



75th Chin National Day Celebration at VSL Sunshine



Welcome to all of our students, parents/carers and teachers to the start of the 2023 school year.

Interest in language learning at the VSL is as strong as ever with demand for classes across our Centres and in Distance Education high. This is a wonderful reflection of the community of language learners which we have across the state, and recognition of the value of the Victorian School of Languages as a quality government language school. We thank you for your understanding as we work to rationalise our provision for classes within the restrictions of our budget.

Congratulations must go to all our students for the progress they made in 2022, and in particular our VCE students. We were again pleased to note that 20 students received the top mark in the State in their particular language, and 5 students received a perfect score of 50. This effort is only achieved through outstanding student effort and dedication from our wonderful VSL teachers. It is certainly worth celebrating, and we will give you a more detailed outline of the achievements of the VCE students in our next Bulletin.

All VSL staff have been briefed at the start of the year around our responsibilities as a Child Safe School. We take our obligation for the safety of your child seriously, and Child Safety Co-ordinators have been appointed across all centres as well as here at Head Office. Your child(ren) should be able identify the Child Safety Co-ordinators and have it recorded (for F–10 students) in their Student Language Passports. If you would like further information on the Child Safe Standards and how we embed them at the VSL, please visit our website on www.vsl.vic.edu.au or ask your Area Manager.

We wish you all the best for a successful learning year ahead.

Regards

Judi Benney
Acting Principal

Area Activities

75th Chin National Day Celebration at VSL Sunshine

On February 20 each year, Chin people commemorate the events of February 19-20, 1948, where 5,000 representatives voted to adopt democracy in Falam, Chin land. Many Chin people remember these events as expressions of their patriotism and their desire for their own state. Chin National Day is a day to celebrate being Chin, a day to celebrate identity, culture and traditions, a day to tell everyone in the world who Chin are and where they come from.



We, the Chin Hakha Faculty at VSL Sunshine also celebrated Chin National Day on 18th February 2023 for the second year. Every student came to the class wearing Chin traditional costumes. Each class presented one item each at the event where VCE class talked about the history of Chin National Day, Year 8-10 class performed a song called "A Hme Ram Laitlang" regarded as the Chin National Anthem. The year 6-7 class presented about various kinds of Chin Traditional Foods with pictures and the year 4-5 class held posters of the Chin national flower and animal and presented the story behind them. The year 1-3 class greeted and welcomed the whole faculty coming to the event venue by holding and waving the Chin Flags which is a mark of the celebration. Later they gave details of the meaning of the colours and the content in the flag and the Chin State map.

We also had words of encouragement from our Area Manager Pashalia Eglezos, the Supervisor Bao Le and Bawi Hnem, one of the 2022 Chin Hakha Top Scorers.

This is the day that the new generation learns about the Chin history, culture, traditions, backgrounds, and celebrates our identity and language, while we are also proud to call Australia home.

*Sui Len Zing Bawi Hrin
VSL Sunshine Chin Hakha faculty*

Annual Privacy Reminder for our School Community

Our school collects, uses, discloses and stores student and parent personal information for standard school functions or where permitted by law, as stated in the Schools' Privacy Policy.

Please take time to read our school's collection notice, found on our website www.vsl.vic.edu.au. We ask parents to also review the guidance we provide on how we use Microsoft 365/Microsoft Teams safely at the school and what parents can do to further protect their child's information. If after reviewing the guidance, you have any questions or concerns regarding your child using Microsoft 365/Microsoft Teams, please contact the school.

For more information about privacy, refer to [Schools' Privacy Policy - Information for parents](https://bit.ly/33oiose) at <https://bit.ly/33oiose>

This information is also available in ten community languages:

- Amharic
- Arabic
- Dari
- Gujarati
- Mandarin
- Somali
- Sudanese
- Turkish
- Urdu
- Vietnamese

Impressive VCE Results at the VSL in 2022

We are very proud to report that our VCE students achieved some outstanding results in 2022. Student achievement profiles will be included in the next Family & Staff Bulletin including potential students which may receive a Premiers Award. The VSL data demonstrates that for three consecutive years (2020–2022) both face-to-face classes and Distance Education, has exceeded our VSL Strategic Plan (2019–2023) progressive target that 'by 2023 all VCE students to be at or above the State mean for both the median study scores and scores above 40'.

