



Geraldton Primary School

Inspiring Generations



Geraldton Primary School Newsletter

No 1 – February 2020



IMPORTANT DATES TO REMEMBER

Term 1, 2020:

- School commences for staff – Thursday 30 January
- Welcome to new Families to GPS Orientation – Friday 31 January
- School commences for students – Monday 3 February
- Parent Welcome BBQ – Thursday 13 February
- Student Census – Friday 14 February
- P & C Meeting – Monday 17 February
- Assembly (School Councillors) – Friday 21 February
- School Council Meeting – Monday 24 February
- Public Holiday – Monday 2 March
- Book Fair Viewing - Tuesday 3 March to Friday 6 March
- Book Fair Buying Week - Monday 9 March to Friday 13 March
- Harmony Week Incursion – Friday 20 March

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PRINCIPAL'S REPORT

Dear Parent/Carers

Welcome to a new school year at Geraldton PS and thank you for choosing our school. We have 388 students enrolled currently and have had a very smooth (albeit very hot) start to the year. Our classes are at capacity in Kindergarten, Pre-Primary, Year 2, Year 4 and Year 6 and we have very limited spaces in Year 5 which we are required to keep free for Local Intake Area students. Space is available in Year 3.

Staffing Update

We have had some changes to the original staffing line up from last year. Please see below:

Fiona Angelatos - 0.5FTE Acting DP Semester 1 whilst Rachel Rutter is A/Principal at HSS. Working on Tuesday, Wed and Thursday.

Alyse Wilson - 0.5FTE Acting DP (SEN) Semester 1 whilst Rachel Rutter is A/Principal at HSS and working on Monday, Thursday and Friday.

Kelly Friesen - 0.4 Sem 1 with Sheree Fishwick in Room 4, Year 5. Working on Monday and Tuesday. Sheree Fishwick in Room 4, Year 5 on Wed, Thurs and Friday.

Jessica McLaren - 0.8 - Mon to Thurs in Room 5, Year 5

Haley Langman - 0.2 on Fridays in Room 5, Year 5 (Sem 1)

Courtney Whyte - 0.2 on Mondays in Room 11, Year 3. Crystal Murray - 0.8 (Semester 1) - Tuesday to Friday in Room 11, Year 3.

Noria Jefcoate - 0.8 on Mon, Tues, Thurs and Fri in Rm 14, Year 1. Haley Langman - Wednesdays in Room 14, Year 1 (Term 1).

All other teachers remain the same.

Mrs Laela Sherrah, Library Officer, has made the decision to retire at the end of February and we will recognise her service to education and Geraldton PS in a few weeks before she embarks on her retirement adventures.

Ms Makeesha Dalgety, AIEO will be continuing on in her new role with the Girls Academy at Geraldton Senior High school and will not be returning to Geraldton PS. We will also acknowledge her service to education and Geraldton PS in a few weeks.

Term Planner

Is currently being updated and will be sent home at the end of the week. In the meantime please see the front page of the newsletter for important dates.

IMPORTANT Coronavirus Note to Parent/Carers-

Dear parent/carer

Acting on the latest information re novel coronavirus from the Department of Health, the Department of Education is implementing the following for public schools.

Students and staff who have been in the Hubei Province of China

Students and staff who have been in the Hubei Province of China must be isolated in their home for 14 days after leaving the Hubei Province, other than for seeking individual medical care. They are not able to attend school, school events, day care centres or residential colleges. This also applies to parents/carers, staff, contractors, visitors and volunteers on school sites and at school events.

A medical certificate is not required for the student to return to school.

Students and staff returning from mainland China

Students and staff arriving out of (including transiting through) mainland China **from 1 February 2020** must be isolated in their home for 14 days from the time they leave mainland China. They are not able to attend school, school events, day care centres or residential colleges.

Students who returned from (including transiting through) mainland China (excluding the Hubei Province) or Hong Kong **prior to 1 February 2020**, are being asked to stay at home until 14 days after leaving mainland China or Hong Kong. Staff who returned prior to 1 February are asked to self-monitor and remain home if symptomatic.

A medical certificate is not required for the student to return to school.

