

August 26th, 2021

Principal's Report

100 days of Foundation

It was heart-warming to see all the 100 days of Foundation celebrations. The Foundation students sent in videos celebrating 100 days of learning in very creative ways and the teachers put them together for all of our Foundation families to watch and enjoy. Well Done to our amazingly resilient Foundation students. Families and teachers- what a challenging start to Foundation they have had!

Fiona Forrest

It is with mixed emotions, I write this post, Fiona Forrest who is currently on Long Service leave for this term, has just announced that once her leave finishes, she will begin the next exciting stage of her life with her retirement. We are so happy and pleased for Fiona and her family but also so sad to have her leave the Balnarring school community that she has been an integral part of for 25 years.

Fiona has had many roles since beginning at Balnarring Primary School working as teacher in many year levels. She was the Junior School Coordinator, Curriculum Coordinator and then joined the leadership team as a Leading Teacher.

We wish Fiona a long, healthy retirement full of fun, joy and happiness. The Balnarring staff, and I am sure, students and families, are all so happy and excited for Fiona to now have her time to be able to do all those other things that are important in life, but also so very sad to see her leave Balnarring Primary School. I really enjoyed the short time I was lucky enough to work with Fiona, she is one of the happiest, brightest and most positive people I have ever worked with. Her gorgeous smile and fun-loving energy is contagious to all those around her. Fiona's bright light will be missed by all of us at Balnarring Primary School and I am sure students and parents will miss her happy and warm welcomes at the school gates. I am sad that I won't get to work with Fiona for a longer period of time but am personally very grateful for the legacy she is leaving behind for Balnarring Primary School to continue with.

In the time, that I have been fortunate enough to have worked with Fiona, I have been so impressed by her incredible energy, and her absolute dedication, love and passion for the Balnarring School Community. Fiona has put her heart and soul into the Balnarring Primary School community and as a result it is the lovely place it is today. Balnarring Primary School prides itself on its wellbeing approach, it's unique natural environment that further promotes wellbeing, high student achievement, science and sustainability programs among many other things. Much of this is a result of Fiona's commitment, genuine care and respect for the whole school community and her hard work and efforts over the years to make Balnarring Primary School the special place it is.

Fiona is admired as a strong, consistent and selfless leader who is always looking out for the best interests of the whole school community. Fiona had the natural ability to build up everyone around her. She was well respected as an educational and curriculum expert at school and across the wider network. Fiona coached and mentored many teachers in her time at Balnarring resulting in exceptional teaching and learning practices. Fiona led and implemented excellent research-based teaching and learning practices and one of those was together with Heather Goddard, developed a spelling program that was adopted by many other schools as an exceptional approach and program to teach spelling.

Fiona can now look back on all she has achieved over her career and the positive impact that she has had on thousands of students and families. Her positive impact will continue to have a ripple effect at Balnarring Primary School as staff, students and families will continue to be influenced by the time spent with Fiona encouraging us to live and lead in the 'Balnarring Way' and always achieve to our fullest potential.

Bendigo Bank

We would like to thank the Balnarring Bendigo Bank for supplying new pads for our school's defibrillator. We are very grateful and appreciate the kind donation and gesture.

Coffee van

The staff at Balnarring Primary would like to thank one of our parents who kindly provided a coffee van to thank staff for all their hard work and efforts at the end of Lockdown5. It was greatly appreciated by all.

CAMP AUSTRALIA

Unfortunately, the survey that CAMP AUSTRALIA sent to our families showed that there was minimal interest from our families for before school care and therefore it is not viable for them to be able to offer this service.

SPECIALIST PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

Japanese classes have been busy looking at the Olympic games held in Tokyo. They noticed that the athletes entered the stadium in order of the Japanese alphabet. That meant that as Australia in Japanese is "oosutoraria オーストリア" we came in with the 5th letter of the Japanese alphabet. India came in before us as they start with the 2nd letter of the Japanese alphabet. Check out <http://www.hiraganaposter.com/> The first letter is in the traditional position of top right and the chart then down the column for the 2nd letter etc.

Balnarring to the Bay - Biolink and Koala Corridor

Please find below information that has been forwarded to me from Michelle De La Coeur, our LOTE teacher, by Mike Gielb from Merricks-Coolart Catchment Landcare Group about the work that was carried out between Balnarring Primary School and the skate park a few weeks ago. Our 'walking bus' travels along this old rail trail and our very own Balbirooroo wetlands are mentioned.

Last week the Balnarring to the Bay Biolink and Koala Corridor project <https://www.facebook.com/BalnarringBiolink> commenced, when the first 40 pine trees were removed from the area between the Skate Park and Balbirooroo Wetlands.

Merricks-Coolart Catchment Landcare Group have now also launched a fundraising campaign to cover the costs of removal of the remainder of the pines. <https://chuffed.org/project/balnarring-to-bay-biolink> Using this link, those who would like to support this exciting project can make a donation. This is a big and costly project which will provide an enormous return, but the Merricks-Coolart Catchment Landcare need the support of our broader community to ensure its success.