There were 40 languages offered at VCE level across the VSL with 154 students achieving a score above 40. Five students achieved the perfect score of 50 in the following languages: German, Greek, Indonesian Second Language, Italian and Japanese Second Language.

The state mean study score for all Languages combined in the Victorian Government school sector was 28.8% in 2022. Our overall mean study score for Year 12 students was 31.3% in Distance Education and for all centres combined, it was 30.4%. Additional data shows that 13.6% of Distance Education students and 9.4% of Centre students achieved a VCE study score above 40 which was higher than the State Mean for Government Schools for Languages.

In 2022, VSL students topped the State in 20 languages listed below

Bengali	German	Indonesian SL	Macedonian	Punjabi
Bosnian	Greek	Italian	Persian	Romanian
Chin Hakha	Hindi	Japanese SL	Polish	Sinhala
Croatian	Hungarian	Karen	Portuguese	Spanish

SL - Second Language

We extend our thanks and congratulate all our teachers across the VSL for their tireless efforts in working with their students to maximise their learning potential!

Angela Natoli
Assistant Principal: Curriculum & Professional Development

Encouraging Sun Protection at the VSL (including excursions and seminars)

The VSL has the following measures in place to help reduce the risk of excessive UV sun exposure for staff and students.

Shade

At the VSL there are over 40 centres each with different settings. During the 20 minute recess period the VSL will provide sufficient options for shelter and trees to provide shade on school grounds, particularly in places such as:

- where students congregate for recess
- the canteen (where operational)
- outdoor areas- if lessons are facilitated outside
- popular play areas
- assembly areas
- sporting grounds/ovals

When building works or grounds maintenance is conducted at a VSL centre site that may impact on the level of shading available to staff and students, a review of the shaded areas available will be conducted to offer further shading options. This will be communicated to students by the Area Manager.

Sun protective clothing

From the beginning of Term Four to the end of Term One, staff and students are encouraged to wear hat styles that protect the

face, neck and ears when outdoors. It is recommended that students who are not wearing appropriate protective clothing or a hat play in the shade or in a suitable area protected from the sun.

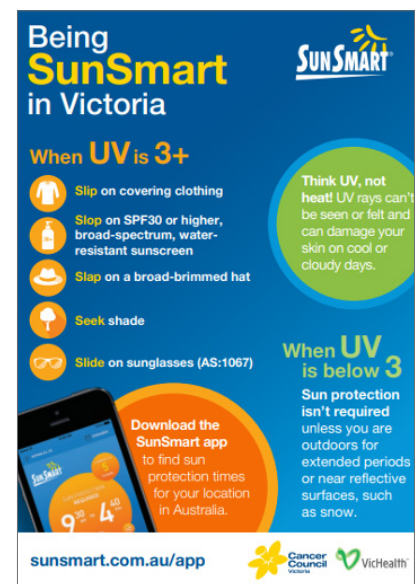
Sunscreen

The VSL encourages all staff and students to apply SPF30 (or higher) broad-spectrum, water-resistant sunscreen daily whenever UV levels reach 3 and above.

Staff and students should bring their own sunscreen according to personal skin requirements. Each VSL Centre Office will have a generic sunscreen that can be used.

Staff and families should role model SunSmart behaviour and are encouraged to apply SPF 30 (or higher) broad-spectrum, water-resistant sunscreen when outside.

Our VSL SunSmart Policy can be viewed at www.vsl.vic.edu.au



VSL School Policies

In 2022 we updated all the VSL school policies according to compliance guidelines and requirements of the VRQA and the Department of Education & Training. The policies have been contextualised for our school setting and are central to the effectiveness of our school. They provide operational guidance which apply to Victorian Government schools. All our policies are available on our school website: www.vsl.vic.edu.au

It is important for us to communicate these policies to our VSL School Community so please take the time to read the policies at your convenience and do not hesitate to provide feedback.

The policies below relate to all our implementation of the Child Safety Standards as well as operational information for parents and students at the VSL.

