FROM THE PRINCIPAL

I would like to welcome everyone to the commencement of the 2015 academic year. In particular I would like to welcome families, students and staff who are new to the school.

It has been an exceptionally busy holiday break at the school and whilst it ended up being a little bit of a tight finish, the majority of work is complete. Seventeen Junior School classes are occupying brand new classrooms this week and an array of new learning spaces have also been created. I would like to thank all staff who have given up weekends and worked to late at night over the break to ensure that we would be ready for Monday. There is obviously still work to be completed on a number of projects and that will continue over the next few weeks.

For well over a year School Council, Senior Staff and I have been working towards a strategic goal of the purchase of additional land to give the school additional room to expand the range of activities the school offers. After a lengthy and detailed search the school has purchased a property of some 200 acres in Stoughton Vale. The annex to this campus has magnificent views of Melbourne and the You Yangs, a series of natural springs and backs onto the Brisbane Ranges National Park. The site is approximately 25 minutes from the school and Geelong and 35 minutes back to Werribee Station. The property enables us to further capture and secure the best experiences of the area that we live in. This purchase marks an exciting new chapter in the School's history. A more detailed pamphlet introducing the community to the site and how the school proposes to use it is being prepared for parents and the community. I thank School Council for their long term wisdom and support in enabling the purchase of this site.

Andrew A. Neal
Principal

Valentine’s Day
Please note that the school will not be accepting any gifts, flowers or cards for students on Valentine’s Day. If a delivery arrives for a student, it will be refused.

FROM THE DEPUTY PRINCIPAL – HEAD OF SENIOR SCHOOL

WELCOME
I would like to welcome back to Bacchus Marsh Grammar for 2015, all staff and students. It is very pleasing to see so many familiar faces return, as well as a large number of new faces across all year levels.

STAFFING
I would like to also welcome to Bacchus Marsh Grammar the following new staff members who will be teaching in the following subjects areas:

New Staff
Miss Melissa LAVENDER - English
Ms Seigrist PEEL - English
Miss Sophia MCQUILLAN - English
Miss Aine MURPHY - LOTE - Japanese
Mr Russell MATCHET - Mathematics
Mrs Eliza RIVETTE - Mathematics
Miss Ainslee McNAMARA - HHD & Science
Miss Georgie WORLAND – LOTE – Indonesian
Prof. Ian McDonald – TaCOL
It is very pleasing to welcome back from family and extended leave the following staff members who will be resuming teaching duties in the following subject areas

**Returning from extended leave**
Mrs Nicole HEYWOOD - Art
Mrs Annie OLIVER - Science

**SCHOOL UNIFORM**
Students may wear their summer uniform for Term 1. Please ensure that hair styles are within acceptable guidelines as set out in the school diary, the summer growth for a number of Senior School students needs addressed. I would like to bring to parent’s attention an issue that is arising with boy’s hairstyle.

A “new” hairstyle trend that quite a number of boys are adopting contravenes school requirements with regard to acceptable hair styles. As stated in the school diary, hair styles are to be **even or not overly graded** in cut and must be off the face.

Therefore, boys who have their hair style long on the top and short back and sides will be required to adjust their hairstyle to be evenly graded from sides to the top. This will need to be rectified by the end of this week.

Boys who attend school “unshaven” will be required to shave at the Health Centre or return home to shave before commencing classes. Ponytails for boys are not permitted.

Long hair for girls must be off the face, not obstructing eyesight. Hair tied back or using clips will assist with this.

Students are required to wear appropriate school shoes; *ballet style*, *fashion* and *skate* (flat soled) shoes are not acceptable.

A reminder that for days forecast to be 30 degrees and higher, that blazers do not need be worn to school. Students may also wish to wear their full school uniform on some of the forecast colder days. If for some appropriate reason, your child is unable to wear their normal summer or full school uniform, then they need to wear the complete sports uniform. **Do not mix** sports uniform with summer uniform or with full school uniform, i.e. ties must be worn with long sleeved shirts, and runners are not to be worn with summer or full school uniform.

