



School Council Newsletter

SEPTEMBER 2023



As Term 3 draws to a close I think we can all agree it has been nothing short of action packed. Not just in activities but in change, news and so much more.

From camps, and district sports. To Hoop time and production rehearsals. To saying a sad farewell and a happy hello.

Term 3 certainly had it all! I hope everyone, Staff, Students and Parents enjoy every moment of the upcoming holidays. We have all certainly earned the rest!

See you under the tree
Ange

The end of term 3 will be closed with a sad farewell to Deb and an exciting evening at our school production to look forwards to. The kids are all so excited about this night and there are plenty of tickets left if you still need to book!

We will keep this newsletter short as we know that families are feeling very overwhelmed with the number of activities and therefore comms to go with them. We bid you a fabulous final week of term 3 and enjoy the well-deserved school break.

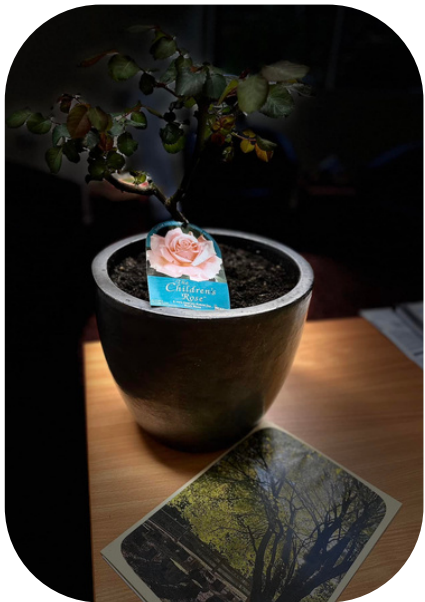




Farewell

At our last council meeting we farewelled our Principal Deb. We thanked her for not only her contribution at our school but also for her long career in education by presenting her with a children's rose to take home to watch grow and bloom with the hope it reminded her of the children she has helped to do the same.

The common bond and what brings the group of parents and staff together to sit on Council is the children of the Patch so it seemed a fitting gift. I share with you my note to Deb from my council presidents report:



I would like to take this opportunity to acknowledge Deb on behalf of Council as she transitions into the next and exciting chapter of her life. Change is never easy. Not for the person making the change nor for the people left to adjust. It comes with many emotions to manage. Excitement, fear, trepidation, and joy.

Deb, I hope that as your time at The Patch draws to a close you find that joy and excitement starts to diminish the sadness that comes with leaving somewhere that you have invested so much of yourself into. I hope you know that your work will continue and grow, and that over these final weeks you enjoy the celebrations and recognition of your time not only at The Patch but your long career in Education.

We wish you nothing but the best and sincerely hope that you enjoy your retirement, your family (especially those Grandkids of yours) and the freedom to travel whatever new path you choose to experience.



As school council president my absolute favourite thing to help with is anything where the kids are involved! However, there is a serious side to the role, one which was more prevalent this last term than before.

I had the absolute privilege of being involved in the selection process of our incoming Principal (along with staff members, parents and DET representatives). It was a daunting, exciting, educational and at times anxiety inducing role. The obvious highlight of the process (and one I won't forget soon) was the opportunity to offer the position to James Burnside as our incoming Principal. Over the last week you would have read the official announcement and the introduction that James himself sent our community (attached below in case you missed it).

I am beyond excited for everyone to meet James as he takes on the role of our principal. His genuine enthusiasm and excitement to begin his journey with us is infectious. There are plans in the making to welcome him officially to our school so keep an eye out for those notifications.

I'd like to take this opportunity to thank the School Council for their work throughout this process. They ensured it was seamless and supportive and I know they are excited to begin working with James as well.

keep reading

FOR A MESSAGE FROM JAMES

Dear Parents & Carers,

I am thrilled to introduce myself as the new principal of The Patch PS from Term 4! I have big shoes to fill, with Debra Herrmann having sixteen highly successful years establishing strong community connections, an exemplary outdoor learning environment and a student-centred culture, amongst many other achievements. I hope to build on these strong foundations for many years to come. Before I tell you about some of my hopes for our school, I need to answer the biggest question I have been asked: who am I? I am an experienced principal with a passion for empowering a school community to make every child feel successful. After teaching for a number of years and then becoming a curriculum coach in Pakenham, I took an acting principal role at Wandin Yallock PS in 2018. Being someone who values knowing every child and family individually, I quickly fell in love with being in a smaller, community-based school. That led to my ongoing appointment as principal of Seville PS later in 2018.

At Seville PS I was able to fully realise my vision of catering for the individual needs of every child while making sure every member of our school had a voice. We implemented a learning program that was centred around students' ownership of individual learning goals and their choice in how they achieved their goals. We focused on celebrating effort and growth, so every child had the chance to achieve and feel successful. We established strong communication of current learning and achievements to parents so they could contribute and celebrate their child. We introduced lunch clubs during break times that were chosen by students, which included gardening, drawing, wheels club, board games, Lego, dance and many more. We introduced veggie patches within our sustainability program as we promoted more outdoor learning opportunities and the role of being a responsible citizen.

We built connections with community groups and clubs to create greater opportunities for our students and establish a tight-knit community. Through these initiatives for four years, we were able to achieve:

- Significantly improved academic results, highlighted by 100% of students achieving benchmark growth and 69% of them in the top two bands for Numeracy in NAPLAN;
- Improving student attendance from 90% to 94%;
- Tripling Prep enrolment numbers;
- Becoming a leading school for School Climate due to high results in all school surveys – students, staff and parents;
- Which resulted in Seville PS having a high performance rating for overall achievement by 2021.

