



Principal News – March 2023

SeeSaw video

Thanks for your feedback on the newsletter video. I will continue to share news this way as well as the traditional written newsletter. The video will not include everything that is in the written newsletter but pick up on a few important points or things that are easier to explain than write. It will be sent as an announcement via SeeSaw so if you have not signed up to your child's new class on SeeSaw, please let their teacher know.

Curriculum Day – Friday 31 March (Cultural Understanding and Safety Training)

As part of our ongoing commitment to cultural understanding our teaching staff will be attending training with Uncle Bill Nicholson from the Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung Cultural Heritage Corporation on Friday 31 March. Curriculum Day Care will be offered to students through our OSHC program. Please book in directly through My Family Lounge.

Welcome Picnic



It was lovely to be able to enjoy the Welcome Picnic in our usual location and our usual time of year, last Friday. The turn out was great on such a warm evening. After two years of either cancelled or delayed picnics, it was great to feel like a community coming together to start the year in a positive way.

Thanks to the parents from the Fun & Fundraising committee who organised QR codes for the class WhatsApp groups. If you didn't join your child's class group, they codes are currently on display in the Brooke St foyer and will be sent via Compass to individual classes in the coming days. This is a new way for families to connect and support each other.

Musical

In the past the school has alternated between an annual musical or art show. The art show is usually held in the even years and the musical in the odd. These events align with the curriculum scope and sequence, so they are not easily swapped. After a few years of disruption to our routine as the result of Covid, we are now back into a usual schedule however we face a different dilemma, which is a musical director. Our music staff all work part time making it difficult to oversee the direction of a musical. We are looking at options for outsourcing, which will come at an additional cost, and running a school musical such as we have had in the past is a massive undertaking, particularly if it is being outsourced. So, while we haven't cancelled the musical, we are still trying to determine a way forward.

S.T.E.A.M. at Westgarth by Yolanda Stephenson

The term in S.T.E.A.M has started off amazingly! Students have been working on lots of different tech within teams. For the second part of this term, students are working in groups on mini projects which will encourage their teamwork, engineering, maths, art and coding skills. Each newsletter will focus on a different year level and what they have been/will be doing for the term. Weekly posts are also being sent through Seesaw about student progress.

The year 3's started off the term learning about block coding using the OSMO coding kits. This requires students to work in groups to use blocks to move their character through a game.

For the second half of the term, students will be using iMovie to record, edit and present Reader's Theatre to their classmates. Teams will be able to edit, add sound effects/backgrounds and develop a 'trailer' to promote their work. At the end of the term, groups will have the opportunity to screen their work for their classmates.



School Review

All state government schools are required to have a review every 4 years. The school review supports the school to differentiate its improvement journey by building on current strengths and responding to unique challenges to achieve continuous improvement.

The school review:

- provides opportunities to engage with the whole school community about how they feel the school is going
- provides analysis of the school by drawing on external expertise
- delves deeply via an independent view into the school's performance through the analysis of performance data, focus group discussions, and observations of teaching and learning practices
- triangulates evidence-based findings to propose goals, targets and key improvement strategies for the new four-year School Strategic Plan.

The School Improvement Team have looked at feedback data collected from staff, students and parents to write a pre-review self-evaluation. This will be interrogated throughout the review. Due to the impacts of COVID and the setting of some unrealistic targets from the last review, many of our goals have been partially, however the progress and growth made throughout the last four years remains strong with 2019 and 2022 with the strongest results.

The panel for the review includes the reviewer (Sharon Adams from EdValuate), Senior Educational Instruction Leader (SEIL) Jane Greig-Hancock, Challenge Partners (two principals from other DET schools) David Twite (Bell PS) and Donald Eddington (William Ruthven PS), School Council President, Jacob Spencer or nominee and a team from the school (Jo Wheeler, Carolyn Shiels, Ben Cunningham, Ben Jones, Megan Robertson).

Important dates:

March 7 – Validation Day

March 14 & 17 – Fieldwork days

March 24 – Panel Day

The fieldwork days will provide opportunities for focus groups where the reviewer, SEIL and potentially the challenge partners will talk with groups of staff, students and parents to garner more information or seek clarification about the data. Parents and carers are welcome to join the focus groups on (Friday 17th). We can accommodate up to 16 parents. The purpose of the parent focus group is to assist the school to reflect on its strengths and areas for growth in preparation for developing the next school strategic plan. After these 2 days, the reviewer will write a report and make recommendations for the development of the new Strategic Plan. The school's priorities over the past four years have been improving student achievement and growth, empowering students as learners and leaders and enhancing inclusion and positive relationships. If you would like to join a forum, please contact me via email at jo.wheeler@education.vic.gov.au . As part of this review, we are required to meet our obligations under the

Victorian Registration and Qualifications Authority regulations and the Child Safe Standards. These were assessed in November 2022, and we have been assessed as fully compliant.

