



SCHOOL NEWSLETTER

Term 1 Week 2 2021
Tuesday 2nd February

Rosary Park Catholic School

Station Street, Branxton NSW 2335

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Website: www.branxton.catholic.edu.au

Built on Faith, Knowledge, Respect

We acknowledge the Wonnarua people-the first custodians of this land.

IMPORTANT DATES

Weekly Mass Times: 6pm Saturday Branxton; 8am Sunday Greta.

Feb		March	
Mon 8th	Year 5 BYOD Starts	Mon 1st	PUPIL-FREE DAY. No school for children on this day. St Nicholas OOSH open, call 0448 751 549
Wed 10th	P&F Meeting 6pm. <i>All welcome</i> (staffroom)	Tue 2nd	Kindergarten 2022 enrolments open
Thur 11th	Opening school liturgy	Wed 10th	P & F meeting
Fri 12th	Principal Meeting – Sallyanne at CSO	Wed 24th -Fri 26th	NAPLAN Practice Tests (Years 3 & 5)
Mon 15th	Parent information night (two sessions) from 5pm and 5:45pm		
Tue 16th	All Saints Regional Swimming Carnival. Due to COVID protocols, parents are not permitted to attend		
Wed 17th	Ash Wednesday		
Wed 24th	Primary Principal meeting – Sallyanne CSO		
Thur 25th	Diocesan Swimming carnival Lambton pool		

Principal's Message

Dear Lord,

As we begin a new school year, we thank you for the many blessings you have given us.

Thank you for the school holidays that gave us time for fun and relaxation with our family and friends.

Thank you for bringing us safely back to school this year.

We ask that you help us to:

use our eyes to see new friends and new opportunities,

use our minds to learn new things,

use our ears to hear your message as we try to live like Jesus and use our hearts in our interactions with others.

Help us to remember you are with us when we face challenges.

Help us to truly learn together and enrich the lives of all that we meet.

Amen

Dear Parents/Carers

Welcome back to Rosary Park to the 2021 school year! I hope you have all had a wonderful break over the holidays and are ready for an exciting year of learning.

It was so lovely to welcome our new Kindergarten children and their families yesterday and today. They are settling in and our year 6 students are doing an amazing job of looking after them.

We especially welcome our new staff:

Miss Rachael Hamilton (4 White teacher)

Mr Matthew Ellis (5 Blue teacher)

Mrs Emily McHugh (1 Blue teacher- job share with Louise Kevin)

Mrs Erin Dewey (Library Assistant & Learning Support Assistant, following the retirement of Mrs Marge Piper)

Mr Nigel Levido (Grounds person, following retirement of Mr Sean MacCormack)

We welcome the return of Mrs Debbie Parkes, Mrs Tiffany Nolan and Mrs Melanie Flynn from leave. Mrs Katrina Mardell and Mrs Amie Harry will return in term 2.

Special welcome to the new families who have joined us this year:

Tipper, Applekamp, Blanch, Simpson, Dumas, Asio, Billington-Sarina, Collier, Lang, Milgate, Cook, McGrath and Cairns.

Staff 2021

Executive staff:

Principal: Sallyanne Stanbridge

Assistant Principal: Louise Kevin

Acting Religious Education Coordinator: Amber Van Duuren

Acting Primary Coordinator: Janelle Dixon (term 1); Katrina Mardell/Janelle Dixon (from term 2)

Teaching Staff:

Kinder Blue: Miss Jessica Mead / Mrs Tiffany Nolan (1 day/week- Mondays)

Kinder White: Mrs Alanna Seysener

Year 1 Blue: Mrs Louise Kevin (Mon-Tue)/ Mrs Emily McHugh (Wed-Thu-Fri)

