



# VIRGINIA PRIMARY SCHOOL NEWSLETTER

Learning Together, Learning for our Future

**CARING, RESPECT, FAIRNESS, ACHIEVEMENT, DIVERSITY**

Issue 16, 2017

21<sup>st</sup> November

## DATES TO REMEMBER

### Week 6

**Tuesday 21<sup>st</sup> November**

Preschool transition to Reception

**Wednesday 22<sup>nd</sup> November**

Preschool transition to Reception

Reception Ready Evening Parent tour  
5:30pm – 6:30pm

**Thursday 23<sup>rd</sup> November**

Reception Ready Morning Parent tour  
9:15am – 10:15am

### Week 7

**Friday 1<sup>st</sup> December**

**PUPIL FREE DAY**

**OSHC AVAILABLE**

### Week 8

**Wednesday 6<sup>th</sup> December**

Governing Council Meeting 6:30pm

**Fri 8<sup>th</sup> December**

Please come along and celebrate our end of  
year concert.

BBQ starts 4:30pm  
Concert begins 6:00pm

### Week 9

**Tues 12<sup>th</sup> December**

Yr 7 Farewell assembly 9:15am  
Parents of Graduating students welcome

**Thurs 14<sup>th</sup> December**

Year 6/7 Graduation

**Friday 15<sup>th</sup> of December**

**Last Day of School, Early Dismissal  
2:15pm**



**Principal:** Ilia Tsoutouras

**Deputy Principal:** Voula Pounendis

**Gov. Council Chairperson:** Anita Trenwith

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Government of South Australia  
Department for Education and  
Child Development

### 2018 Enrolments – PLEASE HELP US WITH OUR PLANNING

We have started the processes of class placement for 2018. 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.

We have had several enquiries in regards to Year 7's and whether or not we will be continuing to have Year 7 students at our school. Some parents are choosing secondary schools with a Year 7 option and are being encouraged to enrol their children by these schools, however, as a DECD school, we will absolutely be having Year 7 students. We are confident in the program we offer our Year 7's in terms of setting them up for senior secondary school both academically and with leadership development. If you do want to discuss this further, please do not hesitate to see either Voula or Ilia.

### Pupil Free Day

Whilst pupil free days provide some down time (or family fun time) for students, the same can't be said for teachers. **On Friday the 1<sup>st</sup> of December (Week 7)** we will be having our Annual School Improvement Process day. On this day, we will review what has happened this year in terms of student achievement and well-being to plan for 2018. It is the final part to a process that takes place throughout term 4. As a school we pride ourselves on continuous improvement and dedicating a day to improving what we do, I believe it has been crucial for our improvement in academic results.

**PUPIL FREE DAY**  
**Friday 1<sup>st</sup> of December**  
(OSHC available if you have booked)

### Concert Information

Classes are busily preparing for our end of year concert. In our next newsletter we will officially thank all of those who have supported with our concert raffle prizes. We are fortunate and grateful as a school to have amazing community support.

**Concert Etiquette:** Our students put a great deal of time in to practising their items to perform. Unfortunately, the acoustics with a large group of people in the Community Centre aren't great. For this reason, every little small side conversation creates a great deal of noise. **We are asking that people refrain from having conversations whilst performances are taking place.**



### **Class Placement Notification 2018**

We will use the same process we have used the past few years whereby families are notified of their child's class in the last week of school so that students can visit their new classrooms.

### **Premier's Be Active Challenge**



Our school has once again participated in the Premier's Be Active Challenge and has met all set criteria to be one of the fifty 'High Achieving

Schools' selected in 2017. We would like to congratulate all the students and like to thank Mr Yates for organising and submitting all the students' results.

### **Parent Insights**

This week's edition will focus on a really interesting topic, *"Social skills for children"*. 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 Iliia Tsoutouras (Principal) or Voula Pounendis (Deputy Principal) who may be able to help with finding an article to suit your needs.

