

# What's on in the West

Wangaratta West Primary School Newsletter

## IMPORTANT DATES

**Monday 11th March**  
**Public Holiday**

**Wednesday 13th March**  
**NAPLAN begins**

**Monday 25th March**  
**Grade 3 overnight camp**

**Wednesday 27th March**  
**Whole School Cross Country**

**Thursday 28th March**  
**Last day of Term 1**

TERM 1 WEEK 6 | 8.3.24

This fortnight has been a scorcher! Credit to our kids, they have carried on despite the heat and haven't let a little (beating) sun deter them from their games of tiggly/cricket/basketball. Clubs this week have been a very popular way to escape the heat with some airconditioned relaxation (Minecraft Club and Loom Band Club were both definite winners!)

We have made a change to games on the oval as of this week, with a schoolwide ban on tackling. We believe this decision is in the best interest of our students' safety and well-being as the oval is very dry and hard at the moment, and any form of tackling/bear hugs seem to always lead to hot heads and accidents. By banning tackling, we aim to minimize the likelihood of injuries and create a safer, more positive playing environment for all students.

We have also been made aware of the fact that a number of our students are using Snapchat to communicate with their peers before and after school. This platform can be used as a great way of communicating, but it also comes with risks (particularly for primary school aged kids which is why the age limit for use is 13+). As such, later in this newsletter I've provided some important information for parents and carers to ensure the safe use of this platform from the Parents' Ultimate Guide to Snapchat (available via <https://www.common sense media.org/articles/parents-ultimate-guide-to-snapchat>).

There is also a range of information available on the eSafety Commissioner website available via <https://www.esafety.gov.au/key-topics/esafety-guide/snapchat>

# REMINDERS

## Absences

Please text any absences to 0477 343 814 or call 5721 3491. It is a legal requirement that all absences are explained.

## Signing Students In/Out

Please sign your child or children in and out at the office if they are arriving at school late or being picked up early. For early pick-ups, we ask that parents/carers please go directly to the office.

## Late Arrivals

All classes (including specialist classes) will begin at 9:05am so we ask that students please make their way in to classrooms by 8:55am.

## School Hours

Just a friendly reminder that staff supervision of students in the yard before school begins at 8:45am. Prior to this, all staff are in a staff briefing each morning and thus cannot monitor the yard. We understand that this timing may be difficult for some families which is why we have Out of School Hours care available each morning from 6:30am. Alternatively, should you wish to drop your child off before 8:45am, you may do so but please be aware that formal supervision is not available at this time and we recommend that students do not arrive before 8:30am.

## Staff Correspondence

Staff can be contacted between 8:30am and 4:30pm on their working days. Out of hours contact may not be responded to until the following work day.

## Parents & Friends

This week we held our second P&F meeting for the year on Wednesday evening and it was absolutely fabulous to see a number of new faces (the size of the group growing from 6 to 16!) The AGM was held first with our newly elected team consisting of:

**President – Katrina Watts**

**Vice President – Tanya McAlpin**

**Treasurer – Jade Penney**

**Secretary – Gemma Howe**

I'd like to extend an enormous thank you on behalf of myself and the entire school to Cassie Kay who is our outgoing P&F President, having been in the role for the past 5 years. It has been such a pleasure working with Cass who has done a powerhouse of work behind the scenes to keep the P&F group together year after year, and organising fun events for the kids that have seen us raise \$20,000 or more each year in fundraising efforts.

Thank you also to Jane Elzinga who has diligently taken notes at each meeting as secretary, and to the rest of the core team who have been such active members of the group throughout last year. Now we look forward to another year with a hopefully even bigger group. Parents and Friends meetings will take place on the 1st Wednesday of every month and it is a great way to meet new people so come along for a great, social evening (7-8 PM in the staffroom).

## Upcoming events planned by the P&F:

**School Disco** – The time to dance the night (afternoon) away is approaching! We will once again be holding the school disco as a fun, social opportunity for kids to let their hair down and have some fun. Tickets are \$5 each (available for purchase upon entry) which gets them a juice box, an icy-pole and a great time. Times are as follows:  
Preps – 3:30-4  
1/2s – 4-4:30  
3/4s – 4:30-5:15  
5/6s – 5:15-6:00PM

Prep students can wear their party outfit or casual clothes to school for the day so that they are ready to head straight into the hall at 3:30 if they wish. All students will be asked to enter via the main hall doors and will exit at the back of the hall, ready to be collected from the OSHC outdoor area gate (next to the bike shed). Miss Murray will also be on the DJ Decks (thank you Maddi!). We hope to see everyone there.

