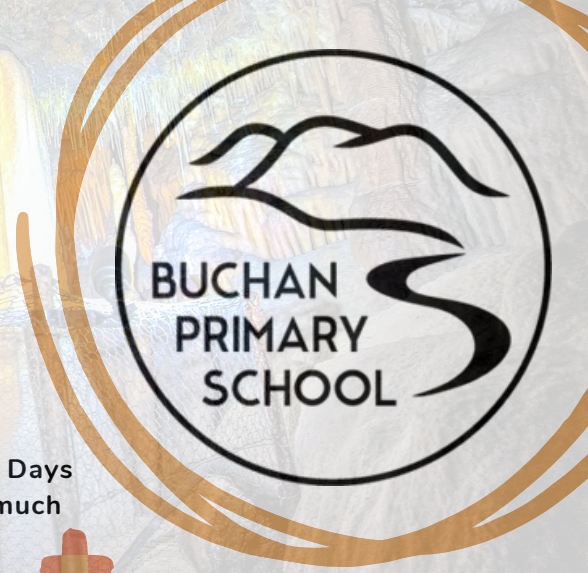


2024  
VOLUME.1

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BUCHAN PRIMARY SCHOOL  
IS A BARR SCHOOL. (BUSHFIRE AT RISK REGISTER)

This means our school will be closed and unstaffed on Code Red Days as well as other days deemed unsafe. Families will be given as much warning as possible. Safety is our first priority.

# SCHOOL NEWSLETTER

1ST OF FEBRUARY, 2024

Inside the newsletter:

- Classroom Report
- Acting Principal's Report
- Key Information
- Literacy Information
- Term 1 Updates
- Roadhouse Lunch Menu
- Parent-Teacher Interview Forms
- Attachments

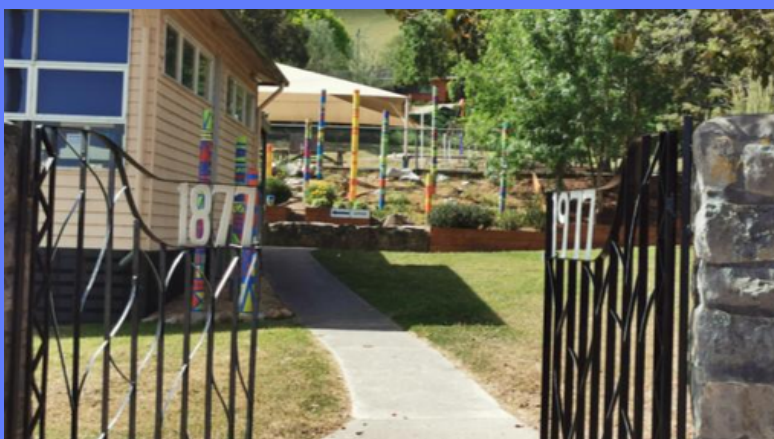


Oliver Benton - January 11th  
Oliver Sandy - January 31st

## BACK TO SCHOOL

## AROUND THE CLASSROOM

Students have seamlessly acclimated to their new and unique classroom environment, with the Grade 6 students exhibiting remarkable support for the incoming Foundation students. During their initial return, students actively participated in a variety of team-building activities and initiatives. Additionally, they got the opportunity to work with Mr Kenyon for a few hours, while I worked with our new tutor, Moira, to make sure our program in the classroom aligns with Tier 2/3 support. Mr Kenyon will be taking the kids for Literacy, Numeracy, The Stephanie Alexander Kitchen Garden Project and Art every Friday. Some lucky students got to meet Moira on Tuesday, with the rest of the students on the tutoring program meeting Moira today.



# ACTING PRINCIPAL'S REPORT

We acknowledge the Gunai Kurnai people as the Traditional Owners of the land on which we work, learn and play. We pay our respect to Gunai Kurnai elders past, present and emerging and extend our respect to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students and families of Buchan Primary School.