School Council Elections 2023

I would like to thank the parents and staff who have nominated or re-nominated to join school council for 2023; Batya Atlas, Mark Dinning, Melanie Wheeler, Lyndall Shelly, and Kellie Byrne. I would like to acknowledge the hard work and commitment of the retiring members of the school council and thank them for their contribution, governance, and support as councillors in 2022; Kate Bassano, Michele O'Connell and Megan Robertson.

School council also runs a number of sub-committees and at times working parties that all members of the school community are welcome to join. Subcommittees assist Council with all the work that needs to be done. They report regularly at School Council meetings, provide advice, and make recommendations to Council, which has the responsibility for making the final decisions. Working parties are established by School Council to oversee the implementation of short-term tasks or carry out responsibilities in accordance with the Strategic Plan or other School Council initiatives. Working parties are given a set of responsibilities and a timeline for completing its work and should operate and report to School Council in the same way as a subcommittee would.

Our school council's sub-committees and working party include:

Finance subcommittee

- To oversee the school finances
- To oversee fundraising in the school
- To oversee the OSHC budget
- To oversee the Buildings Fund
- To participate in the setting of the program budget; establishing and setting priorities
- Checking the monthly accounts before the School Council meeting.

Education subcommittee

- To assist the school in developing programs within the school
- Updates curriculum related policies and submits to School Council for approval

Environment subcommittee

- Oversee that the buildings and grounds are clean, safe and in a sound condition
- Develop plans for improving facilities to meet the needs of the students
- Plan a long-term maintenance and development strategy
- Organise working bees
- Updates environment and facilities related policies and submits to School Council for approval.

Out-of-School-Hours-Care subcommittee

- To support the operation of the OSHC programs
- To ensure OSHC complies with all applicable policies and legislation
- To recommend the approval of equipment purchase and employment of staff
- Updates policies and submits to School Council for approval
- To oversee the program budget.

Fun & Fundraising subcommittee (new this year. This was formerly known as the Parents & Friends Association and was an incorporated committee. This committee was dissolved and now sits as a sub-committee of School Council).

- Build community within the school
- Raise money for important capital works and other projects or school-based programs (either not funded by or not fully funded by government)
- To provide opportunities for parents and families to meet each other

Working Party – school council endorsed the development of a new working party to develop a strategic plan for fundraising. It would sit separately to the finance and fun and fundraising sub-committees. A term of reference is yet to be developed. Members of the school community are welcome to join.

Please refer to newsletter diary dates each month, for future dates for these meetings.

If you would like to be included on the distribution list of any of these sub-committees or working parties, please email the office so your email details can be forwarded to the convenor.

To register your interest in any of the above listed working parties, committees and/or sub committees, email the school at: westgarth.ps@education.vic.gov.au.

Other ways to get involved:

We invite parents and carers to be involved at Westgarth Primary School in a variety of ways such as helping out in the classroom, volunteering in the Stephanie Alexander Kitchen Garden program, Fun and Fundraising events including the annual La Gran Fiesta.

Privacy

Our school collects, uses, discloses and stores student and parent personal information for standard school functions or where permitted by law, as stated in the Schools' Privacy Policy.

Please take time to remind yourself of our school's collection notice, found on our website

https://www.wgps.vic.edu.au/uploaded_files/media/privacy_policy.pdf. For more information about privacy, refer to: Schools' Privacy Policy — information for parents. This information is also available in nine community languages:

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|---------------|------------|----------|
| * Amharic | * Arabic | * Dari |
| * Gujarati | * Mandarin | * Somali |
| * Sudanese | * Turkish | * Urdu |
| * Vietnamese. | | |

Westgarth PS is a member of the Safe School Coalition

Did you know that Westgarth Primary School is a Safe School? We joined the Safe School Coalition in 2017 so we could help to foster a safe environment that is supportive and inclusive of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, intersex and queer students.



Creating this environment is key to tackling bullying, discrimination and harassment at school, particularly arising from homophobia and transphobia. Safe and inclusive schools benefit all students and are critical to students achieving their full potential. Students who don't feel safe or included at school cannot learn effectively. Safe schools do not have a curriculum and the students are not taught any specific skills or knowledge under this umbrella program. It is about creating an environment of acceptance of diversity and a safe and inclusive environment for all of our students.

For further information about safe schools see the Victorian Government website

<https://www.vic.gov.au/safe-schools>

Kiss and Go

Just a reminder that the 'Kiss and Go' zones are designed to allow parents to pull-up, get their child out of the car, give them a kiss goodbye and then the student walks themselves in the school and the driver drives away. It is not meant for parents to park and walk their child into the school. It is designed for traffic flow. This is particularly important on rainy days. Please do not park in the 'kiss and go' and leave your car. If you need to walk your child in, please select another area to park.



