



VIRGINIA PRIMARY SCHOOL NEWSLETTER

Learning Together, Learning for our Future

CARING, RESPECT, FAIRNESS, ACHIEVEMENT, DIVERSITY

Issue 3, 2017

16th March

DATES TO REMEMBER

Week 7

Friday 17th March

Assembly 9:15am
Community Centre

All welcome

Open class activity for families following assembly

Harmony Assembly
Day of Action against
Bullying and Violence

Week 8

*CULTURAL DIVERSITY WEEK
HARMONY WEEK*

Week 9

Friday 31st March

Assembly 9:15am
Community Centre

All welcome

Week 10

Friday 7th April

R-3 Footy Clinics

Week 11

Thursday 13th April

Sports Day
Early Dismissal 2:15pm

Friday 14th April

GOOD FRIDAY PUBLIC HOLIDAY
NO SCHOOL OR OSHC



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Government of South Australia
Department for Education and
Child Development

NAPLAN media story

We were again highlighted in the media for NAPLAN growth success. This is the second time in three years we have been acknowledged which was great affirmation of the work our whole school community has put in. Whilst the article only spoke of growth from year 3-5 in reading, as a school we know that from the 10 opportunities from year 3-5 and 5-7, we grew quicker than the national cohort in 9/10 areas, and were matched by the national cohort in 1 area. Whilst we will and have celebrated and acknowledge this, we are under no illusions that as a school which focuses on continuous improvement, there is, and there will always be much to do.

Interestingly, one of the topics I have often been asked to talk about to other leaders and educational groups outside of our school is the notion of "Achievement Vs Growth". One of the simplest ways I put this across is to these groups is to talk through and explain that achievement doesn't necessarily equate to learning. The reason being is that someone can achieve without necessarily having been taught/ or learnt anything new. Growth measures are however, from whatever the starting point, indicate there has been improvement and learning. NAPLAN is of course only one means of measuring how we are going as a school, as a staff we use many different data sets to inform our practice.

Assembly award winners

Congratulations to the following students who received awards at our last assembly for their work in English and Maths.

| | Literacy | Numeracy |
|---------|-----------|-----------|
| Room 1 | Emilia | Jordan |
| Room 2 | Brooke | Peter Le |
| Room 3 | Kayla A | Mai Ling |
| Room 4 | Rocky | Dora |
| Room 5 | Domenic | Ilario |
| Room 6 | Brianna | Joe |
| Room 7 | Linda N | Charlie P |
| Room 8 | Jacky | Chloe M |
| Room 9 | Huong | Kosta |
| Room 10 | Ross | April |
| Room 11 | Sovanhi | Catrina |
| Room 12 | Chanrithy | Belle Mc |
| Room 13 | George | Selina |
| Room 14 | Chloe M | Antony T |

Harmony Assembly (open classrooms)

This Friday we are having our Anti-bullying/ Harmony Assembly. All are welcome to the assembly and also an open class activity straight after the assembly. **Students are asked to either come in school uniform, a cultural costume or something orange on the day.** Please note: **THIS IS NOT A CASUAL CLOTHES DAY**, students who aren't in one of the options above will be asked to change into school uniform.



School Values Award Recipients

The values award winners from our assembly prior to Week 5's weren't shared in the newsletter. As a school we place a significant importance on our school values as they are great life-long values. Congratulations to the following students

| | VALUES | AWARDS |
|-------|--------------------|---------------------|
| Rm 1 | Riley - respect | Lauren – caring |
| Rm 2 | Jade - caring | Elijah – respect |
| Rm 3 | Vince - respect | Kim D – caring |
| Rm 4 | Liam G - caring | Emily F – caring |
| Rm 5 | Lisa - respect | Bayleigh – caring |
| Rm 6 | Johnny - respect | Maddison – respect |
| Rm 7 | Leena - caring | Charlie E – respect |
| Rm 8 | Kosta - respect | Angie – caring |
| Rm 9 | Andy - respect | Keilie – caring |
| Rm 10 | Peter - caring | Jaeda – achievement |
| Rm 11 | Hoan - achievement | Alexia – respect |
| Rm 12 | Reece - caring | Anthony - respect |
| Rm 13 | Charitie - caring | Alicia-Le - respect |
| Rm 14 | Ethan M - caring | Nhi - caring |