Firstly, I hope everyone had a fantastic summer break. We were delighted to see the return of all our students on Tuesday. New students arrived with smiles and the first few days have seen a remarkably smooth transition, with our school year beginning on a high note. A heartfelt welcome goes out to all our new families joining our school community. A reminder that assemblies are held on Monday morning from 9:00am to 9:10am and families are always welcome to attend.

I'd like to thank the staff and our School Council President for their exceptional dedication and tireless work behind the scenes over the holidays. Big thanks to Julie for organising much of the school management and dealing with the aftermath of the flooding. A big thanks also goes out to Tara, Sophie and Geof who spent multiple days at school completing behind the scene work.

Over the school holidays and past couple of days, we have had the great fortune of adding exceptional individuals to our team. We extend a warm welcome to Moira Ruff, who joins us in the capacity of tutor, Suzanne Gilbert, who assumes the role of Mental Health and Wellbeing Leader, and Tammy Woodgate, who takes on the responsibilities of cleaning the school. Profiles of our new staff members can be viewed later in the newsletter. Additionally, we are still in search of a classroom teacher for the junior classroom (F-3), with the position set to commence in Term 2. So far, the kids have been working like superstars in the one classroom.

Attached to this letter is a Parent-teacher interview slip, providing parents with the opportunity to schedule their appointments later this month. Please ensure these slips are returned by Tuesday, February 13th. We highly encourage all families to attend these interviews, as they offer an excellent opportunity to reach out to the classroom teacher with any questions or address any concerns that you may have. These conversations should be held without the student present, so any concerns can be transparently discussed at the start of the year.

COVID still persists, if your child displays any symptoms, it is advisable to conduct a test. The Department of Health recommends that staff and students who test positive for COVID-19 isolate for a minimum of 5 days and do not attend school until their symptoms resolve. If your child is not feeling well in general, it is recommended to also keep them at home. Our school still has an ample supply of Rapid Antigen Test (RAT) kits, so please reach out if you need one.

Best regards,  
Aidan Johnston



## SCHOOL COUNCIL



Buchan Primary School will soon conduct elections for its 2024 school council members. Nomination forms will be distributed in the upcoming newsletter (15/2). We encourage new individuals to consider joining school council — your diverse perspectives are invaluable. This year, council meetings are scheduled for the third Monday of each month, twice per term, with sessions lasting between 1 and 2 hours. Your active participation would greatly contribute to the collaborative efforts of our school community.

## SCHOOL STREAM

If you are a new family and have not registered on School Stream, please reach out to Aidan. School Stream is the preferred communication platform and all school updates are disseminated through School Stream. **It is very important all families are registered on this platform and keep themselves updated.** Additionally, our newsletter will be distributed fortnightly and handed out Thursdays.



## GRADE 5-6 CAMP

Sometime next week, parents of Grade 5/6 students will receive permission forms to attend the Sovereign Hill camp. This year, the other schools attending this camp are Swan Reach Primary School, Bruthen Primary School, Nungurner Primary School and Metung Primary School. Please, kindly ensure that these forms are returned by the date on the form, as there is a short turn around. As it stands (which may change over the next few weeks), Mr. Johnston will be accompanying the Grade 5/6 students during the camp, while Mrs. Heather Nowell will be in the classroom with the remaining class members. For Grade 5 or 6 students who opt not to attend the camp, regular class activities will continue under the guidance of Mrs. Nowell.

## HOMEWORK



Please refer to the information in the newsletter on the Science of Reading. Each student is going to be given a “reading log”, this is a place for our students to record their nightly reading. 15 minutes a night can make a huge difference. Students who have not yet cracked the code will be reading phonetically controlled texts, while students who have mastered the code will take home rich authentic texts from the school library.



## SUNSMART

Just a reminder that as the temperature starts to creep up over summer and the UV rating stays high, that we are a Sunsmart school. It is encouraged that students wear sunscreen and hats are required for all outside activities (including playtime). **All students need to have a school broad brim hat this year** — these are purchasable off Julie in the office for \$7. Caps are no longer accepted and students with caps will need to stay undercover in the shade.

