Welcome Back
The vacation is long gone now and we are very much back to business. Welcome back to another very exciting year at our school. If I had to sum up the mood of the school in the first week it would be “positive and friendly”. When the opportunity is offered come in and join us, we would love to have you a part of our team.

Talk To Me!
If you have any concerns with your child’s place in the school or the school generally please talk to me. It is very rare that I cannot make time if you call in or phone. If I am unavailable I will contact you as soon as possible. We believe we have a great school but we want to get better. Feedback from parents both positive and negative helps us to go to the next level.

Mrs May
Mrs May has quickly become a part of our staff as she replaces Miss Trickey as part of an International Teacher exchange. Mrs May is very experienced and has been teaching a similar age group in Canada. We are very pleased to have someone of her expertise working with us and sharing her knowledge for 2016. Please make her feel welcome.

School Council Elections
School Council is the governing body of the school and must have a majority of parents for it to operate. Elections are held every year for half of the council members. [Members are elected for two years] More information regarding school council elections is included with the Newsletter. I encourage parents to consider nominating [self nomination is fine]. If you are unsure as to the role, time commitment or have any other questions regarding being on school council please contact me.

Getting to Know You Interviews –Tuesday 23rd of February
Our school information Expo and “Getting to Know You” Interviews will take place after school on Tuesday the 23rd of February. These interviews provide an opportunity for parents and teachers to share information and to “get to know” each other as well as the child. A positive relationship between the child, parent and teacher provides a strong foundation for learning. Please take the time to come.

New Preps
Our new preps have rolled into school as if they have been here for months. Mrs Collins is very happy with the way they have settled and the positive approach they have made to school.

Emergency Evacuations
You may have seen in the Media over the weekend that a number of schools were contacted warning a bomb had been placed in their school. The script of the calls was fairly consistent saying that it was in a student’s bag. Both our school Emergency Plan and DET policy regard all calls as “real” until we know otherwise. If our school receives a call like that we will be evacuating and going through our Emergency Response steps including contacting Police and Emergency Management in Melbourne. I would think it very unlikely, however that is why all schools have plans in place. [It is a different world we live in!]

Shade Shelter over the sandpit
The end of the saga is in sight! The frame is up and the roof is going on. By the end of the week we should have the project completed. This will provide shade for our very popular sandpit.

Graeme
Welfare Update:

EVERY DAY COUNTS

Primary School Attendance

Going to school every day is the single most important part of your child’s education. Students learn new things at school every day – missing school puts them behind.

Why it’s important

We all want our students to get a great education, and the building blocks for a great education begin with students coming to school each and every day.

If students miss school regularly, they miss out on learning the fundamental skills that will set them up for success in the later years of school.

There is no safe number of days for missing school – each day a student misses puts them behind, and can affect their educational outcomes.

Each missed day is associated with progressively lower achievement in numeracy, writing and reading.

Getting in early

Attendance patterns are established early – a child regularly missing days in kindergarten or in the early years of school will often continue to miss classes in the later years, and receive lower test scores than their classmates. It’s vital that students go to school every day – even in the early years of primary school.

What we can do

The main reasons for absence are:

- **Sickness** – There are always times when students need to miss school, such as when they’re ill. It’s vital that they’re only away on the days they are genuinely sick, and setting good sleep patterns, eating well and exercising regularly can make a big difference.

- **Holidays** – It’s vital that holidays are planned during school holidays where possible, and not during the term if it can be avoided.

- **Day off** – Think twice before letting your child have a “day off” as they could fall behind their classmates – every day counts.

- **Truancy** – This is when students choose not to go to school without their parent’s permission. There can be many reasons for truancy. The best way to address this is for schools and parents to work together.

If for any reason your child must miss school, there are things you can do with your school to ensure they don’t fall behind:

- Speak with your classroom teacher and find out what work your child needs to do to keep up.
- Develop an absence learning plan with your teacher and ensure your child completes the plan.

Remember, every day counts. If your child must miss school, speak with your classroom teacher as early as possible. Openly communicating with your child’s school about all absences is a good way to prevent attendance issues being escalated to a School Attendance Officer. A School Attendance Officer is a Department of Education and Early Childhood Development Regional Director who has authority to follow up attendance issues. Attendance issues that are escalated can lead to an Infringement Notice. If you’re having attendance issues with your child, please let your classroom teacher know so we can work together to get your child to school every day.