**Mother's Day Breakfast** – This is a beautiful way to celebrate the special women of The West with a cooked breakfast and social morning. It will be held on Friday May 10th and I will once again send out details relating to how to order your hot or cold breakfast via Compass Tix early next term.

## Dates to Remember

Another important date is fast approaching – the preps have had their last Wednesday off and will be attending school full time as of this coming week (audible collective sigh from all Prep parents!) You made it!

Finally, our only last two curriculum days will be on **April 19th** and **November 4th** (the day before Melbourne Cup Day) so pop those dates in your diaries and we hope you enjoy that long weekend.

## Smile Squad Dental Packs

All children deserve a healthy smile, and the Smile Squad free school dental program is working hard to help make sure this happens. Your child(ren) will soon receive a free dental pack to bring home. The dental pack contains a toothbrush, full sized toothpaste, and an oral health brochure. Please take the time to read the brochure. It's full of helpful hints and tips to help your whole family eat well, drink well and clean well – for life.

Smile Squad is a Victorian Government program that provides free dental care to all Victorian government primary and secondary school students.

We will let you know when Smile Squad will be coming to our school to provide dental examinations. Although Smile Squad is not visiting our school just yet, you can access free dental for students by calling your local community dental clinic at Northeast Health Wangaratta (57225325) and asking for a Smile Squad appointment. They will be able to tell you when they will be visiting or assist you with an urgent appointment if required.

Visit the Smile Squad website at: [www.smilesquad.vic.gov.au](http://www.smilesquad.vic.gov.au) to learn more.

## School Council

Congratulations to our newly elected 2024 School Council members: Tania Pool (Department of Education) and parent members Tom Arnold, Simon Billings, Tegan Podubinski and Damian Watson. Tegan and Damian are both new parents to the school (with Preps Ida and Maisie respectively) so we are excited to have them join our group and look forward to the insight they can provide.

They join remaining members Rachel Hogan, Vanessa Manning, Danielle Ashmead, Hayden Broadbent and I. I am looking forward to working with this crew throughout the year!

I would like to sincerely thank the 2023 School Council group, and particularly Alexei Rowles and Andrea Matheson who are stepping off the WWPS School Council this year. Alexei and Andrea have both been brilliant to work with, sharing their ideas and opinions within our discussions and contributing to the giggles/raucous laughter along the way. I am so grateful to them both for their support over the years and extend my gratitude on behalf of myself and the school community!

Wishing everyone a wonderful long weekend, Kristy.

# REMINDERS

## Headlice

We endeavour to keep our school as free from headlice as possible. As such, any student who has live headlice or eggs will be sent home for treatment. They can return as soon as the treatment has occurred but please remember that it is vital that bedding, hats, clothing and any other soft furnishing/teddies that your child has used need to be washed. If you require a treatment kit, please let the office know.

## Lunch Orders

Lunch orders are available online through Munch Monitor on Mondays, Thursdays & Fridays at first break (11.20am).

## Bike Storage & Locks

We encourage our students to ride their bikes to school and would like to inform due to high numbers at the school now, we will require bikes to be stored in and out of the bike storage facility. Each student is required to have their own bike locks and are responsible for safely securing them to the bike racks.

## Compass Parent Portal

If you haven't accessed the Compass Parent Portal please call into the office for your unique log in letter. This is vital for informing of student absences, emailing your child's teacher and accessing of student reports.

## OSHC

All OSHC Queries/Bookings to 0407 004 059 or [wangwestoshc@gmail.com](mailto:wangwestoshc@gmail.com)





# Westy's Sports Report

## Ovens and Mitta Swimming

### Ovens and Mitta Swimming

Last Friday we took six students to the Ovens and Mitta swimming competition. Lucca B, Emma, V, Lucy B, Pasidhi G, Eva D and Xavier R all competed in two races over the day. Nearly all of our competitors achieved personal bests in their races. Lucy came third in backstroke. Lucca came second in freestyle and backstroke, qualifying her for the Hume Regional competition!



On Wednesday, Lucca went to Shepparton to compete. She came fourth in freestyle and second in backstroke, swimming another personal best time!