Year 1 White: Miss Ashlee Edwards

Year 2 Blue: Mrs Annika Rooke M-T/ Mrs Debbie Parkes W-Th-Fri

Year 2 White: Miss Mackenzie Gageler

Year 3 Blue: Miss Nikola Groves

Year 3 White: Mr Andrew Hacker

Year 4 Blue: Miss Samantha Preece

Year 4 White: Miss Rachael Hamilton

Year 5 Blue: Mr Matthew Ellis

Year 5 White: Mrs Amber Van Duuren

Year 6: Mrs Janelle Dixon M-T/Mrs Kate Burgess W-Th-Fri

Learning Support Teacher: Mrs Annmaree Hooker (Mon-Thur)

Teacher Librarian: Mrs Melanie Flynn (Tue-Thur)

School Counsellor: Mrs Krystle Perrin (3 days/fortnight)

Support Staff

Senior Admin/School Officer: Mrs Jane Johansen (Mon-Tue-Wed)

School officer (Admin): Mrs Kim O'Rourke (Wed-Thu-Fri) & Mrs Josie Thornberry (4 hours/week)

Pastoral Care Worker: 1 day a week/Aboriginal Education Support 3 days/week: Mrs Jess Dougherty.

Library Assistant: Mrs Erin Dewey

Learning Support Assistants: Mrs Renae Craft, Mrs Simone Cameron, Mrs Cherie Lane, Mrs Narelle Moylan, Mrs Josie Thornberry, Mrs Kimberley Gargan

Groundsman: Mr Nigel Levido

School Cleaner: Mrs Telina Foote

Afternoon Pick up reminders.

Rosary Park has a clearly defined Traffic Management Plan, developed in 2020 in consultation with NSW Police, Cessnock Council and the Diocesan Safety and Wellness team. It is attached to today's newsletter. As part of this plan, we regularly review safe travel and road safety with our children. Parents are expected to do the same; we know the best way of doing this is by actually abiding by the road rules and following our set procedures to ensure the safety of everyone.

Whilst COVID forced us to review and change our afternoon pick up procedures, the plan that we now have in place as a result, has proven to be the safest option and one that we will remain in place regardless of changes to COVID guidelines down the track. The parent car queue and pick-up process is a streamlined and organised process which allows staff to monitor children's movements more closely to their homes with known adults and ensure their safety by minimising their interaction with traffic, crossing roads etc.

I am extremely grateful to those parents who follow our procedures as we ask, demonstrate patience, and abide by road rules to ensure everyone's safety. Unfortunately, there are always those who seem to be in a hurry, park illegally and arrive before their allocated time which understandably is extremely annoying and frustrating to those parents who continually do the right thing and follow the procedure as requested.

I encourage you to read and familiarise yourself again with this document which outlines the following:

-Parents are always to abide by traffic laws during drop off and pick-up times. No U turns, follow the 40km zone, do not park in or obstruct driveways.

-The School recommends a "Kiss & Go" process at the front of the school in the mornings where students exit the vehicle on the passenger (kerb) side only. The area (gravel) beside St Nicholas Early Learning Centre is out of bounds for unaccompanied students due to the danger of crossing the St Nicholas Early Education Centre Driveway. If it is necessary to park in this area it is the School's expectation that a Parent/Caregiver will accompany the student to the school crossing to ensure their safety. As staff do not come on duty until 8:30am, students should not arrive at the school before this time.

-In the afternoons, *Parent Pick up and Go* is our preferred method of pick up and we appreciate Parents/Caregivers choosing this option to minimise adults on site as well as children and adults interacting with traffic.

Vehicles queue from ten (10) minute zone to the southern side of the pedestrian crossing (right of the school). They are to wait there until directed by a Staff member (5 cars at a time) to move into the pick-up zone. Staff member will call the family name and students are placed in the vehicle.

Note – A Staff member will place your child/ren in the vehicle on the kerb side (NOT roadside). Parents/Caregivers are to REMAIN IN THEIR VEHICLE. Whilst a Staff member can assist a child with their belt it is appreciated that in order to ensure the swift and smooth running of this procedure, children are able to do this themselves.

