



Term 1 | Week 8

Wednesday 18th March 2020

NEWSLETTER

Gorokan Public School

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Principal: Jesmond Zammit

Dates to Remember

Thursday, 9 th April	Last Day of Term 1
Tuesday, 28 th April	First Day of Term 2

Principal's Report

Dear Parents and Carers,

At Gorokan Public School we believe that supporting student health is of paramount importance and a vital role of the school staff. We have gone to great lengths to ensure the students have the best possible health care whilst at school and to this end, we are one of very few schools to have a fulltime nurse on site each day.

COVID-19 (Novel Coronavirus) - Thank you for the ongoing support which has come from our caring school community in these unprecedented times. Every effort has been made to keep you informed of this changing landscape and the health and safety measures which have been put in place to ensure the wellbeing of students and staff. This will continue as new information comes to light.

The world continues to watch on as this disease is being managed across the globe. There are strict protocols in place by the NSW Department of Education in relation to the outbreak of infectious diseases, including COVID-19. Please rest assured that the school is monitoring student illness very closely and will inform the community immediately in relation to reported diagnosed cases of any infectious disease. In the meantime, students who develop a fever, cough, sore throat or shortness of breath should see a doctor immediately. We encourage all students to adhere to the following in the interest of maintaining a healthy school environment:

1. Clean your hands throughout the day
2. Sneeze into a tissue or your elbow
3. Stay at home if you are sick

At Gorokan Public School we are committed to providing flexible learning options for our students and will ensure that learning can continue and thrive

beyond the classroom. The staff are working hard to ensure that in the event of the school being deemed non-operational, that the students will have an online platform from which they can access meaningful learning. To assist our community we have developed a website to provide support and materials for students and parents to access learning content being covered in class if students are unable to attend school. This website will be updated regularly to help support our community. To access specific grade content click on the grade link

and select a *Key Learning Area*.

<https://sites.google.com/education.nsw.gov.au/flexiblelearningpacegps/home>

Should students not have access to technology or internet, they too will be catered for with hardcopies of student work.

This week's Parenting Ideas article on page 4 of this newsletter *Leading the way for children during the Coronavirus Pandemic*, offers practical ideas to help you to support your children.

Yarn Up - Thank you to the community members who came along to the recent gathering held last Tuesday at the school. It was wonderful to connect with so many of our Gorokan families and to welcome you all as well as Lesley Armstrong - Muru Bulbi AECG President, and Ray McMinn - Aboriginal Elder, who performed the Acknowledgement of Country.



Photo: The school's Didge players' performance



Photo: Elder Ray McMinn performing the Acknowledgement of Country



Photo: Our brand-new yarning circle and shade sails

Day of Action Against Bullying and Violence - The school will be supporting the National Day of Action against Bullying and Violence on Friday, 20th March. Classes will be involved in a range of activities in the lead up to this special day but unfortunately our *Harmony Day/Say No to Bullying* assembly has been cancelled. Students are invited to wear mufti (for a gold coin donation) and are encouraged to wear traditional dress that represent their family heritage if appropriate. Each child will be given a colourful wristband to commemorate the occasion. We are looking forward to this wonderful day of celebrating our rich cultural diversity.

Student Voice - This term, our school is taking part in the *Tell Them From Me* student survey. The survey will provide us with valuable feedback on what our students think about school life, how engaged they are with school and the different ways that teachers interact with them. More information about the survey is available at:

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

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 Monday 9th March 2020.

Parents and Citizens Association - The P&C Annual General Meeting that was scheduled for Monday 30th March, will now be postponed until further notice. Please consider actively participating in one of the many roles on offer.

Together we can make a difference.

Jesmond Zammit

Principal

Class Awards - Congratulations to the following students for receiving class awards. We celebrate the individual achievements of all students. **KC** – Layla, Haylen, Hareem and Jaxon, **KDT** – Ishmael, Harry and Talon, **KJ** – Rozie, Kailee and Cooper, **KL** – Oliver, Kiara, Brodie and Reily, **KF/L** – Hannah, Evie, Riley and Aynsley.

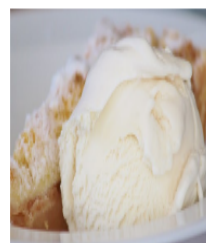
Library Days - Please return borrowed library books on your child's library day. Tuesday – KFL and KJ, Wednesday – KDT and KC, and Friday – KL.

