



VIRGINIA PRIMARY SCHOOL NEWSLETTER

Learning Together, Learning for our Future

CARING, RESPECT, FAIRNESS, ACHIEVEMENT, DIVERSITY

Issue 1, 2019

30th January

DATES TO REMEMBER

Week 2

Tuesday 5th February

Chinese New Year
Internet Safety day

Wednesday 6th February

Acquaintance Meetings Late Night

Thursday 7th February

Buddy Class Picnics

Friday 8th February

Whole School Assembly
Community Centre
9:15am

Week 3

Monday 11th February

Year 6/7 Leadership conference

Friday 15th February

PUPIL FREE DAY
NO SCHOOL – OSHC
AVAILABLE

Week 4

Mon 18th – Wed 20th February

Year 6/7 camp

Wednesday 20st February

Annual General Meeting
(All parents welcome)
6:30pm Library

Week 5

Friday 1st March

Casual Clothes Day
'Kids helping Kids'
School clean-up day

Principal: Ilia Tsoutouras

Deputy Principal: Voula Pounendis

Gov. Council Chairperson: Anita Trenwith

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www.virginiaps.sa.edu.au

Download our school app



Government of South Australia
Department for Education and
Child Development

We would like to once again welcome everyone back to a new school year. I would especially like to welcome the new families and staff who have joined our Virginia Primary learning community.

A list of staff for 2019 has been included in this newsletter. As you will see, this year we have 14 classrooms across R – 7 with over 340 children. Our numbers have certainly grown from 2009 when we had 226 students. One question I have often been asked when chatting to families is the potential impact of the developments at Virginia Grove. We have been closely monitoring the development and enforcing our zone to ensure we stay on top of the growth we have had, and expected growth over the next few years.

Read, Read, Read

Reading is again on the agenda for Virginia Primary, in actual fact, if it isn't at the top it is very close to it (along with all areas of English as well as Mathematics). Your child/ren's teachers have been working exceptionally hard to co-plan around ensuring we maximise support for reading. Our student support teachers, Ms Robyn Lewis and Ms Thuy Tran are working with each class together with the Specialist Curriculum School Services Officers (SSOs) who are attached to each class to also support with reading. In 2017 we introduced MiniLit, an intervention program for Junior Primary which was very successful. In 2018, in addition to MiniLit we introduced Levelled Literacy Intervention for our M/UP readers. We also introduced morning intervention sessions from 8:30-9:15 am to ensure we minimised any potential time lost within the classroom. This year we will again be running these sessions as well as an after school session for those children identified as candidates for this program.

What can you do to help you ask? Promote reading at home as much as you can, share a book with your child, talk to them about the book you have read and most importantly listen to them read every night!

Over the next few weeks, your child will have an identified reading goal. This is so you as a parent can target your support with home reading. In our next newsletter we will unpack what it takes to be a 'balanced reader'.

Pupil Free Day

Whilst pupil free days provide some down time (or family time) for students, the same can't be said for teachers. **On Friday the 15th of February (WEEK 3)** we will be working with Stephen Graham on further developing our skills as educators in the teaching of reading/ writing. This will be our first pupil free day for the year, a reminder that OSHC will be available.

PUPIL FREE DAY

Friday 15th of February

(OSHC available if you have booked)



Acquaintance meetings

I have said it many times, we highly value and acknowledge the crucial role parents play as primary educators in their children's lives and believe **'together is better'**. As you would know from the note already sent home, this year we will again be having acquaintance meetings with parents from weeks 1 – 3. The purpose is to try and find out as much information from you as to how your child best learns and any other information you think might be useful for us to create the best possible learning environment for your child. The feedback from staff has been that these meetings are an invaluable way of quickly making sure we are getting all the important information, rather than waiting to get it down the track. Thank you to everyone who have attended these meetings before and who have already booked a time. If you haven't done so yet, could you please do so.

Beginning of the Year – Culture Building & "What's the Buzz?"