All five (5) cars leave this zone at THE SAME TIME before the next five cars are directed to the pick-up area. Family names A-L are to arrive at 3pm, while M-Z at 3:10pm. **Please do not arrive until your allocated time.**

-For families who have an afternoon commitment and need to leave the school promptly, *Meet and Greet* is the best option. Parents/caregivers are to park their cars and wait beside the staff car park where children will be walked down to you by a staff member at the 3pm bell. Any child whose parents/carers are not there will be walked back to school for parents to pick them up via Parent Pick Up & Go. Staff **will not** make multiple trips to this area for parents who arrive after the agreed time.

Meet and Greet will not operate in wet weather. Parents will be notified of this cancellation on the day via Compass.

Parents are asked NOT to park in St Nicholas car park as we will not walk children across the crossing to meet families. Parents/Carers will have to collect their child at the Meet and Greet. We need to minimise children and adult interactions with the traffic and crossing the road.

-If you are walking/riding bikes home with your child, they will cross with walkers/bike riders and meet you down near the church/cemetery.

-As per the Catholic Schools Office and Transport for NSW (TfNSW) Government guidelines, parents must give annual written permission for their child/ren to ride their bike or walk to/from school, with parents aware that children are under parent's duty of care once they leave school grounds. The School and TfNSW recommends that children under 10yrs DO NOT ride bicycles to or from school unless accompanied by an adult. Children under 12yrs should ride away from busy roads. They may ride bikes on the footpath unless there are signs that specifically prohibit cycling. These permission notes will come home via class teachers in coming weeks.

If for a very *specific reason* you need to pick up your child early one day from school, this must be done before 2:30pm.

Please do not call the school office **UNLESS IT'S AN EMERGENCY** after 2:15pm asking for a message to be relayed to your child about a change to pick up arrangements.

We thank you for your cooperation with this plan to ensure the safety of our children & all members of our community.

Contacting Teachers

The best outcomes occur for our children when school and home work together. We look forward to continuing to build the strong links between families and school. Your child's teacher is obviously an integral part of this and there may be times during the year, aside from our scheduled parent interviews in term 1, that you need to contact your child's teacher. If so, contact can be made via the school's administration email: admin@branxton.catholic.edu.au . These emails are will be forwarded to the relevant teacher by myself or Louise Kevin (Assistant Principal). Teachers will respond to your email within 2 business days and during the hours of 8am and 5pm.

You can also contact your child's teacher through our office, by leaving a message for them. They will return your call as soon as possible. As you can appreciate, teachers are very busy during the school day so any 'urgent' messages for your child regarding travel arrangements, medications, lunches etc must be made by calling the office.

COVID Update

There is little change to the restrictions that we had in place at the end of our 2020 school year. That is,

-Parents can come on site only for pressing school meetings, (start of the year orientation evenings are included), Canteen, uniform purchases, out of hours P and F meetings.

-All parents coming on site (for canteen, meetings etc) MUST sign in via the QR code on display in our office windows. If you do not have a phone, please enter the office, and sign in on the paper forms in the foyer. Please comply with social distancing at all times

-By signing this, you agree to abide by our COVID rules and that you are fit and well.

-Please keep your children at home if they are unwell- return to school once symptoms have stopped.

Holiday work

Over the Christmas holidays, in addition to general maintenance such as pest control and steam cleaning of carpets, we had major works carried out to the trimming of branches and general tree maintenance. As part of our upgrade of school security, a Perspex screen has been installed in the front office foyer.

Last year, our computer lab (in library) was dismantled with all desktops located there now out of warranty. These have now been replaced by 32 new portable devices for use in library lessons and at other times as needed by teachers.

Fifteen iPads were purchased in the holidays for use in K-1. We thank the P and F for their contribution to this.