# Root 2 Leaves Holiday Works

Roots 2 Leaves have delivered an outstanding transformation to our bank area above the art room over the school holidays, this extends all the way across to near the playground. Their work involved reshaping the terrain, strategically laying geofabric to control weed erosion and installing beeching rock along the embankment. This comprehensive approach not only enhances the visual appeal of the space, but also addresses the practical concern of minimizing the need for regular slashing. The geofabric serves as an effective barrier against weed growth, reducing the frequency of maintenance and thereby contributing to significant cost savings for the school over time.



# Flag Poles

In 2023, schools were advised that they needed to install three flagpoles if they currently only had one, like we originally had. This was so that schools are able to display the Australian, Indigenous and Torres Strait Islander flags on their own individual flagpole. Our three flagpoles were installed outside the front of the school in December, 2023, and look fantastic!





# Reading at Buchan Primary School



Over Term 1, I plan to add a simple page or two that unpacks each of the “Big 6” areas of reading and attach one area of the Big 6 to each newsletter. However, to start, I thought I would choose the easiest and most noticeable area for any new families - which is phonics.

Reading is complex, early years (F-2) have a larger focus on word recognition during their class time that is dedicated to reading (phonological awareness, decoding/phonics: getting the words off the page), while the older years (3-6) focus more on language comprehension (building knowledge, vocabulary, language structure etc.). Reading basically has a Big 6 of components that all need to be taught to create a proficient reader, these are: oral language, phonological awareness, phonics, vocabulary, fluency and comprehension.

All of these “Big 6” are explicitly taught, however, the focus on today is going to be phonics, students homework and the support we offer at school. This is because students homework (F-4) will align to the phonics pattern students are learning in class and it is important to know the supports in place at school.

## Systematic Synthetic Phonics

One of the six areas of reading we explicitly teach is **Systematic Synthetic Phonics (SSP)**. This is taught through a program called Sounds-Write.

**Phonics** refers to a method of teaching reading and spelling that focuses on the relationship between sounds (phonemes) and their corresponding written symbols/letters (graphemes).

**Systematic** refers to the fact that the teaching of phonics is organized in a logical and sequential order. Students progress from simple to complex phonics patterns, starting with basic letter-sound associations (e.g. the letter s makes the /s/ sound) and gradually build to more advanced concepts. For instance if you look at the table on the right, over the first two weeks our Foundation students are introduced to the sounds a, i, m, s, t and will be reading and spelling words such as mat, sat & sit by their second week of school. By week 10, the aim is for those students to be able to spell any cvc (consonant-vowel-consonant) word that uses single-sound correspondences, such as wet & red. Term 2 focuses on word structures and Term 3 on digraphs (e.g. sh makes the /sh/ sound).

Foundation (Initial Code)

Term 1	
Week 1	a, i, m, s, t
Week 2	a, i, m, s, t
Week 3	n, o, p
Week 4	b, c, g, h
Week 5	d, e, f, v
Week 6	k, l, r, u
Week 7	j, w, z
Week 9	x, y, qu, ff, ll, ss, zz
Week 10	VCC and CVC word structure (e.g. elf and cat)

The **synthetic** part refers to putting sounds together (blending) to read words, such as "c--a--t" to say "cat." When writing, students break words (segment) into sounds, such as splitting "dog" into /d/ /o/ /g/ to spell it. Spelling and reading have a very symbiotic relationship and Sounds-Write is a highly successful approach to the teaching of reading, spelling and writing. There are banks of activities that students complete to blend and segment words, students are engaged and get to feel success.

