

ARARAT NORTH PRIMARY SCHOOL



NEWSLETTER

13th October 2021

Values
Resilience
Respect
Responsibility

Important Dates

All students back onsite	Tuesday 26 th October
Book Week Dress Up	Friday 29 th October
Melbourne Cup Day (public holiday)	Tuesday 2 nd November
Last day of Term 4 and early dismissal	Friday 17 th December 2:15pm
First Day Term 1, 2022	Monday 31 st January

Dear Ararat North Primary School Parents and Carers,

It's been a great start back to the term and it is wonderful to see all year levels back at school as part of the phased return to onsite learning. I would like to again thank you for your support during what has been an extended period of remote learning for many students.

As announced last week, it has been mandated for all students in Grades 3-6 to wear masks at school from Monday (October 18). We are yet to receive more information from the Department regarding this announcement, however we will keep you updated as we have more information. Thank you to those parents already sending students to school with masks. It remains recommended that students in grades Prep – 2 wear masks, however this has not been mandated.

This year Ararat North Primary is lucky to be a pilot school involved in the Mental Health and Wellbeing initiative. The Department of Education and Training has partnered with the Murdoch Children's Research Institute (MCRI) to deliver a pilot to provide more mental health support in primary schools.

Participating schools receive funding to employ a Mental Health and Wellbeing Coordinator (Mr Johnson), to promote a whole-school approach to mental health and wellbeing. The training and resources will help build mental health capabilities of our school staff to better identify and support students with mental health concerns and link with external services.

As a part of this role, through the newsletter, we will be sharing resources, strategies and external support to develop our understanding of how to build a positive mindset in mental health and wellbeing in our school community.

Each newsletter edition will have a different focus. These include:

- Looking after your child's mental health (this edition).
- What to look for (this edition).
- Talking to your child.

- Getting support at school
- Support and services that can be accessed for parents.
- Support, services, and information for students.

If you have any questions about this initiative or would like to know more, please contact Mr Johnson (Alistair.Johnson@education.vic.gov.au) or the school's office.

Kind regards,

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Principal

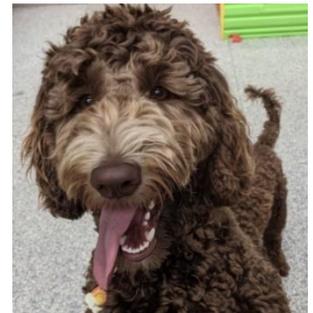
Change of Details & Student Absences

Thank you to all the parents and carers who have maintained communication with school regarding any absences, appointments or change of details. If you know your child is going to be away for any reason, please let the Front Office know. Any changes to student medical history are also important to keep updated. You can contact the Front Office on: (03) 53 52 37 66



POKO'S FIRST DAY

On Monday, we welcomed Poko (our new Therapy Dog) and her handler Andrea onsite for the first time. Poko is a 2 year old Groodle, who is extremely friendly and loves kids! Our students enjoyed spending time with Poko and liked being able to pat her, read her stories and play ball games with her outside during break times. Students also did a great job of respecting our whole school behaviour expectations when working with Poko. These include:



- Using inside voices
- Being calm at all times
- Not feeding Poko
- Respecting Poko's 'time out zone' when Poko feels she needs a break

Poko and Andrea will be onsite once each week and students will have the opportunity to spend time with Poko.



NORTH Wellbeing

Looking after your child's mental health

Changes in your child's mood and behaviour are normal part of growing up. While you know your child better than anyone, sometimes it can also be hard to know the difference between normal behaviour and potential mental health concerns. No one expects you to be an expert in mental health but there are things you can do to support your child.

What to look for

There might be changes in your child's emotions, behaviour and thinking that indicate they might need some extra help.

You might notice:

- Feelings of fear, anxiety and sadness and/or angry outbursts
- Withdrawal from friends, family and activities and/or being low in energy
- Difficulty going to sleep and/or changes in appetite
- Trouble concentrating
- Negative thoughts that won't go away
- Other changes in behaviour – being more emotional or temper tantrums in younger children.
- How long have the emotions and behaviour lasted? If it has been longer than two weeks, it might be time to seek help.
- How strong are the emotions? Are they there all the time or do they come and go?
- How much of an impact are the emotions and behaviour having on your child's schoolwork, physical health, relationships and enjoyment of everyday activities?

Next newsletter we will be looking at how to talk to your child and how to get support from school.

CORONAVIRUS (COVID-19) RESTRICTIONS REMAIN IN PLACE

If you are unwell, please stay at home.

The greatest risk of transmission of coronavirus (COVID-19) is between adults. Please follow these physical distancing measures:

- avoid gathering in a group inside or around the school
- keep 1.5m wherever possible between yourself and other adults



- avoid handshakes and hugs
- wash your hands regularly.



For detailed information visit:
www.coronavirus.vic.gov.au

