



GOROKAN PUBLIC SCHOOL

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Wednesday 20th March 2019

Dear Parents and Carers,

At Gorokan Public School we believe that continual improvement comes from self-reflection and feedback from students, staff and the community.

Tell Them From Me Student Survey - I am pleased to announce that this term, our school, like many others in the state, will participate in a Department of Education initiative - the *Tell Them From Me* student feedback survey. The survey aims to help improve student learning outcomes and measures factors that are known to affect academic achievement and other student outcomes. The focus of the NSW-wide survey is on student wellbeing, engagement and effective teaching practices. More information about the survey is available at:

<http://surveys.cese.nsw.gov.au/information-for-parents>

The survey is a great opportunity for our students to provide our school with valuable and quick feedback on what they think about school life, how engaged they are with school and the different ways that teachers interact with them. Schools in Australia and around the world have used the *Tell Them From Me* survey to help improve how they do things at school.

The survey is confidential and school staff will not be able to identify individual students from their responses. The survey is conducted online and will typically take less than 30 minutes to complete. Participating in the survey is entirely voluntary.

A consent form was sent home with students who will be involved. If you **do not** want your child/ren to participate, please return the consent form to school by **Friday 22nd March**.

National Day of Action Against Bullying - Last Friday 15th March was the dedicated National Day of Action Against Bullying. Our whole school has been involved in this initiative for the past weeks, with all students engaging in a variety of ongoing school-wide activities. Gorokan Public School says "No to Bullying!" and will remain focused on this challenge throughout the year.

Celebrating Harmony Day - On Thursday, the students and staff will celebrate Harmony Day in orange themed mufti. This year marks the 20th anniversary of Harmony Day, recognising the success of Australia's multicultural society and the benefits of cultural diversity and belonging. Teachers and staff will create important opportunities for students to think, talk about and recognise how our differences make Australia a great

place to live. The message of Harmony Day is that everybody belongs. It is a celebration of difference, from the traditional owners of the land to those who have come from all around the world.

Stewart House - Each year approximately 1,700 public school children who are in need go to Stewart House from many parts of NSW and the ACT. During their stay, children are provided with optometric, dental and medical treatment as well as emotional support. This week students will be receiving Stewart House Donation envelopes. These envelopes need to be returned to the school office by Friday 31st May. Every donation that is received goes into a draw to win a \$4000 holiday to a destination of your choice. Good luck!

Mobile Phones and Devices - The use of mobile devices, during school hours by primary school students has been restricted by the NSW Department of Education and is reflected in the Gorokan PS Mobile Phone Policy. The ban relates to student use of mobile phones during school hours. The ban includes mobile phones, tablet devices and devices with mobile capabilities such as smart watches. Students are not to have their phones switched on or use their phone during school hours. If approved by the Principal, mobile phones must be handed in to the school office on arrival to school. Students are not allowed to carry their phone with them. The students have been reminded of the Gorokan PS Mobile Phone Policy and its clear expectations. If you need to contact your child urgently during school time you may do so by contacting the school office.

Election Barbecue - The State election will be held on Saturday 23rd March. The P&C will be holding an election day BBQ. Please let Jasmine know if you are able to help by leaving a message at the office.

Before and After School Care - Thank you to the parents and carers who responded to my invitation to express an interest in accessing Before and After School Care. I will continue to liaise with the Department in order to strive towards re-establishing this essential community service. Watch this space for further updates.

Together we can make a difference.

Jesmond Zammit

Principal

Dates to Remember

Thursday 21 st March	Harmony Day
Tuesday 26 th March	Year 5 & 6 Academic Olympics Gorokan High 8:30am till 2:00pm
Wednesday 27 th March	Year 5 CARES Excursion
Friday 5 th April	School Cross Country
Tuesday 21 st May	Year 1 & Year 2 Excursion Billionaire Boy
Tuesday 3 rd September	Year 6 - Canberra Excursion

Kindergarten Supervisor - Mrs D Jeanpierre

Class Awards - Congratulations to the following students for receiving class awards at our grade gathering last Friday. **KC** - Indigo F, Ola T **KD/T** - Jermaine B, Bronte G **KF/L** - Sienna L, Trevor M **KJ** - Sophie B, Kade S **KL** - Sadie G, Jye B.

Behaviour Monitoring Cards - Please continue to sign your child's behaviour card and return it to school every Monday for consistent monitoring of student behaviour. A rating of 4 is a reasonable achievement for behaviour. Receiving a 5 or 6 indicates that your child's behaviour is more desirable.

Morning Routines - Please take your child to the large COLA area in the morning where they will be supervised by a teacher and important messages relayed. You may stay with your child or leave them with the supervising teacher. Once the bell has rung at the commencement of each day, teachers will line their class up at the top of the steps outside KFL classroom.

Hats - It is important that all children bring a hat to school every day to be worn for recess, lunch and physical activities. Please label their hats clearly.