### **Rec/ Year 1 – Leanne Winning (Room 1), Anita Matricianni (Room 2) & Krystal Butler (Room 3)**

We had so much fun catching the bus to the Elizabeth Aquadome for swimming lessons each day. We learnt many survival and safety swimming skills and on the Friday we got to go on the water slide and have some free time in the pool. We enjoyed sharing our swimming dance at Assembly last Friday. We have been excited about our excursion to the Adelaide Zoo. We have been learning about living and non-living things in Science in preparation for the excursion. We have been continuing with Book making and also the Narrative text type in literacy. In numeracy, we are ensuring that the essential skills such as numeral formation, subitising, trusting the count and counting on are consolidated and fluency is built.

### **Year 1/2 – Katrina Kontos (Room 4), Thuy Tran/Christina Tsonis (Room 5) and Mary Spencer/Gayle Crompton (Room 6)**

What an amazing start to term 4! Everyone has welcomed the last term of 2017 with excitement and an eagerness to learn. Swimming week has definitely been a highlight so far. It was great to see everyone taking responsible risks and learning new skills in the pool. On our return to school each day we were reflecting on our lesson in our swimming journal. We were able to use our understanding of the features and structure of a recount to help us. Each day we focused on a different aspect of our swimming lessons to write about. This term we have continued to investigate and explore words that contain our

sound of the week using our phonological, visual and morphemic spelling knowledge.

In maths we are continuing our understanding and fluency with number strategies and using all the strategies we know to solve problems. We are also investigating multiplication by looking at arrays, skip counting, increasing patterns and repeated addition. We will continue to revise place value, data collection, capacity and having fun with games of chance.

We undertook our spirit of generosity project. We made poppies and handed them out to members of our local community for Remembrance Day.

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

Room 9 and 10 have had a busy start to the term! We can't believe it is Term 4! Students travelled together by bus to the Aquadome for our swimming lessons in Week 2 and learnt many important skills to keep them safe in the water. This compliments our health lessons where we are learning strategies for keeping ourselves safe. In Maths we have been learning about multiplication and division. The students have developed and learnt a range of strategies to help them solve problems using these operations and are developing automaticity with multiplication facts. We are beginning to recognise the link between multiplication and division fact families and have worked hard on carefully reading and solving problematised situations. In literacy we are working to consolidate our comprehension skills within our novel studies of *The Twits* and *The Magic Finger*. We are practising verbalising the strategies we use when decoding our texts. We are excited to begin preparation for the end of year concert but will keep our theme a surprise for now.

### **Year 4/5 – Lia DeGiglio (Room 7)**

And just like that, it is already Term 4! Room Seven have hit the road running as per usual. In English this term we are focusing on Descriptive, Discussion and Response text types. We started off with Discussions and the children are particularly enjoying agreeing and disagreeing with each other in a respectful way. In Maths, we have started Patterns and Algebra and will be finishing off the year with a focus on Shape. In HASS, we are working on the main characteristics of the continents of Africa and South Africa while learning about the importance of environments. We will be continuing our investigation of Earth's Place in Space which was a class favourite during Term 3! Room Seven are very excited for our year 4/5 excursion to the Central Markets and immersing ourselves into different cultures while tasting each cuisine. We are sure Term 4 is going to fly by so we are making the most of each other's company before 2018 rolls around!

#### **Year 4/5 – Shaun Hughes (Room 8)**

Well we have hit the ground running in Term 4. Some of us have enjoyed nice holidays, with students travelling to Vietnam, Bali and New Zealand, and Mr. Hughes taking a cruise through Papua New Guinea. We have started with our Literacy focus on poetry, and we have been writing limericks and shape poetry. Maths we have been learning about angles, and we are about to start a unit on mapping. In Health we will be learning about how to stay safe, and also some healthy eating and exercise habits. For HASS we are focussing on Geography, learning about South America, Africa, North America and Europe. Technology will have us making some rubber band powered vehicles, which we are looking forward to testing. We really enjoyed swimming, it was a fantastic week!

#### **Year 4/5 – Gayle Crompton & Cristina Pissanelli (Room 11)**

Room 11 has had a busy start to Term 4. Nick Porublev has taken leave for personal reasons and Gayle Crompton and Cristina Pisanelli are sharing the class until the end of the year.