Children's Vision Van - Please return your child's permission note this week. This service is provided free of charge to all Kindergarten students. Any concerns with their sight will be communicated immediately to parents and carers.

Stage 1 Supervisor - Mrs L Anderson

Home Reading/Homework - It has been fantastic seeing so many students returning and exchanging their home readers weekly. Please continue to encourage your child to read daily. If they have books at home that they would prefer to read, please encourage this and mark their home reading log. Mathematics and Reading Eggs passwords have been sent home for students to practise and enjoy at home. We are excited to see our students so enthusiastic to continue their learning at home. We thank all parents and carers that make time daily and encourage this in their homes. You are making a positive difference in your child's education.

Celebrations - Year One students have been writing about how they like to eat their ice cream. They have been learning how to publish their writing in Google Docs and inserting an image. Below is an example from one of our students in 1J who has worked particularly hard in class.



I love my ice cream in a bowl. My favorite ice cream is rainbow and vanilla. I like violet crumbles everywhere. My favorite is marshmallows with strawberry topping.

By Lucas

Stage 2 Supervisor - Mrs R Ranse

Stage 2 Sport - Sport is held on a Wednesday and students are asked to wear their yellow sports shirt, navy school shorts and joggers on this day. We are currently rotating through a circuit of skill based games and activities that focus on developing throwing, catching and striking skills.

Online Learning - All students at Gorokan Public School have access to Mathletics and Reading Eggs. Please make contact with your child's teacher if you have not received your child's log on details. Students are encouraged to utilise these programs at home to support their learning.

Stage 3 Supervisor - Mrs K Day

Stage 3 News - Week 8 already! We have had a very busy fortnight with our students being engaged in all classroom and sporting activities. We are trialling sport on Fridays for the remainder of this term and all students are required to wear their sports uniforms on this day.

Year 5 Excursion to Bathurst - The Bathurst excursion which was scheduled for Wednesday 29th July to Friday 31st July 2020, unfortunately has been cancelled due to the current Coronavirus restrictions.

Year 7 2021 Expression of Interest Forms - These forms have been sent home and need to be completed by parents/carers and returned to Year 6 class teachers by **Friday 20th March 2020**.

Year 6 Shirts - Orders have now been placed and are expected to be delivered in early Term 2, 2020.

Year 6 Excursion to Canberra - The Canberra excursion scheduled for 5th - 7th August 2020 has not been cancelled at this stage as the school has sent through a deposit and we really want to ensure that it has to be cancelled before forfeiting this last chance experience for our Year 6 students. Parents and Carers should note, that given these extenuating circumstances, should this excursion be cancelled, the \$75 deposit will be fully refunded.

Special Education – Mrs S Crook

Great Learners - It has been great to see so many of our students working hard and learning lots! Award winners in Grade Gathering this fortnight are: Aiden O, Eli H, Mallee S, Tyson C, Amelia, Nicole, Amelia, Ryland, Jordin and Rayner.

Great Attendance - We have had some great improvements in attendance over the past two weeks. The following students have been recognised for this by receiving an award - Tyson C and Malaqui G.

Great Learning - Creative Arts - Students in K-6J have been working on their creative art skills and have painted some great artworks. They have used some great brush techniques when painting. Here are some examples.



Great Learning - Writing - Students in all of our classes have been working on their writing. Two students in Mrs Greentree's class have published a recent piece of excellent writing. Please take the time to read these informative descriptions.

The Speedy Cheetah – By Noah A - Cheetahs are a part of the feline family. Cheetahs live in the South African Savana. Cheetahs have orange skin with black spots and weigh 65 kg. Cheetahs eat impala and gazelles. They hunt at day to avoid other big cats like lions and tigers. Cheetahs are the fastest land animals going up to 121 km/76 mph. Cheetahs have the ability to see 10000000000000 km away! Cheetahs have such a flexible spine that they can 30m in a single stride! A cheetah's favourite food is wildebeest.

The Purrfect Cheetah - By Charlie S
The cheetah is part of the Feline family.
Cheetahs live in the African savannah.
Cheetahs have black spots.
Cheetahs eat impala deer and gazelles.
They hunt for food at night.
Cheetahs can run to about 500000 miles per hour.

