



VIRGINIA PRIMARY SCHOOL NEWSLETTER

Learning Together, Learning for our Future

CARING, RESPECT, FAIRNESS, ACHIEVEMENT, DIVERSITY

Issue 4, 2017

31st March

DATES TO REMEMBER

Week 10

Friday 7th April
R-3 Footy Clinics

Week 11

Thursday 13th April
Sports Day
Early Dismissal 2:15pm

SPORTS DAY!

Friday 14th April
GOOD FRIDAY PUBLIC HOLIDAY
NO SCHOOL OR OSHC

Week 2

Tuesday 9th May – Thursday 11th May
NAPLAN Testing
Year 3,5 and 7 students

Wednesday 10th May
Mother's Day Stall

Thursday 11th May
Rm 4/5/6 Excursion
to Gorge Wildlife Park

Friday 12th May
UP Bike Ed

Week 3

Thursday 18th – Friday 19th May
PUPIL FREE DAYS
OSHC AVAILABLE



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Government of South Australia
Department for Education and
Child Development

Dear Parents/ Caregivers,

We are nearing the end of term, however, there is still a great deal of work and learning to be done. At assembly several weeks back I challenged our students to continue to raise the bar in terms of their effort towards their learning. At this week's assembly, and over the last few days through class visits I have seen evidence of students rising to the challenge. Some examples have been quality bookmaking, a self-directed guided reading group, some detailed recounts, examples of very persuasive exposition writing, depth of understanding with number sense by subitising and students giving other students quality feedback with their writing tasks.

As a famous quote once said, "Good is the evil of great", our focus at Virginia is not be good, it's about continually working hard and supporting one another to achieve GREAT things.

Parent Insights

This week's edition will focus on a really interesting topic, "10 mindsets to improve your parenting". 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.

Term 2 Pupil Free Days

Next term in Week 3 we will be having two Pupil Free days back to back on the Thursday/ Friday. We have planned these days back to back to be able to work on moderation and scaling. We know that having these days coincide with public holidays is always advantageous, however, to secure the people we wanted to be able to work with us this wasn't possible. We trust that this will be enough notice for families. As with all Pupil Free Days, OSHC will be available, booking information will come for this shortly.

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:



Preschool – Rebecca Elvy

We have welcomed 44 new children to Virginia Preschool this year. The children have settled in well and have made many positive relationships with their educators and peers. The children have enjoyed singing songs and playing games to help get to know each other and gain a sense of belonging. We began the term exploring feelings, how to share and to turn take at preschool and greet their friends and educators upon arrival.

The preschool children enjoy spending time in our outdoor environment and are becoming responsible for the care of our garden. Children share their knowledge about plants, they know that they need sunlight and water to grow. Educators have worked with children to redevelop the vegetable and flower gardens, and the children have observed how much they have grown this term already.

Children have enjoyed discovering healthy foods, what it means to be healthy, and how they help their bodies. As part of our sustainable practices, we have begun learning about recycling and reusing items at home and at preschool. The Preschool children have had a visit from the Northern Adelaide Waste Management Authority (NAWMA) to further develop their knowledge about sustainability.

Reception – Leanne Winning (Room 1) & Anita Matricianni (Room 2)

Rooms '1' and '2' have had an exciting beginning to the year! In English, children are enjoying sharing their mystery objects each week where they describe the size, colour, use, material, parts and shape of an object. We have had a real spider, an egg from a pet chicken and many other interesting and unique objects. Children are also enjoying learning phonics and are beginning to understand the concepts of vowels, consonants and digraphs. Children enjoy listening to stories each day featuring the 'target sound' and enjoy a variety of 'hands on' activities to consolidate these sounds. Students are 'taking responsible risks' and 'striving for accuracy' during Target Time when they work in small groups across the Red Unit to learn about phonological awareness skills such as rhyming and blending sounds into words. Children are organising themselves brilliantly and are enjoying meeting other teachers and children outside of their own classrooms. We are building a Community of Learners!