While the risk of the virus spreading is low, this 14 day exclusion is a precaution to ensure the safest possible environment for children. After 14 days, if the student has no symptoms they may attend school.

Students and staff in close contact with a confirmed case

If a student or staff member has been informed by Public Health authorities they are a close contact of a confirmed case of the novel coronavirus, irrespective of whether they have developed symptoms, they cannot attend school, school events, day care centres or residential colleges until their local public health unit informs them that it is safe for them to do so. This also applies to parents/carers, staff, contractors, visitors and volunteers on school sites and at school events. Evidence from the public health authority is required for the student to return to school.

The [Department of Health website](https://ww2.health.wa.gov.au/coronavirus) at <https://ww2.health.wa.gov.au/coronavirus> has more information on the virus and a **WA Coronavirus Hotline, on 1800 300 243**.

If your child will be away from school for the reasons outlined above, please contact the school to let us know when they were last in China and to discuss any support for your child's learning while they are absent from school.

We will ensure that students' good standing is not impacted where they are absent through isolation as outlined above.

Equipment & Uniforms

We are very grateful for your organisation of uniforms and having the students arrive with the required equipment and we thank you for that. Please ensure every item of clothing and equipment is clearly labelled with your child's name. We all know there is a mysterious void that hats and particularly school jackets disappear into. Labelling will help us to rescue said items from that void.

Homework

Class teachers will be sending out an information about homework in the next couple of weeks. For now, homework consists of regular reading as literacy skills form the foundation of our learning, so time spent reading each day is an excellent habit for your child to develop. Here is the link to the schools' Homework Policy.

[Geraldton PS Homework Policy](#)

Communication

The Seesaw App and the Schoolzine apps are our main form of communication with parents. We strongly recommend that all parent/carers download these apps on their mobile devices. They are easy to use and we love that. Teachers will outline their communication processes to you. You can email (but most people use the Seesaw app) for communicating about any issues that arise regarding your child.

If you wish to have an extended conversation with your child's class teacher, a request for a meeting is preferable as we wish to give you our undivided attention. Morning drop off times are pretty hectic and not the best times for lengthy conversations. Please be aware that emails will be responded to in work times and we thank you in advance for your understanding with this.

Healthy Habits

Our school actively promotes healthy habits! Please ensure your child has a broad brimmed school hat (clearly labelled). We have 'Crunch'n'Sip snack breaks where students are encouraged to enjoy a piece of raw fruit or veg. In addition, students are encouraged to bring in clearly labelled water bottles into their classrooms so that they stay hydrated.

Please consider the quality of the lunch you pack each day. Lunches that include plenty of vegies, protein and some healthy fats are best for optimum learning.

We do not permit soft drink to be brought it to school. Please remember to check with your child's class teacher if you wish to bring in a communal birthday cake/treat. We have many students who have specific dietary requirements and/or food allergies. We are an Allergy Aware school and request that you do not send in whole nuts or nut paste products.

Allergy Aware School

Allergies are very common and increasing in Australia, affecting around 1 in 5 people at some time in their lives. There are many different causes of allergy and symptoms vary from mild to potentially life threatening.

In most schools some children are anaphylactic.

Common allergens for anaphylaxis are:

- foods (e.g. peanuts and tree nuts, shellfish, fish, milk, egg, sesame and soy)
- insect bites (e.g. bee, wasp, jumper ants)
- medications (e.g. antibiotics,)
- latex (e.g. rubber gloves, balloons, swimming caps)



At GPS we use information provided by parent/cares to identify students at risk and their known allergens and inform all staff, including relief staff and Canteen staff about students at risk.

In the Daily management of students with anaphylaxis we:

- Confirm that an Individual Anaphylaxis Health Care Plan that incorporates an Australian Society of Clinical Immunology and Allergy (ASCIA) Action Plan is completed for students at risk.
- Record relevant information on SIS.
- Confirm parents have provided a prescribed AAI (Adrenaline Auto Injector) that is within date.

GPS staff undertake undertake the ASCIA online anaphylaxis training program which includes prevention strategies and how to recognise and respond to anaphylaxis, including hands-on practice with adrenaline autoinjector trainer devices.