The students have adapted well to the change and are continuing to work to expectations. We are maintaining the established year 4 / 5 program that the students have been working on and introduced some new initiatives in the classroom.

They begin each day with mental maths to strengthen their mental strategies and then work in their word study groups. We have introduced Literature Circles to support their reading and comprehension skills and are placing an emphasis on Habits of Mind and Learning Intentions. In writing we are working on report writing using the 6 Hats which will lead to information reports later in the term. In maths we have completed some diagnostic testing and covered roman numerals, subtraction using exchanging and measurement.

During week 2 the students attended swimming lessons at the Elizabeth Aquadome and not only learnt skills and water safety but also had lots of fun doing it.

In Arts Mrs Graham has begun working on their class item for the end of year concert so please keep Tuesday the 12<sup>th</sup> of December free. Gayle and Cristina.

#### **Year 6/7 – Jenny Timperio (Room 12)**

Wow, Term 4 has arrived! Term 4 is going to be a super busy term with lots to look forward to and plenty of exciting learning opportunities happening each week. Christmas will be here before we know it! The children will participate in dance lessons throughout the term under the guidance of the Footstep Dance Company. The lessons started in week 1 with our students learning a routine that will become their concert item performance.

Our main focus this term will be on the discussion and biography genres. This will include exploring, developing and writing our own texts to share. Through this we will be looking at structure, spelling, grammar and appropriate punctuation. As part of the whole school reading agreement we will continue to work through the skills of being good readers and develop greater reading comprehension by practising the skills in our daily reading groups. We are also using the skills of good listeners to listen to others and give constructive feedback that is respectful and useful through Public Speaking. In Maths, students will be covering a range of topics. Firstly we will look at the mathematical laws: the distributive law, the associative law and the commutative law. We will also study transformations and using co-ordinates on Cartesian planes.

During this term we will also be commencing a cross-curricular unit on water and its sustainable use. This unit will allow us to explore geographical issues with water and sustainability, scientific issues looking at the water cycle and how water takes different forms: solid, liquid, gas. We will also look at technology and design where we will give students the opportunity to create designs and solutions to the problem of water accessibility to individuals in need.

#### **Year 6/7 – Jason Coleman (Room 13)**

It's Term 4...Wow students have come back from break and been able to quickly find a routine once again. The year 6/7 cohort has many additional things to cover this term however we are trying to keep day to day plans as regular and structured as possible.

We had aquatics which the students really enjoyed. The year 7s have started on their graduation speeches and understand the importance of presenting their highlights and memorable moments from their time spent at V.P.S.

In English we have been working on discussions, learners are understanding the importance of strengthening an argument by presenting both sides and viewpoints. We allowed students to vote on their first topic with the majority of them choosing to discuss whether mobile phones should be allowed within the classroom.

In Mathematics alongside our morning mental math slips we have been looking at transformations and coordinates, learners have quickly understand the importance of being able to analyse a grid map and recognise and locate key objects.

Our overarching concept this term is water and the idea of sustainability, this fits very easily within our HASS and STEM lessons.

### **Year 6/7 – Cathy Lock (Room 14)**

This term, Room 14 is focussing on the integrated unit of Water and Sustainability. Throughout this unit we have been looking at geographical issues, such as the accessibility and distribution of clean drinking water. In Science, we have been conducting investigations into simple machines with the goal of designing and constructing a simple machine to help in the transport of water over long distances. In English we have started writing discussions. We will cover a range of topics related to the use of water to write discussions about: drinking recycled water; charging people for collecting rain water; desalination.

In maths we have been studying transformations and looking at coordinates on Cartesian planes. Students are also working collaboratively on their ACCORD projects. They have posed their own investigable questions and in groups are researching their topic to see whether they can find an answer. Some of the topics are really innovative: Can we make water artificially?; Why do we have art?; If humans were not on Earth, would there be any other intelligent species?

Students are also enjoying their Footsteps sessions, where they are learning a dance to perform in the end of year concert.