In mathematics, children enjoy the 'Secret Code' strategies. They are currently learning how to subitise and are being exposed to the concept of 'trusting the count' and counting-on. For example, rolling two dice and understanding that they can 'subitise' the first dice and count on to work out how many. Children are 'working interdependently' in small groups to consolidate and discover key concepts in maths such as repeating patterns,

sorting objects into groups and matching and ordering numerals. The children have provided positive feedback about their hands-on and active program and how we can improve activities too. In HASS we are learning about what makes the 'healthiest happiest me' and are about to survey our parents to learn about our 'personal histories'. We will investigate how we were named and how our families are the same and different. The children are excited to be 'detectives' and 'reporters'. Watch this space!

Reception/ Yr 1 – Krystal Butler (Room 3)

The children in Room 3 have settled in nicely to their new classroom. We have been very busy doing many activities to help us get to know each other and have had a big focus on the school values and our Habits of Mind this term. We have really enjoyed our 'What's the Buzz?' lessons, giving us real life social situations and ways that we can approach these challenges when they arise. In English we have been learning our phonics, vowels, consonants, digraphs, letter formation, and blending of sounds to create words, as well as writing simple sentences. We have really enjoyed starting Target Time with the rest of the Red Unit and have enjoyed meeting other teachers and students. In Mathematics we have been we have been learning about numbers to 20 for the reception students and numbers to 100 for the year 1 students. We have been finding many different ways to represent a number, as well as using the number strategies of 'count on', 'subitise', 'rainbow fact' and 'friendly numbers'. We have been learning the Days of the Week and the Months of the Year over the last two weeks, which has been a lot of fun. We have really enjoyed working with our year 6/7 buddies in Room 13. We have worked on partner reading, practising sports day games, our Harmony Day video and making stars for the 2018 Commonwealth Games.

Year 1/2 – Katrina Kontos (Room 4)

What a great start to 2017! All children have settled in well and are coming into the class beaming and ready to learn. Our main learning intention this term has been 'to be able to work in groups/teams'. We have co-constructed the success criteria. Working in groups and teams looks like everyone being nice to each other, helping each other, taking turns and respecting every ones learning. In writing we have been focusing on writing a sentence. The success criteria we use when writing a sentence is, using a capital letter at the beginning of a sentence and using a full stop at the end. We have been getting creative and using lots of adjectives in our sentences. In maths we have been developing a deeper understanding of 100. We have done this by representing 100 as a pattern, as different collections and using numerals. As a class our favourite thing to do together is to enjoy reading

many different books. This term we have enjoyed reading many books by Julia Donaldson and Aaron Blabey.

Year 1/2 – Thuy Tran/Christina Tsonis (Room 5)

Welcome families to another year of new learning and great times. The students have settled into the classroom environment well and it is great to see that they have formed such great friendships already. There has been a big focus on students feeling safe, secure and supported, as well as developing a sense of belonging at school. Our maths focus has been on our number strategies to solve problems, such as subitising, counting on and skip counting. Our Learning Intentions have included: To be able to count on from the largest number and to be able to represent and compare numbers. In Literacy we have been working on our sentence structure and descriptive vocabulary. Some of our learning intentions are: To know what a sentence is, to be able to write a sentence, to be able to describe what something looks, feels, sounds, smells and tastes like. Habits of Mind that we have been focusing strongly on are Thinking Interdependently, Persisting, Striving for Accuracy and Gathering Data through all senses.

Year 2 – Mary Spencer/Gayle Crompton (Room 6)

Room 6, the Super Sixes have been working well as a class and adapted brilliantly to working with their two teachers. The main focus has been on building relationships, celebrating diversity and learning about each other through their autobiographies. Learning Intentions, Success Criteria, Habits of Mind and School Values have also been embedded into their daily routines and learning programme. The day begins with a focus on reading and we are very thankful to the number of parents who volunteer to hear the students read each morning. In writing, we have focussed on character profiles, reporting using Six Thinking Hats and have begun expositions. In maths, number patterns, subitising, counting by 2's, 5's and 10's and 2D and 3D shapes have been the main focus. Students are developing their computer skills through their weekly computer lesson focussing on Mathletics and Raz-kids and are also using the I-pads in the classroom.

