Dear Parents and Carers,

School Priorities

We have been working very hard with our students, ensuring that all students are working towards gains in their education. In particular, the 2016 Benarkin State School priorities are Writing, Numeracy and Reading.

Writing: Students have been expanding their writing within different genres: narratives, persuasive, report writing. At home ideas: give your child a topic to write about - it could be anything! (see Mrs Fillery or Mrs Sparrow for ideas)

Numeracy: All students need to continue working with their place value and times tables. Unfortunately if students do not learn their times tables, they are more then likely to struggle through more senior maths. At home, give your child maths problems. Ask them to keep an eye on the shopping bill, work out change for you, get them to recite times tables while they do the dishes.

Reading: All students should to a parent aloud every night, and parents should ask questions about the text. Through regular reading, our students have all increased in the level of reader, however their comprehension is still lacking. This could be the reason why your child struggles at home. If this is the case, please speak to their teacher. Give it a go - let us know if you would like some help!

See our “Read More in May Competition in this newsletter.

Spirit of ANZAC Experience

We have been successful in obtaining a travel grant to get our Year 5 & 6 students to Toowoomba on the 19th May to experience the Spirit of ANZAC. This educational and exciting program takes in direct with what Mrs Perry is teaching the students in History. We are sharing the bus with Linville and Tandurangie. Forms have gone home with students, please make sure these are returned to school as your earliest convenience.

PARADE

All families are invited to our school-wide parades on Friday afternoons at 2.45pm. As a school, we celebrate student successes, share exciting news for the upcoming week and finish our school week on a high. We would love to see you there!

Next Meeting: Monday 30 May
3:15 pm  **All Welcome**

Making Mushrooms  Volunteers needed for this upcoming project.

These garden ornaments will be cast and painted by the students to be sold at the Blackbutt Show. Contact Deidra for further information.

Thank you to everyone who represented Benarkin SS on ANZAC Day. Our community is proud of you!
**BOOK FAIR**
**May 16—19**

LET’S GET READY TO READ & HAVE A MONSTER OF A GREAT TIME!

DRESS UP ON WEDNESDAY 17TH AS A BOOK LOVING MONSTER!

GAMES * PRIZES * GIVEAWAYS

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**NAPLAN**

The National Assessment Program – Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN) is an annual assessment for students in Years 3, 5, 7 and 9. It has been an annual event for schools since 2008.

On Tuesday 10, Wednesday 11 and Thursday 12 May, students will undertake the 2016 NAPLAN tests. NAPLAN is made up of tests in the four domains of Reading, Writing, Language Conventions (spelling, grammar and punctuation) and Numeracy. The tests will be conducted in all state and non-state schools across the country.

NAPLAN assesses the skills that students develop over time through the school curriculum, and provides additional feedback for parents, carers and teachers on how students are progressing in the key curriculum areas. NAPLAN is not a pass or fail type test, but rather shows how individual students are progressing in numeracy and literacy skills against national standards for all Australian children. An individual NAPLAN report will be sent home for every child later this year.

This year, students in Year 3 & 5 are invited to come and have breakfast at school from 8am on the mornings of the NAPLAN tests. We will provide a relaxed atmosphere, have a few laughs and get the students ready for the day.

What can you do for your child in preparation for NAPLAN?

The very best thing is to make sure your child goes to bed at a reasonable time, make sure they get to school on time and let us help them. We are not putting any pressure on our students to perform, we are looking forward to 3 days of positive atmosphere, with yummy breakfasts and scrumptious muffins for morning tea!

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**Administering Medication at School**

It is mandatory for you to have a script issued by the Doctor for schools to administer medication. A medical form MUST also be completed and signed at Administration and this is kept at the school. We cannot administer medication without this form.

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**Blackbutt Show**

Students have been busy writing a narrative and designing a poster for the Blackbutt Show. There are some excellent entries, all students have worked very hard on these pieces. Entries will be displayed at the show and in the Bunya Nut café window.

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**Learning Goals**

During this week, teachers will meet with each student in their class to formulate individual learning goals based on evidence from assessment in Term One. Each student will meet with their teacher and review their assessment items from Term One to develop goals in Maths, Writing, Reading and a social skill goal. These goals will be displayed in classrooms and will be sent home to all parents. At the end of the term, teachers will meet with students, with their assessment items, to determine if the goals have been achieved or are still being worked on. This reflection will also be sent home to parents, accompanying each student’s report card. This is a valuable process that shares the responsibility for learning with students and aims to further our high expectations of each student to be the best they can be.

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**School Review**

This term, a team from the School Improvement Unit will enter our school from June 6-8 for a full school review. Reviewers will meet with all staff members, parents and members of our local community to review the processes and procedures of our school. The review team will provide recommendations for the school. This review is aligned to our Quadrennial School Review which takes place every four years. The recommendations from this review will form the foundation of Benarkin State School’s strategic plan for 2016-2020. I look forward to seeing the recommendations from the review. An information sheet on this process is attached for your information.

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**Student Absences—POLICY CHANGE**

Last week, we were informed of a change with regards to student absences. We now have to follow a ‘same day absence report’. This change in policy is to ensure that all students are accounted for and safe. This means that if we don’t have either an email, phone message or text message about an absence, we will be calling you each day.

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**Mindfulness for Children**

Mindfulness is a whole body-mind state of awareness that involves ‘tuning in’ to the present moment, with openness and curiosity, instead of ‘tuning out’ from experience. Mindfulness is a state of being fully awake to life – being aware and undistracted in the present moment. It is about focusing attention on the present, rather than thinking about the past or worrying about the future- which is often our brain’s default mode.

Mindful awareness is something that we all possess and that can be strengthened through practice. Mindfulness can be developed through formal sitting meditation practices, or through informal everyday mindfulness activities that use the senses to anchor the attention: such as mindful walking, listening to music, eating or conversation. Mindfulness is a clinically proven tool to support wellbeing and mental health by helping to regulate the body’s fight or flight response.

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**School Banking**

School Banking is here, with thanks to Bendigo Bank! School banking will commence soon, with banking days each Tuesday. Mrs Wagner will take the money to the bank for students in Blackbut. Thank you to Benarkin P&C for organising the banking for us.