Further information

For more information and resources to help address attendance issues, visit: [www.education.vic.gov.au/school/parents/behaviour/Pages/studentattendance.aspx](http://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/parents/behaviour/Pages/studentattendance.aspx)
Welcome back to a great start in our school year. All students and teachers are settling into classroom routine very well. A calm and caring atmosphere radiates from all classrooms as we move from classroom to classroom.

Grades. This year we have Mrs Collins in Grade Prep, Miss Wright & Mrs Ellis and Mrs McPhee in Grade 1 /2, Mrs May and Mr Irwin in Grade 3 /4, Mr Rasmussen and Miss Ross in Grades 5 /6. The specialist program this year will be ART with Mrs Pascoe (all year levels). Mrs Picone will take Civics & Citizenship (Graded 5/6), Humanities (Graded 3/4), Humanities & Fundamental Motor skills (Grades P,1 & 2).

New Preps…. are settling in beautifully. They have lots of enthusiasm and energy and are keeping Mrs Collins on her toes, as they do at this time of their school year. The Grade 6 buddies are also doing a fantastic job looking out for their Prep buddy.

Getting to Know You Parent Teacher Interviews and School Expo… The date for these first interviews and School Expo is Tuesday 23rd February. Please find the interview time note sent home with the newsletter today.

Testing… Grade Prep, One and Two teachers have just begun working through the English Online Testing for each student in these grades. This test is a requirement of the Department of Education for all prep students. We also test grades 1 & 2 as it supplies us with very useful education. Grades 3 – 6 are about to begin the On Demand tests. Students will work through these on their computers over the next few weeks.

Our topics for Term 1 include…Grade P-2 …My World (Me/Family/Local People/my safety), Grade 3 /4 Rochester Local History Grade 5 /6… Why Australia…Immigration

Cultural Presentation… Please keep your eyes open for a note which will be sent home in the next few weeks in regards to a school cultural performance ‘Dinosaur Science’ on Tuesday 15th March. The amount has been subsidised by the school and therefore the cost of the performance is now only $4 per student.

Special Events Calendar…. Will be attached to next week’s newsletter.

School Captain speeches… Students in Grade 5/6 will participate in speeches on Friday Morning. School captains will then be chosen and announced next week at the School Assembly.

We are looking forward to a great year. Feel free to pop in to see the students at work. You are most welcome to assist in any way possible… reading, camps, excursions, spelling groups, maths, fundraising. Contact your classroom teacher if you have any spare time to assist. We’d love to see more parents in our school.

Leanne Picone.

Canteen
Thursday 4th February  Dani Wells
Friday 5th February  Leesa Purdy
Monday 8th February  CLOSED
Tuesday 9th February  CAN YOU HELP?
Wednesday 10th February  Caroline
Thursday 11th February  CAN YOU HELP?
Friday 12th February  Carlie-Maree Honey & Shae Locke

Attached to the Newsletter is an up to date Canteen Menu. Please throw out your old menu. We have had a few minor alterations. Please note that sushi will not be available until further notice.

UNIFORM SHOP
The Uniform shop will be open from 8.30am to 9.15am on a Thursday. Orders may be left at the office and will be filled as soon as possible.

BOOK CLUB
Order forms are being sent home today with the newsletter. If you would like to purchase items please complete the form and return to the office (with correct money & clearly named) by Monday 15th February.
CAMS & EXCURSION APPLICATION – DO YOU HAVE A HEALTH CARE CARD?

Criteria 1 - Eligibility
To be eligible for the fund, a parent or legal guardian of a student attending a registered Government or non-government Victorian primary or secondary school must:

- on the first day of Term one, or;
- on the first day of Term two;
  a) Be an eligible beneficiary within the meaning of the State Concessions Act 2004, that is, be the holder of a 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.

Payment amounts
The amount payable for eligible primary and secondary students is:

- $125 for Primary school students.
- $225 for Secondary school students.

Parent applications CLOSE 29th February. No late applications will be taken.

