

Dear BSPS families,

It is always exciting and energising to get back *insieme* (together) as a learning community after the school holidays. We would like to extend a special welcome to our new families and staff, *Benvenuti* a BSPS!

You will be aware by now that we are bidding farewell to Trevor after 7 years as Principal at BSPS. Trevor has had an enormous impact on our school and on the many individuals who have been part of the community over his time. During this period, our school became the first Italian bilingual school in Victoria and has become a Respectful Relationships lead school, amongst many other achievements. Most importantly, however, Trevor has fostered a school culture that is inclusive, engaged, trusting and collaborative. This is clearly evident by the way students treat each other with respect and compassion, and the love of learning that is on display every day at BSPS.

Walking into the various learning areas of our school, you can see the consistency in evidence-based teaching approaches and the mirroring of the curriculum in Italian and English. While Trevor leaving is an adjustment for our school, the structures and systems that he has helped put in place have built a strong foundation which will allow our teaching staff, Education Support Staff and the leadership team to pick up where we left off last year and continue to create engaging and productive learning experiences for our students in safe and respectful learning environments.

We are sad to see Trevor go, but thrilled for his next professional endeavour. Richmond West Primary School is lucky to have him!

Staff update

In addition to our new families we also welcome **Federica Narcisi** to our school. Federica was previously working as an architect at Amato Design and as a Italian language teacher at Bravissimi Italian Language School. She will be joining BSPS in the 3/4 teaching team.

Mike Pickard will be teaching P.E to begin the term. You may know Mike from his work as a relief teacher at our school, or from his role at Team Kids.

The region has appointed **Toby Mestitz** as Acting Principal for the first few weeks of 2024. During this period, the region will advertise an expression of interest for the Acting Position to cover the remainder of Terms 1, 2 and 3. This allows time for the substantive role to be advertised and a formal Principal selection process to be conducted.

Learning to Learn

This year we are framing our **'Learning to Learn'** program around the mentor text **The Cockatoo Wars**, by Helen Milroy. This book was chosen by students in the Reconciliation Action Team (R.A.T) last year. The students chose the book because they believed that it represented our school values of Constant Learning, Compassion and Mutual Responsibility. One of our students was quoted as saying, "We hope that the book will inspire students to work as a team, learn how to resolve problems and be kind to everyone!"

The 'Learning to Learn' program will begin tomorrow and runs for the first few weeks of term. In addition to exploring our school values and character strengths together, the 'Learning to Learn' program is a time to set clear and consistent expectations and to support our students to transition into the new year. The program also helps to build the disposition of our learners for Literacy and Mathematics.

Maintenance works

This year, Foundation will be in the 2023 Performing Arts space. The building with the hall and new Foundation area had a little makeover during the holidays! You will notice a fresh paint job along the top of the building with our vibrant school colours.

All Year 1/2 classes will be in the Junior building, and Performing Arts will join them. A wall was installed during the holidays to separate the Performing Arts room from the adjoining classroom. All other learning areas and Specialist classes will be in the same spaces as last year.

We are also pleased to have some new cupboards in the STEM room for Eileen to store her eclectic mix of materials!

Instrumental music program

Our wonderful Instrumental Music Program is back for 2024. For those families wishing to enrol in music lessons please visit the [school website](#) for more information and contact the individual teachers directly.

Safety around our school

The landscape of our area is constantly evolving and we know this will continue over the coming years. We are located in a very busy spot, with main roads, trams, cars, bikes and laneways – not to mention to endless construction around us. We ask that you begin conversations at home about how your child travels to and from school and can do this safely being aware of danger spots on their journey.

With a return to school, congestion has also increased. Please be mindful of school speed limits, parking restrictions and modelling safe traffic habits for your children. The time it takes to find a carpark a block away far outweighs creating a possible risk for you or your child.

Student learning groups

Remember, at BPS we don't have 'homegroups' and work on the philosophy that learning groups should be fluid and evolve, meeting the diverse needs of the learners within them. Exposure to multiple teachers helps to reduce variability in teacher instruction, build a team of teachers who know your child and also supports our kids to develop positive relationships with a variety of adults and peers. Our teaching teams know all the students and make decisions to ensure learning groups are balanced, have a range of abilities and personalities and that specific social needs can be adequately met. We ask for you to trust us and our knowledge of all cohorts in the formation of these groups with the knowledge that they can *and will* change throughout 2024.

Team Kids

We are pleased to pass on this news from Nick Gooda, the Partnership Manager at Team Kids:

Hayley Green has been appointed Director of Service for TeamKids. Hayley started with TeamKids on the 8th of January and completed a week of training at another one of our services with an experienced director. Hayley then started at Brunswick South on the 15th of January during holiday care. Hayley will also be continually supported by her Regional Manager Georgia while she gets started.

Updated COVID guidelines

There is at present an increase in community transmission of COVID-19 in Victoria due to a new variant.

