Hi everyone,

Summer is here. Finally! Can you believe we only have twelve more days of school left and twenty three more sleeps until Christmas!

2017 Grade 6 Leaders

The grade 5 students have submitted their ‘expression of interest’ leadership position letters and sixteen grade 5 students gave their election speech to all of the grade 4 and 5 students this morning. The speeches were of the highest quality! I had ‘goose bumps’ because I was so impressed and proud. Congratulations to all of the students who presented their speech this morning.

After the speeches, all of the children in grade 4 and 5 voted anonymously on a ballot paper. This data has been collated and the teachers have also voted. Once we had all of the information we notified the children this afternoon that have been shortlisted for an interview with Mrs Wright and myself on Monday. We hope to make a decision of who our grade 6 2017 leaders are before Wednesday.

The leadership positions are:
- School Captain (1 student)
- Vice Captain (1 student)
- House Captains (2 students per House)

Student Reports

Mrs Wright, Mrs Cooke, Mrs Honeysett and I have had the pleasure of reading the student’s reports during the last week. I’m sure you will all appreciate the work that has gone into these. It is wonderful to get such a detailed view of how well our children are learning and getting a sense of them as life-long learners. Reports will be sent home 15th December. Please take the time to read these with your child, celebrate their achievements and talk with them about their future learning goals.

2017 Grade Structure & Staffing Profile

Children will be finding out who their 2017 teacher is on the 16th of December.

The classes have not yet been finalised. In the next two weeks children will be participating in transition activities. The children and staff will be talking about what to expect next year and students will get to know each other better. Teachers will also be observing the children interacting with one another and how they work in a team.

Next year, the Specialist programs will remain the same as 2016. Children will have the opportunity of participating in one hour a week in each of the following: Art, Music, PE and Science (Grade 3-6) or Library (Prep-Grade 2).
Below is the staffing profile for next year but this may change! Our enrolment numbers are continually changing and with additional enrolments we hope to make another grade to reduce class sizes further. For this reason, the staffing profile below may change. I will keep you informed via the newsletter.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>14 classes</th>
<th>Names</th>
<th>2017 Room</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Prep</td>
<td>Jess Bufalino</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prep</td>
<td>Sue Hrovat</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grade 1</td>
<td>Silvana Skender</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grade 1</td>
<td>Val Orsillo and Alicia Bartholomew</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grade 2</td>
<td>Gina Arena and Kathy Davies</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grade 2</td>
<td>Portia Milan</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3/4</td>
<td>Heather Baniowski</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3/4</td>
<td>Rafah Malaeb</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3/4</td>
<td>Penny Koullinos</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5/6</td>
<td>Lenora Denise</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5/6</td>
<td>Mark Benatmane</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5/6</td>
<td>Sally Nejoski and Tiz Rocca</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5/6</td>
<td>Connie Gaeta and Violeta Colakovski</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5/6</td>
<td>Fil Raif</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

School Fees & Book Packs

As I wrote last week, the school fees notice will be sent home with the school reports. I urge you to finalise your payment at your earliest convenience. This will ensure the school year will commence calmly for your children. Stationery orders are being finalised at the moment for 2017. It is for this reason that we request payment so we can place the whole school order to ensure all materials are available at the commencement of the school year.

Thomastown West Primary School makes every effort to keep the cost and number of items that need to be purchased to a minimum. We also try to ensure that the costs are affordable for all parents. The office will be opened from Friday the 27th, Monday the 30th and Tuesday the 31st of January. Payments could be made then. A school Book Pack will only be received by the students upon payment or an arrangement made for a payment plan. Payment plans are available and can be organised through myself.

How to improve your child’s handwriting

Muscle strength of the hands and fingers increases as children grow and participate in everyday activities. Activities such as climbing, playing with toys or scribbling with crayons all help to develop and strengthen the muscles of the hands and fingers.

Hand and finger strength is important as it is required for many everyday activities such as doing up buttons and zips, climbing monkey bars or cutting up a piece of steak at mealtimes. It also helps to develop the endurance to complete activities such as writing at school. Grip strength refers to whole hand strength. Pinch strength involves the thumb and index finger (and the middle finger if required).

To improve grip strength children could:

- Play with playdough, biscuit dough or exercise putty – knead, squeeze, roll, cut out using cutters, squeeze playdough through a garlic crusher.
- Make a bird’s nest by pinching the playdough between the thumb and fingers, then make eggs for the nest by rolling the playdough into balls.
- Pop beads, ‘Duplo,’ ‘Lego’ or construction sets can be pulled apart and pushed together.
- Squeeze soft balls (or squeeze toys) – squeeze 10 times or as many times as you can in one minute to make it fun. Progress to using firmer rubber balls as strength increases.
- Newspaper scrunch – scrunch up sheets of newspaper into balls. Once a few balls have been made throw them into a bin or at a target.
- Tong relay – pick up small toys or objects with a pair of tongs and run and place them in a container. Time your child and see if he can do it quicker next time.
- Hammering activities.
- Hold and use a stapler for art and craft projects such as making paper chains or a book. Use thicker paper or cardboard to increase the strength demands.
- Take lids on and off jars that are filled with fun objects such as stickers, stars, small plastic animals or bugs.

