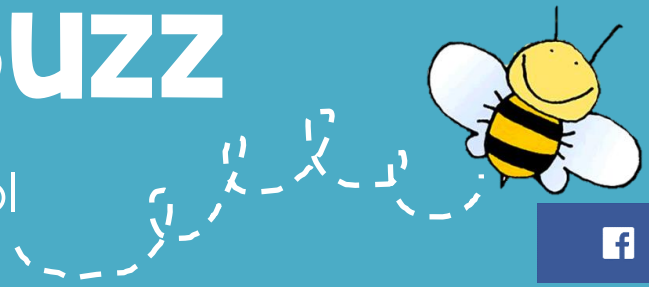


# The Bally Buzz



Balgownie Public School  
*Living & Learning*



W: [www.balgownie-p.schools.nsw.edu.au](http://www.balgownie-p.schools.nsw.edu.au)

T: 4284 4245

F: 4284 3462

E: [balgownie-p.school@det.nsw.edu.au](mailto:balgownie-p.school@det.nsw.edu.au)

Term 1 - Week 8

Wednesday 18 March 2020

## Calendar Term 1 - 2020

|      |        |  |
|------|--------|--|
| Wed  | 18 Mar | P&C Annual General Meeting 7.15pm at Collegians, Balgownie |
| Frid | 20 Mar | Harmony Day celebration - wear something Orange            |

### FROM THE PRINCIPAL'S DESK

We are receiving regular updates from NSW Department of Education on their response to the COVID-19 virus and how this will affect schools.

Firstly, across the board school closures are not planned for the immediate future. Please see the attached advice from NSW Ministry of Health and its Chief Health Officer which clearly outlines the sound reasoning behind this.

Students should still be attending school if they are in good health. There will, however, be some adjustments to our school activities especially those involving other schools and travel. At present, the following activities will cease until further notice:

- All K-2 Assemblies and Whole School Assemblies
- The Harmony Day Mongolian Throat Singing performance planned for Friday 20/3/2020
- The Fit Futures Gymnastics program
- The Working Bee planned for 27/3/2020
- Scripture
- All inter-school and whole school sports events including PSSA trials in all sports, PSSA Knockout Competitions, Cross-Country, Swimming and Athletics carnivals
- Excursions
- Chess Tournament

- Parent/Teacher interviews which were planned for the last two weeks of term.

The activities that will continue include:

- Excellent lessons for every student, every day!
- School based sport activities in class groups
- Fitness

The most important information we have received is about reducing/slowing the spread of the virus. This is done through careful hygiene practice which teachers are reminding students of daily (wash your hands regularly for 20 seconds – singing happy birthday twice through is about the right amount of time).

It is vitally important that if your child is sick you keep them home until all symptoms of their illness have gone. Where previously you may have asked them to “soldier on” (as I have done occasionally with my own children) this situation is very different. If we are to limit the scope of COVID-19, it is up to all of us to follow these guidelines.

Also, if you or a family member has returned from overseas since midnight last Sunday, you are required to isolate yourself for a period of 14 days. Details are on the NSW Govt Health Website:

<https://www.health.nsw.gov.au/Infectious/factsheets/Pages/hubei-contacts-and-travellers.aspx>

If someone who has returned from overseas within this timeframe has had close contact with children who attend school, then those children must remain at home for 14 days from their contact with the traveller. There are some Balgownie students currently at home for this reason, in exactly the same manner as some students had to stay home for the first couple of weeks of school because they had visited foreign

**Respect, Responsibility, Real Learning**

Martin Loxton – R/Principal PO Box 192 Fairy Meadow NSW 2519 P&C: [www.balgowniepnc.com](http://www.balgowniepnc.com)

countries during the holidays. As stated in the information on the website, these students will be provided with appropriate school work whilst they are at home.

It is also up to us to remain calm but vigilant and to reassure our students/children if they are feeling anxious. Encourage your children to talk to you if they are worried. At school we will endeavour to keep our routines as "normal" as possible whilst still taking all necessary precautions. Our counsellor has attached some telephone counselling services for kids in this newsletter.

I will be in regular contact with our Directors, Dr Margaret Turner and Vicki-Anne Stokes and will be passing on all relevant information to staff and the community. There will, no doubt, be more adjustments to be made in the near future.

