Important dates:

<table>
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<th>February</th>
<th>March</th>
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<td>9th Finance Committee</td>
<td>1st Preps first Wednesday at School</td>
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<td>14th Gr 5/6 Netbook Night</td>
<td>3rd Gym Prep-6</td>
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<td>14th School Council 6.30pm</td>
<td>6th MARC Van</td>
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<td>15th Prep Rest Day</td>
<td>7th MARC Van</td>
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<td>16th Classroom Information</td>
<td>10th Gym Prep-6</td>
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<td>Sessions</td>
<td>13th Labour Day holiday</td>
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<td>17th School Council nominations open</td>
<td>17th Gym Prep-6</td>
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<td>20th MARC Van</td>
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<td>21st Parent Teacher Interviews</td>
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<td>21st MARC Van</td>
<td>24th Gym Prep-6</td>
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<td>22nd Prep Rest Day</td>
<td>31st Gym Prep-6</td>
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<td>24th School Council nominations close</td>
<td>31st Last day of Term 1 – 2.30pm finish</td>
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CLASSROOM ACHIEVEMENT AWARD

Charlie – For listening carefully and doing his very best with his work. You have made a great start. Well done Charlie.

Danielle – For having a fantastic start to Grade Two.

Sam C – For working very well on all classroom tasks.

Noah – For starting the year with a positive and enthusiastic attitude.

Cameron – For making a great start to Grade Five and working independently to complete work tasks.

SCHOOL VALUES AWARD

Jayda – For being a very kind and thoughtful student. A friend to everyone.

Emma – For being honest and returning others belongings to them and ensuring that the correct person was thanked for finding the item.

Rachel – For an excellent week of behaviour and self organisation.

Callum – For being a great friend and helping others to settle into the new school year with ease.

Lily B – For working hard to complete all work tasks and completing a 5 Star Lotus Diagram.

BEFORE & AFTER SCHOOL CARE AWARD

Mollie
We would like to say a big welcome to our new Preps who have now completed six days of school. They have made a very smooth start and our thanks go out to their parents who have supported them to make a great start.

We welcome Olivia, Eliza, Jayda, Keira, Henry, Campbell, Zac A, Zac M, Nash, Mitchell, Spencer, Harris, Russell, Ryder, Darby, Harry, Liam, Lachlie, Charlie and Koby (who will be starting school tomorrow!)

We also welcome some new students to our school – Bella, Eric & Russell Johnson, Charlotte & Harry Evans and Alla & Hagan Perry.
Our Parent Information Session that was planned for tonight has been postponed until next Thursday, due to the extreme heat and total fire ban. Parents should have received notification of this yesterday.

If your family did not receive a text (bulk text message) alerting you to this at approximately 2.40pm yesterday, please contact the office.

I apologise for the short notice, but in our endeavours to make the Information Session as useful as possible for parents, I feel this is the best course of action.

Information sessions for each class will now be held on Thursday 16th February from 5.45 – 6.30pm for all Prep-6 grades. This will be an opportunity for parents to get to know the teachers and how their classes will operate through the year.

Following the Information Sessions, we will be holding a Family BBQ from approximately 6.30pm to welcome both new and existing school families. School will provide meat, bread and salads. We encourage everyone to come along.

Families attending are asked to complete the slip at the end of the Newsletter for catering purposes if you haven’t already returned the previous (green) note.

Parent /Teacher Interviews on Tuesday 21st of February. It will be a chance to discuss content covered at the Information Night as well as analyse the first few weeks of school for your child/children and to make clear plans covering academic and social aspects. At these meetings, each student’s learning plans will be discussed and put into place for the remainder of Terms One and Two.

On Tuesday 14th February from 5.45 – 6.15, we will be holding an Information Night for our Grade 5/6 students and parents to discuss the use of Netbooks for 2017. A lease agreement will be distributed and a user agreement will be discussed and signed off by the students and their parents.

Works in and around the new building have continued over recent days. The skip bin of rubbish has been removed and today the fences and work site toilet were removed.

Large portable screens have been installed in both the Grade 3/4 and 5/6 rooms. The senior room printer/photocopier has been relocated to these rooms and new school bag/locker storage cabinets will be delivered next week.