### **Junior Primary / Primary Art – Sue Graham**

Virginia primary school students are combining Music, Dancing and Drama this term. Students are undertaking a structured course in basic percussion using drumsticks and plastic garbage bins. This new learning is both an excellent “brain gym” exercise, exploring as it does the use of left and right hands and a really fun music lesson. Students are also participating in bush and urban Dance. Choir is held on Friday afternoons completing our Music lessons. We also welcome Flinders University lecturer Alirio to V.P.S who is teaching a series of lessons to room 9 this term. Alirio works with The True North Theatre Ensemble and we are very fortunate to have his input this term

As well as all this activity we are starting to think of concert items for our wonderful end of year concert.

### **Junior Primary / Primary Science – James Yates**

Junior primary students have started the term really well; we have almost finished our mixtures unit of work. Students have been doing really well with their final assessments, in which they have been describing a variety of mixtures and their purposes. The middle primary students have been engaged in their heating and cooling unit and have enjoyed observing different materials change state from solids/liquids/gases due to the heating and cooling process.

Upper primary students have recently started their final assessment on physical and chemical changes in a variety of materials. They have been able to describe and identify a range of physical changes and chemical changes.

### **Junior Primary / Primary Language- Thi Hien Danh**

We are starting to learn about Vietnam as a country. We are beginning to read about its’ location, population, cities and the two flags that Vietnamese people use to represent who they are. Children will be given opportunities to discuss, share ideas and opinions about the information presented to them. 6/7 classes are working on procedural writing and they will be transferring the learning task into a fun and exciting cooking lesson by the end of the term.

### **Primary PE – James Yates**

In Primary PE we have started a unit of work on Volleyball. Students are participating in skill based lessons focussing on the skills and rules involved in Volleyball, students have really enjoyed the start of the unit and are looking forward to putting their skills based practice into gameplay situations in the coming weeks.

### **Junior Primary PE – Beck Boteju**

This term we are learning the skills of tennis. Tennis requires a lot of hand/eye co-ordination and can be quite difficult for the younger children. After our stretching and warm up game, we have some free play with the racquets and balls just to get used to handling them. This is done in pairs and individually. We then work individually on skills such as balancing the ball on the racquet, controlling the ball with the racquet on the ground and hitting the ball along the ground. These skills help when we work on our forehand hitting. We finish the lesson with some partner work to put our skills into play.

### **EALD – Robyn Lewis**

This term we have continued to work on our writing in both small groups and whole classes. For many of the middle and upper classes we have been learning about discussion texts, where two sides of an argument are presented and then an opinion by the writer is given in the conclusion. Discussions are particularly challenging when the student has a very strong opinion on one side and totally disagrees with the opposite point of view. It certainly gives students an opportunity to see both sides in a discussion or debate. One of the middle primary classes has focused on different types of poetry including shape poems and limericks. We have lots of fun creating poems and students are usually successful in this genre of writing.

WEEK	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
	20/11/2017	21/11/2017	22/11/2017	23/11/2017	24/11/2017
6	Yr 6/7 Footsteps REC Zoo Excursion	Reception Transition Visits	Reception Transition Visits Reception Ready Parent tour 5:30 – 6:30pm) True North Theatre 1:30pm (Arts program) Staff meeting	Reception Ready Parent tour 9:15 – 10:15am)	Playgroup
	27/11/2017	28/11/2017	29/11/2017	30/11/2017	1/12/2017
7	Reception Transition Visits	Reception Transition Visits	True North Theatre 1:30pm (Arts program)  Staff meeting	Yr 4/5 Central Markets Excursion	ANNUAL SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PROCESS – PUPIL FREE DAY
	4/12/2017	5/12/2017	6/12/2017	7/12/2017	8/12/2017
8	International Volunteer Day (5/12)		Governing Council  Staff meeting	International Day of People with Disability	Playgroup  End of Year Concert
	11/12/2017	12/12/2017	13/12/2017	14/12/2017	15/12/2017
9		Yr 7 Farewell assembly	Staff meeting	Yr 7 Graduation	2018 class visits (students meet their new class and teacher)



**VIRGINIA PRIMARY SCHOOL  
STUDENT FREE DAY REMINDER  
OSHC BOOKING FORM**

*Learning Together, Learning for our Future*

**STUDENT FREE DAY  
(OSHC BOOKING)**

Dear Parents/Caregivers,

Our next student free day for the year will be held on:

**Friday 1<sup>st</sup> December (Week 7).**

OSHC School Care will be available during the day for those families who require this and **book in. Booking in is essential** to ensure we have the correct number of staff to care for your children.

