Dear Parents/Caregivers,

**Staffing News**

Our Deputy Principal position was recently advertised as its three year tenure concluded in January 2017. It was advertised this time for a further five years to take it up until January 2022. I am sure you will join me in congratulating Voula Pounendis who has won her position back. Her commitment, passion and drive towards making Virginia Primary the best it can be leave us with no doubt she is the right person for this job.

We are currently working our way through three permanent teacher positions at our school from 2017 onwards and hope to be able to share the successful applicants with you in our next newsletter.

**Oliphant Science Awards**

I would like to congratulate Toby, Chloe, Belle, Charlie and Flynn who all entered the Oliphant Science Awards. The quality of work they produced and the thinking behind their entries were fantastic. Two of these students were prize winners in their categories, a fantastic achievement. The award ceremony is this Friday, we look forward to sharing more with you about all of the entries after the ceremony. Congratulations again to all of the students above.

**NAPLAN Data School Growth**

Parents whose children sat the NAPLAN test recently received two NAPLAN reports. If you have any questions or queries, your child’s teacher or the leadership team would be only too happy to help.

Congratulations to the children who sat the test and our dedicated staff and families as our results across year 3, 5 and 7 this year were again very pleasing. Out of the possible areas for improvement from the children who sat the test in 2014 (our now year 5s and 7s), we grew at a quicker rate than the Australian average in 90% of areas and were 1% off making that in 100% of areas. This is the fourth year in a row we have achieved such growth, something that has previously been acknowledged by ACARA which is particularly pleasing.

What I can assure you is that as a staff and school we are totally committed to further improving the learning opportunities for our students and will thoroughly review our results to refine the learning experiences we currently have in place.

Although this is only one snapshot of our children’s learning at a particular point of time, this speaks volumes about the quality of teaching and learning opportunities at our school and of what Virginia Primary students are capable of.

**Uniform**

A reminder that students need to be in school uniform. Jeans and black tights are not a part of uniform. Our colours are navy blue and yellow. We have had several children consistently come in other colours and we are now asking them to change into spare uniform if it is a habitual issue. If you need any support with uniform please do not hesitate to contact the front office.
2017 Enrolments
We are beginning to look at numbers of children for 2017 so that we can begin looking at our class structures later this term. As we are zoned and there has been a significant increase in parents wishing to enrol their children here, it would help our planning if you know of any changes for next year (if you are moving etc.) could you let the front office know as soon as you can.

Also, if you know of any families considering enrolling at Virginia for next year, could you please let them know to contact us as soon as possible.

Thank you for your help.

Swimming (R – Year 5)
Swimming notes were sent home last week. Swimming is part of the Physical Education curriculum. Although costs for swimming have increased for our school, we have further subsidised so that the cost can remain the same as last year. If there are any issues or concerns, please contact the office so we can support you.

Performing Arts Assembly/ Spring Fair
On Wednesday September the 28th (Week 10), we will be hosting our very own ‘Spring Fair’. The purpose of this fair is to not only raise some funds but to give our students the opportunity to organise and run a community event!

A note has been sent home regarding this event with our newsletter. The assembly, showcasing the work of some of our classes in specialist Arts, P.E and Vietnamese will begin at 11:15am in the community centre. The Spring Fair will begin at 1:40pm and conclude at 3:00pm. A sausage sizzle note will also accompany this newsletter should you wish to order one on the day. The canteen will run as usual.

Reception – Thuy Tran/ Mary Spencer (Room 2)
It has been very busy in room 2 with all the learning that has been happening. We welcome Miss Mary-Anne who has been in our class every Thursday. We have continued with our learning intention of being able to write a recount and together we have put together a success criteria of: I can include when, who, where, what and my feelings. We have also started with descriptive writing, where we putting together simple sentences about animals. We have also been learning to recite rhymes for clear and expressive speech and continue to enjoy a range of books in our classroom library and we share our findings through class discussions. During maths we have been focusing on recording using tally marks, playing games to make 10 and whole class activities of more or less. We have also been exploring buildings in the past, creating castles and we were all very engaged when building straw houses in design and technology. In science we have been looking at the weather around us. We’ve brainstormed relevant vocabulary, recorded the weather and discussed how the weather impacts our daily activities. We are continuing to focus on the Habit of Mind ‘Managing Impulsivity’ by exploring different strategies to support us with this.