Sleepers (safety concern)

A reminder to all families with regard to earrings. For safety reasons we ask that children with pierced ears wear sleepers rather than hooped and other hanging earrings. The following is a statement from our uniform policy that is on our website and handed out with every enrolment pack;

JEWELLERY/ MAKE-UP

Again in the interests of student safety jewellery must be kept to a minimum, eg small sleepers, studs. Necklaces/ bracelets should not be worn (medical or religious/ cultural necklaces are exempt but must be kept tucked under tops where appropriate) Coloured nail polish and make-up of any sort is also not appropriate.

Again – we thank you in advance for your support with this. If you have any queries or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact the front office.

Newsletters on Facebook page!



Our newsletters are now attached to our facebook page. They will also be uploaded to the Skoolbag app which was recently updated. We are trying to cut down on paper usage. If you are happy to read our newsletters via facebook, skoolbag, or e-mail rather than receiving hard-copies, please do let us know.

Email address for school newsletter OR you are happy to read via facebook

Please return to the Front Office

NAME:

CHILD'S NAME:

ROOM NUMBER:

EMAIL ADDRESS:

Swimming

On Tuesday of week 5, 13 students from years 4-7 to participated in the Playford District SAPSASA Swimming Carnival at Salisbury Swim Centre. Students swam in a number of events including Freestyle, Breaststroke, Backstroke and Butterfly. The students swam extremely well and our school actually finished first in the Playford District Small Schools Category!

We also have two students that have made the Playford District Swimming team that will participate at the state championships on March 16 at Marion Aquatic Centre.

Congratulations to Sovanhi - 10 year old girls 50M Breaststroke and Butterfly and Ashlee - 11 year old girls 50M Freestyle, Backstroke and Butterfly.

Well done to all students that participated on the day it was a tremendous success and thanks to all the parents who came to help and support the kids.

Thanks, Mr Yates



Parent Insights

This week's edition will focus on a really interesting topic, "Helping kids focus in the age of distraction". We hope you find it insightful and interesting.

If there is anything in particular you are looking for, please do not hesitate to come in and see either Ilia Tsoutouras (Principal) or Voula Pounendis (Deputy Principal) who may be able to help with finding an article to suit your needs.

A note from the Minister of Education

Today I had the pleasure of announcing Helen Connolly as South Australia's first Commissioner for Children and Young People.

Ms Connolly has extensive experience, having worked as Executive Director of Australian Red Cross in South Australia and recently concluding the role of Chair of the South Australian Council of Social Services Inc (SACOSS). She is a long-time advocate for building respectful partnerships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, communities and organisations and has established networks and relationships through her position as a Board Member for Reconciliation SA.

Throughout her career, Ms Connolly has taken an active advocacy role on key policy issues that affect the wellbeing of Australian families and children,

with a strong focus on early intervention and prevention.

The Commissioner for Children and Young People is a new position to promote and monitor the overall wellbeing of the children of South Australia, including advocating for the rights and interests of all children and young people, and promoting participation by children and young people in the making of decisions that affect their lives.

Helen is working on a plan to communicate with the children of this state.



Mawson Lakes Mazda



We would like to thank Mawson Lakes Mazda for their kind donation of Thunderbirds netballs and drink bottles.

Car park

I would firstly like to acknowledge and thank the council for their work in upgrading the community car-park. The design and layout is different, and of course with all 'different' there is an adjustment period. We appreciate the feedback we have received, both positive and in regards to concerns.

I would like to highlight two things with regard to the car-park;

1/ There were some valid concerns with regard to the spacing between the parks. I have followed this up with the council who have now made contact with me. In any event, there will be a cost of between \$3 – 6 thousand incurred to the school should we follow up with having these parks being widened as it will need to be jet cleaned or ground back.