Year 3 Jessica Luckman (Room 9)/ Sabrina De Silva (Room 10)

Rooms 9 and 10 have had a fantastic start to the school year! We have developed a positive learning environment together by remembering to uphold our school values and through establishing our own classroom values. We have continued developing our understanding of Learning Intentions and Success Criteria to make the purpose of our learning clear to ourselves each day and enjoy sharing our learning with our teachers and parents!
Maths: We have focused heavily on number sense and knowing the value and place of numbers to

10,000 and beyond. We have revisited our mental strategies and are using them to help solve addition sums and worded problems. We are now learning about the link between addition and subtraction and how to solve mixed operation problems and answer multiple choice questions!
Literacy: We have continued to build upon our CAFÉ (Comprehension, Accuracy, Fluency and Expanding Vocabulary) strategies from last year. We are learning different strategies under each of these headings, which help to support our reading and writing. We have enjoyed applying our reading strategies in guided reading groups and when independently reading. We have a weekly grammar and spelling sound to help us to structure sentences and spell words correctly. This term we have focused on descriptive, procedural and narrative writing genres. Next week we will investigate exposition/persuasive texts.

Health: This term we have participated in What's the Buzz lessons/activities and have enjoyed looking at the different ways to solve social problems in the yard and when interacting with others.

We look forward to progressing on to our HASS – Civics and Citizenship learning in Term 2

Year 4/5 – Lia De Giglio (Room 7)

Wow, what a great start to the 2017 academic year. Having been at VPS as a relief teacher last year, I was very excited to join the team this year as Room Seven's class teacher. At the beginning of the year, Room Seven spent a good deal of time getting to know each other while feeling safe and comfortable with in our class. The children in Room Seven take responsibility for their learning and behaviour. This is noticed particularly each morning where they are required to revisit work from the previous day by answering the Next Steps in their English and Maths books as soon as they arrive.

In Literacy this term, we have been writing cohesive narratives, with a focus on structure, interesting vocabulary and complex sentences. Within our Literacy program, Room Seven have been developing important SPaG (Spelling, Punctuation and Grammar) skills to up level their writing and establish important editing skills which they apply across all curriculum areas. We are now transferring these skills into Exposition writing.

Room 7's Maths program has a focus on Number this term. We have identified the place value of numbers, ordering and comparing numbers, addition, subtraction and are now focusing on factors and multiplying 3 and 2 digit numbers. We have a class target which will continue throughout the year which focuses on mental strategies in multiplying numbers. The children are really

enjoying this target, I have already seen a great deal of progression.

We have been encouraging each other in always following the school values and HOMs while thinking about what this looks like in and out of our classroom. We are looking forward to continuing this while on our learning journey.

Year 4/5 – Shaun Hughes (Room 8)

It has been an amazing journey for Room 8 as we got to know each other. Being new to the school and not knowing the students, we spent the first 2 weeks getting to know each other, setting our class expectations and building bonds with one other. We also completed several What's The Buzz lessons with the other year 4/5 classes. We then started on learning about narrative (story) writing, and have been creating our own stories. We have also been learning about homophones (especially there, their and they're).

We have started a new spelling program where we have a focus on a grapheme each week (a grapheme is a letter or group of letters that makes one sound). In Maths we started with exploring measurement of different things, and also how to use graduated scale instruments to measure. We have also learnt how to calculate the perimeter and area of squares, rectangles and irregular shapes. We have just finished working on number, which was place value, rounding and estimating, odd and even numbers and factors. We have also been working on Science, HASS and Health. In Technology we are learning about algorithms and how to code.

Year 4/5 – Nick Porublev (Room 11)

I am new to Virginia Primary school and believe I am now growing more acclimatised to the many school routines and structures. We in room eleven have spent much time in developing, building and extending relationships. We are supportive of each other and endeavour to encourage each other to aim and achieve our best. We have spent time to build on the Habits of the Mind and to link them to the school values.

We have worked hard at establishing morning routines that focus in guiding the children in organisational skills and mentoring each other in fluency in reading, word recognition and times tables.

In English we have worked on aspects of narrative writing and have progressed to currently examine persuasive writing, its language and structures. We have also linked editing and grammar skills to strengthen the writing processes. We continue to work on developing our sentence structures and language associated with this. Recently we have started implementing a reading program and relevant strategies to aid comprehension.

In Maths we have made number facts a priority in our learning. Students are constantly practising their times tables. We use computer software and internet maths sites to reinforce processes being learnt. We have been working at consolidating our skills with number operations.

In Civics and citizenship we have studied the voting system, rules and responsibilities.