POLICY	PURPOSE
Anaphylaxis Policy	Processes and procedures in place to support students diagnosed as being at risk of suffering from anaphylaxis.
Asthma Policy	Processes and procedures in place to support students diagnosed with asthma.
Bullying Prevention Policy	How the VSL is committed to providing a safe and respectful learning environment where bullying will not be tolerated.
Camps and Excursion Policy	Processes and procedures the VSL will use when planning and conducting camps, excursions and seminars for students.
Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy	Our school's commitment to creating and maintaining a child safe and child-friendly organisation, where children and young people are safe and feel safe. It informs our school community of everyone's obligations to act safely and appropriately towards children and guides our processes and practices for the safety and wellbeing of students across all areas of our work.
Child Safety Code of Conduct	The expected behaviour of adults with children and young people in our school.
Child Safety Responding & Reporting Obligations Policy & Procedures	The procedures our school has in place to respond to complaints or concerns relating to child abuse and to ensure that all staff and members of our school community understand and follow the various legal obligations that apply to the reporting of child abuse to relevant authorities.
Communication with School Staff Policy	How the VSL proposes to manage common enquiries from parents and carers.
Digital Learning (Internet, Social Media and Digital Devices) Policy	Our commitment to providing students with the opportunity to benefit from digital technologies to support and enhance learning and promoting safe, responsible and discerning use of digital technologies.
Duty of Care Policy	The non-delegable duty of care obligations that all staff at the Victorian School of Languages owe to our students and members of the school community who visit and use the school premises.
Homework Policy	Outlines to our school community the Department's and VSL's policy requirements relating to homework.
Mobile Phones – Student Use Policy	Explains the requirements and expectations relating to students using mobile phones [and other personal mobile devices] during school hours.
Student Attendance Policy	Explains the key practices and procedures the VSL has in place to: support, monitor and maintain student attendance & record, monitor and follow up student absences.
Student Wellbeing and Engagement Policy	Our commitment to providing a safe and supportive learning environment for students, expectations for positive student behaviour, support available to students and families and our school's policies and procedures for responding to inappropriate student behaviour.
Student Attendance Policy	Explains the key practices and procedures the VSL has in place to: support, monitor and maintain student attendance & record, monitor and follow up student absences.
Sun Smart Policy	To encourage behaviours at the VSL to minimise the risk of skin and eye damage and skin cancer.
Yard Duty and Supervision Policy	Ensures that school staff understand their supervision and yard duty responsibilities.

Angela Natoli
Assistant Principal / Child Safety Coordinator

Distance Education

As we work through the transition from start of year administration to being in the thick of teaching at VSL Distance Education, I find myself reflecting on the many changes that we've experienced in recent years, and those that lie ahead. Some changes are fun and exciting, others can be smooth and uneventful. I am really very hopeful that the most significant change we have made this year at VSL Distance Education will just make sense.

In 2022, a committee of teachers and course writers collaborated on a new approach to feedback and reporting, that we hope will bring many benefits to parents, teachers, and most of all, learners. In any educational context, it is vital that learners receive clear and timely feedback that they can put into action. This is difficult to do if feedback is presented in a range of locations and formats, and even more so if the reason for their grade is unclear. It's also challenging for parents to start a conversation around their child's learning if they don't have access to enough information.

In an effort to improve the consistency of the feedback we deliver to students and their families, we have renewed our workset grading system, added weekly assessment of learning behaviours and asked teachers to provide a comment following the 'two medals and a mission' model. These changes are very exciting for us, and we cannot wait to see and hear the response we get from our learners. In our new grading system, learners are encouraged to go above and beyond the requirements of their course, take risks with the language, and understand the level at which they have achieved. They can also see what their teacher expects of them in terms of effort, organisation and engagement, and address these areas on a weekly basis. And finally, learners will receive one key piece of feedback on what they can improve, to ensure that they can focus on developing their language skills one step at a time, and not getting lost among reams of advice. Of course, they will always be encouraged with their strengths and areas of achievement.



Professional Development Day, December 2022

parents and home school supervisors. We strongly encourage you to access this page and get the conversation started with your child.

You will notice at the end of Semester One that we have also adjusted our semester reports. These will now summarise the data from worksets across the semester to give you a useful overview of their progress through their course. Your child's teacher will also share three areas for improvement to provide a focus for learning in the following semester. You will receive an email when your child's semester summary is available on the *View Student Progress* page.

So I encourage you to access the *View Student Progress* page and keep up with your child's language learning journey, start that conversation and continue to support them and their VSL teacher.

Not all changes are difficult, uncomfortable or stressful. We hope that this change makes sense, and we await your feedback across the year. Welcome back to the VSL for the 2023 school year. We look forward to working together with you and your children to achieve new personal bests in language learning this year.



The Distance Education team

Building upon the *View Student Progress* page developed over the past few years, we are now sharing the above information with

Mike Atkinson
Acting Manager - Distance Education

The VSL School Council 2023 Election

The following details are provided to the VSL community about the 2023 School Council Election.

