



Principal News – March 4, 2020

School Council Elections

I would like to thank the parents who have nominated to join school council for 2020. We rarely need an election so it is great to see a number of people willing to get involved in the governance of the school. While we have four x 2 year vacancies, we also have one x 1 year vacancy and one co-opted position to fill.

The ballot forms, candidate bios and return envelopes have been sent home today. Please look out for it, complete your vote, following the instructions provided, and return to school by the close of ballot on **16 March at 4pm**. You can either hand deliver or post it back to the school. The ballot box is in the foyer of the Brooke St office. We will declare the poll on Tuesday 17th March via Compass.

School council also runs a number of sub-committees and all members of the school community are welcome to join one or more of these. The next meeting dates, times and locations for each are:

Education - 7pm Tuesday March 10, Staffroom, Brooke St

Out-of-School-Hours-Care -2pm Wednesday March 11, Carolyn's office, Brooke St

WPS Redevelopment working party - 5pm Wednesday March 11, Jo's office, Brooke St

Finance – 8.15am Tuesday March 17, Jo's office, Brooke St

Environment – 8am Thursday March 19, Jo's office, Brooke St

Policy – TBC (contact the office if you would like to be added to the distribution list)

Communications Working Party - TBC

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.

Corona Virus

The department of education and training has provided schools with this information/advice:

If you/your child/ren have been in mainland China (excluding Hong Kong SAR, Macau and Taiwan) or Iran in the past 14 days you are advised to:

- stay at home (self-quarantine)
- avoid public settings - this means you should not attend work, school, childcare or university or go to other public places such as restaurants, cinemas or shopping centres and should not use public transport or taxis
- do this for 14 days after leaving mainland China or Iran (other than when seeking medical care).

If you have been in close contact with someone who has coronavirus disease (COVID-19):

- stay at home (self-quarantine)
- avoid public settings for 14 days after you last came into contact with them.

If you fall into the risk groups above and suspect you may have the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) **call the dedicated hotline on 1800 675 398**. (Please keep Triple Zero (000) for emergencies only).

Symptoms of COVID-19

The most common symptoms reported include:

- Fever
- Breathing difficulties such as breathlessness
- Cough
- Sore throat
- Fatigue or tiredness.

Visit the Better Health Channel for more information about the disease and how it is diagnosed.

If you are not in any of the risk groups above, you should go about your daily life and travel and work or study as normal.

Practice good hygiene

- You should pay close attention to good hand hygiene. Wash your hands regularly with soap and water, especially before eating and after using the toilet.

- Cover your mouth and nose when coughing and sneezing with a tissue - or cough into your elbow. Dispose of the tissue into a bin and then wash your hands afterwards.

Face masks are not recommended for use by members of the public in Victoria, although anyone who wants to be cautious can of course choose to wear one.

Current travel advice

The current Australian Government advice is to not travel to China and Iran.

The government is also implementing travel restrictions on visitors from China and Iran who are not Australian citizens or permanent residents.

Visitors from mainland China and Iran who are not Australian citizens or permanent residents, or their dependents will not be allowed entry into Australia. These restrictions will be reviewed by 7 March 2020.

Further information can be found on Smart Traveller.

Advice for people who have travelled overseas

The Victorian Government is recommending that people who have travelled to China, Iran, Cambodia, Hong Kong, Indonesia, Italy, Japan, Singapore, South Korea or Thailand and become unwell seek medical advice and be tested for coronavirus.

There is no evidence of community transmission in Victoria at this time.

Additional cases and outbreaks of COVID-19 are expected in Victoria as this illness continues to spread across the world. Medical practitioners have been advised to consider testing anyone with compatible illness who has recently travelled overseas, with a focus on current areas of high risk.

At school we are encouraging students to wash their hands before eating and each classroom will have either hand soap (if they have a classroom sink) or hand sanitizer (if they don't have a classroom sink). Student toilets also have soap for handwashing, which is checked daily. If the supply runs out during the day, we ask students to inform teachers so it can be replaced. You can assist the school by teaching your child/ren about hygiene particularly sneezing and coughing and managing dirty tissues. It would also be helpful if you could remind them about not wasting the hand soap in the student toilets. At this stage there are no planned closures of schools and we will keep you updated of changes to this advice or situation.

Yard Supervision Before and After School

The school provides staff supervision for students from 8.45am each morning and until 3.45pm each afternoon. Students who arrive at school prior to 8.45am are required to be in Before School Care (OSHC) or supervised by a parent. Students who require supervision after 3.45pm must be booked into After School Care (OSHC). Please help us to keep your child safe by adhering to this. If there are issues specific to your family that you need school support with, please contact assistant principal, Carolyn Shiels.

National Day against Bullying and Violence - March 20

Friday 20 March is the National Day against Bullying and Violence and the school captains have been working on ways to recognising the day. Our school's motto for the day is "Don't be a by-stander be a Stand-byer". At Westgarth PS, we say "Bullying - No Way!"

Labour Day Holiday

A reminder that there is no school on the Labour Day public holiday March 9.

Sunday Salon at Neighbourhood Books – 22 March

Join Westgarth parent, Andrew Wear, to discuss his newly-published book, *Solved! How other countries have cracked the world's biggest problems and we can too*. With a big dose of optimism, the book examines what has worked around the world and how we can apply the lessons at home.

Come along for a relaxed afternoon of intelligent, constructive conversation helped along by live piano playing and light refreshments.

3pm, Sunday 22 March at Neighbourhood Books, 55 High Street Northcote. Tickets \$10 at <https://www.eventbrite.com.au/e/sunday-salon-with-andrew-wear-tickets-94335037637>