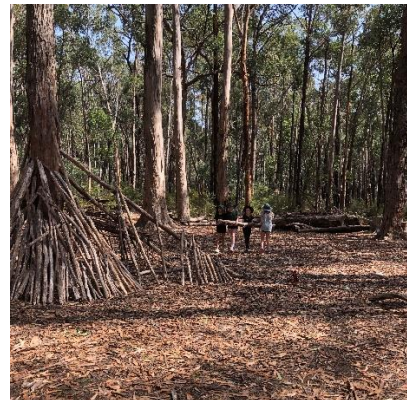
Labour Day Holiday – No school Monday 13 March

A reminder that there is no school on the Labour Day public holiday Monday 13 March. As this is a public holiday, there is no childcare available.

Year 6 Camp – February 8 - 10

The year six camp was well attended and ran beautifully. The students lived our school values and enjoyed all that was on offer, archery, canoeing, hut building, ropes course, mountain bike riding, orienteering, bush walking, etc. I would like to acknowledge the staff who attended: Cameron, Erin, Mark, Hannah, Stacey, Lara, Mairead, Finny, Dallas and Kat. It is a big commitment for staff to give up their after-hours time to support

the camp program, so we are very lucky to have staff willing to attend. We are also lucky to have a regular booking at Cave Hill Creek as it is such a beautiful location and a wonderful opportunity for our students.



Child safe at Westgarth PS

Westgarth Primary is committed to child safety. As a community we want children to be safe, happy and empowered. We support and respect all children, as well as our staff and volunteers. We are committed to the safety, participation and empowerment of all children. There is zero tolerance of child abuse, and all allegations and safety concerns will be treated very seriously and consistently with our robust policies and procedures. We meet our legal and moral obligations to contact authorities when we are worried about a child's safety, which we follow rigorously.

Westgarth Primary is committed to preventing child abuse and identifying risks early and removing and reducing these risks. We have robust human resources and recruitment practices for all staff and volunteers. Our school is committed to regularly training and educating our staff and volunteers on child abuse risks. As a community we support and respect all children, as well as our staff and volunteers. We are committed to the cultural safety of Aboriginal children, the cultural safety of children from a culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds, and to providing a safe environment for children with a disability. Westgarth Primary has specific policies, procedures and training in places that support our leadership team, staff and volunteers to achieve these commitments.

At Westgarth Primary:

- Everyone connected to our school can help children be safe.
- We have zero tolerance for any abuse of children.
- We already have policies and processes in place to protect the care, safety and welfare of children. These are being strengthened to ensure a zero tolerance approach to child abuse. As policies are ratified at school council, they will be made available to your through the newsletter and on our web page.
- There will be clear boundaries about how adults in our school community may interact with the children here set out in our school's Child Safe Code of Conduct. This will be made available when school council ratifies it at school council

To read our many Child Safe Policies and procedures click this link <https://www.wgps.vic.edu.au/page/333>

School Council Report – February meeting

– Jacob Spencer (School Council President)

The last School Council meeting was held onsite at 7pm on Wednesday 22 February.

Principal's Report – Topics discussed: Staffing changes for 2023, School review process, Annual Implementation Plan endorsement, enrolment numbers, yr 6 camp, holiday works, welcome picnic, information nights and yr 6 graduation.

Finance – Finance committee presented the annual policies, and transactions and payments for approval and endorsement for the months of December and January. Discussion and endorsement of the profits and loss statements for 2022 fundraising, which is carried forward for expenditure in 2023 budgets.

Environment – The Inclusive Playground is complete, and we are very happy with the outcome. The capital works project is tracking on time. The schematic design phase has been signed off and the design development stage will now commence. The school is applying for a \$25 000 Federal Government Grant to develop the east side of the Brooke St front yard. We have set the following dates for working bees for the year. Please pop them in your diary

1. Sunday 19 March 10am – 12pm
2. Sunday 4 June 10am – 12pm
3. Sunday 23 July (Christmas in July) 1 – 3pm
4. Sunday 8 October 10am – 12pm

OSHC – At its first meeting for the year, OSHC committee was delighted to hear that students and families were continuing to enjoy the OSHC service. Attendances are above the same time last year, and students are excited about this term's feature programs which include Gardening, Basketball, Animalia, and Messy Clubs. New staff have been inducted, and our continuing staff have enjoyed catching up with students. The key strategic focus for OSHC Management will be to develop its annual Quality Improvement Plan to assist in guiding the service's standards and meeting the needs of students. Feedback will be sought on the QIP from the community.

Education – no report

Next meeting dates:

OSHC	Wednesday 22 March @ 11am WebEx
Finance	TBC @ 10.00am WebEx
Education	TBC @ 7pm WebEx
Environment	Thursday 23 March @ 8.00am Jo's Office
School Council	Wednesday 29 March @ 7.00pm Library

If you would like to join a sub-committee, please contact the office so we can pass on your details to the convenors of the sub-committees so you can receive the correspondence and meeting invites.

Jo Wheeler
Principal