The Department of Health have provided schools with three recommended steps to reduce transmission:

1. Encourage all school community members to ensure COVID-19 vaccinations are up to date
2. Ensure good ventilation through the use of the supplied air purifiers and opening doors and windows
3. Encourage **staff** and **students** to stay home if they have any symptoms, and to get tested and isolate for at least 5 days and until they no longer have symptoms.

We ask parents and carers to continue to remain vigilant in preventing COVID-19 transmission. Any student who is unwell should continue to remain at home. This is about keeping students healthy and well in our school and reducing the spread of both COVID-19 and other respiratory diseases. Parents and carers will be contacted if their child shows symptoms while at school and free rapid antigen tests are available from the school office to enable continued testing.

We will also continue to use air purifiers and other COVID-19 prevention measures.

Students, staff and families who wish to wear a mask should continue to do so.

Sun protective clothing

Term 1 is a Sun Smart term at BPS and in line with the school's Sun Smart Policy we recommended that from September to April, students wear sun-protective clothing such as:

- loose, cool, closely-woven fabric
- shirts with a collar and/or high necklines
- tops with elbow length or long sleeves
- longer style shorts and skirts

At recess and lunch times, all students **must** wear a hat when playing outside. Students are required to wear a school hat or another hat style that protects the face, neck and ears when outdoors, for example broad-brimmed, legionnaire or bucket. Students who are not wearing appropriate protective clothing or a hat will be asked to play in the shade or in a suitable area protected from the sun. Please ensure your child brings their hat to school each day. New ones can be purchased from the office for \$20.

School/Home communication

To help you get to know your child's new teachers and learning areas we have organised the following:

1. **Learning Area Information Video:** Teams are going to record their sessions and distribute links to videos on Compass. You'll still have the opportunity to clarify any questions or wonderings with teams either in person at pick up and drop off, or via email or phone. The video will be live on the **23 February**.
2. **Student Led Conferences:** These are booked to occur on **Tuesday 19 March** from 1.00-7.00pm. Students will attend school in the morning and the afternoon times will be scheduled in for these meetings. The purpose of these sessions is for our students themselves to share their learning with you and to allow you time to talk with their teachers about their achievements and future goals.

In addition, as always, we encourage any families to come and see the teachers with any pressing concerns about your child as soon as possible.

Finally, for the beginning of the year, a few quick, general safety reminders that we ask be adhered to. These requests are important for the safety and wellbeing of our school community.

- Before entering the school grounds all staff, students and parents should dismount from their bikes or scooters.
- Please observe all speed and parking restrictions around the school. The area can become very congested at pick up and drop off times and the safety of everyone is our priority.
- The staff car park is not to be used as a thoroughfare for students and families. The designated entry and exit gates are Brunswick Road, Rathdowne Street and Park Street.
- Students are only supervised by staff from **8:45am** until **3:45pm** each day. To safeguard and maintain an appropriate Duty of Care for your children and to assist the TeamKids OSHC program, students and families are asked to follow our '[Access to School Premises Policy](#)' and allow TeamKids to access the playground and yard area from 3.45pm onwards.
- Dogs in the yard must be on a short leash (not extendable) and controlled by an adult at all times. In accordance with our '[Dogs in School Policy](#)' dogs should remain only on the asphalted areas.

We look forward to seeing all of your faces tomorrow! Thanks to those families who came in for the 'Introduce your Child' sessions today. It is wonderful to begin the year with information about your child, so that it is a smooth transition into the new school year.

Toby, Marg and Sarah

Term 1 Calendar					
Week	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Week 1 WC: 29 Jan	Curriculum Day (no students)	Introduce Your Child Interviews	Years 1-6 commences	Foundation commences Foundation family Morning Tea (in the hall)	
Week 2 WC: 5 Feb	Tentative booking (TBC) Welcome to Country – Smoking Ceremony 9.00am				
Week 3 WC: 12 Feb	Assembly (5/6 hosting) 9.00am			School Photos	School Photos
Week 4 WC: 19 Feb	School Council 2023 Members Meeting				Family Information Night Video live on Compass
Week 5 WC: 26 Feb	Assembly (3/4 hosting) 9.00am				
Week 6 WC: 4 Mar	Foundation students at school full time				
Week 7 WC: 11 Mar	Public Holiday (Labour Day) NAPLAN Commences				
Week 8 WC: 18 Mar	School Council 2024 Members Meeting NAPLAN continues Assembly (1/2 hosting) 9.00am	Student Led Conferences 1-7pm Students dismissed at 12pm			
Week 9 WC: 25 Mar	Italian Day Assembly (Foundation hosting) 9.00am			End of Term 1 (2:30pm dismissal)	

2024 Curriculum Days and Public Holidays			
Term 1	Term 2	Term 3	Term 4
29 Jan: Curriculum Day (no students)	15 April: Curriculum Day (no students) 25 April: Anzac Day (no school) 10 June: Kings Birthday (no school)	15 July: Curriculum Day (no students)	7 October: Curriculum Day (no students) 5 November: Melbourne Cup (no school)

*** The Victorian Government Schools Agreement 2022 provides teachers with **one professional practice day** in 2024. The precise date will be decided during the year