During 2022, I made the difficult decision to leave Seville due to my family – my wife Michelle, daughters Grace (7) and Maya (5), and son Nate (2) – and I deciding to relocate to Queensland. Being an active family that love the outdoors, I wanted to put my family first and experiment with what life would be like in the sunshine state. Fortunately, due to my successful time at Seville, I went straight into a principal role at a larger school of 455 students in Brisbane for a year. It was an amazing experience leading a school with a high number of First Nations families. I was honoured to take part in many traditions with our Goori Elders, such as dances, story-telling and walking through sacred sites on North Stradbroke Island. It opened my eyes to how different cultures view community differently, and allowed me to experiment with further initiatives in my quest to create an inclusive school environment for all. In Term 2 this year, with our family having spent a year in Queensland, we realised that being close to family was the most important thing to us. So, we made the decision to come back to the hills in Victoria as our permanent home (with all our family residing in Monbulk and Macclesfield). However, my daughters Grace (in Year Two) and Maya (in Prep) had one request: wherever we went, they just wanted to be at daddy's school. So, we decided we would choose the school together. We wanted a school that valued community. That had gardens and loved the outdoors. One that wasn't too big so we could know everyone in it. One where I could further my dream of making every child feel successful and valued. We watched advertised jobs come and go for four months until we finally found one that ticked all our boxes: The Patch Primary School. I took a risk in only applying for your beautiful school, but I wanted a school that I envisioned seeing myself at for many years to come. One that matched my ethos and ambitions, and one that would be a great fit for my family to become a part of. I am so excited to begin my time with you all in just four weeks as both a principal and a community member!

In Term 4, my main goal is to immerse myself in our school community and to make sure every member is heard. From students to staff, parents to volunteers, I want to talk and listen, and get to know what everyone values and hopes for in our school. Be prepared: I love a good yarn! Expect to see me walking our grounds before and after school whenever possible (please approach me to say hello if you see me), visiting each classroom to greet our students each day and having an open door as often as possible. In addition, I encourage you to keep reading our Compass dates regularly, as I love to get your opinions on school ideas through online surveys.

For now, enjoy your time with Deb and celebrate hers and your achievements together. But, if you do have any further questions of me, feel free to talk to the school and they will forward on any pressing requests, as I won't have school email or Compass access until the beginning of the new term. I look forward to seeing you face-to-face on Monday, October 2nd, as we start this new chapter together at The Patch!

Regards,
James Burnside

COME ON A JOURNEY....

The Patch Primary School Presents

WILLOW THE WONDERER

*Willow the wonderer
Woke up one day
Wondering about happiness
And where it lay ...*

Thursday 14th September 2023

Discovery Church Mt Evelyn

Matinee performance 12:30 – 3:00 pm

Evening performance 6:30 – 9:00pm

Tickets on sale from 4pm on 3rd August

<https://www.trybooking.com/CKKOG>

As the “Willow the Wonderer” production opening night draws closer, I think mention needs to be made of the people who won’t get a standing ovation at curtain call. Teachers and staff. Your work to get the kids performance ready whilst also continuing your everyday class plans and keeping the school running is nothing short of amazing. The kids are taking so much pride in their work and its obvious they can’t wait for the very excited audience that is coming their way. Your belief in their ability and your building of confident performers is very much appreciated.

Volunteering parents/friends who are working on the food, backstage, fundraising, advertising etc. As Patchfest has taught us “It takes a village” and once again our community is showing up and working together. You are the unsung legends of events such as this!

This is our schools first production since 2017. Our Grade 6’s were then just Preppies. It has been a long time since we hit the stage and I want to wish everyone a huge Chookas (Theatre slang for break a leg!).



Social Media @The Patch



We understand that not everyone has a social media account or even wants one! And those that do, know just how good a social media detox can be for the soul every now and then. However, it does prove to be a fast way to get information out to our community when needed, or if you need to find something fast.

Obviously the first point of information is Compass. **Please make sure your email is up to date with Kim in the office.**

The school has a Facebook page run by the staff
The Patch Primary School | Facebook

We also have a family's page. Please be aware that this is run by parent volunteers. There is no staff involvement. It is a good place to ask for playdates, check in the files section to find lost newsletters or information, find out about free dress day or for any other community information sharing

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/familiesofthepatchps>

Families of The Patch Primary School Group | Facebook

There is a page for the Nest that is currently under construction as it has been inactive over lockdown to some degree. We will share the link for that once it is up and running again.



Our school council members 2023

President: Ange Ellis

Vice President (Term 3): Emma Taylor

Treasurer: Marie Schoenmaker

Secretary: Mikhaela Bourke

Parent Council Members

Nadine Goodall

Kathryn James

Tex Moon

Peter D'Abico

Staff Members

Karen Robinson

Tania Blandthorn

Michelle Rayner

Deb Herrmann

Alesha Sangster

Community Member

Jo Rouse

Who to contact

If you have anything you would like to discuss or have raised by someone on council, please do not hesitate to reach out to Ange or any of our members. In the meantime, please check the link below to see if your concern or issue is something school council can help with. A gentle reminder that our parents volunteer their time, and may not always be available.

<https://www2.education.vic.gov.au/pal/school-council-powers-and-functions/policy>