Dear Parents and Carers,

A fortnight has passed and we haven’t had a chance to breathe yet! From swimming and leadership induction to cross country practice, students have not only been busy learning, but also participating in many valuable extra-curricular activities.

Student Uniforms
The Benarkin State School community strongly advocates the universal wearing of school uniforms by students from Prep to Year 6 when at school, travelling to and from school, or when attending school related activities. This supports:

- A safe environment for learning by enabling ready identification of students,
- The elimination of competition in dress/fashion at school
- A sense of belonging and minimises visible evidence of economic and social differences
- The proud unison of our small school students.

This uniform includes: Uniform Shirt, Uniform Shorts, Uniform Hat, hair tied back if it is above shoulder length, plain ankle length socks, closed in shoes, no jewellery or makeup.

Please contact the school so we can assist your students in having the required uniform.

Student Leadership
There are a number of student leader activities currently underway. Students in Years 5 and 6 will be commencing their Student Council elections in the coming weeks. The council will be organising activities around the school, giving the students a wonderful opportunity to develop their leadership potential.

On 14 March, the Year 6 students will accompany Mrs Smith to Kingaroy for the GRIP Student Leadership Conference. This conference is unique in that it concentrates specifically on training student leaders for their role as SCHOOL LEADERS. The style, topics, and content of this conference all focus on what the students can do RIGHT NOW.

The goal is that our student leaders will leave the conference with a clear vision, a solid understanding and dozens of ideas for their time as a leader.

Learning and Growing Together
Joining Blackbutt State School. Permission slips are to be returned by 9 March.

Students have been increasing their fitness, in preparation for the Cross Country on 15 March. This year, we are sending a reminder that parents who have tried the new system over recent months. Please feel free to contact the school and have us walk you through the system. The advantage of BPOINT is that payments are directed to specific activities allocated to a specific student. It is an online system, similar to BPAY, where you can pay school invoices quickly and securely. You can use any computer, tablet or smartphone to pay invoices from the school. To use this method log onto www.bpoint.com.au/payments/dete. You then enter the BPOINT details from the bottom of your invoice into the boxes to make the payment. If you have any difficulty accessing this page, please visit the school office with your invoice and we can open the website for you. BPOINT will become our preferred method of payment over the coming year. Please try BPOINT for your next school invoice.

Sending Money into the School

Even though BPOINT is our preferred payment method at the school, if parents are sending payments in cash, please ask your child to post it in mail slot in the desk to the right as you enter the office. Please do not leave money in the office unless it is posted into this secure desk.

Healthy Lunch Boxes

It has been really great to see students coming to school with lots of healthy food in their lunch boxes. Students have really enjoyed the introduction of ‘Brain Snack’ before they go to class at 9am. Can we please ask that this snack consist of a fresh piece of fruit or vegetable. Fruit in jelly, Roll-ups and other commercial products contain a lot of sugar and are not conducive to a healthy choice. A good healthy lunch box makes a huge difference to a students learning and behaviour throughout the day.

Please note that due to safety reasons, we are not allowed to heat up food for students. As you are aware, microwaves heat food unevenly and we would hate to burn your child. Teachers have also asked that fruit be cut up if your child can not manage to eat it whole.

Cross Country

Students have been increasing their fitness, in preparation for the Cross Country on 15 March. This year, we are joining Blackbutt State School. Permission slips are to be returned by 9 March.

KIDS MATTER Mental Health Basics : Suggestions for Families

- Spend time with children by having fun playing games, going to the park or going somewhere together as a family.
- Try to maintain routines as much as possible. Routines and consistency help children feel secure.
- Build and maintain supportive relationships with family, friends and early childhood staff. Talk with them about how they can best support you and your child during hard times. Tell staff about any concerning behaviour you are noticing at home.
- Try to help children to understand and manage their feelings; this can help them develop coping skills.
- Help children learn to cope with loss and change by providing support and reassurance, honesty and clarity. Help them also to understand that loss and stress are a normal part of life.
- Acknowledge children’s feelings and try to understand and respect them, especially when they are going through a difficult time. Offer support and reassurance by asking questions and letting them talk about their feelings.
- Try to support children in building their internal protective factors (eg good communication and problem-solving and social skills) by acknowledging and encouraging their skills when guiding their behaviour.