Volunteers

We appreciate the important role that volunteers play at our school. Everyone who volunteers at Rosary Park must first read and fill out the relevant parts of the Diocesan Volunteers handbook, available from our office. Part of this is the completion of a Police check and our office staff must sight relevant ID from you before we send it to the Catholic Schools Office for verification. This process normally takes 3-4 weeks. Upon this clearance, you are then free to volunteer. There is also the completion of an induction you must complete within 6 months.

Parents and Friends Association

Rosary Park is fortunate to have a supportive, hard working group who form our Parents and Friends Association. This year our monthly meetings (2nd Wednesday of the month, 6pm) will either be held in person at school or via Zoom. Any parent/carers is very welcome to join us at these meetings where we discuss fundraising initiatives and any issues arising for us as a school community.

I direct you to a letter attached to today's newsletter that outlines a discussion point for next week's meeting- that is moving the canteen from a P and F run entity as it is now, to the school taking over the canteen's daily financial organisation.

Our first meeting will be held at school on *Wednesday 10 February from 6pm in the staffroom*. All are welcome!

St Nicholas OOSH Branxton

A reminder that St Nicholas OOSH offer before and after school care 7am-8:30am & 3pm-6pm (as well as Vacation Care in holidays). OOSH can be contacted on **0448 751 549** to make enrolment inquiries. Vacation care is available during holidays and pupil-free days.

Uniforms

Thank you to those families who have ensured their children have started 2021 with correct uniforms. Please remember that our uniform policy states sports socks are *plain white (no sport logos) with predominantly white joggers*. Thank you for assistance with this.

It is great to see a number of girls have decided to try our new Summer uniform option- don't they look fantastic!



Rosary Park Summer Uniform – Girls

Shorts/Shirt	Peter Pan white collar shirt (emblem) and blue Midford shorts, white socks.
TUNIC	Blue & white check summer dress
SHOES	Black Shoes (lace up or Velcro) with white socks, to be worn above the ankle

Rosary Park Summer Uniform – Boys

TOP	School blue shirt with embroidered logo.
SHORTS	Navy shorts, not cargo.
SHOES	Black Shoes (lace up or Velcro) with navy socks to be worn above the ankle.

Rosary Park Sports Uniform: Summer

TOP/ PANTS	Blue and White Sports Polo with school logo Navy microfiber shorts with school initials
SHOES/ SOCKS	Predominately-white joggers. Plain white socks (no sport logos such as Puma, Adidas), worn above the ankle

Music lessons

Howard Ward is continuing to provide music lessons for students in years 3-6. Howard attends Rosary Park on Wednesdays and Fridays with lessons in flute, clarinet and saxophone as well as bass guitar. If your child is interested in these lessons, call Howard on 0419 663 389 for more details.

Staff from the Conservatorium of Music (Muswellbrook) have re-commenced keyboard, drum and guitar lessons this week.

Whilst individual music lessons are an important and valued addition to the curriculum, they nevertheless take children away from their core learning in the classroom, and this time cannot be made up by class teachers. Whilst music teachers are asked to rotate music lesson times, parents need to be aware that there will be aspects of learning missed as a result of the weekly music lesson.

School Assemblies

As per COVID guidelines, we are unable to have parents attend our Friday afternoon assemblies. We will continue to film and share this with you. Our first assembly will be Friday 19 February.

At these assemblies, teachers give out their class awards while Principal's awards are presented. Mr Ward and our students learning music will lead us in the National Anthem and Happy Birthday.

Parent Information Night

Parents are invited to Rosary Park on Monday 15 February for our parent information night. This will start at 5pm in your child's classroom for individual class information. These will be held in classrooms at 5pm and repeated at 5:45pm. Staff supervision will be available for children in the playground during these parent meetings. Children are not permitted to attend the meeting with their parents.