Please review the School Uniform regulations as set out in the diary. If you are unsure, please ask prior to any significant “fashion” changes.

**Kevin Richardson**
Deputy Principal - Head of the Senior School

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**FROM THE DEPUTY PRINCIPAL – HEAD OF JUNIOR SCHOOL**

Welcome to the new school year. A big welcome to all our new preps and new students across varying levels of the Junior School. I look forward to getting to know the families who have joined us in the Junior School and sharing with you, your involvement in your child’s education.

All students in the Junior School appear to have settled quickly into the school routine. If your child is having any areas of concern I would hope you are working through these with your child’s class teacher. Please feel free to contact me at any time if you have any queries or concerns.

**Year Level Coordinators 2015**
Mrs Vanessa Stainton Prep A and Prep
Mrs Ros Pittard Year 1
Mrs Belinda Rzanovski Year 2
Mr Brendan McLoughlin Year 3
Mrs Dani Kiriazis Year 4
Miss Catherine Baldwin Year 5
Mr Travis Newton Year 6.

The Year Level Coordinators may be contacted at school on 5366 4800 or email school@bgq.vic.edu.au if you wish to discuss any issues regarding your child.

**New Junior School Staff**
I would like extend a welcome to the new staff in the Junior School for 2015:
Mrs Erin Bullen - Year 5 Class Teacher
Miss Imogen Murray - Year 3 Class Teacher
Miss Harriet Madams - Year 4 Class Teacher
Mrs Michelle Elcoat - Year 2 Teacher (Nee Mrs McCubbin)
Mrs Raelie Patterson - Junior School Science

**Returning Staff**
Mrs Zoe Cassar
Mrs Rachel Dale
Mrs Sara Antonovicz

**Staff Name Changes 2015**
Congratulations to the following staff who were married over the holiday break:
Miss Holly Watts now known as Mrs Holly McKay
Miss Michelle McCubbin now Mrs Michelle Elcoat
Brendan McLoughlin

**Junior School Leadership Positions 2015**
Congratulations to the following students for their award of leadership for 2015:
Junior School Captains: Ella Grahek and Zoli Earnshaw
Junior School Vice Captains: Jaz Ward and Nathan Harvard
Junior School Sports Captains: Bianca Iannazzone and Jacob Attard
Year 6 students are currently preparing applications to fill other leadership roles available to them.
Year 3 to Year 6 Information Evening
We understand that moving up into a new year level requires learning new routines and integrating new methods for organisation. At Bacchus Marsh Grammar, we recognise the valuable part parents play in helping their child settle into a new school year. To assist in making that transition smooth, we are inviting all parents of Year 3, 4, 5 and 6 students in 2015 to attend the information night. The information night is to highlight the daily routines, workbook and homework guidelines expected at these year levels.

Years 3-6 Information Night
When: **Wednesday, February 4th at 7:00pm**
Who: Parents of Years 3 - 6 students in 2015
Location: Gym
Agenda for the information night:

*Important Information*
- Curriculum
- School Diary
- Student Planner
- Homework
- Moodle
- Classroom Management
- Uniform expectations
- Student Health
- Bus safety
- Active Learning/Active Sports/Clubs program

Agenda for the workshops:
- Ask any questions about difficulties you might experience when reading with your child.
- Explore the different three reading strategies further and learn how to prompt your child to promote reading for understanding.
- Discuss the importance of reading the same book for multiple nights.
- Look at the difference between fluent, phrased and expressive reading.
- Learn to recognise what ‘good reading’ sounds like.
- Hand out practical tips and seeing a teacher model the prompts.

HUBS Programs
Learning Hub
The Learning Hub Program operates Monday to Friday from 3.05pm – 5.30pm during the school term. Please refer to the School Business Notice for further details about the program. Mrs Judith Clark oversees the Learning Hub and Sports Hub on a nightly basis, under the direction of Mrs Rachel Peterken. Mrs. Donna Blake is the Learning Hub Coordinator; Lauren Majewski is the Sports Hub Coordinator.