Here at Virginia Primary School we have strong school values of **Respect, Caring, Fairness, Achievement** and **Diversity**. These values underpin our school vision of "Learning Together, Learning for our Future" and our school aims.

During the first two weeks of the school year, each class discusses and works through a series of lessons and activities which support children's learning and a healthy school culture.

Topics include:

- Our school values
- Responsibilities
- Expectations of work and behaviour
- Class and school routines
- Setting goals
- Safety and problem solving
- Cyber safety
- Developing positive relationships
- Anti-bullying skills

In addition to this, we will continue using the **"What's the Buzz?"** social skills program.

The program is split into two parts, one for primary students and one for Early learners.



What's the Buzz? A social skills enrichment programme for primary students, was released in 2011 and found its way into dozens of countries and hundreds of schools and organisations. This 16 lesson highly structured, role-play and play-based program was designed to teach children



how-to think socially and how-to make friendship work.

What's the Buzz? for Early Learners: A complete social skills foundation course. It's built to awaken social consciousness in youngsters. Over 16 lessons students become immersed in a variety of essential relational skills, stimulated by the experiences of our much-loved character. Through activity, discussion, role-play and quizzes, children learn how-to become a better friend and a more flexible social thinker.

In 2016 our school was introduced to a character in a story named Archie (you can see him in the pictures above). They followed Archie through 2017 and 2018 in a series of lessons and learnt from both his mistakes and successes. We will continue to follow Archie in 2019 as he has a lot of learning to do and at Virginia we have just the right helpers!

The partnership of home and school is important and we would encourage you to talk to your child about the above topics. Having a whole school focus at the beginning of the year sets a very positive school culture. Copies of these lessons are available on the school website under 'parent info'.

School Values

At our school we are really strong on promoting and encouraging our school values as we believe they not only support students in being successful at school, but in life. Our school values are as follows:

Caring

Speaking and behaving kindly, considering other people's feelings, helping others.

Respect

Behaving politely toward others, not putting others down, looking after our school environment and property.

Fairness

Sharing, taking turns, playing and working by the agreed rules, including others, taking the time to listen to others.

Achievement

Trying hard, being persistent to keep improving and learning at your level, setting goals and feeling proud when you have been successful in reaching your goals.

Diversity

Valuing the similarities and differences in all people. Being confident and proud of who you are.

As a school we have a zero tolerance to bullying and we are very proud of our 'caring for one another culture'. From time to time there are situations when students don't follow our school values and problems or issues arise. We continually encourage and support children with how to behave and use our school values to work through problems.

It is really important that if there are occasions where problems do occur, in the first instance, children are encouraged to use the strategies they have been taught and/ or to report to a teacher so that we can follow up with the concern.

All children have a right to come to school to learn in an environment where they feel safe in!

New Reporting Procedures

In one of our last newsletters of 2018 we sought feedback in regards to our reporting processes. Below we have outlined what the official reporting process of 2019 will look like, please note, Terms 2 and 3 are slightly different to previous years. We have highlighted what is different in green.

Term 1 (Acquaintance Meetings) Occur during Weeks 1, 2 and 3 of Term 1. The purpose of these is to establish a relationship teacher/ parents while gathering as much information about the student as possible. During these meetings our teachers record information about the student eg Hobbies, likes, dislikes, strengths, weaknesses, health and social issues, favourite and least favourite subjects etc and use this information to provide students with an inclusive, relevant and challenging curriculum.

Term 2 (Mid-Year Reports & Interview)

The student written report is presented to parents/caregivers at a teacher/ parent interview in Weeks 9 and 10 of Term 2. You will have the opportunity to discuss your child's progress at this meeting and your child's teacher will be able to talk to the report in more depth.

Term 3 (English/ Maths books go home for students and parents to discuss)

The purpose is to share examples of students' learning with parents/caregivers. Teachers send home an English and Mathematics book with an enclosed letter offering parents/caregivers the opportunity to comment in writing about their child's work. The letter encourages parents/caregivers to read their children's books with them present and to provide them with feedback about the books.

