



# VIRGINIA PRIMARY SCHOOL NEWSLETTER

Learning Together, Learning for our Future

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

Issue 3, 2018

1<sup>st</sup> March

## DATES TO REMEMBER

### Week 5

**Friday 2<sup>nd</sup> March**

Casual Clothes Day

'Kids helping Kids'

### Week 6

**Friday 9<sup>th</sup> March**

Whole School Assembly

Community Centre

9:15am

Kitchen Garden

World Clean Up Day

Whole School Clean-up immediately after assembly

Rm 9/10 Star Dome Incursion

### Week 7

**Monday 12<sup>th</sup> March**

Public Holiday

Adelaide Cup

NO SCHOOL OR OSHC

### Week 8

**Friday 23<sup>rd</sup> March**

Whole School Assembly

Community Centre

9:15am

After assembly Harmony Day Morning Tea



**Principal:** Ilia Tsoutouras

**Deputy Principal:** Voula Pounendis

**Gov. Council Chairperson:** Anita Trenwith

Park Road, Virginia SA 5120

**Phone:** (08) 83809292

**Fax:** (08) 83809576

**Email**

[dl.0455.info@schools.sa.edu.au](mailto:dl.0455.info@schools.sa.edu.au)

Visit our web site

[www.virginiaps.sa.edu.au](http://www.virginiaps.sa.edu.au)

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Government of South Australia

Department for Education and Child Development

Dear Parents/ Caregivers,

### Reading

In our first newsletter we highlighted the importance of reading and how we as a school have reading as a priority for further improvement on our Site Improvement Plan. We also shared how we have introduced a new intervention program, Levelled Literacy Intervention (LLI) for students 'flagged' as needing extra support. At Virginia, we conduct Collaborative Planning Meetings (CPM meetings) and Student Review Team meetings (SRT meetings) to ensure we are tracking the progress of EVERY child.

CPM meetings are where all adults (teacher, student support teacher and student support officers) who work within each class meet to discuss the progress of each child within the class. Goals for children in English and Mathematics are discussed and reviewed, regardless of a child's academic level of achievement.

Voula (Deputy Principal), Robyn (Middle and Upper Primary Student Support / English as an Additional Dialect and Language – EALD teacher), Thuy (Junior Primary Student Support / English as an Additional Dialect and Language – EALD teacher) and myself (Principal) meet for SRT meetings and track our student progress on a whole school level. Information and data on each child from the CPM meetings feed into this group and we use this information as well as students whom teachers have 'flagged' for either MiniLit or LLI intervention support.

MiniLit, being an established intervention program was running from Week two, however LLI has only just begun on a student level this week. These intervention programs begin at 8:30am in the morning and some continue throughout the day. In addition to this support, each of our classes is supported with Specialist SSO support and Student Support Teacher support for guided reading and writing. Our Reception students have this year been involved in using 'Speech Sounds Pics', an evidence based, highly explicit program to develop reading, writing and spelling. I have included some photos of learning in action from my morning walks over the last few days.



(Speech Sounds Pics learning)





(Reading groups with Mrs Lewis)

## Reading Levels

When investigating the use of the above programs last year, our Literacy Improvement team also visited several other schools and investigated different tools for the deeper assessment of reading. Whilst we have had some fantastic growth and results, we believe and are aiming for further improved results in one of life's most important skills, reading!

After considering several options, we have made the decision to change the assessment kits we use for Running Records to track reading levels.

Whilst the process is largely the same, there is a significant difference in the 'comprehension conversation' with children from the old kits to the new.

Children are required to have a much deeper understanding of the text, and text type to move through levels. The other added difference is that the new assessment kits allow us to assign a level to **ALL** children, Reception – Year 7 (in fact, they are designed to assess up to Year 8). Children are levelled right up to level 35 and we have found through early testing that we have scaled children back.

Within the Running Record testing process there are several key elements we are looking for;

- a) The accuracy in which a child technically reads the text
- b) The fluency in which a child reads
- c) The child's comprehension (within, beyond and about the text).

**From Term 2 onwards ALL of our children, R-7 will have a running record taken and you may find that your child's reading level will be different.** Please don't be alarmed or concerned by this, we are doing this intentionally. We have purchased a significant amount of reading material that is levelled, and developmentally appropriate to all year levels to ensure they are engaging. This will be somewhat of a change as we will see our Middle and Upper Primary children with levelled texts. The Lexile system

currently in place will remain to support children with borrowing good fit books.

Throughout the testing period we will be assigning children with two levels.

1/ **an independent level** (this is a level in which they can read with accuracy, fluency and good comprehension). These are the types of texts we will be encouraging children to read at home.

and...

2/ **an instructional** (this is a level we are actively 'teaching' new skills with.

In the past I have had parents ask why their child is taking home level 13 readers when they are at a level 15, the simple answer is that this is an independent level and is far more appropriate for them in terms of continuing to build an enjoyment of reading and to further develop the key elements of reading mentioned earlier.

During the school day children will be using instructional levels with their teacher and in 'guided' small group reading lessons.

Each child will have a specific reading goal that will be shared with students and with you at home to support with their reading development.