We are so proud of all the students who represented Wangaratta West over the last week! Well done everyone!







# BUDDIES







## What Parents & Carers Need to Know about

# SNAPCHAT

Age Rating

13+

Snapchat is a photo- and video-sharing app which also allows users to chat with friends via text or audio. Users can share images and videos with specific friends, or through a 'story' (documenting the previous 24 hours) visible to their entire friend list. Snapchat usage rose during the pandemic, with many young people utilising it to connect with their peers. The app continues to develop features to engage an even larger audience and emulate current trends, rivaling platforms such as TikTok and Instagram.



### Connecting with Strangers

Even if your child only connects on the app with people they know, they may still receive friend requests from strangers. Snapchat's links with apps such as Wink and Hoop have increased this possibility. Accepting a request means that children are then disclosing personal information through the Story, SnapMap and Spotlight features. This could allow strangers to gain their trust for sinister purposes.



### Inappropriate Content

Some videos and posts on Snapchat are not suitable for children. The hashtags used to organise content are determined by the poster, so an innocent search term could still yield age-inappropriate results. The app's Discover function lets users swipe through snippets of news stories and trending articles that often include adult content. There is currently no way to turn off this feature.



### Compulsion and Excessive Use

Many users spend vast amounts of time trying to become a Snap Star. Snapchat is offering a share of \$1 million, and the chance of online fame, to users who create and share the best videos. Children are therefore becoming obsessed with producing appealing content. The Spotlight feature's endless scroll of videos makes it easy for children to pass hours watching content, slowly getting addicted to the app.



### Sexting

Sexting continues to be a risk associated with Snapchat. The app's 'disappearing messages' feature makes it easy for young people (teens in particular) to share explicit images on impulse. While these pictures do disappear – and the sender is notified if it has been screenshot first – users have found alternative methods to save images, such as taking pictures with a separate device.



### Damage to Confidence

Snapchat's signature filters and lenses are a popular way for users to enhance their 'selfie game'. Although many are designed to entertain or amuse, the 'beautify' filters on photos can set unrealistic body-image expectations and create feelings of inadequacy. Continually comparing themselves unfavourably against other Snapchat users could threaten a child's confidence or sense of self-worth.



## Advice for Parents & Carers



Hi!

### Turn off Quick Add

The Quick Add feature helps people find each other on the app. This function works based on mutual friends or whether someone's number is in your child's contacts list. Explain to your child that this feature could potentially make their profile visible to strangers. We recommend that your child turns off Quick Add, which can be done in the settings (accessed via the cog icon).



### Choose Good Connections

Snapchat has recently announced that it is rolling out a new safety feature: users will receive notifications reminding them of the importance of maintaining connections with people they actually know well, as opposed to strangers. This Friend Check up encourages users to delete connections with users they rarely communicate with to maintain their online safety and privacy.



### Talk about Sexting

It may feel like an awkward conversation (and one that young people can be reluctant to have) but it is important to talk openly and non-judgementally about sexting. Discuss the legal implications of sending, receiving or sharing explicit images, as well as the possible emotional impact. Emphasise that your child should never feel pressured into sexting – and that if they receive unwanted explicit images, they should tell a trusted adult straight away.



### Keep Profiles Private

Profiles are private by default, but children may want to make them public to gain more followers. You may wish to customise the settings so that your child's Stories can only be viewed by people they know well in real life. In SnapMaps, enabling 'Ghost Mode' (again via settings) prevents your child's location being seen; it also nullifies SnapMap 'status', which visibly displays a user's exact location for as long as they stay there.



### Be Ready to Block and Report

If a stranger does connect with your child on Snapchat and begins to make them feel uncomfortable through bullying, pressure to send explicit images or by sending explicit images to them, your child can select the three dots on that person's profile and choose report or block. There are options to state why they are reporting that user (annoying or malicious messages, spam, or masquerading as someone else, for example).



### Chat about Content

Talk to your child about what is and isn't wise to share on Snapchat (e.g. don't post explicit images or videos, or display identifiable details like their school uniform). Remind them that once something is online, the creator loses control over where it might end up, and who with. Additionally, Snapchat's 'Spotlight' feature has a #challenge like TikTok's: it's vital that your child understands the potentially harmful consequences of taking part in these challenges.



## Meet Our Expert

Dr Claire Sutherland is an online safety consultant, educator and researcher who has developed and implemented anti-bullying and cyber safety policies for schools. She has written various academic papers and carried out research for the Australian government comparing internet use and sexting behaviour of young people in the UK, USA and Australia.