In science we have been working through a Primary Science Connections unit on Desert Survivors.

We are currently working in the Garden / kitchen program that is run at the school.

It has been a busy time for both the students and myself as we establish a positive learning environment. We will continue to consolidate positive practices and build on our learning.

Year 6/7 – Haze Sackey (Room 12)

We have had a tremendously busy start to our year. Being new to the school I was really not sure what to expect. But after a lot of getting to know each other activities, setting up our class routines I have discovered that the school and the class are supportive, welcoming and great to be working with. Week 3 we attended a fantastic Leadership Day which was followed up by our 6/7 Camp to Woodhouse. Camp was fantastic and went off without too many issues and everyone returned exhausted, but having had a brilliant time. The highlight of camp for me, was to see all the students getting along, working as teams and really exemplifying the school values. There were numerous positive comments from camp staff about our students' manners and behaviour. At the end of the three days I'm not sure who was more tired, the staff or the students.

In English we are currently examining persuasive writing and have started to strengthen our arguments through our language choices and writing skills. Additionally we are now starting our reading program and working on strategies to aid comprehension.

In Maths we began by consolidating our skills with the four number operations and finished this off with an iMaths investigation which the students thoroughly enjoyed. We have extended ourselves and are now looking at long multiplication and division and dividing by decimals.

In History we have been learning about timelines and we are in the final phase of creating a personal timeline using timeline creation software and images of ourselves.

Probably the most loved lesson is computer coding. Using the website code.org, we have learned binary, basic coding, computational thinking and how to write algorithms. The students are always hungry to learn more and are pushing through these lessons at

a great rate. So all in all a very positive, busy and fulfilling start to the year.

Year 6/7 – Jason Coleman (Room 13)

What a full on start to a term! After a great deal of team building activities, goal setting and discussion around leadership and expectations we were excited to hear from some quality guest speakers for Leadership day in week 3. The following week it was off to camp, which went even better than I had anticipated; I was so impressed to see the levels of collaboration, teamwork and genuine care shown throughout the 3 days as well as students participating in activities outside of their comfort zone. They were definitely taken some responsible risks.

In English we currently have 2 distinct focuses – explicitly teaching the reading strategies to aid comprehension. – Analysing, planning and constructing quality persuasive texts that follow a distinct structure and contain specific features. In Maths we began the year with an investigation using the Imaths program called ‘my personal profile’ this enhanced students understanding of classmates through the collection of data about all members of room 13. We are currently looking at long multiplication and factor trees which have enhanced opportunities for students to recall number facts.

In HASS we are looking at Australia as a nation, this unit has given students the opportunity to analyse the differences between rules and laws as well as looking at Australia as a democracy.

Year 6/7 – Cathy Lock (Room 14)

We have had a very busy start to the year. In week 3 we had our Student Leadership day. Students had the opportunity to consider what it means to be a leader within the school. They were also fortunate to have the opportunity to listen to guest speakers: Dr Victoria Pederick, a former student and scientist and a speaker from Headspace. In week 4, we went on our camp to Woodhouse. Students got to participate in lots of great, challenging and fun activities. Some of these were Challenge Hill, Bug Busters, Boomerang Art and team building activities. In English students have been looking at narrative and exposition. They have been planning, writing and reviewing pieces of writing in these genres. We have also been focusing on reading strategies to help develop reading skills and improve comprehension. In Maths, we began the year by conducting an Imaths investigation called My Personal Profile. Students collected data on themselves and the other members of the class and had to create some representations of this data: pie graphs and dot plots. They were then required to analyse and display their findings.

In Science, we have begun our Primary Connections unit: Marvellous Micro-organisms. Students are investigating yeast and how it is a living organism and the characteristics it shares with other living things.

Junior Primary / Primary Science – James Yates

We have been continuing our work on the Primary Connections units in the learning area of Physical sciences.

Junior primary students have been learning about how objects move via a push or pull force. We are currently exploring push and pull forces in the air and water.

Middle primary have been investigating heat and how heat sources work to produce heat. They have recently started learning about friction, burning and electricity as 3 ways in which heat is produced. The upper primary students have been exploring a unit of work on energy, which has been focussing on the types of energy that can be found throughout their homes, school and the community. Students really enjoyed the building a marble run which demonstrated potential energy transforming into kinetic energy.