Dave, our gardener, has established mulch paths around the sides and rear of the rooms for easy access from the car park.

A dividing concertina door will be installed in coming weeks, allowing separation between the rooms when required.

Teacher desks have been purchased and installed.

The building now has full wireless capabilities, which will allow the use of netbooks by all staff and students.

The bulk gas tank has been removed from the school.

Quotes have been sought for a school wide PA system, which will be housed in the Office and connected to all rooms and outside speakers.

Parent and student help is requested in helping to keep our Raglan St. (dirt road) car parking area safe for all students. Over recent months we have put a number of aspects in place. Our main aim is that students are never required to be walking behind a car, as per City of Greater Bendigo school parking guidelines.

For new and existing families, we ask that:

- Where possible, you park on the school side of the road
- If you are parked on the north/paddock side of the road that your child, and you if walking with your child, cross between the white posts and walk along the front of the cars to get to your car.
- Students should not cross Raglan St. without teacher or parent supervision.
- If parked on the paddock side of the road but up near the Goornong Rd. end, we ask that you still cross between the white posts and follow the fence line.

Parent information sessions and family BBQ.
• With increased student traffic near the new building, we now ask that cars parked in front of the new buildings are parked nose towards the new fence so that students can follow the fence until they reach their car. Again, ensuring that students are never walking behind cars.
If your child is a regular user of this crossing, please discuss these guidelines with them. This will also be done in classrooms.

School Council have been in regular contact with COGB regarding the condition of the road. I have made a number of presentations at Small Town Meetings to COGB traffic staff regarding the condition of the road and our eventual aim of having the road sealed and kerbing and channelling completed.

**SCHOOL COUNCIL**

Our School Council is made up six Parent Representatives, three Staff Representatives and the Principal as Executive Officer.

Current School Councillors

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<td>Garry Van Wynen</td>
<td>Neil Aurisch</td>
<td>Gaye Saunders</td>
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<td>Kristen Harrison</td>
<td>Sharon Hipwell</td>
<td>Corrina Hartland</td>
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<td>Julie Liersch</td>
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<td>Steve Christensen</td>
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Our School Council operates on a March to March cycle. Nominations for the 2017/18 School Council will open at 9.00am on Friday 17th February and close at 4.00pm on Friday 24th February. An election will follow if nominations exceed positions. There will be three Parent Representative positions and three Staff Representative positions declared open. Elected parent School Councillors will serve a two year term.
Potential School Councillors can self-nominate or have someone nominate them. Forms will be available at the Office.
Once School Councillors are in place, sub committees and leaders for Finance, Buildings & Grounds and PVF can be organised.
The AGM will be held on Tuesday 14th March where the 2016 Annual Report will be presented.
The AGM will be followed by a regular School Council Meeting of the newly elected 2017/18 School Council.

**SCHOOL VALUES**

The school motto is - ‘Excellence Through Endeavour’

Our school values are:-
• Respect
• Honesty
• Tolerance/Inclusion
• Fairness
• Responsibility
• Trust
• Co-operation
• Organisation

Monday assembly awards will acknowledge great work in the classroom as well as students who are demonstrating the school values. Two awards per grade will be presented each Monday.
Work on these values is being covered in classrooms to allow the students an opportunity to fully understand the value, as well as build their skills and attitudes in each of the areas.

**TERM ONE CALENDAR**

Attached to the Newsletter today is a Calendar for Term One. It may be handy to put on the fridge and to write other dates on as they arise.
TEACHING AND LEARNING NEWS
A number of new initiatives and changes have been put in place in the curriculum being provided for the students this year. These aspects will be covered in further detail in the Parent Information Sessions next week.

Smart Spelling
This year we will be adopting the ‘Smart Spelling’ program. The program has an increased focus on spelling and grammatical rules. Words covered and weekly test words will involve set words and some chosen by, or for the student.
Junior students will move away from the ‘Magic Words’ for spelling purposes and weekly tests and will have weekly words based on the Smart Spelling Program.

Magic Words (Gold, Red, Blue etc.) will still be used on a regular/weekly basis for reading recognition testing and progress in Prep to Grade 4 where required.