Reception – Leanne Winning (Room 1)
Room 1 have been enjoying a new investigation in mathematics. We are measuring mass and capacity in small groups. We have been filling different containers with rice and sand and comparing which can hold more and which ones hold less. We are focusing on precise language such as full, half, quarter and overflowing. We are using the skills of observation, prediction and experimentation to explore the materials and construct our own understanding of capacity. We have been using balance scales to work out which objects weigh the same and different. We are discussing ‘hefting’ and learning key language such as heavy and light. The children are really engaged with this investigation which is a credit to our pre-service teacher, Kate, who is leading us with this particular unit of learning. In English, the children are learning to ‘tell’ and write an information report. They are learning about headings, subheadings and learning to group key
information about appearance, habitat and diet. This links in with our HASS inquiry about living things. Children are learning what is living and man-made and are inquiring into mini-beasts. We have been ‘walking and talking’ around the school’s natural environment; observing and noticing what is living in our ‘own backyard’! Ants have never seemed so fascinating while using the magnifying glasses and iPads to capture our findings has brought our inquiry ALIVE.

Term 3 has been a busy but rewarding term! Children are using the HOMS language consistency by telling us things such as ‘I’ve taken a responsible risk’ or ‘I am thinking flexibly’ and are often giving one another feedback using the ‘two stars and a wish’ strategy which is exciting. They are learning to unpack words used to provide feedback such as ‘build your fluency’ to language such as... your next step is to read slower and stop at the full stops’ which is brilliant to demonstrate that they understanding the key concepts in reading from an early age. The children are an absolute joy and have grown so very much!

**Yr1/2 – Pauline Ferguson (Room 3)**

Many thanks to parents for supporting the recent book parade by assisting with costumes and coming along to watch. We read five of the Book Week awarded books and collected data on favourite books. We drew ourselves in the parade and ordered the pictures using ordinal numbers. We have also been enjoying traditional fairy tales followed by the mixed-up version – very funny but also with life skill themes. In maths we have been working on place value, and revisiting number skills and strategies such as making 10, doubles, skip counting etc. We have also been investigating and describing the properties of 2D and 3D shapes. In science we have investigated bees through books, stories, poems, posters and you-tube. The children were fascinated by some of the information and wrote impressive reports on the bee - of course they enjoyed eating the honey too! A recent visit to the sandpit gave us the opportunity to write a procedure for ‘How to make sandcastles’. Following a discussion and critique of the sandcastles we have planned another visit using more tools/equipment to make improvements. With our buddy class we have nearly finished making our own jigsaw puzzles to take home and share with our families.

**Year 1/2 – Katrina Kontos (Room 4)**

It’s hard to believe that we are already at the end of term 3! What a wonderful term of learning in Room 4. We have been enjoying reading a range of books and focusing on reading with fluency. When we read with fluency we read at the right pace (not too fast and not too slow), we use expression (change our voice for different characters) and read emphasising the punctuation (stopping at a full stop, using more expression when we come across a word that is bold). We have put all these skills into practice during ‘Fluency Friday’. In maths we have been investigating how shapes are all around us and the properties of different 2D and 3D shapes. Our learning intention is to be able to name and describe 2D and 3D shapes. We do this by using words such as faces, edges, corners, vertices and sides. During our literacy rotations one of our learning intentions is to be able to link what we read to our prior knowledge we have also been exploring ‘new’ vocabulary we find in books we read. We are continuing to focus on the Habit of Mind ‘Taking Responsible Risks’ and are acknowledging when we use this habit. We look forward to celebrating our learning with you all during our 3-Way Interviews.

**Year 2 – Jessica Luckman (Room 9)**

The term has flown by in Room 9 and what a fantastic term it has been. One highlight that comes to mind is our hosting of the assembly in Week 6 alongside Room 10. We were proud to share our learning with the rest of the school and practise our presenting skills. Even though some of us were a bit nervous, we persisted and took responsible risks that paid off.

In Maths we have just finished our unit of work on 2D and 3D shapes and look forward to completing an I-Maths investigation, ‘Once upon a castle’ based on the skills we have learnt. We are now focussing on subtraction and are building a bank of strategies to help us solve a range of subtraction problems. We loved participating in the Junior Primary Maths trail and particularly enjoyed collecting data on all of our teachers’ cars!
In Literacy we are working towards completing a unit of work based on ‘Heroes and Villains’ which has helped consolidate our knowledge of narrative text types. We have also practised the skill of comparisons through Venn Diagrams and written detailed preferences for different characters. We have recently been working on direct speech and apostrophes to demonstrate ownership.

We are busily planning for the Spring Fair where we will be selling ‘biscuit burgers’ and ‘chocolate sticks’ and will run a ‘pin the tail on the donkey’ game which we are sure students will enjoy. We are also making out costumes for the Arts Assembly in Week 10 where we will be singing a snowflake song.

