Hello Everyone,

Welcome back to school everyone!

An extra special welcome to all of our new families! We are sure you will enjoy being part of the Thomastown West Learning Community.

We really have had an impressive start to the year! It was a pleasure to visit the classrooms. All of the students were settled and engaged in their learning.

The Assistant Principal Mrs Wright and I have seen lots of happy faces and heard lots of wonderful feedback from students!

Our Prep students made a fabulous start on their education journey at TWPS this Monday! Our Prep Buddies have been spending time with the students at play times in the yard. The Preps are delighted with our playground!

Everyone seems to have had a very relaxing holiday and there has been lots of talk and sharing of experiences amongst the children and the staff about their holidays. I feel very confident that we will have another exciting and productive ‘learning’ year at Thomastown West PS.

Welcome Mike Christie!

Thomastown West PS has a new Grade 3/4 teacher, Mike Christie. Mike was appointed just a few days before school started this year. Mike is a graduate teacher and has already begun making excellent relationships with the children. I am confident that room 12 and the entire school will have a great year of learning!
Student Welfare Officer

As you are aware, Tim Brown has moved to another school this year.

Last week, Bianca Bagnara (left) was appointed as the new Student Welfare Officer at TWPS. Although Bianca’s official start date is not until 17th January, you might have seen her volunteering at our Breakfast Club this week. Thank you Bianca, it was very generous of you to lend a hand!

Parent Information Sessions

Similar to last year, we will be running parent multiple parent information sessions during the day. Please save the date: Tuesday 21st February. A note will be sent home giving you more details about the sessions.

TWPS School Council

Our next School Council meeting is Tuesday 21st February at 6:30pm. This meeting is very important as Graham Stevenson, a Department of Education Senior Education Improvement Leader (SEIL) will be attending the meeting to begin the official process of appointing a substantive Principal for Thomastown West Primary School. Could all School Council members please ensure they attend earlier Parent Information sessions so that they can attend the School Council meeting at 6:30 pm.

Principals exercise a significant influence on the effectiveness of their school and the achievement of their students. Of all the factors that impact on student learning, research suggests that leadership is second only to the influence of classroom instruction. Selecting the right candidates to leadership positions has a significant impact on school performance. An effective principal selection process ensures that potential applicants are encouraged to apply for vacant positions and increases the likelihood that the most appropriate candidates are appointed to these senior leadership positions.

STUDENT LEADERS

It gives me great pleasure to introduce to you our SCHOOL CAPTAIN: Josh and SCHOOL VICE CAPTAIN: Carli. Both Josh and Carli have already demonstrated they are great role models for the younger students and have been consistently living by our school values.

Later this term will be having our official badge presentation ceremony.

BECOMING COMFORTABLE in our new classes

I’ve had many conversations with students and while they absolutely love their new class, some are missing their 2016 class and friends. The information below comes from KidsMatter.edu.au and gives us some information to support our students to become more resilient.

Everybody’s life has ups and downs

Adults sometimes look back on their childhood as a time when they were always happy, but life’s ups and downs are a part of childhood too. Children need to build resilience skills to be able to both enjoy good times and deal with hard times. Helping children learn how to manage life’s ups and downs and build their coping skills supports their mental health and wellbeing now and into the future. Feeling good protects mental health and wellbeing.

Did you know that experiencing positive emotions such as joy, pleasure and having fun are essential experiences for building and maintaining a healthy mind across our whole lives?

Skills and qualities that help children cope with life’s ups and downs

- Trust - that the world is safe and that there are caring people to help them.
- Belief - in their ability to do things for themselves and achieve their goals.
- Feeling good - about themselves and feeling valued for who they are by their parents and carers.
- Optimism - that things generally turn out well.
- Regulation - Ability to manage their feelings, thoughts and behaviours.

Children develop these skills and qualities and learn to keep a balance over time, initially through their experiences in coping with small stresses with help from supportive adults. When bigger stresses come along, even though at first they might feel quite
distressed, children can draw on what they have learned about helping themselves to cope and feel better. Looking to others for support continues to be an effective way of coping.

**How are your child’s resilience skills developing?**

Resilience is the ability to cope with life’s ups and downs. Children’s resilience is enhanced when they:

- are loved by someone unconditionally
- have an older person outside the home they can talk to about problems and feelings
- are praised for doing things on their own and striving to achieve
- can count on their family being there when needed
- know someone they want to be like
- believe things will turn out all right
- have a sense of a power greater than themselves
- are willing to try new things
- feel that what they do makes a difference in how things turn out
- like themselves
- can focus on a task and stay with it
- have a sense of humour
- make goals and plans, both short and longer term.

**NEWSLETTERS**

Our weekly newsletter is available on our school website each Friday for you to access: [http://www.thomwestps.vic.edu.au/page/98/Weekly-Newsletter](http://www.thomwestps.vic.edu.au/page/98/Weekly-Newsletter) It is filled with important information for parents. It also highlights the children’s learning and activities during the week. We hope that we will soon be able to publish our newsletters on COMPASS!

**COMPASS**

Thomastown West uses COMPASS as an online content management system which also allows you to access up-to-date and meaningful information about our school and your child’s learning. You can also use COMPASS to easily provide an explanation of your child’s absence.

**GREAT NEWS! We have sent home the COMPASS Parent Portal log in details.**

**Education Matters, Teachers Make a Difference & Every Day Counts!**

Sandi Young
Acting Principal
Hi Everyone! It has been great catching up with students and parents this week and to see their smiling faces. I look forward to another year of caring, sharing and encouraging.

Playgroup

Sadly playgroup will NOT be running on Thursdays and Fridays this year. I will not be leading playgroup this year.

BUT Whittlesea Community Connections will be running a MULTICULTURAL PLAYGROUP ON TUESDAY MORNINGS-9.30-11.30 AM. This playgroup will begin on Tuesday, February 21st. You and your child can enrol on the day at the HUB. Playgroup is FREE. (see attached flyer)

School Values

This term staff will be encouraging students to be responsible – to take ownership of their actions, organisation and learning.

Responsibility begins at an early age when we encourage our children to take responsibility for their toys, for keeping their bedroom tidy, helping around the home, caring for a pet or a sibling, getting themselves ready for school.

I can remember when my daughter began year 7 at secondary school, and needed to catch a bus to school. I began the year reminding her she needed to be ready on time in the mornings to catch the bus. She told me that it would be her own fault if she missed the bus, so I never mentioned it again. She took responsibility for herself and NEVER missed the bus!

I look forward to working with you and your children in 2017. Please contact the school office if you wish to meet with me.

Robyn Mulholland

Student Wellbeing

Dear Prep Parents.

An information session has been organised for you. Come and meet Cat Sewell (play therapist). A fun session for parents about how to make the most of play and its importance in your child’s development.

Cat Sewell works with TWPS as part of an Education Department project called LINKING LEARNING. She has a lot of experience and expertise. Don’t miss this great opportunity

WHEN: Thursday February 16th
WHERE: Meet in the office
TIME: 12.00-1.00pm
Dear Prep Parents.

Helen Chatzopoulos is our school’s speech pathologist. Come along and find out more about her role in the school and some simple ideas of how you can further help your child with their language development.

Another opportunity not to be missed.

**WHEN:** Wednesday February 22nd  
**WHERE:** Meet in the office  
**TIME:** 12.00-1.00pm