Day	Name of child/ren	Drop off time	Pick up time
Friday 1 <sup>st</sup> December			

**Please return booking sheet to the Front Office or OSHC by Friday 24<sup>th</sup> November.**  
**Bookings can also be made by phoning the school or contacting OSHC directly.**



## Building parent-school partnerships

WORDS Michael Grose

# Social skills for children

School brings different types of learning, including social interactions and how to make friends. Parents can lay the foundations at home by teaching their kids these 7 important social skills.

Children who are able to form friendships when they start school are happier at school and also learn better.

More significantly, *positive friendships have long-term implications for social and indirectly academic success.*

Friendships skills are generally developmental, but they don't develop in isolation. Kids acquire these skills when they play with their siblings and interact with children and adults outside their family.

*Today's children grow up with fewer siblings, fewer opportunities for unstructured play and less freedom to explore friendships than children of even ten years ago.*

Parents can help kids develop important social competencies by teaching them sociable behaviours at home, being good role models and providing opportunities for kids to play with each other in a variety of situations.

**Here are 7 important social skills to help children to develop:**

### 1 Ask for what you want

Help children ask for what they want. It means they don't throw tantrums, whinge,

and sulk or expect parents to guess what's on their minds. While we need to be patient with toddlers, we need also to give older children the chance and opportunity to ask for what they want. Sometimes we need to ignore shrugs and grunts and expect them to articulate their wishes. This is the basis of civil behaviour, as well as a basic human skill.

### 2 Good manners

Teach kids good manners, in particular the three 'power words'. These words are very persuasive because they have a way of breaking down barriers and people's defences. These three words are: your name; please; thanks. These terms are the basis of good manners, and, when used, will increase the likelihood of getting what you want.

### 3 Sharing

Sharing is a basic social skill. Developmentally, very young children like to keep their possessions themselves. As they get older and move into Pre School and beyond the notion of sharing becomes a pre-requisite for playing with and forming relationships with others. Other children like

to play and be with those who share their time, possessions and space with them. Sharing is the start of empathy as it shows sensitivity to other people's feelings.

### 4 Holding a conversation

Holding conversations with others is a lifetime friendship skill. Conversations require self-disclosure, which can be challenging for some children. Good conversationalists give of themselves, but also take an interest in the person they are talking to. Many children forget that good conversations are two-way events, and tend to focus solely on themselves.

Children within conversations need to learn to ask good or interesting questions; to take turns when speaking and to show you are listening by making eye contact and not interrupting.

### 5 Winning and losing well

Kids need to learn to win without rubbing others noses in it, and lose gracefully without throwing tantrums and making excuses.

more on page 2 >>>



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### ... Social skills for children ...

Wanting to win is natural, but they need to do so in a way that they maintain a relationship with other players so they will play again. Losing may make kids feel bad, but kids need to control their negative feelings so that others will play with them again.

#### 6 Approaching and joining a group

The ability to approach strangers in social situations is valuable skill that opens up many doors, both friendship-wise and business-wise. These skills can be learned and practised during childhood, so that it becomes second nature in adulthood.

#### 7 Handling fights and disagreements

Disagreements happen in families and among friends. The key is to make sure disagreements don't lead to the breakdown of friendships. It's important to get across to kids that having an argument or disagreement doesn't mean that a friendship is over. Strong friendships, like strong family relationships, withstand disagreements. In fact, they only serve to strengthen friendships.

The results of a number of studies indicate that children can be taught friendships skills. The strategies are simple and revolve around teaching children a range of friendly behaviours such as: talking with others while playing, showing an interest in others, smiling, offering help and encouragement when needed, a willingness to share and learning how to enter a game or social situation.

As parents we often focus on the development of children's academic skills and quite easily neglect the development of important social skills, which contribute so much to children's happiness and wellbeing.

Michael Grose



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