Term 4 (End of Year Report)

A written report is presented to parents/caregivers in week 9 summarising the student's achievements and attitude throughout the year

Wellbeing

Well-being is integral to the learning process; well-being is about feeling well, functioning well, achieving one's best and enjoying learning. At Virginia Primary school students' wellbeing is a high priority. We have embarked on a journey where our

whole school community can connect with us if they have a concern connected to a student's wellbeing.

We have a new TAB on our school website titled 'Well-being'. This is where you can feed through wellbeing concerns to our wellbeing team about your child or another child. By scrolling down to the 'Parent' section and clicking on the form and recording your wellbeing or mental health concerns for your child or another then pressing submit. This gives our well-being team valuable information, so we can support Virginia Primary School students holistically while they are at school. We believe 'together is better' and being able to connect with our whole school community will enable us to be positively proactive in supporting students rather than being re-active.



Annual General Meeting – Governing Council of 2018 (Week 4)

Our Annual General Meeting will be on **Wednesday the 21st of February at 6:30pm**. Please see the attached information to this newsletter for more information. I would strongly encourage anyone who has questions or is thinking about joining Governing Council to speak to Voula or Ilia.

Volunteers in Schools

It has been a DECD requirement that all parents and other volunteers who work with or in close proximity to children have Criminal History Check pursuant to section 8B of the *Children's Protection Act 1993*.

Last year the Department for Education and Child Development (DECD) updated its screening policy to make it easier for parents and guardians to volunteer their time.

Parents and guardians volunteering in schools and preschools to support their own child's education no longer need to undertake relevant history screening.

Screening is still required for any parents/ volunteers attending any overnight camps or supporting other children within the school or classroom. Should you wish to obtain a Criminal History Screening we are able to assist you. This process can be started by collecting a screening application from Deb Smith at the school office.

Each Criminal History Clearance lasts for three years so it is important that any expired ones are updated. Please see Deb Smith at the office to collect the necessary forms, complete them and return to the school for processing by SA Police. We will also be holding a volunteer induction session this term for all volunteers.

We have attached a form to the back of this newsletter that you can fill in if you are willing to volunteer within our school.

Attendance

Our aim is for all students to attend school at least 95% of the time. **This equates to no more than 10 days absence for the year.**

Students are expected to attend school unless they are ill, or parents have sought a written exemption from the principal (if less than a month) or the minister of education (if longer than a month.)

Previously we have issued students with attendance certificates to promote and acknowledge excellence in this area. We will re-introduce this practice once again this year as it has been highly valued by parents.

Library opening hours!!!!

Our library is open every morning from 8:30am and closes every afternoon at 3:30pm. You are more than welcome to come into the library to borrow, return, or simply sit down and enjoy reading a book with your child.

Uniform

It is fantastic to see so many students wearing our school uniform proudly. In line with our SunSmart School status, **students must be wearing a Virginia Primary hat.** A quick reminder that closed shoes are required as children participate in daily fitness and specialist Physical Education lessons throughout the week.

Rock & Water

Mr Yates will again be running a Rock & Water program. We have identified two separate groups who will work with him once a week for an hour over a ten week period.

"The Rock and Water program aims to apply a physical/social approach to assist boys and girls in their development to adulthood by increasing their self-realisation, self-confidence, self-respect, boundary awareness, self-awareness and intuition. A specific goal for the course is teaching boys and girls to deal with power, strength and powerlessness." Mr Yates will also be running whole class sessions this year.

Proactive Play

At the end of last year there was a considerable amount of time that went in to planning for proactive programs across the school.

Part of this has been providing more opportunities for children to be a part of structured activity during play break. Mr Yates has been busily setting up a range of activities. So far we have had, and have planned to come over the next few weeks;

- Tennis
- Dance
- Boxercise
- Cricket
- Imagination Playground

Reducing Newsletter Printing and Paper

Please provide us with your email address if you would like to receive the newsletter electronically.