Some of the strategies to reduce the risk of exposure to known allergens include:

- Taking **reasonable** steps to minimise the risk of exposure to known allergens for *identified* students including:
- confirming that students anaphylactic to insect stings wear shoes at all times;
- establishing rules precluding the sharing of food;
- supervising young children with anaphylaxis during meal breaks;
- ensuring students wash their hands before and after eating;
- regular cleaning of environmental surfaces; and
- **advising parents that the school is allergy and nut aware and requesting them not to send foods with whole nuts or nut pastes to school.**

** This request does **not** apply to foods labeled as 'may contain traces of nuts' as this applies to many foods and excluding them all is not practical.*

- Parents of children with anaphylaxis should be advised of the importance of teaching their child to eat only food provided from home or another safe source, e.g. foods from the school canteen that have been determined to be safe.

Student Health Care

A reminder to return any Medical Plan documentation to Mrs Simpson at the Front Office. This applies to students who require specific actions/plans for a range of common conditions. Forms are available for common conditions. For other conditions the generic health care form or a plan provided by a medical practitioner can be used.

The following plans are available from the Front Office should you require one or more of them:

- Severe allergy/anaphylaxis
- Minor and moderate allergies ☒ Diabetes
- Seizure
- Asthma
- Activity of daily living
- Administration of medication
- Emergency response plan for students with special needs
- Generic health care plan (for all other conditions).

[Parent Information Brochure – Student Health Care](#)

Parent/Carer Helpers

We love helpers in our classrooms and the children love it too. Please see your child's class teacher if you are available and then the Front Office for the completion of required forms. Throughout the year, there are several events that you are welcome to attend and which also require parent/carer help, including assemblies, incursions, excursions, sports carnivals, fundraisers, welcome bbq, special events, etc.

The P & C Association are always on the lookout for new members and the first P & C Meeting for the Year is on Monday 17 February. Please look out for information closer to the date.

Relationships are Everything

We strongly believe that developing strong and effective relationships between home and school are vital for a great education for your child. What we have in common is a responsibility to teach and support children and clear, open and collaborative relationship is vital to build and grow.

You are your child's first teacher and we are privileged to be working in collaboration with you to provide an all-round education which helps your child grown into the person they have the potential to be.

This is an excerpt from a teacher which I think is pretty apt.

“You may not realise it, but you've been teaching your child for years. You teach your child through the manners, respect, resilience and confidence you live out each day. Simply watching you order your coffee teaches your kid so much. Do you greet your barista by name? How do you interact with the cafe staff? Do you scroll Facebook while you wait, or do you chat with the people around you? Do you say thank you? Your child watches all of this, day after day, and they learn from you – not just how to order a coffee but how to interact with others, how to wait, how to treat those in positions of service, how to show gratitude. During these seemingly small interactions our children watch and listen and learn. You are your child's first teacher and their lifelong teacher. You. The work that I do, the work that any classroom teacher does, is secondary to the teaching that you do every single day of your child's life.”

IPS (Independent Public School) Opportunity for Geraldton PS in 2020

There is an opportunity for Geraldton PS to apply to become an Independent Public School in 2020 as part of Cohort 8.

Becoming an IPS provides an opportunity to empower our school community to make local decisions across a range of school operations to enhance education outcomes for students based on our individual context.

IPS is about reimagining the potential and possibilities for our school with the flexibilities to respond to the unique needs of our school community so that we are all working for a common cause.

I have been the principal of an IPS school from 2013 to 2016 prior to beginning at Geraldton PS in 2017 and been able to utilise IPS flexibilities to provide a high level of innovation and strategic direction for the school.

An Independent Public School is a public school that has demonstrated its capacity to use its increased flexibilities and responsibilities to make local decisions across a range of school operations to enhance education outcomes for students.

Independent Public Schools:

- have greater independence for local decision making which directly reflects the needs of their students and communities
- establish dynamic and open governance relationships with the people in their communities
- have continued access to central and regional support services
- are supported by the full range of resources and infrastructure that comes with being part of the Western Australian public school system.