Working as a whole community has never been more important than now. Thanks for your ongoing support.

## Payments

If you have paid for an event that has been cancelled, your money will be refunded. Fit Futures have agreed to reschedule the remaining 3 gymnastics lessons for later in the year if possible so these payments will not be refunded unless the rescheduling does not occur. Choral Festival, planned for July, is still going ahead, as far as we know. **In order to limit cash-handling by office staff, could all further payments (voluntary contributions, subscription fees, etc) please be made by eftpos, credit card or transfer.**

## Fit Futures Gymnastics

As indicated, this program has been curtailed for the time being. We hope to be able to reschedule the remaining three sessions later in the year.

## Parent/Teacher interviews

This has been a difficult decision for us. Teachers relish this opportunity to talk with you about your child and how they are developing academically and socially. Our advice, however, is to limit the number of people visiting the school whilst the COVID-19 virus is an issue. We are planning to reschedule the interviews for Term 3. If you need to speak to your child's teacher about a matter of particular concern, you can call the school to arrange an interview by phone. Similarly, teachers will get in touch with parents/carers if there is something specific and pressing that requires

discussion/action. Teachers at Balgownie have always made themselves available to parents/carers to discuss student progress and this remains the case.

Kind Regards,

Martin Loxton, Relieving Principal, on behalf of Balgownie School staff.

## SPORTS NEWS

### Boys Knockout Cricket Round 1

On the 10th of March, the Balgownie PS boy's cricket team played their round 1 game against Woonona PS. We had a very close game winning by 1 run! The boys played wonderfully led by their captain, Lucas and an exceptional performance by Mitchell. It was wonderful to see the boy's talent and skill on display and they were excellent sports, supporting and encouraging each other at all times. Well done boys! A special thanks to Shane Brown for umpiring the game.



## YEAR 6 SHIRTS - 2020

Year 6 shirts are now available to order on the uniform shop website. The shirts will have the school emblem on the front with student name underneath and on the back will have a list of all students in year 6. The shirts will be available in white short sleeve and black long sleeve (very similar to last year's shirts). Prices will range from \$34.50 to \$39.50 per shirt depending on the size and type (long/short sleeve). Orders must be received by **Friday the 27th of March.**

**NO late orders can be accepted.**

Please visit the uniform shop to order <http://balgowniepnc.com/ourschool/uniforms/>

## UNIFORM SHOP

The P and C has made the decision to close the Uniform shop until further notice. This will continue to be reviewed as circumstances change and we will provide any updates via the Skoolbag app, the Bally Buzz school newsletter and the Balgownie Public School P and C Facebook page. Thank you for your understanding.

All students who have placed a winter tunics order, these will be delivered once the items have arrived.

If you have any questions please do not hesitate to email us at: **balgowniepublicschool-uniform@pandcaffiliate.org.au**



The Australian Health Protection Principal Committee has met to consider the issue of school closures in relation to the community transmission of COVID-19. The Committee's advice is that pre-emptive closures are not likely to be proportionate or effective as a public health intervention to prevent community transmission of COVID-19 at this time.

There is currently limited information on the contribution of children to transmission of COVID-19, with the WHO-China Joint Mission noted the primary role of household transmission and observed that children tended to be infected from adults.

Previous work suggests that the potential reduction in community transmission from pre-emptive school closures may be offset by the care arrangements that are in place for children who are not at school. Children may require care from vulnerable grandparents or may continue to associate (and transmit infection) outside of school settings.

Broadly, the health advice on school closures from previous respiratory epidemics shows the costs are often underestimated and the benefits are overestimated.

<https://www1.health.gov.au/internet/main/publishing.nsf/Content/ohp-ahmppi.htm>.

This may be even more so in relation to COVID-19 as unlike influenza, the impact on otherwise healthy children has been minimal to date.

School closure is associated with considerable costs. Studies have estimated that around 15% of the workforce and 30% of the healthcare workforce may need to take time off work to care for children. While this effect could be mitigated somewhat, it is likely that this burden will still be significant and will fall disproportionately on those in casual or tenuous work circumstances.