Year 2 – Sabrina De Silva (Room 10)

Room 10 has had a fantastic term of learning! We very much enjoyed hosting the Week 6 assembly where we enjoyed presenting, sharing our learning and practising our public speaking skills. We have almost completed a Literacy unit of work on ‘Heroes and Villains’ where we have looked at comparing similarities and differences between characters using Venn diagrams and have written detailed character preferences. We have structured independent narratives and created our own heroes and villains! We have been able to use the spelling and grammar rules we focus on weekly to improve the quality of our written work. We have had lots of fun bringing a scene from our narratives to life during our Design Technology lessons, by designing and making dioramas! Next week we are dressing up as one of our characters and using iPad technology to enhance their appearance to suit their personality and traits.

In Maths we have completed a unit of work on 2D and 3D shapes and their properties. We are currently focusing on subtraction and strategies to help us with solving worded problems! We enjoyed the JP Maths trail and moving to the different exciting activities. We recently sat our PAT Maths test and are very proud of our achievements.

In Health (CPC) lessons we have enjoyed learning about keeping ourselves safe and using positive and non-blaming language. We are moving on to a strong focus on identifying, what to do scenarios and reporting bullying when we witness it happening. We are eagerly anticipating and planning for the upcoming Spring Fair where we will be selling homemade lemonade, well-being balls and have an accuracy throw game for children to take part in!

Year 3 – Kasey David (Room 11)

During Numeracy activities Together 11 students have recently completed an iMaths investigation titled “How I measure up”. The investigation involved measuring various parts of their body, graphing their results and writing comparative sentences about their findings. With Mrs Lewis and during writing, students have been exploring rhyming couplets, alliteration and shape poems. We have created class books of their poems and they have been extremely successful when creating them! During Civics and Health, students are investigating which class in the school eats the healthiest recess. Students have collected data and are in the process of tallying and graphing their findings. Together 11 have also been fortunate over the past week to work with our pre-service teacher Joanne. As 3-way interviews begin this week, students have also been looking through their past work and organising themselves for their individual meetings.

Year 3/4 – Angela Patrikis/ Gayle Crompton (Room 12)

Students had a great time doing the recent maths trail during Maths Week and were challenged by the variety of tasks. Many thanks to the year sevens who acted as mentors. We are continuing to improve our facility with the mental strategies and it is encouraging to see many of the students applying these skills to the problem solving area in Maths. We have been exploring the use of similes in texts and students have been on a simile hunt and have collected a range of similes which they have come across in various texts and some of them are even beginning to use them in their own writing. As part of our recent visit to the Mawson Exhibit in the Adelaide Museum we are creating a display which showcases some of our learning in this area. Students have written recounts, information reports, a biography, formulated questions that they might like to ask Mawson just to mention a few. We are also looking forward to sharing our learning in the upcoming 3-way interviews.
Year 4/5 – Jason Coleman (Room 13)
In Room 13, we have been highly focused on making inferences in our reading comprehension lessons by looking beyond what is written. Or as my students suggested (thinking outside the box). One way that we are achieving this is via analysis of song lyrics on a Tuesday, we select 2 songs one new (selected by students) and a classic (selected by me!). Room 13 really look forward to this task and have begun to use great inferring language and really think outside of the box! In our writing lessons we have been working on explanations, after co-construction of a text students wrote an explanation on the same topic. As part of a formative assessment task I selected the 3 best pieces of work (without fixing, marking, or commenting on them) and we had a discussion about what made them the best pieces of work. This then formed our success criteria for all students as they went back and re-typed and edited their final copies. I was very impressed with how well this task went; we are now doing some research around animal adaptations to assist with their final written task for the term. An explanation of an animal’s adaptation and how it helps them survive.

Our class will be attending Zoosnooze this Friday to support this work and are very much looking forward to it after hearing what a fabulous time Room 14 had.

Year 4/5 – Cathy Lock (Room 14)
In Room 14, we have been learning about adaptations and how organisms evolve, over time in order to survive in their environments. We have been writing explanations in English about how the three different types of adaptations; structural, behavioural and physiological, and how they support survival. In Science, students have been conducting investigations on animal adaptations. They were required to pose an investigable question and design an experiment to collect data. Some groups are investigating how the behavioural adaptation of being nocturnal helps animals evade predators when searching for food. Some groups have been investigating how structural adaptations, like camouflage, help animals hide from predators. They are required to present their findings to Dave from the Adelaide University, Compass program following our visit to Roseworthy University.