Ideally, Systematic Synthetic Phonics (SSP) is only focused on for the first 3 years of school (F-2). Afterward, students explore word meanings (morphology) and word origins (etymology). Sounds-Write ensures that there is ongoing revision of spelling patterns previously learnt. Furthermore, every morning, students enjoy a lively 20-minute literacy daily review, dedicating 5 minutes of this review to reinforce previously learned letter-sounds and spelling patterns that help move short term memory to long term memory through retrieval practice.

## What does this mean for you?

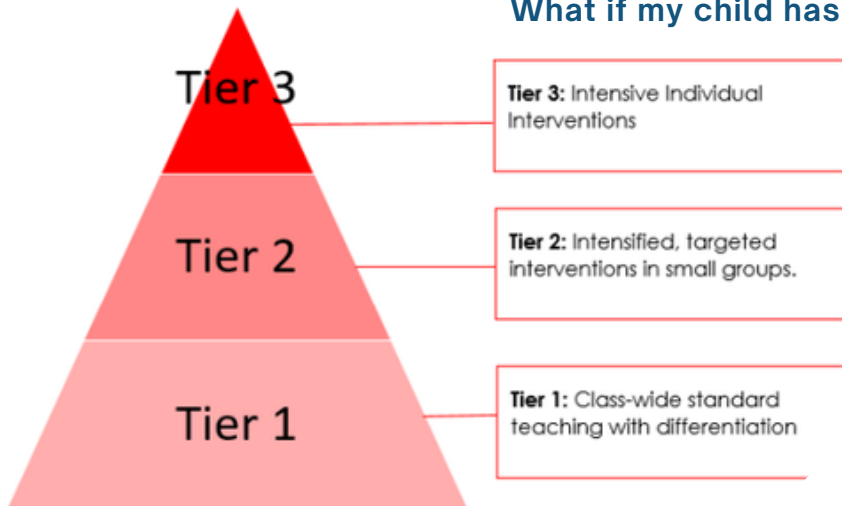
As part of homework, we provide your child with specially designed books known as phonetically controlled or decodable readers from Foundation to Grade 4. These books are closely connected to the sounds your child is currently learning in school and serve to reinforce their reading skills. Older students (Grade 3/4) will be given some books that have either complex phonics patterns (e.g. the /eer/ sound like in sphere, clear or engineer) or morphemes they are learning (depending on student ability). it is **strongly recommended** students spend 10-15 minutes to read their book each night and get someone to sign it. **This is extremely important for students in lower grades (F-2) who are going through lots of orthographical mapping and older students who are behind the expected level of achievement.**



# Reading at Buchan Primary School



## What if my child has fallen behind?



Buchan Primary School uses the Response to Intervention (RTI) Framework. This multi-tier approach to classroom learning enables teachers to identify the abilities of individual learners and provide additional instruction to learners who may benefit from support in smaller, more targeted settings.

Buchan Primary School is fortunate to possess a team well-versed in evidence-based literacy instruction. The process begins with the classroom teacher identifying concerns in areas like oral language, phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary etc., through thorough assessments. For instance (keeping with the phonics theme), if an older student struggles with decoding (phonics), a specialized assessment reveals gaps in their understanding of spelling patterns, an example could be where a student may not recognize patterns like "ay" making the long a sound and the rule/generalisation being that ay goes at the end of a syllable or word, as seen in "tray." Students are expected to master the ay pattern by the end of Grade 1. Addressing these gaps for students who have not learnt this involves focused interventions, including targeted small group/Tier 2 sessions in the classroom with Aidan or Tara. Alternatively, Moira oversees additional targeted Tier 2 intervention support and leads Tier 3 interventions, which entail very intensive 1-to-1 sessions with students identified as being at the biggest risk.

In cases where articulation issues might be identified, our speech pathologist, Morgan, steps in. Depending on the issue, Morgan might provide precise models for correct sounds and implement specific articulation exercises for students to enhance the coordination of articulators, including lips, tongue, and jaw.