The Victorian School of Languages is a government school providing instruction to approximately 17,000 students in languages other than English. The school's language program is delivered through both face to face teaching in centres across the State and through distance education mode. The face to face classes from Foundation to VCE are held during out of school hours in 42 metropolitan, country and regional centres. The VSL distance education section offers 13 languages from beginners to VCE.

School Council

The VSL is governed by a School Council and this body provides leadership and direction for the School. Parents of VSL students are eligible to stand for election and/or vote for parent candidates.

SCHOOL COUNCIL COMPOSITION

The Council of the Victorian School of Languages comprises the following membership:

- 6 Parents (non DET employees) (elected)‡
- 2 DET staff* employed more than 8 hours per week (elected)
- 2 staff* employed less than 8 hours per week (elected)
- 4 representatives from relevant agencies (nominated)‡
- 1 representative from DET (nominated)
- 2 community members (nominated)‡
- 1 Principal

‡President to be appointed from one of these categories.

*Staff refers to VSL employees.

1. FOR PARENTS OF VSL STUDENTS

There are 3 vacancies for 2023-2025.

CANDIDATES for one of the above positions should nominate on the correct form (see the next page of this Bulletin). Nominations must be delivered to the Head Office of the VSL, 315 Clarendon Street Thornbury, or mailed to PO Box 1172 Thornbury 3071, no later than 4pm on 2 March 2023. The PARENTS category also includes guardians or people who have the custody of a VSL student.

2. FOR VSL STAFF EMPLOYED LESS THAN 8 HOURS PER WEEK

(ie. Instructors/non teaching staff in VSL centres)

There is one vacancy for 2023-2025.

CANDIDATES for this position should nominate on the correct form and deliver nominations no later than 4pm on 2 March 2023 to the Head Office of the VSL or mail to PO Box 1172 Thornbury 3071.

THOSE WHO NOMINATE A CANDIDATE MUST BE ELIGIBLE VOTERS.

A LIST OF CANDIDATES will be posted at each VSL centre and the VSL Head Office on 4 March 2023 SHOULD THERE BE A NEED.

ELIGIBILITY TO VOTE

To be eligible to vote you must either be a parent or guardian of a student, or be employed by the VSL

VOTING FOR CANDIDATES

For all people eligible to vote - **you may vote by post**. To collect the ballot papers and envelopes, you need to attend the VSL centre listed in the section below marked

- VOTING BY POST **OR**, for parents in country locations, a ballot paper and envelopes could be forwarded on request by the VSL (Tel. 03 9474 0500) **OR** you may vote by coming to the Head Office on 10 March 2023 before 4pm. The Election Meeting will be convened at 3.30pm although you may vote at any time during the day between 9am and 4pm.

VOTING BY POST

To collect a ballot paper and envelopes for voting you should attend a nearby VSL Centre at the times indicated below. If uncertain, ring the VSL Head Office.

Centres that operate on Saturdays – 11 March 2023

Voting will take place at all metropolitan and Geelong Centres on Saturday 11 March 2023.

Mid-week Centres – Between 7 March – 10 March 2023

The following country centres will be contacted by the Area Manager separately: Doncaster (mid-week), Glen Waverley (mid-week), McKinnon (mid-week), Ballarat, Wodonga.

VSL Head Office – 10 March 2023

Staff based at the VSL Head Office will vote on 10 March 2023.

VOTING TIMETABLE

The postal votes, whether mailed or hand delivered, must **reach** the Head Office of the VSL by no later than 4pm on 10 March 2023.

Judi Benney

Acting Principal

School Council Elections

Schedule 4: Notice of Election and Call for Nominations

An election is to be conducted for members of the School Council of the Victorian School of Languages.

Nomination forms may be obtained from the school and must be lodged by 4:00pm on 2/03/2023.

The ballot will close at 4.00 pm on 18/03/2023

Following the closing of nominations a list of the nominations received will be posted at the school. The terms of office, membership categories and number of positions in each membership category open for election are as follows:

MEMBERSHIP	TERM OF OFFICE	NUMBER OF POSITIONS
Parent member - 6 positions	From 20 March 2023 to and inclusive of the date of the declaration of the poll in 2025	3
VSL staff employed by the VSL less than 8 hours per week - 2 positions	One from 20 March 2023 to and inclusive of the date of the declaration of the poll in 2024 and one until 2025	1

If the number of nominations is less than the number of vacancies, a notice to that effect and calling for further nominations will be posted in a prominent position at the school.