The Primary students started off the term with a lot of teamwork activities to build classroom culture which they have excelled in. As of week 4 we have started our sports day preparation, the students have been developing skills in hurdles, high jump, sprints, discus, shot put and a variety of relays. They have really enjoyed the start of the year in PE and are demonstrating fantastic teamwork within their sports day teams.

EALD – Robyn Lewis

Students in years 3-7 are continuing to build their understanding of the structures of both narrative and persuasive texts in preparation for the Australia wide NAPLAN tests in week 2 of term 2. With this, we are learning about the language features of these texts as well as the grammar and punctuation required. The importance of speaking and listening using a wide variety of vocabulary cannot be underestimated in helping your child be successful. ‘The better the vocabulary, the better the speaking and writing.’ I would encourage all parents, not just those who have English as a second language to introduce your child to new words on a daily basis as you go about life.

Parenting *ideas*

INSIGHTS



Building parent-school partnerships

WORDS Michael Grose

10 mindsets to improve your parenting

The best intentions may not be enough to raise happy kids. Here are 10 mindsets to help you on the path to parenting success.

All parents want to be successful and raise kids to be happy and contributing members of our community. Good intentions are not enough. Often there is no difference between one parent and another in terms of skills, knowledge and understanding of kids. However, the biggest difference can be found in parents' mindsets, rather than their parenting skills and understandings. Here are 10 mindsets for parenting success:

1 Believe in your child

This is easy if you have an early maturer, a child who has talents you value, or one who easily achieves anything he or she puts his mind too. But it's a different story if you have a child who struggles at school or to make friends, or just has a different interest to you. Your belief in your child's abilities is revealed through your expectations, your body language, even the expression on your face.

2 Look for the best

What you focus on expands so if all you see is misbehaviour, weakness and poor performance than you'll get more of those things. Set your antennae for children's strengths, abilities and social behaviours and you'll invariably get more of those.

3 Think long term

If you want your child to become independent then don't do everything for him or her; you need to teach them some skills so they can become self-sufficient.

Awareness, teaching and opportunity are the main requirements for kids to pick up these skills. They need to be aware of what can be done. They need to acquire the skills- some take more teaching than others. They also need the opportunity to put things into practice.

4 Be brave

Parents of large families invariably give their later born children more freedom than they gave their first-born. We are always stricter with our first-born than later born as by the time you have 4 or 5 kids you've worked out what's worth worrying about. So if you are parent of one or two kids give them more freedom and responsibility; you need to be brave!

5 Think family

Successful parents have found a way to lead their family in one direction. To do this you must think in terms of parenting 'the gang' rather than individual children. "What's in the best interest of my child?" has replaced "What's in the best interest of the family?" as the guiding family principle. This has partly come along as a result of small families, and partly it's a social imperative that is common among aspirational parents where wanting the best for your kids means wanting what's best for each child as an individual, rather considering what may be in the best for the entire gang.

6 Accept challenges

There are always challenges raising kids. It's important to embrace these challenges whether they are behavioural, or a child has struggles at

school, or he is moving into puberty. It's these challenges that will make you a better parent.

7 Build your community

Parents don't raise kids well in isolation yet there is often a reluctance to share the parenting with others. Successful parents know they haven't all the answers so they build a community of support and expertise around them.

8 Trust the process

Sometimes the desire to want the very best for our child can lead us to interfere at school, pre-school, childcare, even when kids are at their grandparents. It's best to trust the process and allow people to educate, care for and look after your child in their own way.

9 Adversity builds character

It's natural to want life to be easy for our children, but sometimes in an effort to ensure their well-being we smooth things over for them. It is through the small hardships that kids experience that they build the persistence and resilience necessary for continued success.

10 This too shall pass

The hardest part of parenting is supporting kids when life doesn't go their way. There is plenty of research that suggests that kids benefit from having parents who have a positive parenting style that gets the balance right between protecting, teaching and nurturing kids when life gets hard. This starts with the belief that "This hardship too shall pass."



Stay one step ahead of your kids with great ideas & expert advice from Michael Grose. Join Michael's **NEW ParentingIdeas Club** today at parentingideasclub.com.au. You'll be so glad you did.