Sport Term 1

For term 1, we are fortunate to have a Sporting Schools Grant for cricket skills. These will run for 5 week blocks. Please note sport uniform days for grades:

Kinder: Sports day every Monday for all of term 1

Year 1: Sport uniform worn on Fridays (weeks 2-5) then from week 6 (1 March) sport uniform on Mondays

Year 2: In weeks 2-5 Sports day is Fridays then from week 6 (1 March) sport uniform on Mondays

Year 3: Sport uniforms on Mondays (Weeks 2-5) then Wednesdays from weeks 6-10 (starting Wed 3 March)

Year 4: Sport uniforms on Mondays (Weeks 2-5) then in week 6-10 sport is Fridays

Year 5: Sport uniforms on Mondays (Weeks 2-5) then Thursdays

Year 6: Sport uniforms on Mondays (Weeks 2-5) then from weeks 6-10 sport uniform on Wednesdays

School Attendance

As you would be aware in recent years, new attendance requirements came into effect.

The Education Amendment (School Attendance Bill) main points:

- All absences must be recorded and kept by the school for 7 years. Parents must give the school a reason for their child's absence (Compass, email or by phone) within 7 school days, otherwise it is marked in school records as an 'unexplained absence.'

- Principals may request a doctor's certificate if leave is for several days OR there are patterns of absence e.g. every second Monday.

- Parents are urged to avoid booking holidays in term time. If, however, your child needs time from school (more than 10 days) you must complete an 'Exemption from Attendance' form available from the Principal, PRIOR to exemption. It cannot be granted retrospectively. These are retained by the school. Exception from Attendance over 100 days in a 12-month period must go to the Minister via the Catholic Education Commission NSW.

-According to the Guidelines: Principals and the Diocesan Director may grant exemptions due to exceptional domestic circumstances, including, but not limited to participation in family holidays during school term, subject to being satisfied that this is in the best educational interests of the child.

School Website

Our website can be accessed via, <http://www.branxton.catholic.edu.au>

Our 2021 newsletters can be accessed there by clicking on the Newsletters button.

We also have relevant diocesan policies (which are followed by the school) on our website site such as Privacy & Complaints Resolution for Parents and Carers, as well as P and F monthly meeting minutes.

Please have a look - any constructive feedback or ideas about features or additional information you would like to see on the site is welcome.

Camp 2021

In 2021, Year 5 and 6 children will attend Aussie Bush Camp 16-18 June 2021. The cost of the camp is not covered by the resource fee and will cost approximately \$360/child. This is not covered by the school resource fee.

Student Leaders

Congratulations to our 2021 Leaders. They will receive their badges at our opening liturgy on **Thursday 11 February at 9:20am.** The format of this service and the attendance of parents is to be advised as it will be dependent on COVID restrictions.

Environmental Team Leader: Kiara Hedger

Mercy Team Leader: Charles Wilson

Positive Behaviour for Learning (PBL) Leader: Claire Jordan

Active Lifestyle Leader: Annika Marr

Sport Leaders:

Green: Eddie Walters, Bridie Richards

Red: William Heggart, Hugh Dilley

Blue: Isabella Theuma, Ashton Johansen

Gold: Hannah Norton, Jed Ayscough

Toys at school

We had several incidents over the course of last year where children have brought toys to school, often special ones, and they have traded or given them to a friend or broken or lost them. As you can understand this often ends in tears, with particularly our younger students finding it hard to understand the permanency of this decision.

We have a number of different toys for children to play with at school, so children are **not** to bring toys into school. If your child requires a toy for sensory or comfort needs, this can easily be accommodated by talking with your child's teacher. Thank you in anticipation for your cooperation with this.

Helping your child settle into the new school year (Source: Beyond Blue)

Occasionally feeling scared or fearful is all part of growing up. But some kids find it much harder to manage stressful situations and the world can be scarier for them than for other kids their age.