A reminder to parents that if your child is booked into the Learning or Sport Hub and circumstances change during the course of the day, please notify the administration office to ensure that we are not calling you and searching for your child at the end of the school day. If your child is a regular at the Learning Hub and is not attending on a specific night, this needs to be noted in your child’s diary or at the Administration Centre.

If you require your child to join the Learning Hub program, bookings must be received by 9.30am at Reception on the day required. Bookings will then need to be confirmed subject to availability.

Please note that you are no longer able to claim CCB rebates for this program.

The **Learning Hub contact number is 0408 548 058**
The Learning Hub now operates from Rooms L6 and 7. These rooms are located adjacent to the basketball court near the gymnasium. If students are participating in activities in other areas of the school, a note will be left on the door to direct parents to the activity area.

Sports Hub
Information about this program has been distributed. The program is open to all Junior School students and operates on Monday to Thursday afternoon for the remainder of the term beginning Monday 9th February. The program runs from 3.05pm-4.30pm. Students will be notified today of the group they have been assigned to if they have gained a place in the program.

The **sports offered are:**
- Monday: Golf and Games
- Tuesday: Hockey
- Wednesday: All Ball Sports
**Nuts and Nut Products**
At Bacchus Marsh Grammar, we have a growing number of students who have been identified with anaphylaxis, a severe allergic reaction particularly to nuts and nut products. In the interest of the safety of all students in our school, it is necessary that we ban students from bringing peanut butter sandwiches/rolls/biscuits and snack bags of nuts to school for snack or lunch. It would also be appreciated if parents could be careful in selecting food with nuts listed as an ingredient for their child’s lunchbox.

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**Junior School Adventure Playgrounds**
The Junior School Adventure Playgrounds are OUT OF BOUNDS at all times before and after school. I ask parents to please not allow any students or toddlers to use this equipment during the hours of 8.15a.m. - 9.00a.m., and 3.00p.m. - 4.00p.m. These areas are not supervised by staff during these times. Any student using the play equipment during these times will be administered with a lunchtime detention.

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**Uniform and Hair Regulations**
I encourage all parents to become familiar with the Uniform and Hair regulations published in your child’s diary. Some students have started back without attending to their hair. From next week class teachers and the Year Level coordinators will be conducting uniform, hair and jewellery checks. Students with issues that need attention will be administered with notification of what is required. Students will be required to rectify the problem promptly to avoid further consequences.

Please ensure that your child is wearing BMG school socks and sport socks. There has been an extended phase in time and it is now expected that all students are wearing BMG school socks and sport socks. Please note as per the student diary that runners may be black, white, gold or blue (Not fluoro) and school laces must be either black or white. Uniform consequences will be administered for breaches of these issues.

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**Working with Children Check**
It is a legal requirement that any person who works or voluntarily assists within the school environment has a Working with Children Check. Thank you to the parents who have already presented their Working with Children Check Card at the school office for inclusion on the school data base. Unfortunately we cannot allow helpers to assist with the children until your name is included on the school register. If you haven’t already done so, please present your Working with Children Check Card to Michelle Graham in the Principal’s office to ensure you are registered. Working with Children Check application forms are available on line. For current parents it is wise to check that your Working with Children Check is still valid.

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**Infectious Disease and Head Lice**
It is imperative that cases of infectious disease are reported to your child’s class teacher and to Jo Stanley in the Health Centre as soon as parents become aware of the illness. This includes cases of chicken pox, measles and the like. Thank you for your cooperation with this matter.

All cases of head lice with students need to be reported to the Health Centre or your child’s class teacher to enable us to monitor this closely in the Junior School. All children will be checked by our school nurse and first aid staff in cases of reports of head lice. Children in the same class of the child who has been infected with head lice will be checked by the Health Centre staff.

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**Pets and School**
Due to the number of students with allergies to various animals, students are not permitted to bring pets to school for their show and tell times.