In addition to this, sometimes parents of Reception children become concerned when they don't see levelled readers come home at the beginning of the year. This is an intentional move on behalf of our teachers as they are still teaching children 'the code' to reading. Sending home a levelled reader before children can use 'the code' can most often have a detrimental effect as you are teaching strategies that will help in the early levels, but will cause issues in the later levels. Teaching 'the code' is a 'go fast, slowly' approach. Children, whilst often appearing to be behind those who aren't using this approach will quickly 'take-over'. For those of you with children in Reception, the program our teachers are using is called Speech Sounds Pics (SSP). The first part of the systematic teaching of 'the code' starts at the green level where children learn *s,a,t,p,i,n*. An approach such as this is an evidence-based approach to reading development. When children do have enough elements of 'the code' they will begin bringing 'decodeable readers' home, these are readers with words that can be sounded out.

## Habits of Mind at Virginia

As mentioned in our last newsletter, we have included an information page on two of the Habits of Mind, Persistence and Managing Impulsivity. We will continue to share the other 14 Habits of Mind with you throughout the year so you too can work with your children in further developing positive dispositions to learning and life.

# Habits of Mind

Developing your child's habits of success



## Persistence

People who persist.....

Make mistakes but don't quit	Practice!
Don't say I can't or this is too hard	Believe in their abilities
Use strategies to solve problems	Work hard to reach their goals
Work through a challenge	Know they can be successful

Keep going

I can do this

Never give up

You can do it!

Keep practising

Keep trying

I'm going to try my best

Persistent people stick to a task until it is completed. They don't give up easily. They look at a problem and develop a plan on how they are going to tackle it. They are able to look at a problem and use strategies to help them keep going. Persistent people are able to see if their strategies are working, if one strategy isn't working they are able to try another.

Art Costa

### What you can do at home

- What does persisting look like, sound like, feel like?
- Reinforce, model and practice persisting with your child
- Talk about ways you have persisted and how you did it
- Identify people who are successful (i.e sports people) and discuss what sort of strategies they used to achieve their success
- Help your child to set goals and identify small steps on how they can achieve their goals
- Give feedback to your child when you notice them being persistent

# Habits of Mind

Developing your child's habits of success



## Managing Impulsivity

People who manage their impulsivity.....

- Set goals
- Make sure they fully understand something before making judgements
- Make plans
- Don't blurt out the first thing that comes to mind
- Stop and think before doing

*wait your turn*

*patient*

*be reflective*

*stay calm*

*take a deep  
breath*

*consideration*

*stop, think and do*

People who manage their impulsivity are deliberate when they are solving problems. They think before they do. Before starting anything they have a vision in their head and a plan on how they are going to reach their goal. They strive to clarify their understanding using various strategies. People who manage their impulsivity are constantly reflecting and considering all possibilities.

Art Costa

### What you can do at home

- Talk about what managing impulsivity looks like, sounds like and feels like?
- Explore alternate strategies together and consider consequences of actions before beginning tasks at home
- Model ways you manage your impulsivity
- Praise and acknowledge instances where you have noticed a family member remaining calm
- Allow time for reflection and encourage 'wait time'
- Talk to your child about the rules of a game before starting

## UPDATED 28/02/2018

	26/02/2018	27/02/2018	28/02/2018	1/03/2018	2/03/2018
5					Schools clean-up day Casual Clothes day Kids Helping Kids
	5/03/2018	6/03/2018	7/03/2018	8/03/2018	9/03/2018
6				International Women's Day	Assembly Community Centre 9:15am Kitchen Garden Rm 9/10 Star Dome Incursion Community Centre
	12/03/2018	13/03/2018	14/03/2018	15/03/2018	16/03/2018
7	Public Holiday Adelaide Cup			Day of Action against bullying & violence	
	19/03/2018	20/03/2018	21/03/2018	22/03/2018	23/03/2018
8	Cultural Diversity Week HARMONY DAY		World Harmony Day HARMONY CULTURAL DIVERSITY WEEK GC meeting 7pm	Aunty Peach Show 9:00am	Assembly Community Centre 9:15am Kitchen Garden
	26/03/2018	27/03/2018	28/03/2018	29/03/2018	30/03/2018
9					GOOD FRIDAY PUBLIC HOLIDAY
	2/04/2018	3/04/2018	4/04/2018	5/04/2018	6/04/2018
10	EASTER MONDAY PUBLIC HOLIDAY				
	9/04/2018	10/04/2018	11/04/2018	12/04/2018	13/04/2018
11			Sports day tm mtg. 3:00pm		SPORTS DAY World Book Day (23/4)

# Busy Fridays

You may have noticed that Fridays are busy and many special events are taking place on a Friday (assembly, kitchen garden, casual clothes day, incursions/ excursions where possible, choir etc.). This has been done intentionally, we are minimising any potential distractions from Monday – Thursday when there is huge levels of support in classrooms for Numeracy and Literacy learning.

It certainly isn't that we don't value those extra-curricular learning opportunities, we absolutely are proud of the programs we have established in the last few years, however, to continue to build upon our recent academic successes we want to ensure that those opportunities don't become distractions.