



College Principal's Report

CURRICULUM DAY

Curriculum Day was held on **Wednesday 17 August**, staff undertook work on improving connectedness. The morning session focused on developing a School Wide Positive Behaviour Support Framework integrating feedback we have already collected from students. School-wide Positive Behaviour Support (SWPBS) is an evidence-based framework for preventing and responding to student behaviour. It aims to create a positive school climate, a culture of student competence and an open, responsive management system for all school community members. It includes analysis of data in professional learning teams, implementation of evidence based practices and organisational systems for establishing safe, purposeful and inclusive school and classroom learning environments while providing the individual behaviour and learning supports needed to achieve academic and social success for all students. The afternoon session included analysis of data we have collected from the students about their social and emotional learning. Schools can play a pivotal role in providing students with the opportunity to gain greater social and emotional awareness and to practice interpersonal skills as they learn and grow. Social and Emotional Learning (SEL) can help students develop the understanding, strategies and skills that support a positive sense of self, promote respectful relationships and build student capacity to recognise and manage their own emotions and make responsible decisions.

PARENT TEACHER INTERVIEWS

Parent Teacher Interviews will be held on **Thursday 8 September at the Senior Campus**. Parents are reminded that classes are not run on this day and students are not required to attend however students are expected to attend the interviews with their parents.

What can you expect?

- **A two-way conversation.** Just as you want to learn about your child's progress at school, we want to hear from you about how you think your child is doing. When teachers know about children's talents, interests, needs and dreams, they are better able to help their learning.
- **Emphasis on learning.** The focus of the conference is your child's learning. We want to discuss how well your child is doing and what we can do to support even better learning. Come prepared with any questions you would like to ask the teacher.
- **Opportunities and challenges.** Teachers will always try to give you positive feedback about your child and areas for improvement. You will know your child's strengths and areas of difficulty. Together, you and the teacher can explore ways to help your child with challenges.

What will be talked about?

- **Progress.** How is your child coping? Is your child performing at the expected age and grade level? What are your child's strengths? Where are the areas for improvement?
- **Your thoughts.** Let the teacher know how you feel about your child's progress and abilities. Tell the teacher about anything you think needs extra attention.
- **Learning at home.** Ask what you can do at home to help your child learn.

Follow-up

- Talk with your child about the conference. Share with your child what you have learned. Show how you will be helping with learning at home. Pass on praise. Ask for your child's views on how learning can be improved.

Please do not hesitate to contact us if you have any queries. Parents focused on their children's education also make a huge difference in a student's achievement.

PREPARATIONS FOR 2017

Preparations for 2017 are well under way. Student subject selections have been collated and the units being run in 2017 are being determined. Of concern, however, are the students who have not submitted their subject selection forms. These forms are required urgently. Students and parents are encouraged to seek advice from our excellent Careers team should they have any questions.

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AN EARLY START TO SPRING AND THE MAGPIES ARE SWOOPING!

It appears we have had an early start to Spring with warmer weather, allergies and swooping Magpies.

Swooping birds can be a frightening and even dangerous experience for any unsuspecting passers-by. August to December is the period when many areas become danger zones as native birds swoop to protect their nests, eggs and young.



BOOK WEEK

Each year, across Australia, The Children's Book Council of Australia (CBCA) brings children and books together celebrating Children's Book Week. During this time Schools, Libraries, Booksellers, Authors, Illustrators and children celebrate Australian Children's Literature. As always our dedicated Library Team is planning celebrations in both libraries for Book Week next week. The Middle Years students will participate in "Drop Everything and Read" for the first 20 minutes of session 1 each day. The theme this year is *Australia! Story Country*.



The Middle Years Library display will include straw so students with allergies to straw should participate in the many other activities but avoid the straw in the library.



Trish Horner

EVERY DAY COUNTS

How can I get my teenager to school?

Many teenagers seek independence and think they know best. No matter how hard parents try, some students may be reluctant or refuse to go to school. These are some ideas which may assist parents to deal with teenagers and school refusal. Addressing this attendance issues promptly and setting up good patterns in adolescence can lead to future success.

Did you know?

- Patterns of late arrival at school or missing classes are early warning signs
- Missing one day of school each week adds up to 2 months missed over a year
- Each day absent in high school has an impact on skill development and social connections
- Poor attendance may be associated with future unemployment, criminal activity, substance abuse, and poorer health and life expectancy

Some causes of school problems

Some of the more common causes of school problems are underlying learning difficulties or learning disabilities or behavioural or emotional issues. But there are many other reasons why a young person might not be engaging fully in their education.