Additionally, as of last year - we now conduct thorough screenings for **all** kindergarten students in November, before they commence school in January. Only Aidan or Morgan administer these screenings. Early identification is our primary focus, allowing for timely and tailored interventions. The screening results furnish valuable insights into each child's literacy strengths and weaknesses, empowering classroom teachers to implement personalised interventions right from the students inception to Buchan Primary School, ensuring a strong foundation for success, opposed to a "wait, see and hope for the best" approach.

## FAQ

Won't my child catch up later?

See the below quote below from Dr Snow (Co-Founder of La Trobe Universities Reading Lab)

**Pamela Snow** @PamelaSnow2 · Aug 21, 2023

We've known for decades that it's perilous for children to be behind by year 3. It's extremely difficult to genuinely catch such children up. High quality Tier 1 instruction is needed as a matter of urgency for ALL children, not just the lucky ones 🍀

What is the difference between phonics and systematic synthetic phonics?

Phonics just refers to the relationship between sounds and letters and can be taught in various ways, such as analytical phonics (analysing whole words). However, systematic synthetic phonics (SSP) is the gold standard and what research considers to be the most effective. SSP follows a well-defined scope and sequence, introducing sounds in a logical order and has the direct teaching of phonics rules, with regular assessment to ensure mastery before moving on. Additionally, previous sounds are constantly reviewed in the SSP block (and in daily review).

What happened to the old readers with the levels?

Leveled readers are based on a different model of instruction, known as balanced literacy. Leveled readers will often require children to guess words based on the picture rather than by sounding out or applying rules learnt in class, thereby bypassing the opportunity for orthographic mapping. See the image on the next page from Decodable Readers Australia.



Fewer than 1 in 5 students who are behind in Year 3 catch up and stay caught up



# Science of Reading

VS

# Balanced Literacy



unknown word = track

## Strategy:

Learn the sounds. Decode the words

## Teacher:

“Blend the sounds to read the word.”

## Student Response:

“/t/ /r/ /a/ /ck/ - track”

## Strategy:

Look at the picture. What makes sense? Guess the word.

## Teacher:

“Look at the picture. What is Eric running on?”

## Student Response:

“red road?”



# NEW STAFF!

## MOIRA RUFF TUTOR



Moira, a Sounds-Write practitioner, will be visiting Buchan P.S. on Tuesdays and Thursdays to work 1:1 and in small groups with students focusing on their literacy goals. Each session involves reading decodable text, writing and learning through games with a multisensory approach. Moira provides students with time for review, and ample practice time, with the goal for students to achieve automaticity and confidence in their reading. She will also facilitate Spelling Mastery sessions in small groups. Moira enjoys connecting with her students, “Ensuring students are happy and comfortable is a huge priority. That gives them the best chance to thrive in the classroom. I have a huge passion for helping young people reach their reading and writing goals.”

Moira, originally from Melbourne, moved to East Gippsland in 2010 and lives in Marlo, with her husband, Simon, and two boys Owen and Link aged 7 and 9. She loves outdoor adventures, family time and is looking forward to being involved in the Buchan community.

## SUZANNE GILBERT

### MENTAL HEALTH AND WELBEING LEADER

I am very excited to be working at Buchan Primary School this year as the Mental Health and Wellbeing Leader. Mental Health and Wellbeing Leaders are being rolled out in every Victorian primary school over a four-year period. Outer Gippsland was fortunate to be part of the first allocation last year and I did my training whilst working at Clifton Creek Primary School.