Elizabeth O’Day
Deputy Principal - Head of the Junior School

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**The Learning Hub and The Sports Hub and Clubs.**
For each of these programs it is important and the parent/guardians responsibility to notify the program coordinators if there are any changes to your child/ren’s attendance on the day that they are to attend. This may be done by SMS to either related program on the following numbers:

- The Learning Hub - 0408 548 058
- The Sport Hub - 0428 315 081

or

Confirmations of absences may be phoned through the main school number on 5366 4800.

or

email the Learning Hub via active_learning@bmg.vic.edu.au

*A reminder for all students attending The Learning Hub, The Sports Hub and/or Clubs Program MUST have spare hat to wear. Students are expected to keep their spare hat in their school bag so it is available to them after school. The student’s spare hat is not required to be a school branded hat. Students who do not attend with a hat will be excluded from outdoor activities.

The Learning Hub operates out of room L7 room. A school map has been attached the full version of the newsletter for your reference.

The Sports Hub will begin Monday 9th February. Students in this program are also required to have a hat.

Looking forward to a great Term 1

The Hub team
**PREP-YEAR 2 READING NEWS**

**Invitation**

**Prep – Year 2 Parent Information Night**  
**When:** Monday 9th February 2015 at 7pm  
**Where:** BMG Gymnasium

Agenda for the information night:

**Reading**
- The different reading strategies that students need to use.
- Useful prompts that will help your child in developing these strategies consistently.
- The importance of promoting reading for understanding rather than decoding.
- The importance of the reading log book.
- Fun and effective ways to read with your child.

**Curriculum overview Prep – Year 2**
- Homework
- Classroom Management
- Student Health
- Bus safety
- Learning Hub, Sports Hub & Club Hub

**Prep – Year 2 Reading Workshops**
- Monday 16th February 2015 at 8.45am  
  (Prep Demonstration)
- Thursday 19th February 2015 at 8.45am  
  (Year 1 Demonstration)
- Monday 23rd February 2015 at 8.45am  
  (Year 2 Demonstration)
- **Where:** Meeting Point at the JS Library

Agenda for the workshops:
- Ask any questions about difficulties you might experience when reading with your child.
- Explore the different three reading strategies further and learn how to prompt your child to promote reading for understanding.
- Discuss the importance of reading the same book for multiple nights.
- Look at the difference between fluent, phrased and expressive reading.
- Learn to recognise what ‘good reading’ sounds like.
- Hand out practical tips and seeing a teacher model the prompts.

**Nici Deller**  
Director of Literacy Development & Support

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**SCHOLASTIC BOOK CLUB NEWS**

**SCHOLASTIC BOOK CLUB NEWS FEBRUARY 2015**

**Issue 1 is out this week**  
**Orders due by Thursday 12th February**

Yes, Book Club is back for 2015 with some exciting new changes!  
1. ‘Busy Bee’ has now been combined with ‘Wombat’ under the ‘Wombat’ name and ‘Extra’ is no longer a separate booklet but now incorporated with each age level catalogue so only one order form to fill.

2. BMG is now registered for LOOP (Linked Online Ordering & Payment system for Parents) which is replacing the old online credit card payment system and therefore no order forms to fill out. Orders will still be delivered to and distributed by the school to your child/ren.

See online version of our newsletter to get information on how to connect with LOOP which has a handy app for easy ordering. Basic ordering instructions are also located on the back page of each catalogue.

Each Prep – Year 7 family will receive a letter this week introducing new families to Book Club and outlining the changes.

**Di Dunn**  
Book Club Coordinator

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**EQUESTRIAN NEWS**

Following on from a very successful season in 2014, our Equestrian Team are back training and looking forward to our first competition on Sunday the 15th February at Geelong Grammar’s Dressage Day.

Throughout the year, our team competes in a range of events across all disciplines and at different locations. Students are required to have their own horse and be a member of Equestrian Australia.

If you would like more information please collect an information booklet from the office or contact Georgia Romaszko.