School factors might include:

- bullying
- disliking, or not feeling connected to, the school culture or environment
- disliking school subjects, not liking the choice of subjects, or not feeling challenged by the work
- poor school or academic support, especially in relation to heavy workloads
- not getting along with teachers or other students at school
- competing demands on time, such as extracurricular activities

Personal factors might include:

- chronic illness
- intellectual or cognitive disability
- behavioural or developmental difficulties or disorders
- mental health issues such as depression or anxiety
- history of abuse and neglect
- poor self-concept or self-esteem
- poor communication skills
- poor social skills
- difficulty with listening, concentrating or sitting still.

College Principal's Report

Family factors might include:

- parents who aren't involved in their child's education
- a home environment that doesn't or can't adequately support a young person's learning
- family problems such as relationship breakdowns
- competing family or social responsibilities, such as caring for family members, or working outside school hours



What you can do

- Act early
- Talk about the importance of showing up to school every day, make that the expectation. Regular attendance at school sets up good behaviours for regular attendance at work.
- Help your teenager maintain daily routines such as finishing homework and getting a good night's sleep. On average, teenagers need 8-9 hours sleep to be healthy and alert. You may also need to monitor their use of the Internet, mobile phone and TV at night to ensure they are not staying up too late or being disturbed while sleeping.
- Try not to schedule hair, dental or medical appointments during school hours. Arrange family holidays during scheduled school holidays so that they don't miss out on classes and feel left behind. If it is necessary to be absent from school for an extended period, arrange with your school for a Student Absence Learning Plan.
- Don't let your teenager stay home unless genuinely sick. Complaints of headaches or stomach aches may be signs of anxiety.
- If your teenager wants to stay home to finish an assignment, rather than letting them stay home, expect them to go to school – make attendance the number one priority. Later, you can discuss with them how they can improve their study habits or adjust their schedule.
- Be sure to set a good example – how you meet your commitments impacts on how they will meet theirs.
- Talk to your teenager. What are their feelings about school? What interests them at school? Are there any difficult situations? It helps if you open these discussions in a relaxed way so that your teenager knows you are demonstrating concern, not authority.
- Try to be aware of your teenager's social contacts. Peer influence can lead to skipping school, while students without many friends can feel isolated.
- Encourage meaningful extracurricular activities that your teenager enjoys, such as sports and clubs, to develop positive relationships and experience success outside of a classroom setting. These activities can help your child feel part of the group, important to the school, and more motivated.
- Set clear parameters around part-time work. Make sure that the hours your teenager is working do not impact on their ability to go to school the next day, or interfere with school assessment expectations or exam preparation
- Familiarise yourself with the school's attendance policy. This can help when trying to reason with teenagers.
- Monitor your teenager's attendance and school performance. Periodically check with their teachers to find out how things are going. If you find it difficult to contact several different teachers by phone, try email. Alternatively, the year level coordinator may be a helpful point of contact in relation to specific issues.
- Ask your teenager's school about what types of flexible or blended learning options they offer.



Remember

You can talk with school staff (such as a teacher, year level coordinator, wellbeing staff, careers staff, assistant principal or principal) to find out what support they can provide to keep your teenager attending and engaged.

USEFUL WEBSITES / CONTACTS

www.raisingchildren.net.au

www.headspace.org.au

www.education.vic.gov.au

www.youthbeyondblue.org.au

www.kidshelp.com.au or phone **1800 55 1800**, 24 hours a day, 7 days

Parentline – phone 13 22 89 8.00am to midnight seven days a week



Karen Eastlake
Middle Years Campus Principal

MY Campus Principal's Report

A reminder to all parents / guardians that Parent / Teacher Interview bookings on Sentral will open on Monday 29 August at 9:00am.

YOUR CHILD IS UNIQUE

Every child is different

Most children enjoy play, but each child plays differently. Some bounce from one activity to another while others stick to a task until it's done.

Some children enjoy their own company and some prefer to play with others. Some children jump right in to a game while others stand on the sidelines, getting a feel for what's happening before joining in.

Some children love a routine and find it hard to adapt when things are out of order. Others are never hungry at dinner time, nor tired at bedtime (which adults find challenging).



Learning to walk is not a competitive sport

Because your child is a unique individual, they will learn in their own time and in their own way.

Some children walk at 10 months; others much later. It's not a race to be first; nor is it a test to finish on time.

Most children learn skills like talking and walking in a predictable order: sit, crawl, walk, run. But they don't learn them to a pre-set timelines. And that's good news because it means you don't need to worry if your child is not doing something.