Maths Groups
Grade 3-6 students will be involved in explicit skills based maths session each Thursday and Friday with Mr. C, Mr. Hartland and Mr. J. Units of place value, addition, subtraction, multiplication, division and fractions will be pre-tested and post tested over each 2/3 week unit. Students will be working in like skilled groups to build, reinforce and extend skills in specific areas. Groups will change as each unit topic changes. In each group, there could be students from any four of the grade levels involved.

Responsibilities and Respectful Relationships Program
During this year, students will be covering eight topics from the DET Rights, Responsibilities and Respectful Relationships curriculum as part of our school values work and Health Curriculum.
Senior students will begin the year with a focus on their personal strengths. Junior students will begin with a focus on Help-Seeking.
The eight values to be covered will include:-
- Emotional Literacy
- Personal Strengths
- Positive Coping
- Problem Solving
- Stress Management
- Help-Seeking
- Gender and Identity
- Positive Gender Relations

Bluearth
Each Friday, Grade 2 students will be combining to take part in ‘Bluearth’ activities as part of their Health/PE Program. The Bluearth Foundation has been set up to promote active living and improving kids’ physical, social and emotional health. Since its beginnings in 2000, Bluearth has helped create healthy lives for over 300,000 students in more than 1,000 Australian schools. Alice Fleay has accreditation to teach Bluearth after participating in training sessions at her previous school.

WHY BE ACTIVE?
Food for thought!
Being active can improve a student’s memory,
Encourage teamwork, reduce obesity.
Being active can increase a student’s self-esteem,
Develop confidence, reduce absenteeism.
Being active can enhance a student’s concentration,
Lengthen attention, encourage participation.
Being active can help students break out of the mould,
Develop leadership, set big challenging goals.
Being active can assist a student solve problems,
Progress test results, advance their knowledge.
QUICK SHEAR
A Quick Shear Review Meeting was held last Tuesday night. All aspects of the day were covered, with plans made for changes to some aspects for 2018.
As some sponsorship payments are still coming in and EFTpos reconciliations are being completed, final financial calculations are not yet completed.
We will provide this information in upcoming Newsletters.
Thanks again to all those who volunteered and attended on the day.

BEFORE AND AFTER SCHOOL CARE
As you may know, Claire and Craig Turner have set up Open Air Adventure Care to provide Before and After School Care at Axedale Primary School.
Before and After School Care is available from 6.30am – 8.30am and from 3.30pm-6.00pm Monday – Friday in the brick building.
Claire can be contacted on 0487 325 512 or check the website at www.oaac.com.au
The first two weeks have been very busy setting up lots of organisational details and child based activities.
Our school is pleased to be able to support Claire and Craig in their venture.
We welcome Claire and Breanna to our school in their current roles.

MULTI PURPOSE ROOM (MPR)
With the new classroom buildings, our brick building has now become a multi-purpose room to cater for a range of weekly activities.
Before and After School Care will operate from the MPR each day.
On Tuesday and Wednesday, Michelle Mannes will run Art sessions in the MPR.
Choir will use the MPR for practice each Wednesday morning.
Brekky Club will run from the MPR each Tuesday and Thursday.

BREKKY CLUB
Brekky Club runs each Tuesday and Thursday morning from 8.30 – 8.50am in or outside the MPR. Students will have access to a range of cereals, baked beans/spaghetti, porridge, toast and fruit. Students can choose if and when they come along to join in. Parents are most welcome to join their child for some brekky. Our Student Well Being Worker Ricky Cawley co-ordinates this most beneficial initiative.
If any parents are interested in helping Ricky prepare brekky, please fill out the slip on the Newsletter this week.

BREAKFAST CLUB
Many thanks to those who have volunteered to help with Breakfast Club. Thanks also to our sponsors.
Tuesday 14th February – Julie Liersch & Samantha Gilbertson
Thursday 16th February – Melinda Pengelly & Hannelie Schutte

FRESH FRUIT FRIDAY
Many thanks to those who have volunteered to help cutting up fruit on Fridays this year.
Friday 10th February – Jodie Black & Tanya Czuczman
Friday 17th February – Reneé Hedger & Liz Harrington

FAMILY CONTACT INFORMATION
It is extremely important that the school has up to date information about your children and their contacts etc. Please look through the forms sent home in your family envelope today, correct/add anything that you think needs changing/adding and return them to school ASAP. Many thanks for your support in this matter.