National Online Safety®

#WakeUpWednesday

Sources: Status of Mind Social media and young people's mental health; Life Hacks – Children's Commissioners Report (<https://support.snapchat.com/en-US/help/faq/parent-review>); @troom; Independent.co.uk (<https://independent.co.uk/news/technology/snapchat-parent-review-1180000.html>); @mashable.com (<https://mashable.com/article/snapchat-status-snap-maps/#page=two>); National Online Safety (2021) Young People and Sexting – All UK based Behaviour Research Findings from the United Kingdom, New Zealand and Australia



# Student OF THE Week

- Prep D** Rosie For being a kind and caring classmate and letting other students play with her. Thank you, Rosie!
- Prep J** Sam for always being such a kind class member. The care you show for those around you is beautiful.
- Prep M** Sienna For showing respect to your teachers and classmates. Thank you for always entering the classroom with a smile on your face, keep up the good work!
- 1B** Elouise for the resilience she has shown at the start of this year. We are so proud of the way you come into the class with enthusiasm each day. Keep up the great work!
- 1Z** Haddie for showing amazing listening on the carpet and always trying your best. You are a role model for the class. Well done!
- 2C** Lucia For always showing respect when the teacher is explaining and talking in class. You also show respect to your classmates and will work with anyone whenfor the resilience she is showing in the classroom. Lulu, it is inspiring watching you check in with your learning and seek support as needed. You are working through challenges so well! asked, treating all with compassion and care.
- 2WR** Eli For always coming into class with a ready to learn attitude and a cheerful smile!
- 3A** Alex for showing wonderful listening skills in the classroom and for making positive choices to help him learn and have fun in Grade 3. Well done, Alex! Keep it up!
- 3M** Clay For always demonstrating respect and kindness towards his classmates and teachers. Amazing work Clay!
- 4G** Grace For being a wonderful friend who is kind, caring and inclusive of everyone. Thank you Grace!
- Flynn For sharing his knowledge around place value including decimals during our maths lessons. Flynn made an amazing number line showing decimal tenths with playdough.
- 4S** Jewel The way that you always go above and beyond in all your work is amazing. You are given a task and see it as a challenge to push yourself. This does not go unseen and I think you are awesome!
- 4P** Lucy Lucy your bookwork is a joy to see—meticulous, organised, and filled with creativity. Your dedication to learning sets a shining example for your classmates. Well done, Lucy!



# Student OF THE Week

- 5VH** Maya for taking her learning into her own hands. Maya is reading at home and filling in her diary every week! Go girl! Keep it up!
- Pasidhi for showing our school value of success. Pasidhi does this by giving 110% to her learning each and every day! Keep up the great work Pasidhi!
- 5WJ** Ethan You have a never give up attitude, Ethan. You handled your injury like a pro and still managed to complete your work to a very high standard.
- 6L** Lachlan For demonstrating our school values of resilience and success by adopting a positive growth mindset towards his learning. His hard work and growth mindset are paying off, leading to achievements inside and outside the classroom. Well done, Lachy! I'm proud of you, mate!
- 6N** Hazel for the enthusiasm she demonstrates towards all learning tasks. You are to be congratulated on the effort you put into all tasks ensuring your work is of a high standard.
- Olive for always demonstrating great maturity and leadership in the classroom avoiding distractions to complete all work tasks. You are a wonderful role model Olive.
- PE** Lucy B for how beautifully you competed and supported everyone at swimming last week. You congratulated everyone on their efforts while also doing an amazing job yourself! You should be very proud!
- Auslan** Amelliah H for your amazing signing in Auslan. You worked so hard to complete your work to an excellent standard. Keep up the amazing work Amelliah.
- Music** Ava S Thank you for bringing your best into the music room and playing the instruments respectfully.



WANGARATTA  
HIGH SCHOOL

# 2025 YEAR 7

# INFORMATION EVENING

 - Tuesday 12th March  
 - WHS PAC

**6:00 PM - General Year 7  
Information**

**6:30 PM - SEAL (Select  
Entry Accelerated  
Learning)**



We invite future families to join us for our first Year 7 2025 information evening. We will be welcoming families from 5:45pm onwards, prior to our 6:00pm presentation.

Please enter the staff carpark via the open gate on Edwards Street.