**Georgia Romaszko**  
Equestrian Coordinator
SS SPORTS
NEWS

“From the Gym”
Welcome Back

Welcome back to all students in preparation for another exciting year ahead in all things sporting at Bacchus Marsh Grammar. This year there are numerous Interschool ICCES events on the calendar with the introduction of the new ICCES Summer Tour to be held in Ballarat in Term 4 and ICCES Badminton and Table tennis to be held in conjunction with the Swimming Carnival in Term 1. We also have our major ICCES Carnivals, Football and the ICCES Winter Tour once again on our sporting calendar.

The Elite Sports Program continues to expand and athletes will also take part in an International Training Camp in Singapore in June/July.

The first major sporting event happens this week with the House Swimming Sports to be held on Friday. At the conclusion of this event the ICCES Interschool Swimming Team will be selected and swimming training will then take place for this team on Tuesday nights after school at Melton Waves.

Good luck to all our students this year and enjoy the great sporting landscape that Bacchus Marsh has to offer.

Fantastic Individual Sporting Success
Congratulations to the following students who have been performing brilliantly in their chosen sports:

- **Julia Bourke** - FedUni WestVic scholarship athlete won the Victorian Country u/18 Shotput Title as an Invitational athlete over the holidays. Julia backed this up with a Silver Medal in the Open Women’s shotput.

- **Mitchell Braiden** - FedUni Westvic scholarship athlete was part of the Victorian U/15 Indoor Hockey Team that won the National Title over the holidays. This was the first time Victoria had beaten NSW in these championships.

- **Anthony Failla** – Won a Sparring Gold Medal in the Australian National Taekwondo Championships 12-14 Age Group Under 65kg. What a fabulous performance!

Once again congratulations to all on a great week for BMG Mustangs in Sport!

In the meantime train hard, get active and stay healthy!

Andrew Perks
Director of Sport

LOTE
NEWS

Host Families Required
The LOTE department is seeking families to host a Japanese girl/boy from the 10th to 22nd March 2015. If you can assist please complete a Host Family Profile Form which is attached to the full version of the Grammar Weekly online.

For further information please contact Mr Love at school or through his email lovem@bmg.vic.edu.au.

Michael Love
Canteen News

Welcome to the 2015 school year. 2015 Canteen lunch order bags have been ordered and will be available soon.

All lunch orders require the following basic information:
- Students name
- Year level and Tutor Group/Class
- Lunch order
- Payment

*Where possible we ask that you provide the correct money with the order and under no circumstances will frozen foods such as icy poles/zoopey doopers be included with lunch orders.
*No credit accounts are available at the Canteen.

Senior School Lunch Ordering Procedure
1. A table is placed outside the canteen with a tub that includes lunch order bags and pens for students to utilise if they have not already completed orders at home.
2. Completed orders are to be “posted” through the slot in the canteen door by 9.30AM daily.
3. Senior Students are to collect orders from the canteen. Students in Years 10, 11 and 12 collect their own lunch off the respective shelf section from the canteen.
   Students in Years 7, 8 and 9 are to continue to collect their orders from the front counter in the lunch order pick up queue.

Junior School Lunch Ordering Procedure.
1. Each Junior School Class has a lunch basket in their classroom in which students place their completed lunch order bags. Junior classes send baskets with canteen monitors to the canteen by 9.30AM daily.
2. Lunch orders are filled and placed back into these baskets for collection by Canteen Monitors from each class prior to lunch.

Emergency Lunch Procedure
In our busy day-to-day lives the school understands that students and families may forget lunches and an emergency replacement lunch may be required. If this should occur all students are to report to the Main Administration Office for an emergency lunch requisition. Payment for the emergency lunch must be made to the canteen the next school day. Teaching staff will not be permitted to send students directly to the canteen for emergency lunches.

Students Years 5 to 12
Students in Years 5 to 12 will be sent to the canteen where they will be supplied with a basic sandwich/wrap, snack and drink meeting any dietary requirements the student may articulate.