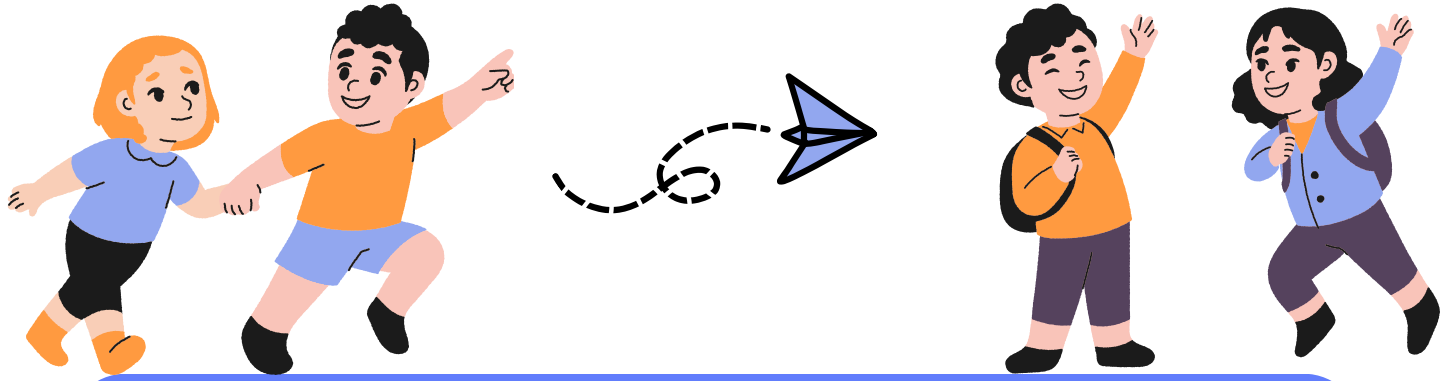
This year at Buchan Primary School, it will be my job to work alongside staff and monitor our students’ social and emotional learning. If needed, I will facilitate referrals within our school or to external agencies. I will also support staff in building their knowledge of mental health and wellbeing in the primary school setting and will promote a whole school approach.

I have been teaching for many years, in the State, Catholic and Independent settings; in Melbourne schools, Mornington Peninsula schools and now East Gippsland schools. Working in a rural school that is part of a close-knit community is a totally new experience for me. I am really looking forward to working with and getting to know the students, staff, and parents/carers in this new role.

I will be working Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday and the alternative week, Tuesday and Wednesday. I can be contacted via email: [suzanne.gilbert@education.vic.gov](mailto:suzanne.gilbert@education.vic.gov), or phone: 5155 9241.



Pictured below is a schedule of events that will be held over Term 1. Please continue to monitor School Stream and each fortnightly newsletter, as events are always being added!



## Upcoming Events - Term 1

February 1:	Optional Hot Dog Lunch Orders
February 7:	MARC Van
February 7 & 9:	Grade 1 and Foundation Testing (English Online Interview)
February 8:	Optional Toasted Sandwich Lunch Orders
February 15:	Optional Roadhouse Lunch Orders
February 21, 22 & 23	Parent-Teacher Interviews
February 21:	MARC Van
February 22:	Optional Hot Dog Lunch Orders
February 26 - February 29:	Grade 5/6 TUBBS Sovereign Hill Camp
February 29:	Optional Toasted Sandwich Lunch Orders
March 6:	MARC Van
March 7:	Optional Roadhouse Lunch Orders
March 11:	PUBLIC HOLIDAY LABOUR DAY - NO SCHOOL
March 13:	NAPLAN Start (writing for Grade 3s&5s)
March 14:	NAPLAN (Reading & Language Conventions for Grade 3s&5s)
March 14:	Optional Hot Dog Lunch Orders
March 15:	NAPLAN (Numeracy for Grade 3s&5s)
March 21:	Optional Toasted Sandwich Lunch Orders
March 22:	TUBBS Cross Country (All Ages/Grades)
March 25:	NAPLAN Finish (Catch up 13th to 25th)
March 28:	Optional Roadhouse Lunch Orders