For any queries, please contact our Enrolments Officer, Jodie Bell on 03 5723 0500 or at [Jodie.Bell2@education.vic.gov.au](mailto:Jodie.Bell2@education.vic.gov.au).





# OBrien Real Estate

JOYCE



## -COMMUNITY EASTER EGG HUNT-

Thursday 28 March  
4:00pm-7:00pm (hunt will begin at 6:00pm)

HP Barr Reserve Oval 2

This is a fundraising community event (\$5 entry per person). All money raised will go directly to North East Health Wangaratta Paediatric Unit.

There will be loads of entertainment to keep the kids busy but registration is a must!

Hunting baskets will be provided so no BYO. This means everyone gets an equal amount and no one misses out.

Food and drink will be available to purchase but you're welcome to bring a picnic and join in the fun!



Register here





*Women's*

# DANCE PARTY

*Fundraiser*

**An intergenerational celebration of sisterhood!**

- Tickets \$40 incl. entry & nibbles
- Drinks at bar prices
- 18 yrs & beyond
- Playlist of the best party anthems of the 60's, 70's, 80's, 90's, 00's and today
- All dance abilities welcome!



**15**

**MARCH**

**6.30 PM - 10.30 PM**

**QUALITY HOTEL GATEWAY WANGARATTA**

**CENTRE  
AGAINST  
VIOLENCE**

100% of profits supporting  
the Centre Against  
Violence

Scan QR for tickets or  
[https://events.humanitix.com/  
/women-s-dance-party-  
fundraiser](https://events.humanitix.com/women-s-dance-party-fundraiser)



DO YOU HAVE CHILDREN AGED 0-12?

JUNCTION SUPPORT SERVICES PRESENT:

# EARLY HELP PROGRAM

## WE CAN PROVIDE SUPPORT WITH:

- Developing & Maintaining Routines
- Understanding and learning how to respond to children's big behaviours.
- Building and strengthening attachment and connection between parent, child and siblings.
- Supporting School Attendance
- Regulating Screen Time
- Promoting Participation in the Community
- New Parent Adjustments
- Supporting children to meet developmental milestones



THIS PROGRAM IS COMPLETELY FREE  
& WE CAN TRAVEL TO YOU!

## HOW TO FIND OUT MORE...

- You can access the Early Help Program by self-referral with the team at Junction Support Services
- Speak with your local school, kinder, childcare or maternal health team.

155 Melbourne Rd  
Wodonga VIC

0260 437 400

<https://junction.org.au>



**SAVE THE DATE!**

**2024**  
**1 DAYER**  
17TH MARCH 2024

(raising awareness  
of depression and  
suicide prevention)



**Black Dog Ride**

**WANGARATTA  
VICTORIA**

**SAVE THE DATE  
SO YOU  
DON'T MISS OUT  
ON THIS ICONIC  
RIDE!**

Help us get the country talking  
and join your local 1 Dayer!

Departing Apex Park,  
Wangaratta VIC 3677

[www.blackdogride.org.au](http://www.blackdogride.org.au)

**8 AUSTRALIANS TAKE  
THEIR LIVES EVERY  
SINGLE DAY, THAT'S ONE  
AUSSIE EVERY 3 HOURS  
LOSING THEIR LIFE TO  
THE BLACK DOG.**

On the third Sunday of March,  
Black Dog Ride is uniting under  
one banner with one voice on  
one single day to amplify a  
national message of hope,  
awareness and prevention.

Scan the QR Code to register



For more information contact  
ride coordinator

Kurt Dissegna  
e: [kurt922@yahoo.com](mailto:kurt922@yahoo.com)  
or  
m: 0428 657 196





# HARMONY DAY

**A CELEBRATION OF MULTICULTURAL  
DIVERSITY AND YOU!**

**EVERYONE BELONGS**

**SATURDAY 23RD MARCH 2024**

**11AM TO 2PM BATCHELOR'S GREEN  
TONE ROAD, WANGARATTA**



Emergency Services  
Dance, music, singing  
Wangaratta Pipe Band  
Scouts Sausage Sizzle

Central Victorian Food Vans Hamper Raffle  
Lion Team Giant Lawn Games  
Spectacular Jumping Castles  
11:45am Children's Entertainment

**IN PARTNERSHIP WITH**



Families,  
Fairness  
and Housing



Rural City of Wangaratta



ENGAGE!