2/ With the improved surface we have noticed an increase in speed. Please **SLOW DOWN**. Don't be offended if a member of staff approaches you to ask you do slow down, they are doing it in the interests of keeping all of our students and families safe.



| | 13/03/2017 | 14/03/2017 | 15/03/2017 | 16/03/2017 | 17/03/2017 |
|----|---------------------------------|--------------------|---|-------------------|---|
| 7 | PUBLIC HOLIDAY | | | | Harmony Assembly & Day of Action against bullying - 9:15am Families Welcome to open class activity after assembly |
| 8 | Cultural Diversity Week | HARMONY DAY | HARMONY WEEK GC meeting 7pm | | |
| 9 | | | | | Assembly 9:15am |
| 10 | Sports Day Team meetings 2:50pm | | | | R – 3 Footy Clinics |
| 11 | | | Sports day tm mtg. 3:00pm Staff meeting | SPORTS DAY | GOOD FRIDAY PUBLIC HOLIDAY |



Building parent-school partnerships

WORDS Sarah Wayland

Helping kids focus in the age of distraction

Finding ways to turn your kids from flitters to focusers – how teaching your children to ‘stick with it’ can have lifelong benefits.

As a society we often debate about the ‘right’ amount of screen time, and with the introduction of personal screens over the last decade, to add to TV, laptops and desktops, the focus on a single task has slowly ebbed away. The British Psychological Society found that too much screen time (more than their recommendations of no more than 2 hours per day) could unintentionally cause permanent damage to a child’s still-developing brains. Impacting the capacity to focus, to concentrate and to give attention to tasks.

Distraction is often managed through the delicate art of re-direction or encouragement to combat the ‘but I just can’t do it!’ However, has this brave new world of binge watching TV, entertainment on demand and socialisation via hand held devices created kids that always have options for those tasks that require some stubborn determination? If so how might this new way of living and relaxing challenge our kid’s capacity to stick with a difficult task when they have a world of entertainment at their disposal?

Dr Daniel Goleman, an award-winning psychologist and TED speaker, emphasises the need for people to engage in skills that foster emotional intelligence. Goleman’s belief is that ‘Kids learn best when they can maintain sustained attention, whether to what a teacher is saying, their textbook, or their homework. The root of learning is keen focus; distractions kill comprehension.

But the new normal for young people continually interrupts their focus with distractions.’

Neuroscientists tell us that the more a young person can practice keeping focus and resist distraction, the stronger and more richly connected this child becomes. By the same token, the more distracted, the less so. Rebecca, a NSW schoolteacher who is passionate about the topic, finds that the evidence is clear in our own homes and in classrooms ‘we now have young people who are experts at ‘flitting’ from one device to another’ and she refuses to take a defeatist approach because without refocusing those ‘flitters’ to ‘focusers’ who risk the next generations creative or scientific masterminds we risk losing children who are able to ‘sit still and agonise over a task long enough to see it through to its marvellous end’.

Tips for helping kids maintain focus and attention

1 Build your child’s focus

As with all tasks the aim is to start small and build your child’s capacity to master the concept of ‘sticking with it’. Cath, a school counsellor, finds that she can use the same strategies with the teens she works with and her primary school aged children when she gets home: ‘it’s all about breaks and rewards. Set a timer between breaks and then on a break they need to do something active like a push-up. Then there is a little reward for staying on task for a particular amount of time.’

2 Remember it’s all about the journey

Parents and researchers agree that understanding what can be gained from being focused is the key to engaging your ‘flittering’ child. Our solution driven society is often focused on what we receive at the end rather than the process to get there. Teaching your children to tolerate the unexpected can have wonderful benefits, as can sitting with something that may have previously been viewed as unachievable.

3 Keep calm and focus

Use calm methods to engage children who become distracted: breathe, relax and high five each other when working alongside your child or when with a group of children. Talk about what might be achieved at the end and make it a fun process.

Screens, for all their negatives and benefits, are here to stay. Many argue that they provide complexity and new experiences to our children’s world by identifying exciting technologies but they also provide avenues to ‘opt out’ of the hard yards.

Reaching what you thought was unattainable by engaging in a single focus and ‘sticking with it’, can provide lifelong lessons.

Sarah Wayland



Want more ideas to help you raise confident kids and resilient young people? Subscribe to Happy Kids newsletter, my **FREE weekly email parenting guide at parentingideas.com.au**. You’ll be so glad you did.