Students Years Prep to 4
Parents/guardians of students in Years Prep to 4 will be contacted by the Administration staff for permission to give students the emergency lunch requisition and to check if there are any specific dietary requirements.

Canteen Volunteers
The School and canteen staff would greatly appreciate volunteer support from the school community and your assistance is always welcomed. To any parent who is thinking of assisting in the canteen in 2014, you are required to have a current Working With Children Check. Once you have received your card please present it to the Main Administration Office where a copy of the card will be kept in a confidential file.

Kerrie, Leanne and Janine.

BUS NEWS

Private Bus Service Reminder
Private bus services including all Werribee, Watergardens, Caroline Springs, Cairnlea and Sunbury/Gisborne buses are private bus services for students who live in the Werribee, Watergardens, Caroline Springs, Sunbury and Gisborne areas. Students who are not allocated a seat on these bus routes are not permitted to travel on these services at any time.

Late Bus Service
The late bus service is available from Monday to Thursday which departs the school at 4.30pm. Students requiring use of the late bus must put their name on the late bus list in the Main Office by the end of lunch on the required day. The size of the late bus is determined by daily demand. If students fail to put their name on the late bus list they will not be guaranteed a seat.

The cost of the Late Bus is $10.00 per trip and the fee will be charged to your next terms fee account. Please note if students place their name on the late bus list and do not inform the office that they no longer need the service by the end of the day the $10.00 fee will be charged to term fees. A copy of the Late Bus timetable is available from the Main Office.

Late Bus Service
MONDAY, TUESDAY, WEDNESDAY & THURSDAY PM:
4.30  Depart Bacchus Marsh Grammar
4.55  Coburns Central near Safeway Petrol Station (Coburns Road, Melton)
5.10  Caroline Springs Boulevard (service rd just after Chisholm Dr roundabout)
5.30  514 Derrimut Rd (Service Road between Rebecca Prm and Baden Powell Drive)
5.35  Werribee Plaza (Corner Derrimut Rd and Baggott Drive)
5.45  Werribee Railway Station
5.50  Corner Ballan Road and Whitton Grove
5.52  Corner Ballan Road and Manor Lakes Blvd (Shopping Centre Bus Interchange)
Public Bus Notice:
Student conduct when travelling on school buses in 2015

When travelling between home and school (visa/versa), students must adhere to various regulations regarding passenger behaviour.

It is every student’s responsibility to behave in a manner that ensures the safety and comfort of passengers and drivers.

To ensure your child’s and other passengers safety and the comfort, students will:
1. Behave safely at all times.
2. Respect the needs and comfort of other student passengers.
3. Behave appropriately at all times (e.g. no use of offensive language, fighting, spitting, placing feet on seats or throwing things in or from the bus).
4. Follow instructions of bus duty teachers and bus drivers.
5. Respect staff (duty teachers and bus drivers)
6. Respect other student passenger’s property.
7. If required hold a valid MYKI pass.

Please note: Disobeying these rules may lead to the withdrawal of access to school bus services and/or prosecution.

Lupco Arsovski, Bus Co-ordinator
Bacchus Marsh College

ADMINISTRATION
NEWS

St Bernard’s Catholic Parish
Bacchus Marsh

Sacramental Program for children attending local government and independent schools within the parish of Bacchus Marsh, Maddingley, Darley, Comadai, Parwan, Balliang & Balliang East, Rowsley, Myrning) and wanting to participate in the following sacraments:
Confirmation - Gr 6 or higher
Eucharist - Gr 4 or higher
First Reconciliation - Gr 3 or higher

should register immediately for ALL Sacraments at the Parish Office, 61 Lederderg Street, Bacchus Marsh, Tues to Fri 9am to 3:30pm.

Enrolments for all Sacraments (particularly Confirmation) must be completed by Tuesday 31 March 2015.
Attendance at all classes is compulsory. Dates of preparation classes will be given on enrolment. Fee $50 per child per sacrament payable on enrolment.
Enquiries: 5367 2069

Disclaimer: please note the school provides this newsletter space to local community activity based businesses and does not have an affiliation or endorse individual businesses.