SAND PIT
Over the holidays a lot of work has been completed in our school grounds.
A big hit with the students has been the new and enlarged sand pit. Our thanks go out to Steve Browne who, with his trusty bobcat, was able to shape our large rocks into a great area for all ages.
**FENCE**
Our thanks go out to Andrew, Tanya and Kodi Czuczman for their work in constructing a little more of our timber fence outside the new building. It is a great improvement on the old one and is a great asset to this new area of our school.

**FRONT GATES**
New gates have been constructed for the McIvor Hwy. entrance and will be installed tomorrow. They will complement the fence and provide a safe entry and exit point for students and families.

**VEGGIE PATCH**
A big thanks to Jeanette Tenace for all her work in keeping the veggies watered over the holidays and to our *Before and After School Care* kids for their work with the veggies this week.

**LUNCH ORDER BAGS AVAILABLE**
- Insulated bag - $10
- Lunch wallet - $8

**ASTHMA MANAGEMENT PLAN**
At the beginning of each school year we require an updated Asthma Management Plan for those students who are diagnosed with asthma. Please organise your child’s 2017 plan as soon as possible and drop it into the office so we can update our records. Parents are also asked to check the expiry date on any medication which is kept at school and supply the school with new Ventolin etc. if required. Parents are reminded that we require each student to have their own spacer due to health regulations. Thanks for your assistance with this.

**STUDENT ABSENCES**
When your child is absent we require you to complete one of the tear-off slips attached and return it to school or enter the absence via our school app. More forms are available from your child’s teacher, the office or on our school website. It is an expectation of the Department of Education and Training that all absences are explained. Regular attendance is extremely important and it’s not okay to be away, unless your child is ill or has a valid reason. Studies have shown that there is significant negative impact on a child’s learning if they are absent for 15 days or more in a year.

**FOOD/WATER**
Students are strongly encouraged to bring a water bottle to school to have in the room while working. Water coolers are available in both buildings for the students to refill their bottles. A fridge is available near the Prep room for lunch/snack items such as yoghurts that need to refrigerated. Lunch orders need to be placed in the box near this fridge before 9.00am please.

**ART SMOCK**
All students are asked to bring along a named art smock to protect their school uniform. An old oversize cotton shirt usually does the job.

**INSTRUMENTAL LESSONS**
We have had a healthy number of students who have indicated an interest in drums, guitar and keyboard. Guitar lessons started yesterday and drums will commence next Monday. We are in the process of confirming a keyboard teacher. David Dewar conducts drum lessons each Monday morning at $20 for a 30 minute session. Jo Woodward will be teaching guitar on Wednesdays at $12 for a 20 minutes session. A drum kit is provided by the school. Guitars are available or students can bring their own. Please indicate on the slip at the end of the Newsletter if your child is keen on any of these opportunities.
BUS TIMETABLE
A draft Bus Timetable was attached to last week’s Newsletter for those who didn’t collect one at bookpack day. This may be refined over the first few weeks of travel. Ross’ phone number is 0438 894 742 and is at the top of the Bus Timetable. New bus travellers – please let the school know when your child will be starting to use the bus eg. some Preps may not use the bus for the first few weeks. Previous users- please text Ross to let him know if you will not be catching the bus in the mornings. Ross is happy to take messages from 7.00am.

SCHOOL HATS
A reminder that students are expected to wear their broad brimmed school hats during Term One. They are available for purchase at the Office for $11.

GYMNASTICS
Beginning on Friday 3rd March, all P-6 students will be travelling to the Bendigo YMCA each Friday afternoon to take part in a five week Gymnastics Program. The program will be conducted at Palmer’s Gym in the Mundy St. YMCA building. There is a $50 charge to cover the cost of the bus and entry fees. This can be paid weekly or as a lump sum prior to the program beginning. This amount is included as part of the Excursion Levy.
More information in upcoming Newsletters.

CAMPS, SPORTS AND EXCURSIONS FUND (CSEF)
The CSEF is an annual payment to the school to be used towards camps, sports and/or excursion expenses for the benefit of the eligible student.
Primary school student rate is $125 per year.
The CSEF is paid directly to the school and will be allocated by the school towards camps, sports and/or excursions costs for your child.
To be eligible for the fund, a parent or legal guardian must:
• on the first day of Term One, or first day of Term Two:
  a) be a holder of Veterans Affairs Gold Card or be an eligible Centrelink Health Care Card (HCC) or Pensioner Concession Card (PCC) holder, OR
  b) be a temporary foster parent, and:
  c) submit an application to the school by the due date – 28th February 2017.