There is, however, a broad time period in which most children acquire certain skills.

If you are concerned about your child's learning or development, always talk to your maternal and child health nurse, your family doctor or your child's educator.



What does this mean?

Value what is unique about your child and accept your child for who they are right now. This is an important way to help your child have a strong sense of identity.

Try not to compare your child with other children. Each child learns in their own time.

Be aware of your child's temperament and work with it instead of fighting it. If your child dislikes rough and tumble play, don't force them to wrestle with you! Find gentler ways to relate physically.

Watch how your child likes to learn. Do they hold back, watch and then try? Then let them observe first, before encouraging them to join in. Do they need to try it for themselves?

Be aware of your own uniqueness. How does your temperament affect the way you interact with your child? Does your child 'press your buttons'? How does this affect your family? What does your child learn from your reactions?

Offer your child rich learning and play experiences. Encourage and support their interests, but don't push or pressure them to reach milestones before they are ready.

Other related newsletters can be found at www.education.vic.gov.au



M.P.S.C. INTERNATIONAL STUDENT PROGRAM LOCAL HOMESTAY FAMILIES WANTED



Host families are a very important factor in the success of our International Student Program and are greatly valued by the College.

Our program is growing, so we are looking for more families interested in providing a warm and supportive environment for an international student who has chosen to study at Mill Park Secondary College. Families receive payment to cover expenses for full board and our International Student Coordinator is available at all times, to provide ongoing support to host families.

For more information, please contact **Marilyn Pridmore**

Phone: 9409 8222 or 0438 681 125

Email: pridmore.marilyn.j@edumail.vic.gov.au

Middle Years Campus Report

TAASS YEAR 8 SEAL FEDERATION SQUARE CITY EXCURSION

On Monday 8 August Year 8 SEAL students went on an excursion to the City of Melbourne, as part of the collaboration between SEAL schools that are part of the TAASS (The Academy of Accredited SEAL Schools) network. Mill Park Secondary met up with Gladstone Park Secondary and Keilor Downs Secondary SEAL classes and formed mixed groups for a rotation of three activities.

This was an opportunity for students to become familiar with the culture and history of Melbourne (specifically Federation Square), as well as participate in activities at ACMI (Australian Centre for the Moving Image) and NGV (National Gallery of Victoria). It was a wonderful opportunity for our students to meet gifted students from other schools and form some new relationships with children in similar educational programs.

The students also were fortunate enough to be able to watch the 'Choir of Hard Knocks' rehearsing for their forthcoming 10 year anniversary tour and see Bruce Woodley, founding member of *The Seekers*, leading the rehearsal. It was quite moving to hear the choir (comprised of marginalised Australians and people who may have been at one time homeless or influenced by unfortunate circumstances), singing *I am Australian*.

The sun was shining, the public transport ran on time and the Year 8s were even able to catch a Pokémon or two in the city.

Thanks to Rob Magnano (student teacher), the Year 8 SEALs, as well as the students and teachers from Gladstone Park and Keilor Downs Secondary Colleges. A huge thanks to Belinda Pringle from Federation Square Education, who assisted with organising activities for the students.

Leesa Mereos, SEAL and Extension Coordinator



Important Dates

IMPORTANT DATES:

- ◆ Monday 22 - Friday 26 August - Year 9 City School (9AR, 9BR, 9BS & 9BW)
- ◆ Monday 22 - Friday 26 August - Book Week activities
- ◆ Monday 29 August - 9:00am - **Parent Teacher Interview Bookings open on Sentral**
- ◆ Monday 29 Aug - Friday 2 Sept - Year 9 City School (9AS, 9AW, 9AE & 9BE)
- ◆ Thursday 8 September - **Parent Teacher Interviews** (No classes for students)



Colin Burke
Senior Campus Principal

Senior Campus Principal's Report

VISIT FROM HONG KONG AND TAIWAN EDUCATORS

On Friday 12 August, the Senior Campus hosted a visit from a group of teachers from Hong Kong. The teachers were from the Tsung Tsin Christian Academy, and visited a number of schools in the local area including Mill Park Heights Primary School. On Tuesday 16 August, we also hosted a group of teachers from Teach for Taiwan. The teachers visited a range of different classes including Legal Studies, PE and Literature.

VTAC INFORMATION NIGHT

We held a highly successful VTAC information session for year 12 parents, to assist them in supporting their children's applications for University and TAFE. We had a great turnout of parents on the night to hear from our outstanding careers team. Thanks also to Kelli MacDonald, who ended up staying later than expected, to help a parent whose car had become bogged.