Sport

Zone Swimming Carnival - One of our swimmers that attended the Zone Carnival achieved an amazing result. Amelia came first or second in a total of 4 events and was awarded the Junior girl swimmer of the meet. Congratulations to Amelia and all those who swam on the day. They all showed persistence and represented our school with pride.

P & C News

Easter Fundraiser - If anyone is able to make a small contribution towards the P&Cs Easter fundraiser it would be appreciated. Please leave any donations at the school office. We are hoping to finalise donations by Friday 20th March 2020.

School News

Busways Bus Services - With the COVID-19 situation continuing to evolve in NSW, it is important to keep up to date with the latest information and advice. School and route bus services are currently operating as normal, however, should this change unexpectedly, our school bus operator, Busways, advises it will post updates to school and route bus services to its website. Parents are encouraged to regularly check the Busways website at www.busways.com.au for updates and announcements regarding bus services for our school in case changes happen unexpectedly outside of school hours. Regular checks to the Busways website will ensure you have the most up to date information.

Leading the way for children during the Coronavirus pandemic

If you're like me, the news of the Coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic has your head spinning and your heart pumping. That's only natural as life as we know has taken a seismic shift in recent days.

International travel bans, cancellation of sporting and cultural events, shopping frenzies and talk of school closures continue to dominate the airwaves. Terms such as social distancing, self-isolation and social lockdowns have entered our vocabularies and may soon become part of our daily lives.

Coronavirus is having an unprecedented impact on our daily lives, and will probably do so for some time. While keeping ourselves and children healthy and safe is our main concern, it's also essential to address the anxieties of children and young people during these changing times. Here are some ideas to help inform, reassure and keep children and young people safe.

Build on what your children know

Children and young people have already been exposed to a great deal of information about corona virus through media, digital means and direct social contact. Their understanding will vary depending on their age and also the quality of their information sources so you probably will need to help kids process what they already know.

Casual conversations with teenagers and older children can be useful ways to glean their understanding. You could ask questions like "What are you hearing about Coronavirus? Is there anything you're not sure about?" Younger primary age children may need a more direct approach with parents addressing their specific concerns without giving too much information that can overwhelm them.

Check your own thoughts and feelings

Check your own frame of mind and emotions about COVID-19 before talking to kids. Most children are astute mood detectives and they'll gauge their safety by the way you communicate with them. If you tell a child, "You've got to wash your hands or you'll get infected," you are communicating your own anxieties, making it difficult for them to maintain a healthy state of mind. Have a think about how you can frame your instructions and their importance in a way that doesn't heighten your child's anxieties.

Stay informed

It's difficult to work out fact from fiction, correct from incorrect, information from exaggeration when the news is changing so fast. However you need to educate yourself about the virus itself, including how it's transmitted and how to stay safe. Get information from trustworthy sources such as The Australian Government Health Department website and the current federal government corona virus information media campaign.

Answer questions truthfully

It's important that parents and teachers answer children's questions honestly in age-appropriate ways and within context of what is happening at the given time. If their sport or hobby has been temporarily cancelled empathise with their concerns, while helping them maintain a sense of perspective.

Initiate positive action

One way to reduce anxiety and allay children's fears is to involve them in planning and preparation for their personal and group safety. Positive activities such as maintenance of personal hygiene, greeting people with an elbow tap and getting plenty of sleep can help restore a sense of control, that is so important for their wellbeing.

Find refuge in rituals

Regular rituals such as mealtimes, bedtime stories and regular one-on-one time provide both an anchor to normality and a sense of connection for kids at times of change. Consider reconstituting favoured family rituals at this time if they have lapsed due to lack of time, or lifestyle frenzy.

Look outwards

In difficult times there is a tendency to look inwards, which is a natural protective strategy. The alternative is to establish a sense of connection and community spirit by focusing on generosity and togetherness. Help children see past their own needs and look for ways to assist others whether it's shopping for an elderly neighbour, helping a younger sibling occupy themselves, or planning an indoor movie night for the whole family.

The Coronavirus presents many practical challenges to parents and other important adults in the lives of kids. Staying calm, keeping informed, and adjusting our own habits are just some of the challenges we face. However a significant challenge is one of personal leadership. That is, during these difficult times we need to be civil to each other, look out for each other and be mindful of the common good in everything we do. In this, we can all take a significant lead.