A particularly stressful situation is when children start kinder or primary school. Separation anxiety refers to the fear kids have when being separated from their parents or caregivers. It's very common in early years. The [Australian Parenting Website](#) has some great tips for helping a child deal with starting childcare, kinder or school:

- Help your child adapt to a new setting by spending time at the new place with them before the separation. If you're there when your child is introduced to their teacher or caretaker, they're more likely to develop trust quickly.
- If your child is feeling very upset and showing signs of separation anxiety before you arrive, have a chat to the childcare centre or the school so they're aware of the situation.
- Tell your child when you're leaving and when you'll be back. Sneaking out can make matters worse. At the same time, don't drag out your goodbye.
- Keep a calm and cheerful manner when leaving. If you look stressed, your child will likely pick up on this and get upset.
- Don't use negative phrases like, "stop being such a baby". Instead, reinforce positive behaviour by complimenting them when they are behaving well.

At home, you can work together with your child to develop coping strategies for their anxiety. Here are six great ways to get on top of it:

- **Slow down.** This is always the best place to start. Take some slow, deep breaths together. Breathe in for three seconds, hold for three, then out for three. Once they're feeling a bit calmer, you can talk through what's worrying them.
- **Think positive.** Remind them of times they've dealt with similar issues. "Remember the time your friend Andy didn't play with you at lunch, you played tiggy with Keely and Matt and had a great time."
- **Help them to challenge the scary thought with facts.** "Sharks can't live in a swimming pool." "Every time Mum goes out for dinner, she comes back." Make a plan together for what to do if things don't go as they'd like. "If you forget your workbook, it's okay, just borrow a piece of paper to write things down and we can glue it in later when we're home."
- **Have a go.** Kids often worry about making mistakes. This can lead to them avoiding situations or activities. Encourage your kid to give new things a try and let them know that it's about fun, not being perfect.
- **Check yourself.** Try taking a step back and wait before you jump in to help your child. Figuring things out for themselves, learning to problem-solve, is an important step and will help them to be a resilient adult. Over-protective family members can reinforce a child's fears that the world is a dangerous place and that they can't handle it.
- **Be the example.** Be a model for your child. Kids pick up signals from adults, so by showing calmness in dealing with stressful situations, you are showing them the way.

More support for your anxious child can be found on Beyond Blue's [Healthy Families](#) website. A health professional can help you develop strategies tailored to your child.

Rosary Park is truly a unique School and Parish community with an inclusive and nurturing atmosphere where we learn together and enrich the lives of each other. I am very much looking forward to continuing to work with you, your children, and the staff this year to ensure that every child at Rosary Park thrives in 2021!

Kind regards,

Sallyanne Stanbridge (Principal)

Pastoral Care News

Raising 3 children, I often wish I had a user guide to parenting. Just when I thought I'd overcome a problem with one child a curve ball would come flying at me from another.

Parenting isn't easy and unfortunately there is no instruction manual however, we are better equipped now more than any other time in history to understand the emotional and resilience needs of our children.

Cessnock Family Support service has two brilliant courses available to parents of Rosary Park children. 'No Scaredy Cats', 23rd February 2021 from 9am to 2.45pm provides advice, support and understanding for parenting children suffering from Anxiety. And 'Circle of Security' which looks beyond children's outward behaviours to focus on underlying needs of children. To find out more information please call Cessnock Family support on 4990 4507.



Kind regards,

Jess Dougherty

Library News

Bookclub online orders to be completed by Monday 8 February, 2021.

Just a reminder that children will be required to bring a library bag if borrowing from the school library.

Become a foster carer and help a child to heal

CatholicCare are looking for people interested in providing a loving, supportive and predictable home for children.

Through no fault of their own, many children are not able to live with their birth families. Our carers are crucial to providing children with stability and nurturing when they need it most.

There are various types of care you could provide that would make a difference:

- **Short term:** such as providing regular weekend care.
- **Medium term:** typically, six to twelve months while families work to have their children restored to them.
- **Longer term:** typically, two to five years or longer.

Can you commit to helping a child? Please call Di Walters on (02) 4944 0711 for further information or visit bit.ly/CCfoster



**Social Services
Hunter-Manning**
DIOCESE OF MAITLAND-NEWCASTLE



Contact (02) 4944 0711
www.catholiccare.org.au

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