THANKYOU

I would like to take this opportunity to publicly thank Sam Milbourn for all of her efforts in replacing Peter Tonis as Assistant Principal, whilst he was on leave. Sam performed all of the duties of Assistant Principal with aplomb, and has fully supported Kelli and myself. Thanks Sam. Peter returns from leave on Monday 22 August.



Senior Campus Awards and Graduation Night

15 December 2016

at

Moonee Valley Racecourse

more details to follow

SPARK ENGINEERING CAMP

Over the June / July holidays, I was accepted into and attended a one week camp called "Spark Engineering" hosted by the non-for-profit organisation 'Youth without Borders.' I was told about it by my Systems teacher Mr Fahey and I applied through the MPSC Careers Centre. The group stayed at Queens College in the student dorms of the University of Melbourne. Throughout the week we visited different universities such as Melbourne, Monash, RMIT and La Trobe where we attended information sessions and completed activities. We had the opportunity to listen to guest speakers who were engineers and entrepreneurs; played around with robots and technology, as well as compete in scavenger hunts. Overall, we got an insight into the different types of engineering and had a lot of fun doing it. We learnt fun chants and dances, had a talent show and I made a heap of new friends. The teachers who supervised the camp are known as 'Sparkies' and they

are young uni students who we were able to have fun with. To top it all off – the food was great, the camp costs were provided for and it was one of the most enjoyable experiences of my life! I would recommend any Year 11 or 12 students who have the opportunity next year to go as I learnt a lot about myself, different universities and engineering.

Olivia Audino, Year 11



Reminders

- 'INSIDE MONASH' UNIVERSITY SEMINARS – Final seminars in the series: **Science** - August 24; **Teaching** - September 13; **Details and bookings:** www.monash.edu/inside-monash
- **YEAR 12 VICTORIAN TERTIARY ADMISSIONS CENTRE (VTAC)** applications for 2017 courses open **Mon 1 August**; timely applications close **29 Sept** (see www.vtac.edu.au)
- **MONASH ART, DESIGN & ARCHITECTURE (MADA) WORKSHOPS** - 26 & 27 Sept, MADA (Caulfield campus) for Year 11 & 12's; **Book:** www.monash.edu/mada/workshops.

1. **OPEN DAY REMINDER** – Make sure you attend **Open Days** this year. They are your opportunity to 'try before you buy' your university or TAFE course. They commence **THIS weekend** at **Swinburne** (Hawthorn), 10am – 4pm. Remember to use **Open Day planners** before



attending. For example, **La Trobe University** has a handy tool for browsing the **Open Day activities** and lets you **build a personalised schedule** to follow on the day. You can download the **La Trobe Open Day app** which you can use to access your **timetable** as well as maps to help you get around.

Some Open Day Dates for 2016:

- **Sun 31 July** – Swinburne University
- **Sat 6 Aug** – Monash (Peninsula)
- **Sun 7 Aug** – Deakin University (Warrnambool); La Trobe University (Bundoora); Monash University (Caulfield & Clayton)
- **Sun 14 Aug** – Australian Catholic University (Melbourne), La Trobe University (Bendigo); RMIT University; William Angliss Institute
- **Sun 21 Aug** – Box Hill (Lilydale campus); Deakin University (Waterfront & Waurn Ponds); University of Melbourne; Monash (Parkville)
- **Sun 28 Aug** – ACU (Ballarat): Box Hill Institute (Box Hill); Deakin University (Burwood); Federation University; Victoria University (Footscray campus)

2. YEAR 12 NEWS –

- **VTAC APPLICATIONS** - Applications for TAFE and university courses open on the Victorian Tertiary Admissions Centre (VTAC) website on **Monday 1 August, 2016** at www.vtac.edu.au. Use **Course Searches** as it is the primary

source of course information. You will also find very useful **VTAC videos** about applying for courses, SEAS, scholarships, offers and changing preferences at www.youtube.com/vtacmedia.



You can apply for **up to eight courses**, placing them in the order you most want them. You will be **offered a place** in the highest course in your list for which you meet the requirements. Don't forget to check out the **Selection Requirements** for each course for which you apply. Many use only the **ATAR** for selection, however, a lot have other requirements such as an **audition, folio presentation, interview or an extra form or documents** that must be completed as well. You will **NOT** be offered a place in any of these courses if you do not meet the selection requirements, regardless of your ATAR.