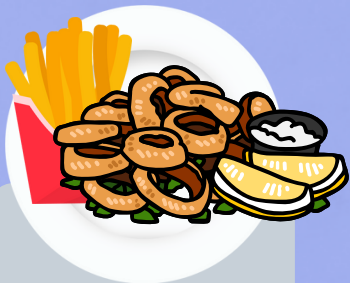


# BUCHAN

# ROADHOUSE

## LUNCH ORDER MENU

Jane at the Buchan Roadhouse has simplified the menu in 2024. She requests that parents stick to the 3 menu items, with the additional \$1 gravy addon. Buchan Primary School will continue to offer students the option of a Roadhouse lunch 3 times per term. **All orders need to be in the day before at the latest (on the Wednesday). Alternatively, if you prefer, you can organise this with the Roadhouse directly.**



CHIPS AND 3  
CALAMARI  
\$5



CHIPS AND 2  
DIM SIMS  
\$5



CHIPS AND 3  
CHICKEN  
MEDALLIONS  
\$5



TUB OF GRAVY  
ADD +\$1

## DATES - TERM 1

THURSDAY 15TH OF FEBRUARY  
THURSDAY 7TH OF MARCH  
THURSDAY 28TH OF MARCH



## FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE INFORMATION FOR PARENTS

Every Victorian child should have access to the world of learning opportunities that exist beyond the classroom. The Camps, Sports and Excursions Fund helps ensure that no student will miss out on the opportunity to join their classmates for important, educational and fun activities. It is part of making Victoria the Education State and the Government's commitment to breaking the link between a student's background and their outcomes.

### CAMPS, SPORTS & EXCURSIONS FUND (CSEF)

School camps provide children with inspiring experiences in the great outdoors. Excursions encourage a deeper understanding of how the world works while sports teach teamwork, discipline and leadership. All are a part of a healthy curriculum.

CSEF is provided by the Victorian Government to assist eligible families to cover the costs of school trips, camps and sporting activities.

If you hold a valid means-tested concession card or are a temporary foster parent, you may be eligible for CSEF. A special consideration category also exists for asylum seeker and refugee families. The allowance is paid to the school to use towards expenses relating to camps, excursions or sporting activities for the benefit of your child.

The annual CSEF amount per student is:

- \$125 for primary school students
- \$225 for secondary school students

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### MORE INFORMATION

For more information about CSEF visit:

<https://www.education.vic.gov.au/about/programs/Pages/csef.aspx>

### HOW TO APPLY

New applicants should contact the school office to obtain a CSEF application form or download from the website below.

If you applied for CSEF at your child's school last year, you do not need to complete an application form this year unless there has been a change in your family circumstances.

You only need to complete an application form if any of the following changes have occurred:

- **new student enrolments;** your child has started or changed schools this year.
- **changed family circumstances;** such as a change of custody, change of name, concession card number, or new siblings commencing this year.

Check with the school office if you are unsure.



## Parent / Teacher Conversations

### Wednesday 21<sup>st</sup>, Thursday 22<sup>nd</sup> and Friday 23<sup>rd</sup> of February

We will be holding Parent/Teacher conversations on Wednesday the 21st, Thursday the 22<sup>nd</sup> and Friday the 23<sup>rd</sup> of February. These early parent-teacher interviews are designed to establish open communication, set collaborative goals and address any concerns promptly. Please indicate the time that best suits you to meet with your child's teacher. If we do not get a returned form by the 13<sup>th</sup> of February, you will be randomly assigned a time.

Please write three time slots that suit you and we will try to accommodate you the best we can. Confirmation times will be sent home on Thursday the 15<sup>th</sup> of February.

Thanking you  
Aidan Johnston and Julie Cameron

Parent(s) Name \_\_\_\_\_

#### Wednesday the 21<sup>st</sup> of February 2024

3:30	3:45	4:00
4:15	4:30	4:45
5:00	5:15	5:30

#### Thursday the 22<sup>nd</sup> of February 2024

3:30	3:45	4:00
4:15	4:30	4:45
5:00	5:15	5:30

#### Friday the 23<sup>rd</sup> of February 2024

3:30	3:45	4:00
4:15	4:30	4:45
5:00	5:15	5:30

**Please return by Tuesday the 13<sup>th</sup> of February, 2024!!**