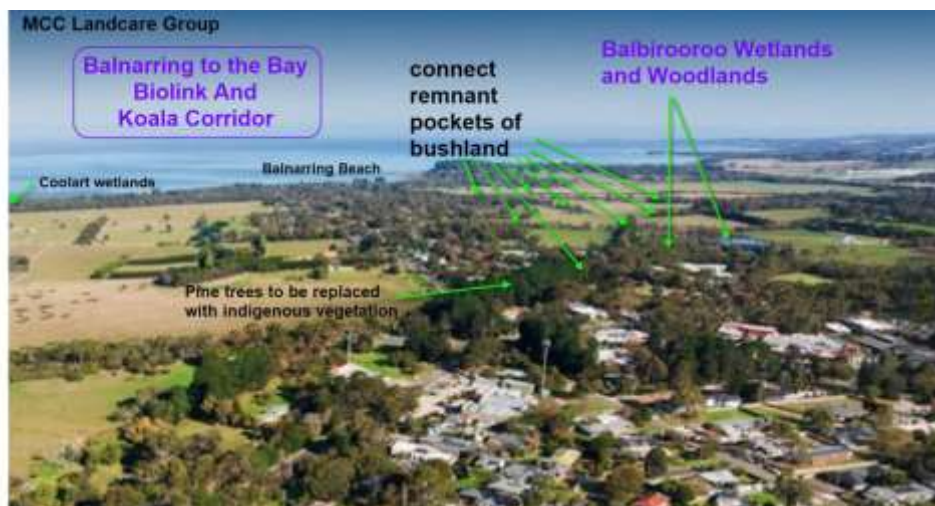
Locally, there are great examples of what can be accomplished by community and environmentally minded people. [Balbirooroo Wetlands](#) and [Coolart Wetlands](#) are two examples of successful revegetation and habitat restoration projects achieved in one generation.

By supporting our campaign, you can be an important part of our Biolink, which will complement and link these other vital habitat areas.

Thanks for your support

Mike Gielb

Those who would prefer to make a larger tax deductible donation are welcome to do so by clicking on this link <https://fundlandcare.org.au/campaigns/balnarring-to-bay-biolink-and-koala-corridor>



Nicky Walker

Assistant Principal's Report

Feedback from Remote Learning Survey

When schools first embarked on designing and delivering online learning last year, they had no idea what it looked like. Unlike any other educational initiative, we had no research or examples to base our Remote Learning models on. Each school grappled with how they could deliver Remote Learning in a way that suited the needs of their school community whilst meeting the guidelines that were set by the Department of Education. Balnarring Primary School was no different.

Last week, I had the privilege of viewing online sessions across all year levels. I approached these sessions with curiosity, as being new to the Balnarring School Community and coming from a completely different school context, my understanding of what Remote Learning looked like was bound to be quite different. What I found was that there is a lot to celebrate in our online classrooms at Balnarring PS! I saw children engaged in their learning with big smiles on their faces, high energy levels from teachers and a consistent lesson structure across all year levels. But this was only one aspect of what happens during Remote Learning. As a school, we recognised that it was important to get the "big picture" of Remote Learning which is why we sought information from families, students and teachers via surveys.

Thank-you to everyone who completed the Parent Remote Learning Survey. We truly value your feedback. We are currently collating all of the results from these surveys and hope to get a balanced view of what is working well for our students, staff and families. Together, all of this information will help us to develop some guidelines for staff and families. So, stay tuned, we hope to get them to you very soon.

Wellbeing

I have chosen the following article written by Michael Gross to highlight how we can lessen the stress of both ourselves and our children during this COVID Pandemic. What I particularly liked was having a plan to deal with stress and anxiety. I hope it helps!

Pandemic induced anxiety

Since the pandemic adults and children are reporting higher levels of stress and anxiety. Morning is one of the worst times for anxiety to strike. Like a fox, anxiety comes in the night robbing children of their courage, replacing assuredness with self-doubt, apprehension and fear.

Dealing with a child or young person in the middle of their anxious moment is super hard, particularly when you're still wiping the sleep from your eyes. In times of stress it's always best to stay SOBER. That is,

Stop what you are doing and pay attention to your child and to yourself

Observe the emotional reaction you are having to your child's distress and ask what your gut is telling you

Breathe deeply to remove yourself from panic mode ('I can't take this!') and kick start your thinking brain that has succumbed to your survival brain

Expand your vision and look at the bigger picture. Perhaps your child is genuinely nervous but it's important that they sit the test that makes them feel awful. Allow the bigger picture to guide your actions.

Respond to your child or young person calmly. Empathy and understanding are in short supply in the mornings, but if you have practised this type of response in low stress situations, you'll be more than ready to respond appropriately, rather panic or over-react when your child is stressed.

Like everything in parenting, this plan sounds easy when there are no kids around, but it's important nevertheless.

A lack of a plan you can follow when kids are anxious is the major cause of parent stress. In times of stress, it always helps to have a plan to follow. When dealing with children's nerves, tension and anxiety at stress o'clock this plan will really help you.



Anne McDonald

SUPERVISION AT SCHOOL

BEFORE AND AFTER SCHOOL HOURS, AND CURRICULUM DAYS

Supervision before school commences at 8.30 am and after school until 3.30 pm.

There is no supervision on Curriculum Days.

UNIFORM SHOP

(Please note that samples only are kept onsite)-Cash only
Onsite currently unavailable due to Covid restrictions

WHAT ACTIVITIES ARE COMING UP

PLEASE BE AWARE THAT DATES SOMETIMES CHANGE AND UNFORSEEN EVENTS MAY BE ADDED. CHECK COMPASS FOR UPDATES.

MONDAY	TUESDAYS	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
			26 August	27
30	31	1 September	2	31
6	7	8	9	10
13	14	15 *Parent Teacher Interviews online *School Council Mtg	16	17 Last Day of Term 3 2.10 pm finish

TERM BREAK