You have **until 29 September** for a 'timely' application. After that, the normal **application fee of \$32.00** rises to **\$100.00**

- When applying for courses you will be asked for a **contact email address**. You are advised **NOT** to use your school email address
- Some **B. Fine Art** degrees at the **University of Melbourne** (Southbank campus) have earlier closing application dates; they close on **31 Aug** for **Animation, Dance, Film and Television and Screenwriting**. For **Production, Music Theatre, Theatre Practice and Visual Arts**, timely applications close on **29 Sept** and no later applications are allowed.
- **SPECIAL ENTRY ACCESS SCHEME (SEAS)** – This Scheme allows selection officers at universities and TAFE's to **grant special consideration** for course entry to applicants, but doesn't exempt you from meeting course requirements. SEAS **doesn't change** your educational results or qualifications **but enables course selection officers to consider circumstances** that may have affected your results or educational progress. There are **four categories of special consideration**:



- Personal Information and Location
- Difficult Circumstances
- Disadvantaged Financial Background
- Disability or Medical Condition

For information about SEAS **participating institutions, how to apply** (demonstration

provided), **supporting evidence required** (with suggested tips) and other details, see: www.vtac.edu.au and search for SEAS.

3. WHAT IF I DON'T GET THE ATAR REQUIRED FOR MY DESIRED COURSE?



Firstly, remember that even if you think the ATAR will be too high for you, **still put your most desired course first in your VTAC application.** ATAR's sometimes come down on previous years, and some applicants get in on lower ATAR's because of **bonus points** achieved, or with a **successful SEAS application**, so you might be surprised.

However, what can you do if you do not obtain a high enough ATAR to access your course(s)? Many universities offer **pathways** into university. For example, **Deakin** has Deakin College, **Monash** has Monash College, **La Trobe** has La Trobe Melbourne and **Swinburne** has UniLink. These institutions can be accessed with lower ATARs and usually provide pathways into university.

Many **other pathways** exist. For example, **Monash** offers some diploma programs (in business, science, education & nursing), the **University of Melbourne** offers a Diploma of General Studies as a pathway, **ACU** offers courses through ACUCom, and **Swinburne**, **RMIT** and **Victoria** Universities offer certificate and diploma courses in their VET divisions, often offering pathways to university. Some **VET providers** (eg Box Hill Institute) have formal pathways to university.

Keep in mind as well, as noted in previous issues, that some universities allow students to access their courses on a **lower ATAR** as a result of their **involvement in their communities** (eg **Aspire** program at La Trobe and the **Early Achievers Program** at ACU).



4. NEW COMMON FIRST YEAR FOR ENGINEERING STUDENTS AT SWINBURNE

– In 2017 engineering students will begin their studies with a common first year. The B. Engineering (Honours) will teach students the fundamentals of engineering before they choose their major, ensuring they can make informed choices about their career in industry. Those who enrol in the B.

Engineering (Honours) (Professional) will also complete a guaranteed



12-month paid professional work placement. <http://www.swinburne.edu.au/study/course/bachelor-of-engineering-honours/>

5. NEW MAJORS IN HEALTH SCIENCE AT SWINBURNE

– In 2017 Swinburne's B. Health Science will include four new majors. The degree is designed to equip students for **careers promoting health and wellbeing.** New majors in **biomedical and clinical technologies, exercise science and nutrition** will be offered alongside a revised major in **biomedical science.** Student who enrol in the B. Health Science (Professional) will also complete a guaranteed 12-month paid professional work placement. **Find a course at:** <http://www.swinburne.edu.au/study/find-a-course/health/>

6. DEAKIN UNIVERSITY NEWS –

- Find out more about your **professional personality**, about **life after finishing Year 12**, and about **how to improve your study habits.** Check out some of these latest articles featured in the Deakin digital content hub at: <http://this.deakin.edu.au/careers/whats-your-professional-personality-the-careers-quiz/>; <http://this.deakin.edu.au/careers/what-life-was-like-after-i-finished-year-12> and <http://this.deakin.edu.au/study/five-ways-to-get-on-top-of-your-study-workload>.
- Also remember to check out the **Deakin EXPLORE** facility at: <http://explore.deakin.edu.au>. Find out which **course suit your interests**, **major studies** available to you, and **how to qualify for a career** that interests you, plus a lot more.

7. SPOTJOBS CAREER EXPO COMING –

This Expo will showcase career opportunities from large employers and trades through to higher education. There will be free career advice, industry panels, interactive training demonstrations and exhibits, seminars, and a wealth of information and opportunities for further study. **When:** Fri 26 – Sun 28 August; **Where:** Melbourne Exhibition Centre, Southbank; **For details and a free ticket see:** www.careerexpo.com.au.



Compiled by:m.walker