CONVEYANCE ALLOWANCE
A Conveyance Allowance is available for eligible students using private cars to attend school. To be eligible a student must live more than 4.8km by the shortest practicable route from the nearest school or bus stop. Please come into the office by the end of February to complete an application form if you are eligible.

VOLUNTARY FINANCIAL CONTRIBUTIONS
To subsidise our Government funding, we request families make a voluntary contribution to the school. We have a suggested amount of $50 1st child, $30 2nd child and $20 3rd+ child.
A Grounds Maintenance and Beautification amount of $20 per family has also been requested to continue the development of exciting and safe grounds/facilities for our students to play in.

STUDENT BANKING
Our school banking day is Tuesday. Interested students can apply online, at any Commonwealth Bank branch, over the phone, or via a paper-based application available from the office.

STUDENT ACCIDENT INSURANCE
We have been requested by DET to remind parents that the Department does not provide personal accident insurance for students. Parents and guardians are responsible for paying the cost of medical treatment for injured students, including the cost of ambulance attendance/transport and any other transport costs. Student accident insurance policies are available from some commercial insurers. These cover a range of medical expenses not covered by Medicare or private health insurance.
PERSONAL PROPERTY
Personal property is often brought to school by students and visitors. This can include toys, sporting equipment and cars parked on school premises. The Department of Education and Training does not hold insurance for personal property brought to schools and it will generally not pay for any loss or damage to such property. Students should be discouraged from bringing any unnecessary or particularly valuable toys or items to school. **If bus travellers have phones/ipods etc at school, they must be stored in the Day Safe in the Office. Please remind your children of this.**

SCHOOL APP
If you haven’t already signed up to our school app we ask that you take the time to download it.

The majority of our families have now signed up for our school app and are finding it is a great way of staying in touch with easy access to newsletters, receiving calendar updates direct to your phone and entering absence notes. It is also the way we send our alerts and reminders.

To download the app just visit the App Store for iPhones or Google Play for Android’s. Search for **Updat-ed** and from the menu select our school. We’ll receive your registration request and will need to approve you before your app is up and running.

MICHAEL GROSS PARENTING RESOURCES
This week’s attached article is “Sleeping Beauties”

STAY CONNECTED
A reminder and invite to new and existing families that many parents gather at the Axedale Tavern at 9.30am on a Thursday morning for a coffee, a chat and a chance to meet families new to the area. If you are keen to go but don’t know anyone, contact the school and we’ll ‘buddy you up’.

Our school endeavours to provide a range of opportunities for parents to be involved and to contribute to the school. Our Thursday morning ‘Stay Connected’ coffee time is chance to catch up informally, without your school age children, and develop friendships within the community.

NEWSLETTER
These are the most important means of communication between school and home. Newsletters are sent home every Thursday. Please get into the habit of looking for them, reading them carefully and responding to the contents as soon as possible. Please call the school if you have any queries. The Newsletter is also available on our website at [www.axedaleps.vic.edu.au](http://www.axedaleps.vic.edu.au)
If you would like a copy emailed, please contact the school.

ASSEMBLY
Assemblies are held every Monday morning from 9.00am in the main building. Parents are welcome to stay for assemblies.

TERM DATES 2017
Term 1: 31st January to 31 March
Term 2: 18 April (Tuesday) to 30 June
Term 3: 17 July to 22 September
Term 4: 9 October to 22 December

PRINCIPAL CONTACT
I am happy for parents to contact me as required. If contact needs to be made out of school hours, my mobile phone number is 0408 138 836 and my email is johnstone.alexander.i@edumail.vic.gov.au

Lex Johnstone
Principal
CAMPASPE ROCKS ANGUS

John and Robyn Knight from Campaspe Rocks Angus have become generous sponsors of our school. We thank them for their involvement in helping to support local children and promote students fulfilling their potential. Please support Campaspe Rocks Angus where possible or share their involvement in our school with friends involved in the industry.