Email address for school newsletter

Please return to the Front Office

NAME:

CHILD'S NAME:

ROOM NUMBER:

EMAIL ADDRESS:

MATERIALS AND SERVICES CHARGES

Fees for this year are \$241 which is in line with the School Card payment. **Invoices will shortly be sent home with your children.** Prompt payment would be appreciated.

School fee payments can be made by cash, cheque or via EFTPOS at the Front Office. Payments can also be made by instalments however this must be documented in a formal agreement with Jo Burgess, Finance Manager, and the payment schedule must be adhered to. Families with low income can apply for School Card Assistance.

School fees need to be paid by the end of term 1.

Applications for School Card Assistance need to be made immediately.

Please don't hesitate to see us if you have any concerns or queries.

Snake Awareness

Virginia Primary is located in a semi-rural area with surrounding horticulture and farming land. It is common to have a number of snake sightings at the school, including juvenile snakes which are poisonous. As the weather is warm, it is important to remind everyone of the importance of keeping safe and to be extra vigilant.

One of our programmed focus areas for term 1 and 4 of each year is snake awareness. Teachers discuss with children what they should do if they see a snake in the yard. They also discuss how to keep safe, by wearing enclosed shoes during high risk periods, not walking through garden beds and keeping school bags zipped up and off of the floor.

If a snake is sighted, please alert the front office immediately.

Safer Internet Day 2019

Be smart, play your part!

Tuesday the 5th of February is Safer Internet day. Among other activities, each class will be asked a range of questions through our student news to raise awareness and create rich discussion on keeping internet safe.

The Office of the Children's eSafety Commissioner has a number of resources for the whole community to use. We have listed a link to and highlighted some of the parent resources available. We strongly encourage you look into these resources and work with your child to ensure they are E-safe.

E-Safety Parent resources

- Cyberbullying
- Inappropriate content
- Online grooming
- Too much time online
- Parental controls

For more information, please visit the link below

<https://www.esafety.gov.au/education-resources/parent-resources>

Birthdays

We understand birthdays are special and we like to acknowledge children's birthdays at school within classes. We do however request that in line with our healthy eating policy and to ensure the safety of children with severe allergies that parents **do not** send children with cakes/ lolly bags and other sweets to share with the class.

Holiday upgrades

During the holiday break we had a little bit of a face lift at school. The area outside Rooms 9, 10 and the library/ playground were cleared and turfed. We are hoping this will be a great space for imagination playground and also a great 'picnic space'. What a difference a bit of greenery makes!