ENROLMENT INFORMATION
Is your information current? Many families forget to update their contact details (including emergency telephone numbers). Each student will have received a form today to be checked and returned to the office. The Privacy notice and Head lice check also needs to be completed and returned as soon as possible. Newsletters can be sent to your email address if you would prefer rather than a hard copy.

BUS TRAVEL
As per previous years students will not be given permission to travel on a country bus that they do not normally travel on eg. For party invitations, sports etc. Most of the buses are running at full capacity, so you will need to make alternative arrangements.

GRADE 5 & 6 CAMP
A reminder to parents that the initial deposit for the Grade 5 & 6 Camp to Melbourne (10th, 11th, 12th February) of $80 was due last year. If you have not paid this yet please contact the office. We are required to have confirmed numbers to book the venue and must have all payments in prior to the Camp.

STUDENT ACCIDENT INSURANCE
Parents are reminded that Rochester Primary School does not provide personal accident insurance for students. There are some companies that provide this service if parents wish to take out a policy. Below is the contact details of one such company. All contact regarding these matters must be done through the company and not the school. The school does not endorse any particular company but provides a service by passing on contact information to parents.


Subject Contributions
School Council has decided to set subject contributions in 2016 at $190.00 per child with a grounds maintenance levy of $20.00 per family. The grounds levy covers such things as lawn mowing, pruning of trees, sweeping paths etc. Families of three or more children attending the school would not be expected to pay more than $590.00 [including the grounds levy].

It is an expectation that all contributions will be paid as soon as possible after the commencement of the 2016 school year. In some cases arrangements may be made to pay in instalments. EFTPOS facilities are available at the office.

LATE TELEPHONE CALLS
Please be mindful that the office is extremely busy between 3.00pm and 3.30pm. It is not always possible to get late messages to students. If a message is needed, please ring as early in the day as possible. Please note that the telephone is diverted to message bank every morning until 8.30a.m. If you wish, you can leave a message and your call will be returned as soon as possible.
SCHOOL COUNCIL ELECTIONS
A form is attached to this newsletter calling for either self nomination to school council or nomination by another community member.

- Closing date for nominations – Friday 19th February
- Date by which the list of candidates and nominators will be posted – Tuesday 23rd February
- Date by which ballot papers will be distributed (if needed) – Friday 23rd February
- Close of ballot – Tuesday 8th March

PRELOVED UNIFORM ITEMS
We are after preloved T shirts (in good condition) sizes 6 to 10 if you have any. Current supply has been depleted. Items can be left at the office. Thanks

COMMUNITY NEWSLETTER ITEMS
If space is available, we are happy to include community announcements in our newsletters. Small notices only will be accepted. These notices need to be emailed before 12 noon on Tuesday. Thank you.

COMMUNITY NEWS

ROCHESTER NETBALL ASSOCIATION
RNA 2016 JUNIOR PRE-SEASON CHALLENGE
Interested in getting some match fitness before the season starts?
Come and join us. Starting Friday 12th February 7pm, continuing on 19th Feb & 4th March. Divisions: 15 & Under and Primary grade 5 & 6. $35 per player plus yearly VNA $49. Register by 5th February.
Make up a team of friends or register individually and go into a team, just fill in a form and contact: rochesternetball@gmail.com or Lisa 0408371837. Everyone welcome. Forms available at the office.

ROCHESTER JUNIOR FOOTBALL CLUB
REGISTRATION NIGHT
WEDNESDAY 24th FEBRUARY, 2016
4.00pm – 6.00pm
WINDRIGE OVAL PAVILION
FEES TO PAID ON THE NIGHT
1 Child $95.00, 2 Children $170.00, 3 Children $230.00
For further information please contact Leisa Evans

CANTENE
We are always seeking helpers in the Canteen. Your children love to see you at school and Canteen is a great way to help out. The job is not hard to do and I am always on hand to answer your questions. Canteen duty is from 10am to 2pm and involves collating orders and preparing the food. If you would like to help us and support the school, please complete the slip below and return to office.

CANTENE HELPERS
Name ……………………………………………………………………….
Phone ………………………………………….
☐ I would like to help out in the canteen in 2016
☐ I have not done canteen duty before
I can help on the following days:
☐ Tuesday ☐ Wednesday ☐ Thursday ☐ Friday