Educational Website - The school covers the membership costs for each student to access Reading Eggs, Mathletics and Worldbook. Please see your child's teacher if you are unable to access these fantastic programs at home.

Stage 1 Supervisor - Mrs C Henderson

Toy Donations - Thank you to all the families who have donated toys to our playgroup. We are looking for toys such as cars, trucks, construction toys and games suitable for 4 to 8 year old children. Please send them in to your child's teacher if you have any.

Road Safety - We teach Road Safety lessons to our students every school term. We recently talked about safety when crossing roads before and after school. Children under 10 years of age are encouraged to hold a grown-up's hand when crossing roads as it is not until after 10 years of age that children's brains are developed enough to understand the complexities of distance and speed of traffic. Please reinforce safe behaviours when crossing roads and around cars with your child.

Year 1 and Year 2 Excursion - Notes for our Stage 1 excursion to see *Billionaire Boy* at The Art House Theatre on Tuesday 21st May have been sent home. The cost of the excursion is \$25.00 and payment is due in full by **Friday 12th April**, the last week of this term. If you have not received this note please let your child's teacher know so that a new one can be sent home.

Stage 2 Supervisor - Mrs R Ranse

School Supplies - Please ensure that your child comes to school each day with a pencil. Whilst the school does supply some items, we really need all students to have their own lead pencils. Thank you for your support.

Parent Teacher Interviews - Thank you to all of the parents and carers who were able to attend the parent teacher interviews. If you were unable to make it, please phone the school to make a suitable time for a telephone interview with your child's teacher.

Years 3 and 4 Multicultural Speeches - Students from Years 3-6 were selected to represent our school. The Year 3 and 4 representatives are Paige R and Lilah M. Congratulations to all who participated.

Stage 3 Supervisor - Mrs G Farrell

Donations - Years 5 and 6 are looking for old magazines and newspapers for art and craft activities. Any donations would be greatly appreciated.

Years 5 and 6 Multicultural Speeches - Students have been busy preparing speeches and two students from each class were selected on Friday to present their speech on Monday in the school finals. Year 5 and 6 representatives are Hannah T and Ellys M. Students from Years 3-6 were also selected to represent our school. Congratulations to all who participated.

Year 5 and 6 Academic Olympics - The Academic Olympics will be held at Gorokan High School on Tuesday 26th March starting at 8:30am and finishing at 2pm.

Year 5 and 6 Girls' Mighty Mariners Soccer Clinic - Eight of our girls have been given the opportunity to attend this workshop on Friday 29th March at the Tuggerah complex.

Cyber Safety - Constable Wells spoke to the students in Years 5 and 6 last Thursday about being cyber safe. They were informed as to how to collect evidence and when to report it to the social media service. For more information go to:

<http://www.esafety.gov.au/safetycentres>

Expression of Interest High School Enrolment Forms - The forms were due to be completed and returned by last Friday 15th March. There are still a number of students who have not returned these important forms. Do not change any information filled out by the school. Your address on our school records indicates your child's designated High School.

Year 6 Souvenir T-Shirt - Students have been busy designing the front pocket and the back design at school. A note will be sent home when all designs and costs are finalised. The cost will be between \$30 and \$35.

Year 6 Canberra Excursion - The Canberra excursion is to be held from Tuesday 3rd September to Thursday 5th September. Notes were sent out last week advising the cost is \$375. A deposit of \$75 will be required ASAP as we need to confirm our numbers for accommodation. We have booked for 90 students and want to avoid paying addition costs for incorrect numbers. A regular payment plan will be sent out once the deposit has been paid.

Year 5 C.A.R.E.S. Excursion - The Community and Road Safety Education Scheme will be held on Wednesday 27th March. Students will learn about road rules, hazard perception, hand signals as well as helmet and bicycle safety in a practical way from the expertise of two NSW Police Officers. This excursion relates to our PDHPE syllabus. All equipment is provided for the students to participate on the day. There are only 60 spaces available and the cost is \$12.

Year 5 Bathurst Excursion 26th - 28th August - Notes will be sent out in the near future with costs and a suggested payment plan. Approximate cost will be \$380.

NAPLAN - Year 5 will be doing NAPLAN online this year between Tuesday 14th May and Friday 24th May. There will be practice testing in Weeks 9 and 10 of this term from Monday 25th March until Friday 5th April at school.

For further information about the NAPLAN Online go to <http://www.nap.edu.au/naplan>

Special Education - Mrs S Crook

Hats - Please ensure that your child brings their hat to school each day. Our school is 'Sun Safe' and students are required to wear a hat when they are participating in activities outside, including recess and lunch. Students in the special education unit have a unique hat with a yellow strip around the brim so we can identify them quickly if needed. If your child not yet been given one of these hats, please see their class teacher.

Screen Time - We have been talking about cyber safety at school this week as part of the National Day of Action Against Bullying. It is important for families and caregivers to monitor what our children are watching and playing while on their iPads, phones and other devices to ensure that they are participating in age appropriate, safe activities.