UNIFORM SHOP
NEWS

“ON CAMPUS” TRADING HOURS
Mon & Fri: 12:30p.m. to 4:30p.m.
Wed: 8a.m. to 12noon
Bacchus Marsh Grammar “On Campus Shop”
Phone: 5367 4072

RUSHFORDS SCHOOLWEAR

RUSHFORDS TRADING HOURS
Mon-Fri: 9a.m. to 5.30 p.m. Sat: 9a.m. to 1p.m.
Shop 3-5 Watton Arcade, 28 Watton Street, Werribee
Phone: 9741 3211  Fax: 9741 3155
Introducing

Book Clubs **LOOP**
for Parents

**LOOP** is the **NEW** Scholastic Book Clubs **Linked Online**
Ordering & **Payment** platform for Parents.

If you want to pay by credit card for your online Book Club order, our new platform makes it easy! It eliminates the need for paper order forms plus your online order is submitted to the school safe and sound.

Log-in to [www.scholastic.com.au/LOOP](http://www.scholastic.com.au/LOOP) or download our **NEW** iPhone and iPad app from the App Store!

- For a quick start, just click on **ORDER** in the top menu or **REGISTER** first to save your details for next time
- Select your school and your child’s class
- Add your child’s first name and last initial (so the school knows who the book is for)
- Enter the item number from the Book Club brochure
- You can order for multiple children at once if they attend the same school
- All orders are linked directly to the school for submission to Scholastic. Books will still be delivered to your child’s classroom if you order by the close date
- There’s no need to return paper order forms or payment receipt details to your school!

Bacchus Marsh Soccer Club Inc.

Soccer Players Needed for 2015

All skill levels and all ages
Girls and Boys all Welcome
Girl’s teams, Open teams and Senior teams available
Training Wednesday and Friday nights

Registration Day-Sunday 15th February
11.00am – 2.00pm
Masons Lane Bacchus Marsh

Pre-season Enquiries:
bacchusmarshscorpions@hotmail.com.au
Chris Wallace 0425828307
Karen Yates 0425 878 251
http://bacchusmarshsoccer.org.au/

COACHES WANTED FOR ALL AGE LEVELS

If you want to help a family friendly club succeed on and off the field please email your interest and details to:
bacchusmarshscorpions@hotmail.com.au
SCHOOL PROCEDURES FOR THE BUSHFIRE SEASON – 2 February 2015

The way schools in Victoria respond to bushfires was revised by the Victorian Government in 2013.

Fire danger ratings and warnings have been introduced to provide clear direction on the safest options for preserving life when there is fire risk danger. These procedures are of particular relevance to Bacchus Marsh Grammar and most other schools.

The Fire Danger Rating system which includes six ratings from Low/Moderate to Code Red helps you to know when to leave early to ensure family safety on a bad fire day. The higher the Fire Danger Rating, the greater the risk to control a fire, therefore increasing the risk to lives and property.

Schools identified as being at highest bushfire risk will be closed on days declared by fire authorities to be Code Red. Bacchus Marsh Grammar has not been identified as a school at highest bushfire risk so we are not on the Bushfire at Risk Register. However, our location and the current dry conditions surrounding our campus require us to be vigilant and prepared. In recent weeks this fire season, there have been bush and grass fires within our school catchment area. The school monitors such events particularly as they may affect the operation of our bus service, road closures and of course any threat to our campus. When students are off campus at school camps or on other excursions at this time also require close attention and contingency plans which we have as a matter of course.

Some schools in the immediate vicinity of a fire, or facing a forecast Code Red Day may be closed with prior warning, or even evacuated in the event of a fire developing during the day. At Bacchus Marsh Grammar, we would monitor any such developments of a fire threat and advise parents of intended action.

Where possible, we will provide parents with up to three days notice of a planned closure. We will contact you directly by letter, email and SMS message with advice on planned closures and will confirm the decision to close by 12 noon the day before the planned closure. Clearly, for an emergency closure, the period of notice would be reduced. Similarly, should the bus service be partly or wholly effected, we would need to use SMS and email to advise parents. A clear imperative for all parents is to maintain the currency of contact details with the School Office. Any changes should be communicated to the Office immediately.