For pre-emptive school closures to be effective, prolonged closure is required and it would be unclear when they could be re-opened. If there were still a large pool of susceptible students when schools are re-opened, there would be likely to be re-emergence of transmission in the community.

School closures may still be considered late in the outbreak in anticipation of a peak in infection rates, for a shorter period of time. Short term reactive school closures may also be warranted to allow cleaning and contact tracing to occur.

At this stage, the spread of COVID-19 in the community is at quite low levels. It may be many months before the level of community infection is again as low as it is at the moment.

A decision to close campus operations now on the current level of community transmission may therefore see schools closed for many months.

A number of countries around the world have implemented either nationwide or localised school closures, at different times in the evolution of the local epidemic. Some countries have also closed schools in a reactive manner following identification of illness in a school member. Some of these countries are now considering their position in relation to re-opening schools.

Singapore has had success in limiting the transmission of COVID-19 in the community without closing schools. Other countries are working in different contexts, including Northern Hemisphere countries making decisions at the end of winter with COVID-19 being accompanied by influenza in the community.

<https://en.unesco.org/themes/education-emergencies/coronavirus-school-closures>

The Australian Health Protection Principal Committee will meet on Monday and Tuesday to review advice on the operation of boarding facilities in schools. Further advice will also be provided this week on school sport. The advice in relation to school closures will continue to be reviewed at daily meetings of this Committee.

Schools should implement a range of other strategies to reduce transmission, including the promotion of personal hygiene measures (handwashing, reducing face contact, cough etiquette), physical distancing, reducing mass gatherings (eg school assemblies), and reducing the mixing of students (eg reduced use of common areas, staggered lunchtimes, and reduced after school activities and inter-school activities).

Schools should also reinforce existing policies to exclude students and staff who are unwell, and current policies requiring quarantine for those who have recently travelled overseas. It is also important that the learning needs of students who are excluded from school are met.

NSW Health has developed separate advice to NSW Government schools in relation to implementing social distancing strategies in a school setting. This advice will be forwarded separately.

Dr Kerry Chant PSM

Chief Health Officer

NSW Health

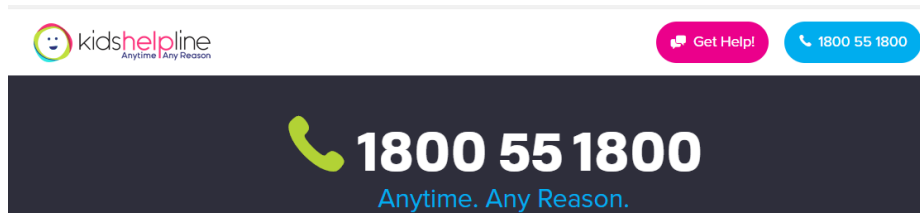
15 March 2020

Online counselling and information that can be accessed from home providing information and support via the web and phone.

### Kids Help Line

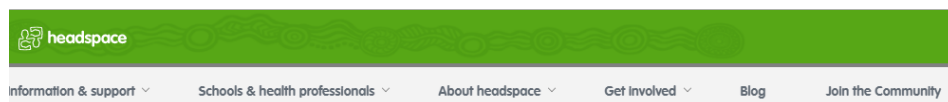
Online webchat and phone counselling

<https://kidshelpline.com.au/>



### eheadspace

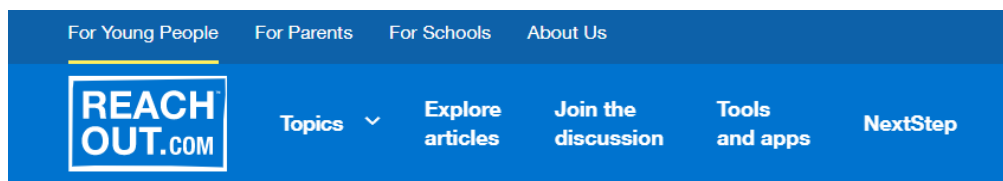
<https://headspace.org.au/eheadspace/>



eheadspace provides free online and telephone support and counselling to young people 12 - 25 and their families and friends. If you're based in Australia and going through a tough time, eheadspace can help.

### Reachout

<https://au.reachout.com/>



### Parent Line

<http://www.parentline.org.au/>