Applying to become an Independent Public School is a decision made by each school, in consultation with the school council and local community. The school community must consider its capacity to take on the additional accountabilities of being an Independent Public School, the local community's support for change and the school's operational performance.

Here is a link to the IPS (Independent Public Schools) Program for your interest.

<https://www.education.wa.edu.au/independent-public-schools>

PLAYGROUND SUPERVISION AFTER SCHOOL

Please ensure that you closely (visually and within close proximity) supervise your children in the school grounds after school. This means remaining close by if you allow your children to play on the playground equipment. Please note, the playground equipment outside Room 16 is for children aged 6 to 12 years.

Students are not permitted to play in the playground without a parent/carer in situ.



A reminder about the Kiss & Go Zones Protocols:

They work efficiently if everyone abides by the time restrictions and moves on. Cars can also shuffle up to the next free space while waiting for their kids. This allows cars to enter the drop off zone from the back, rather than attempting to parallel park in front of the school at a busy time. Also, if you use these Kiss & Go zones you should encourage your kids to move quickly out of school so they are ready to hop in the car when you arrive.

If your kids aren't out the front ready when you arrive, you need to move on and let others use the facility.

Please do not park and then leave your car to drop off students in the Kiss and Go Zone.

As a guideline, please keep the Kiss and Go drop off times to a maximum of 2 minutes.

It would be appreciated if parent/carers using the Kiss and Go zones follow these guidelines.

GPS CANTEEN

Did you know that the GPS Canteen now has online ordering facilities? Online Canteen Orders can now be done online at www.quickcliq.com.au. It is very easy to set up and use.



The first P & C Meeting for 2020 will be on Monday 17 February 2020.

BACK TO SCHOOL ANXIETY

Starting school, going back to school, moving classes, new teachers, new students – it's natural for there to be some anxiety about this and I am talking about both students and parent/carers. Here are few tips and articles about how you can support your child if they are feeling anxious about any of the above.

Going back to school, or heading off to school for the first time, can stir anxiety in the bravest of hearts. Whether it's anxiety around school, separation from a parent, exams, a performance, sports, the dentist, or the type that isn't connected to anything in particular, 'Hey Warrior' empowers kids with the information they need to feel stronger, braver, calmer, more able to manage their anxiety and thrive.

She has a lovely video (click on the link below)

itled Hey Warrior – Anxiety Explained, Kids Empowered that you can view. She also has a book of the same title "Hey Warrior" - A book for kids about anxiety.

Understanding where anxiety comes from, and why it feels the way it does is a powerful step in turning anxiety around.

<https://www.facebook.com/heysigmund/videos/going-back-to-school-or-heading-off-to-school-for-the-first-time-can-stir-anxiet/775582152641870/>



What to Do (and Not Do) When Children Are Anxious

How to respect feelings without empowering fears by Clark Goldstein, PhD

1. The goal isn't to eliminate anxiety, but to help a child manage it.
2. Don't avoid things just because they make a child anxious
3. Express positive—but realistic—expectations.
4. Respect their feelings, but don't empower them.
5. Don't ask leading questions.
6. Don't reinforce the child's fears.
7. Encourage the child to tolerate their anxiety.
8. Try to keep the anticipatory period short.
9. Think things through with the child.
10. Try to model healthy ways of handling anxiety.

Tackling back-to-school anxiety

The hot, sticky weather has reached its sweaty peak and you're being bombarded with stationery and uniform adverts. It can only mean one thing: the holidays are almost over and it's time to head back to school.

Starting a new school year can be an exciting time, but also an [anxious](#) one. Lots of kids – and their parents – feel nervous in the build-up to their first day back. This is really common, but that doesn't make it any less stressful! Having your child attend school for the first time or starting a new school can create even more [anxiety](#).

Preparation is key to dealing with situations where there are lots of unknowns. The more things feel familiar and controlled, the more your child or young person can relax and feel confident about what's happening.

Here are some strategies and tips to make the transition back to school a positive experience.

(Click on the link above to access the Beyond Blue website).

Welcome again – we are looking forward to another wonderful year of teaching and learning at Geraldton PS.

Regards

Jacqui Quartermaine, Principal