School Arrival and School Pick Up

Please note our start time of 9am. Supervision is provided students from the arrival of the school bus each morning. Non-bus students can arrive at school between 8.00am and 9am each day. Our daily iAIMs Program runs from 8.00 to 8.50am each morning.

If your child arrives after 9am, you must sign the late register in the office. This is an auditing requirement, but also means that your child is on the roll in case of emergency. If you are picking up your child of an afternoon, please come into the school grounds to collect them. If your child normally catches the bus, please inform the teacher on bus duty that your child is going home with you instead of catching the bus. Student safety and protection is of great importance to all school staff. Thank you for your support in this matter.

Homework

By now most students are into the routine of homework. You can make this more meaningful by asking questions about what learning has occurred during the day, listening to and signing off on homework readers each night and encouraging your child to complete more activities in spelling and number facts.

School Payments

BPOINT is the new payment system being adopted by the Department of Education and Training. Thank you to parents who have tried the new system over recent months. Please feel free to contact the school and have us walk you through the system. The advantage of BPOINT is that payments are directed to specific activities allocated to a specific student. It is an online system, similar to BPAY, where you can pay school invoices quickly and securely. You can use any computer, tablet or smartphone to pay invoices from the school. To use this method log onto www.bpoint.com.au/payments/dete. You then enter the BPOINT details from the bottom of your invoice into the boxes to make the payment. If you have any difficulty accessing this page, please visit the school office with your invoice and we can open the website for you. BPOINT will become our preferred method of payment over the coming year. Please try BPOINT for your next school invoice.

Sending Money into the School

Even though BPOINT is our preferred payment method at the school, if parents are sending payments in cash, please ask your child to post it in mail slot in the desk to the right as you enter the office. Please do not leave money in the office unless it is posted into this secure desk.

Healthy Lunch Boxes

It has been really great to see students coming to school with lots of healthy food in their lunch boxes. Students have really enjoyed the introduction of ‘Brain Snack’ before they go to class at 9am. Can we please ask that this snack consist of a fresh piece of fruit or vegetable. Fruit in jelly, Roll-ups and other commercial products contain a lot of sugar and are not conducive to a healthy choice. A good healthy lunch box makes a huge difference to a students learning and behaviour throughout the day.

Please note that due to safety reasons, we are not allowed to heat up food for students. As you are aware, microwaves heat food unevenly and we would hate to burn your child. Teachers have also asked that fruit be cut up if your child can not manage to eat it whole.

Cross Country

Students have been increasing their fitness, in preparation for the Cross Country on 15 March. This year, we are joining Blackbutt State School. Permission slips are to be returned by 9 March.

KIDS MATTER Mental Health Basics : Suggestions for Families

- Spend time with children by having fun playing games, going to the park or going somewhere together as a family.
- Try to maintain routines as much as possible. Routines and consistency help children feel secure.
- Build and maintain supportive relationships with family, friends and early childhood staff. Talk with them about how they can best support you and your child during hard times. Tell staff about any concerning behaviour you are noticing at home.
- Try to help children to understand and manage their feelings; this can help them develop coping skills.
- Help children learn to cope with loss and change by providing support and reassurance, honesty and clarity. Help them also to understand that loss and stress are a normal part of life.
- Acknowledge children’s feelings and try to understand and respect them, especially when they are going through a difficult time. Offer support and reassurance by asking questions and letting them talk about their feelings.
- Try to support children in building their internal protective factors (eg good communication and problem-solving and social skills) by acknowledging and encouraging their skills when guiding their behaviour.

- Group 1 – Bree-ann, Ivy and Ruby and Group 4 – Harper, Matilda and Saxon tried watering one bean plant while leaving the other without water.
- Group 2 – Cohan and Oliver and Group 3 – Annabella and Alyssa experimented with sunlight, putting one bean plant into a closed cupboard while leaving the other in sunlight.

Together they discovered that a healthy plant needs – Water, Sunlight and Soil to grow.

Prep – Year 2 SCIENCE

These students have been busy setting up Plant experiments for their Science Unit ‘Growing Well’.

Group 1 – Bree-ann, Ivy and Ruby and Group 4 – Harper, Matilda and Saxon tried watering one bean plant while leaving the other without water.

Group 2 – Cohan and Oliver and Group 3 – Annabella and Alyssa experimented with sunlight, putting one bean plant into a closed cupboard while leaving the other in sunlight.

Together they discovered that a healthy plant needs – Water, Sunlight and Soil to grow.