FORMS TO BE RETURNED OR ORGANISED AT SCHOOL

FAMILY INFORMATION
It is extremely important that the school has up to date information about your children and their contacts etc. Please look through the forms sent home in a separate envelope last week, correct/add anything that you think needs changing/adding and return them to school ASAP. Many thanks for your support in this matter.

CAMPS, SPORTS, EXCURSION FUND
The Camps, Sports Excursion Fund (CSEF) is available for eligible families with a Health Care Card. Please come to the office to complete a form. The payment is $125 and is paid directly to the school to be put towards the child’s excursion or camp costs. Applications need to be submitted to the school by Tuesday 29th February.

ASTHMA MANAGEMENT PLAN
At the beginning of each school year we require an updated Asthma Management Plan for those students who are diagnosed with asthma. Can these please be organised ASAP and the new plan dropped into the office so we can update our records? Parents are also asked to check the expiry date on any medication which is kept at school and supply the school with new Ventolin if required. Parents are reminded that we require each student to have their own spacer due to health regulations. Thanks for your assistance with this.

CONVEYANCE ALLOWANCE
A Conveyance Allowance is available for eligible students using private cars to attend school. To be eligible a student must live more than 4.8km by the shortest practicable route from the nearest school or bus stop. Please come into the office by the end of February to complete an application form if you are eligible.

GRADE 6 POLO SHIRT ORDER FORM
These order forms were sent home yesterday and are due back to school by, Friday 10th February.
COMMUNITY NEWS
As you may be aware, the City of Greater Bendigo is no longer co-ordinating the mobile Library Truck that used to come to the Axedale Park. Permanent libraries are being set up in a number of rural towns. Axedale is one of these.

New Axedale Library
opening this Friday 10th February 2017
at 2pm - 4pm at Axedale Hall
Do you fancy yourself as Belle from Beauty and the Beast and have always wanted a library?
Are you raising a Young Adult and want to encourage reading?

Are you looking for a date on the side (table) for Valentines Day?

Axedale CWA Ladies will be there on Friday 10th February to voluntarily staff the new library.
Please come along for a cuppa and check out the stacks.
C M S  D a n c e  W o r x
Offering Tailored classes in:
* Ballet - Cecchetti * Jazz * Tap
* Casual Classes * Competition Classes
* Catering for Ages 3+
* Beginner to Advanced levels
Qualified & Trained Teaching Staff
Annual concert at the Capital Theatre
Showcase Performances for all Students
Location: Uniting Church Hall
(21-23 Condon Street Bendigo)

Special & Tailored Under 8 Class’s for both
Adult Ballet and fitness Class 6.15 - 7.15 pm
Fairy/BEGINNER Ballet 9.30 am
BEGINNER Jazz 10 am
Tuesday Nights

Enrolment Information and Enquiries
Email: cmsdanceworx@bigpond.com
Ph: 0419 382 745

Be a guide for a day
Greater Bendigo Girl Guides invites girls aged 5 - 17
to be a Girl Guide for a day.

Date: Saturday 11th February
Time: 10 am - 2 pm (all day event)
Place: Old Shire Strathfieldsaye Hall
818 Strathfieldsaye Road
Cost: $5 per person
Bring: Lunch, Enclosed Shoes, Hat, Water Bottle
RSVP: Wednesday 15th of February to greterbendigo@guidevics.org.au or 0427 927 268
Please include name of children, name of parent/guardian and contact details
RSVP essential.

Fun, Friends, Adventure

K I D S  C L A S S E S  2 0 1 6
More classes available subject to demand

DANCE / FITNESS STUDIO

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ABRIAL STUDIO

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Littlies – under 6 years
Kids - ages 6 - 12 years
Teens - ages 13 and up
All classes in dance fitness studio run for 46 minutes.

Class Descriptions:
- All classes available for recruitment at 3rd Dance session

Strathfieldsaye Community Fun Day
Saturday 11th February 2017
9.00 am - 1:00 pm

Join Jenny’s Strathfieldsaye for a fun filled day of activities and displays for all ages!

Market Stalls
Face Painting
Jumping Castle
Cake Stalls
Sausage Sizzle
Activities for Children
Fun Day for Whole Family

Jenny’s Early Learning Centre
www.jennyselc.com.au
INSTRUMENTAL TUITION

My child _______________________________ is interested in drum/ guitar/ keyboard (please circle) lessons in 2017.