Check out the before and after photos



Virginia Primary Staff list 2019

Front Office		
Ilia Tsoutouras	Principal	
Voula Pounendis	Deputy Principal – Counsellor	
Jessica Nguyen	Student Wellbeing (Tues & Wed)	
Denise Wilson	Front Office SSO , ICT	
Joanne Burgess	Finance Manager SSO	
Deb Smith	Front Office SSO, Personal Assistant to leadership	
Preschool		
Rhiannen Spano & Belinda Burt	Preschool teachers	
Jodie Spano	Preschool Executive SSO	
Kirra Jackson	SSO	
Debbie Barbato	SSO	
Xuan Nguyen	BSSO Vietnamese language	
Classrooms		
Krystal Butler (<i>Room 1</i>)	Reception	
Anita Matricciani (<i>Room 2</i>)	Reception	
Katrina Kontos (<i>Room 3</i>)	Reception/ Year 1	
Christina Tsonis (<i>Room 4</i>)	Year 1	
Jessica Luckman (<i>Room 5</i>)	Year 2	
Mary Spencer (<i>Room 6</i>)	Year 2 (<i>Mon, Tues, Wed</i>)	
Jenny Gordon (<i>Room 6</i>)	Year 2 (<i>Thurs, Fri</i>)	
Belinda Haley (<i>Room 7</i>)	Year 4/5	
Rachele De Fazio (<i>Room 8</i>)	Year 4/5	
Jenna Negruk (<i>Room 9</i>)	Year 3/4	
Sabrina De Silva (<i>Room 10</i>)	Year 3/4	
Elliana Valente (<i>Room 11</i>)	Year 4/5	
Georgina Kosteriadis (<i>Room 12</i>)	Year 6/7	
Jason Coleman (<i>Room 13</i>)	Year 6/7	
Cathy Lock (<i>Room 14</i>)	Year 6/7	
NIT SUBJECTS	Junior Primary	Primary
NIT – Arts	Sue Graham	Sue Graham
NIT – P.E	James Yates, Marie Lionello	James Yates
NIT – language	Thi Hien	Thi Hien
NIT – Science	James Yates	James Yates
SPECIALIST POSITIONS		
EALD & Student support M/UP	Robyn Lewis (<i>Mon, Tues, Wed, alternate Thurs</i>)	
EALD & Student support JP	Thuy Tran (<i>Mon, Tues, Wed, alternate Thurs</i>)	
Curriculum Coordinator	To be confirmed	
Leonie Watts	Library/ IT	
Mimi Azzurro	Classroom/ Curriculum SSO	
Lia Jurkovic	Classroom/ Curriculum SSO	
Jacque Rowe	Classroom/ Curriculum SSO/ Kitchen Garden	
Shirley Moros	Classroom/ Curriculum SSO	
Amanda Bentley	Classroom/ Curriculum SSO	
Rebecca Mickel	Classroom/ Curriculum SSO	
Simon Costello	Grounds (<i>Tues, Thursday</i>)	
Nisha Ahrens	Out of School Hours Care Director/ Individual student support	
Karen McKeon	Canteen Manager x 5 days	

Term 1 WEEK	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
	28/01/2019	29/01/2019	30/01/2019	31/01/2019	1/02/2019
1	Australia Day holiday				Whole school Health Hustle 9:15am
	4/02/2019	5/02/2019	6/02/2019	7/02/2019	8/02/2019
2		Safer Internet Day Classes to re-visit internet safety Chinese New Year	Late night Acquaintance Meetings		Whole School Assembly Assembly
	11/02/2019	12/02/2019	13/02/2019	14/02/2019	15/02/2019
3	Year 6/7 leadership day				PUPIL FREE DAY NO SCHOOL OSHC AVAILABLE
	18/02/2019	19/02/2019	20/02/2019	21/02/2019	22/02/2019
4	Year 6/7 camp	Year 6/7 camp	Year 6/7 camp Governing Council AGM 6:30 – 8:30		
	25/02/2019	26/02/2019	27/02/2019	28/02/2019	1/03/2019
5	Maths Financial	Maths Financial	Maths Financial		Schools clean-up day Casual Clothes day Kids Helping Kids
	4/03/2019	5/03/2019	6/03/2019	7/03/2019	8/03/2019
6					Kitchen Garden Assembly Rm 13 International Women's Day
	11/03/2019	12/03/2019	13/03/2019	14/03/2019	15/03/2019
7	Public Holiday Adelaide Cup NO SCHOOL OR OSHC				Day of Action against bullying & violence
	18/03/2019	19/03/2019	20/03/2019	21/03/2019	22/03/2019
8	Cultural Diversity Week		HARMONY CULTURAL DIVERSITY WEEK GC meeting 7pm	HARMONY DAY	Kitchen Garden
	25/03/2019	26/03/2019	27/03/2019	28/03/2019	29/03/2019
9					Assembly Rm 9 & 10
	1/04/2019	2/04/2019	3/04/2019	4/04/2019	5/04/2019
10					Athletics Carnival
	8/04/2019	9/04/2019	10/04/2019	11/04/2019	12/04/2019
11			Sports day tm mtg. 3:00pm		SPORTS DAY World Book Day (23/4)