Another side to this issue is that your child's free time could be better spent interacting with the rest of your family or their friends to increase their social skills. Why not encourage your child to participate in family activities like the preparation of dinner or playing simple board or card games. These activities can improve your child's communication skills and also help your child

learn friendship skills like sharing, turn taking and how to be a good winner (and loser).

Sport News

Sydney North Swimming - Amelia and Evie will travel to Sydney Olympic Pool to compete in the Sydney North Carnival on the Thursday 28th March.

Rugby League - Congratulations to Kingston S and Jaxson W who will be representing the Tuggerah/Wallarah Zone at the Sydney North Trials.

School Cross Country - Our school carnival is planned for Friday 5th April. Students who turn 11 or 12 in 2019 run 3km and students who are 8, 9 and 10 in 2019 run 2kms. Please encourage your child to start preparing for it by running regularly for 10-15mins each day.

School News

Harmony Day - This week is Harmony Week with Harmony Day being held on Thursday 21st March. Students may wear orange tomorrow as part of our celebration.

School Fundraising - We are raising money for our school and are thrilled to be launching the NEW 2019/2020 Entertainment Memberships soon!

The book or app costs \$65 with 20% of every membership sold going to the school. There are great deals which include 2-for-1, special rates and up to 50% off on activities, dining, shopping, travel and leisure. There is a 2018/19 book in the office for you to look at as an example. It does not take you long to save the \$65 you spend. Anytime you use it, the savings are dollars in your pocket! Please help us achieve our goal by purchasing an Entertainment Membership online at <http://www.entbook.com.au/345h40> or contact the office for a form to complete.

Community Liaison Officer – Miss J Daunt

Thank you to all the families who have returned students' dental permission slips. The dentist will be arriving at Gorokan Public School on Monday 25th March so there is still time to get your notes in. Please see the office if you need another note.

P & C News

On Saturday 23rd March during the Election at Gorokan Public School, the P&C will be selling raffle tickets at 50c each for our Easter raffle, which will be drawn during the Fancy Hat Parade in Week 11. We will also be selling lucky dips for \$1 and show bags for \$8. If anyone is able to volunteer any of their time to help please email me at jasmine.daunt3@det.nsw.edu.au If any families are able to donate any Easter treats towards our raffle it would be greatly appreciated. Please leave donations at the office. Thank you for your support.

Balancing extra-curricular activities for flourishing kids

by Dr Jodi Richardson

Busyness seems to have become a way of life for modern families. It's unlikely you'll ever hear a parent talk of having plenty of free time on their hands. Unfortunately, that's a statement unlikely to be heard from a lot of modern-day kids either.

The afternoons on family calendars are increasingly filling up with organised after-school activities, and in families with multiple children the logistics of keeping up with all this can be complicated. The strain of ferrying children back and forth, often in different directions, saps families of energy, resources and time.

We have great intentions

Recent research from the United Kingdom found that the desire for children to succeed is a strong driver for many parents, sometimes causing them to load their children up with extra-curricular activities. While the intentions are good, the method of keeping kids busy is probably questionable.

Other reasons for encouraging extra-curricular activities include: giving kids the best start in life, making friends, keeping fit and healthy, developing interests and preventing boredom. Anecdotal evidence suggests the findings are similar in Australia.

The cost of busyness

We live at a time where rates of mental illness, particularly anxiety, are climbing. One in seven Australian children have a diagnosed mental illness. That's three in an average classroom. Many more go undiagnosed.

Rushing to activities, late nights and stressed parents aren't the conditions for family members to enjoy flourishing mental health. Too many organised activities detract from time to hang out with friends, to comfortably complete homework tasks, to

spend time with family, to get bored and, importantly, to simply play.

Free play is serious business

Author and research professor of psychology Dr Peter Gray attributes the rise in anxiety, depression, suicide and narcissism among children to the decline of play. Unstructured play is vital for the healthy development of children and teenagers. Through play kids learn to interact with others, develop physical skills necessary for school success and gain confidence they need to interact with peers.

How much is too much?

Some children can cope with busy schedules, while others flounder. As a rule of thumb, if your child or young person is struggling in any of these three areas: i) mental health, ii) schoolwork and studies, iii) their participation in family-life then it may be time to reduce their extra-curricular load.

Choosing the activities to omit from a schedule can be tricky, as your child or young person may have a different motivation for each. In short, each activity can be 'the one they love.' Here's a good question to ask your child or young person that can make decision-making easier: *'If all of your after-school activities were cancelled, which one(s) would you plead with me to re-enrol you in?'*

Their answers will reveal a great deal about their commitment to each activity. Ideally, kids should be choosing extra-curricular activities that nourish them rather than cause anxiety and stress. Aim for two activity-free nights each week so that your child or young person can meet their study and family commitments.

The same principle for balance holds true for weekends. Make sure your kids enjoy some time free from structured activity, so they can refresh and recharge, ready for the week of school that lays ahead

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