fully agree – Please reach out to each other for support and do not hesitate to ask for help. Take Care.

Ray Varone

School Council President.