Once confirmed, the decision to close will not change, regardless of improvements in the weather forecast. This is to avoid confusion and help your family plan alternative care arrangements for your child. No staff will remain on site when the school is closed by the risk of fire.

We will also cancel any offsite activities (such as school camps and excursions) and out-of-school care if the activities are at risk. There may also be changes to school bus routes. Depending on routes, this may also occur on days when the school is not closed. Cancellation of any scheduled school activities will occur should there be an incident in the immediate area of an activity.

On high fire risk days families are encouraged to enact their Bushfire Survival Plan – on such days, children should never be left at home unattended or in the care of older children.

For those of us living in a bushfire prone area, the safest option when a Code Red day is declared is to leave the night before, or early in the morning of the Code Red day.
As part of preparing our school for the threat of fire, we have completed the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development’s self-assessment of our emergency preparedness. We have also updated our emergency management plan; reprioritised any maintenance works that may assist in preparing for the threat of fire and cleared our school grounds and gutters. Representatives of the local CFA have also visited our school to review our level of emergency preparedness and I have completed CFA training for school principals.

What can parents do?

Make sure your family’s Bushfire Survival Plan is up-to-date and includes alternative care arrangements in the event that our school is closed. Make sure we have your current contact details, including your mobile phone numbers. Keep in touch with us by reading our newsletters, by checking our school website www.bmg.vic.edu.au and by talking to your child’s teacher, any other member of the teaching staff or me.

Most importantly at this time of year, if you are planning a weekend holiday or short stay in the Bush or in a coastal area, you should check warnings in advance of travel and remain vigilant during your stay.

If your child is old enough, talk to them about bushfires and your family’s Bushfire Survival Plan.

You can access more information about school closures on the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development website – see www.education.vic.gov.au/bushfires, applicable to independent schools as well as government schools.

For up-to-date daily information on fires in Victoria, visit the CFA website at www.cfa.vic.gov.au or call the 24-hour Victorian Bushfires Information Line on 1800 240 667. A useful “App” “FIRE READY” may be downloaded free of charge from http://www.cfa.vic.gov.au/plan-prepare/fireready-app/ this “App” enables you to monitor fire activity within the immediate vicinity of your home.

What will the School do?

Fire events so far this and last year in the areas of Little River, Meredith, Lederderg, Point Cook, Gisborne, Craigieburn and Epping indicate that apparently safe suburban, urban fringe and regional areas are also susceptible to threat. Our community, surrounded by grassland, old mine sites and scattered eucalypt forests, is certainly at risk from a family and community perspective.

If a grass fire occurred near the school, an assessment would be made immediately about the risk of the fire affecting the school site. The initial assessment would be most likely be made regarding the impact of smoke on the site. If there was going to be smoke or any other issue from the fire, then all students would be immediately returned to their classrooms and a school ‘lock down’ would occur.

From this time onward information about the fire and any further actions to teachers in classrooms would be given via the school’s PA system. Also from this time onwards the school would be in the hands of the emergency services (Police, CFA and/or DSE fire services) who would be managing the fire response, and protecting the school from the impact of the fire (if required). To the North of the school property we are surrounded by industrial estates, the railway line and house properties that have mown most of the long grass, so this would reduce the risk of an ‘out of control’ grassfire impacting the school from the North. From other directions, more grassed and bush areas prevail.

At this point in time if such a situation occurred, we would use every means of communication with parents we have available such as SMS, email, website, special telephone message etc. to provide information to parents about the status of the emergency. School telephones could well be overloaded so this would not be an effective means of communication. Children would not be allowed to use their mobile phones unless under supervision of teachers … as you can imagine, if incorrect information is given out by a student then it could feed unnecessary rumour and panic amongst people outside of the school situation.

Andrew A Neal
PRINCIPAL