Signed _________________

FRUIT DUTY ROSTER

I am able to assist with cutting up fruit on Friday mornings.

Name: __________________________________________________

BREAKFAST CLUB ROSTER

I am able to assist with Breakfast Club on Tuesday and/or Thursday mornings.

Name: ________________________________________________

FAMILY BBQ & INFORMATION NIGHT

We will/will not be attending the Family BBQ & Information night on Thursday 11th February.

Family Name: __________________________________________

Number attending: Children [ ] Adults [ ]

Dietary Requirements: ____________________________________
Sleeping beauties

Helping kids get the right amount of quality sleep will reap manifold rewards when it comes to their development and general wellbeing, writes Karen Fontaine.

Article contributed by Karen Fontaine

Whoever coined the term ‘sleeping like a baby’ had obviously never lived with one. Infants’ sleep patterns are notoriously erratic, and as they grow up the story remains much the same. Preschoolers kick up about napping during the day, school-aged children want to stay up late at night and teenagers refuse to get out of bed in the morning.

One thing remains the same: sleep is critically important for children, but Australians are getting about half an hour less sleep per night than they did 30 years ago, according to a study by the University of South Australia’s Centre for Sleep Research.

Kids are going to bed later because it’s now the norm for both parents to work full-time, meaning that evenings are often the only opportunity for family time. In addition, the intrusion into bedrooms of digital media such as mobile phones, laptops and iPods means children are getting less shut-eye – with far-reaching consequences.

“With disturbed sleep, you pretty well see changes in everything, from the cardiovascular system through to the skin,” says Dr Kurt Lushington, head of the University of South Australia’s Centre for Sleep Research. “You can go without food for a week or so but you cannot go without sleep.”

As Dr Lushington says, sleep is important for memory, “so if you want to remember things and to forget things – which is equally important – you have to sleep”.

“We also know from animal studies that sleep state seems to be incredibly important for the optimal wiring up of the brain,” he says. “In infants and kids, sleep plays an important role in the optimal development of the brain. Sleep is also important for growth, and for those who don’t get enough there is a failure to thrive. Sleep plays an important role in the immune system and it also anchors the circadian body clock system.”

Most parents realise the importance of sleep, Dr Lushington says. However, “what many don’t appreciate is how important structure, namely a routine, really is.”

“Our research shows that in terms of kids being able to cope with school and life and not having any problematic behaviours, it’s not so much how long they sleep – what’s important is a regular schedule,” he says.

“Kids who go to bed at different times and wake up at different times with big swings on weekdays compared to weekends – those are the kids who tend to get into trouble. Sober habits are very important.”

There is no such thing as a sleep bank – meaning that even if a child had 12 hours sleep last night, they won’t get away with just eight hours tonight. Parents need to stick to a routine, make evenings as predictable as possible, and enforce hard-and-fast rules, particularly for teenagers, about digital media in the bedroom.

“The teen years are a period of life where it’s to be expected that you will hand over control to them; learning their own limits is part of the journey,” says Dr Lushington. “And, being young and healthy, they can sometimes stay up all night and be fine the next day. What you can do is help them see the connection between how they’re sleeping – and how they feel during the day.”

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<th>How much is enough?</th>
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<td>To ensure your child gets the optimum amount of sleep, use the following as a guideline, says Dr Kurt Lushington, head of the University of South Australia’s Centre for Sleep Research:</td>
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<td><strong>Children aged 2-5</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Children aged 6-12</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Teenagers</strong></td>
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And adhere to these rules, advises Dr Lushington:

- “On the weekends, don’t let kids stay up more than an hour or two later than they normally do, and don’t let them sleep in more than an hour or two later than normal.”
- “Give them time to unwind before they turn off the lights and don’t let them fall asleep in front of the TV. There has to be a routine for falling asleep – otherwise what happens is that unless the light or the TV is on, kids can’t fall asleep – which is crazy.”
- “Exercise, big meals and hot baths are not a good idea directly before they go to bed.”
- “Keep track of how they are during the day. If they look like they’re not coping or if they’re irritable, it might be that they need more sleep.”

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