To further our understanding of this unit, we went on a Zoo Snooze last Friday. The students visited the zoo during the day, observing animals and documenting many types of adaptations. Then, we had a night program, run by Eric, the Zoo Education Officer. We got to go on a night walk and see the animals after dark and handle a Hosmer skink and a variety of animal artefacts. In the morning, students were taken behind the scenes and saw some of the work that goes into running the zoo; the feeding of the animals and maintaining their enclosures. It was a wonderful experience and the students were extremely well behaved and learnt a lot.

Year 6/7 – Blue Unit
In Literacy, students have learnt about and written poems with a focus on haiku, limericks, diamante and cinquain. They are currently focussing on writing discussion texts with Mrs Lewis. They have continued to develop their reading comprehension skills in order to successfully complete literature circle roles and reading tasks. In Mathematics, students have focussed on measurement and geometry and have applied their knowledge and understanding to complete a range of tasks including complex problem solving. Students have continued with their study on Ancient Greece and have deepened their knowledge of ancient life, making connections and comparisons to present times. In Science, students are applying their knowledge of biological sciences to create a species of their own. They are researching existing animals focusing each animal’s adaptions, diet and habitat in order to combine elements of the animals to create a super species. They have been doing a fantastic job! We recently attended Monarto Zoo for a science excursion to link with our learning with students recording the adaptions of each animal they viewed.
Our senior Choir are in the final rehearsal stages before the “Festival of Music” concert on Friday the 23rd of September. These students have worked hard to learn lyrics, choreographic moves and the finer points of singing technique. We wish to thank our choir trainer Lydia Johnson for her dedicated work with our students.

Our Junior and Middle Primary choirs have gradually built up a repertoire of songs to perform. They are very keen to share these at assemblies in term 4. Thank you to our choir trainer Jodie Sarnon for her wonderful enthusiasm.

Junior and Middle Primary students have been working hard rehearsing for a presentation celebrating our verdant kitchen garden. I would like to congratulate these students. Learning new skills in the performing arts is often quite challenging as it takes a measure of confidence to perform before peers or an audience.

Year 6/7 students are about to complete a media studies unit of work on the film “The Princess Bride”. They have investigated the role of a film critic and are writing reviews and creating posters.

The junior primary students have had a fantastic term. Students have been participating in a basketball skills unit and have demonstrated some big improvements in dribbling, passing, catching and shooting techniques. We will continue this unit of work for the rest of this term before beginning our next unit on cricket skills in term 4.

In Primary PE the students have recently finished a Touch Rugby skills unit. The students have been doing really well and have adjusted to the different rules and skills involved. We have recently started our basketball skills unit, which will take us to the end of the term. The unit will have a high focus on skill development (passing, dribbling, and shooting), gameplay and teamwork.

Junior Primary students have been investigating how to change properties in foods, using the ‘Spot the Difference’ unit from Primary Connections. Students have enjoyed trying to figure out how some mystery items have been changed using their 5 senses. Students have currently explored dissolving, cooking, mixing, adding and melting and have been able to explain the differences in properties when the food/liquid has come under change.

Middle Primary (3/4/5) students are currently exploring the importance of materials and packages using the Primary Connections unit ‘Package it better’. Students have recently started designing their own gifts and packages that they will make in Science for end of year gifts to their classmates. Students really enjoyed the Strong Shapes experiment in which they were able to explore how to make materials stronger by making different shapes with the material.

6/7 students have been investigating mixing and separating techniques and how these techniques are used in the real world. Students really enjoyed the hand picking technique experiment, in which they had access to a variety of tools and had to separate a mixture of 3 ingredients. Students have recently explored other separation techniques including filtration and distillation and how these techniques are used in the water treatment process to make water drinkable.

**EALD-English as an Additional Language or Dialect – Robyn Lewis**

The year 6/7s have been exploring written discussions through the question, “Should Year 7s be in high school?” This has generated a great deal of passionate views both for and against. Some want the security of being in a smaller school and others want the extra facilities and opportunities in high school.

Explanation writing on animal adaptations for survival has been the year 4/5 focus, learning particularly about cause and effect. There is some high quality work being produced. Year 3s have written some fantastic poems using rhyming couplets, alliteration and shapes. Year 3/4s have been concentrating on the language needed to write a biography and/or autobiography.

**Student Support-Robyn Lewis**

Several times a year, a Student Review Team meets at our school to discuss the learning of students who are having difficulties. At these meetings our district speech therapist, psychologist, attendance officer, wellbeing coordinator and special education consultant meet to discuss particular students whom the school has concerns about. These important meetings help us consider the whole child and what they may need, whether it is a hearing test, a psychological assessment, the help of an occupational therapist or more intensive work in a particular area. No testing of this type is done without discussion and permission from parents. This support from the team is invaluable.