Judi Benney
Acting Principal

Schedule 5B: Nomination Form for Parent Member Category (and Centre Staff)

I wish to nominate as a parent member (or an elected position) on the Victorian School of Languages school council

CANDIDATES DETAILS

Name (use BLOCK letters)

Residential address P/code.....

Contact phone (mobile or landline)..... Email.....

I am the parent / guardian of (student), who is/are currently enrolled at this school.

The person I have nominated is an employee of the Department of Education and Training but not engaged in work at and for the school.

Yes / No (please circle)

Name of Nominator (use BLOCK letters)

Signature of Nominator Date / /

CANDIDATE TO COMPLETE

I accept the nomination and I am prepared to serve as a Parent member or as a sessional staff member of the above-named school council. I hereby declare that I am not and undischarged bankrupt, of unsound mind, currently serving a sentence for an indictable offence, a registrate offender within the meaning of the Sex Offenders Registration Act 2004.

Signature of Candidate Date / /

You will be notified when your nomination has been received.

Personal information provided in this form is collected as part of the school council election nomination process. The information may be used to determine your eligibility as a candidate and to nominate. Your personal information may be disclosed as a result of inspection prior to the commencement of voting or at any time up to one year from the declaration of the poll.

Your name will be included in a list of school council candidates and nominators (where applicable) posted in a prominent position at the school and for candidates, on a ballot paper (where applicable).

Further, the name, membership category, gender, term of office, office held (if any) of school council members and notification whether the member is an employee of the Department will be forwarded to the Department of Education and Early Childhood

Development by the principal by 30 April each year as a record of council membership and may be used for statistical purposes.

You can access your personal information by contacting the principal on (03) 9474 0500.

If you choose not to give some or all of the information requested your nomination may not be accepted. If you have any queries about the school council nomination process, please contact the principal.

School Updates

Key Dates Term 1, 2023

25 January	VSL Leadership & Area Managers return
26 January	Australia Day holiday
27 January	Government School Teachers resume
4 February	Centre Classes commence (Saturday)
2–18 March	School Council Election
11 March	Labour Day weekend - no centre classes
23 March	Distance Education Parent Teacher Interviews
1 April	Final Day Centre classes for Term 1 Distribution of VCE interim reports (Centres)
6 April	End of Term 1 (Thursday)
24 April	Term 2 begins
25 April	Anzac Day holiday
29 April	Term 2 Centre classes resume

Term 1 Professional Development

27 January	Distance Education Staff PD, Thornbury
28 January	Centre Staff PD (Area based)
21 February	VCAA VCE Leaders Briefing
27 Feb- 23 March	VCAA Analysing VCE Results Modules
1 March	VSL New Staff Induction Seminar
8 March	VSL centre VCE Teacher briefing

VSL - Earthquake Victims Fundraising Campaign

The human crisis around the earthquakes in Turkey and Northern Syria recently continue to be on our minds. This tragic event has affected many of our VSL community across Melbourne and Victoria. We know that some of our families have loved ones significantly affected by the earthquake and extend our comfort and best wishes to you.

Times like these remind us of the importance of supporting each other as a VSL community. We come together from our diverse backgrounds to care for our Turkish and Syrian citizens in whatever way we can. Last week our School Council endorsed the following fund-raising campaigns. We encourage you to show your support if you are able to do so.

1. Australian Red Cross: Donate to the Red Cross Türkiye-Syria Earthquakes Appeal <https://www.redcross.org.au/earthquakes/>
2. Embassy of the Republic Of Türkiye – Canberra Disaster Relief Fund : Turkish Embassy Disaster Relief Fund https://m.facebook.com/story.php?story_fbid=pfbid02FdzAxTEWY4TAA4pRDa6VDWM4baQ4ChFfDS3R5Ca8Nkmg-t9imDqAmXVvuzN3mzJcil&id=100067941046852&mibextid=qC1gEa
3. AHBAP Association: AHBAP Association Disaster Relief <https://ahbap.org/disasters-turkey>

Professional Development at the VSL



South East – Berwick, Dandenong and Hampton Park



West 1 - Altona North, Ballarat, Footscray, Sunshine



Distance Education Professional Development



Area South/South 2 - PD Day, January 28