I have included some more ideas on page four.
“A person who has never made a mistake… never tried anything new.”  
Albert Einstein

“A friend is someone who understands your past, believes in your future, and accepts you just the way you are.”  
Unknown

**LOST PROPERTY**

Below is a photo for families to see how important it is to label your children’s clothing! This is what our LOST PROPERTY looks like! I would like to encourage you all to support your children to take more responsibility of their belongings whilst at school. Thank you 😊

**2017 TERM DATES**

**Term 1:** Monday 30th January - Friday 31st March.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Days</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Week 1</td>
<td>Monday 30th January and Tuesday 31st January</td>
<td>Teachers commence (Student free days)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week 1</td>
<td>Wednesday 1st February</td>
<td>Grades 1 – 6 Students commence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week 2</td>
<td>Monday 6th February</td>
<td>Prep students commence on at 8.45am and finish at 12.15pm this week</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week 3 and 4</td>
<td>Monday 13th February - Friday 24th February</td>
<td>Prep students finish at 1.15pm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week 5</td>
<td>Monday 27th February</td>
<td>Prep students now attend full time 8.45am – 3.15pm</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Term 2:** Tuesday 18 April – Friday 30 June
**Term 3:** Monday 17 July – Friday 22 September
**Term 4:** Monday 9 October – Friday 22 December

**2017 Parent/Teacher Sessions**

- Term 1: Tuesday 21st February 2017  **Parent Information Session**
- Term 2: Tuesday 27th June  2017  **Parent/Teacher Interviews**

**Curriculum Day dates for 2017 (Ratified by School Council):**

- Monday 30th January and Tuesday 31st January  (Term 1)
- Monday 24th April  2017  (Term 2)
- Friday 3rd November 2017  (Term 4)
### How to build finger muscle strength and improve fine motor skills:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Image</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Threading the ‘snake’ through the material.</td>
<td><img src="https://via.placeholder.com/150" alt="image" /></td>
<td>Use chop sticks, tweezers or tongs to fish out objects.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Make patterns with rubber bands.</td>
<td><img src="https://via.placeholder.com/150" alt="image" /></td>
<td>Tracing with finger in salt or sugar.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Patterns with bands.</td>
<td><img src="https://via.placeholder.com/150" alt="image" /></td>
<td>Tying shoe laces on a tissue box.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unlock the padlocks.</td>
<td><img src="https://via.placeholder.com/150" alt="image" /></td>
<td>Using tongs to pick up a variety of different shapes and sizes.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Threading bottle tops or pasta onto string or wool.</td>
<td><img src="https://via.placeholder.com/150" alt="image" /></td>
<td>Colours or letters can also be used. Names could also be created.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Children squeeze it to pick up objects.</td>
<td><img src="https://via.placeholder.com/150" alt="image" /></td>
<td>Use a spoon to place marbles into an empty bottle.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Using tongs to pick up a variety of different shapes and sizes.</td>
<td><img src="https://via.placeholder.com/150" alt="image" /></td>
<td>Cloths, letters and names could be used.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strengthen little hands and aims by using a potato smash...</td>
<td><img src="https://via.placeholder.com/150" alt="image" /></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Use chop sticks, tweezers or tongs to fish out objects.</td>
<td><img src="https://via.placeholder.com/150" alt="image" /></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tracing with finger in salt or sugar.</td>
<td><img src="https://via.placeholder.com/150" alt="image" /></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tying shoe laces on a tissue box.</td>
<td><img src="https://via.placeholder.com/150" alt="image" /></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
CHILDREN ARRIVING AT SCHOOL
BEFORE 8:30am
We have noticed that a number of children are arriving at school before 8:30am. Unless attending Breakfast Club children cannot be outside school until there is teacher supervision which is 8:30am. This is due to safety reasons. Thank you for your cooperation.

Cup of Life
This week’s winner of Cup of Life is Room 17! Well done to Room 17 students who have done a great job of coming to school every day during 2017!

Next week I will be announcing the Term 4 winner of Cup of Life.

Remember every day counts…

Breakfast Club (Café 4999)
Breakfast is the most important meal of the day. Come in any and every day to enjoy some great summer selections including cereals, toast, yogurt, scrambled eggs, pancakes, milo, and juice just to name some!

Please note that Café 4999 (Breakfast Club) will close for the year on Friday December 18th.

Activities during the holidays
With the holidays fast approaching its important to consider what are your kids going to do during this time? If left to their own devices they will most likely end up watching HUGE amounts of TV and spent HUGE amounts of time on technology such as computer, PlayStation, Xbox, iPod etc.

There are lots of things kids can do over the school holidays that will be both enjoyable, relaxing and increase their health and wellbeing. Simple things like going to the park, catching up with family, attending Thomastown Recreation and Aquatic Centre (TRAC). Other activities can be spending time with family and friends, Going to the library and reading some great books visiting a museum and/or exhibition of their interest. Teach your kids how to cook. Actually plan some family time where EVERYONE is there and complete games and activities together. Visit a Zoo or nature park or go to the city or visit the beach. You don’t need to spend lots of money in order to have lots of fun.
The following are some local suggestions of things to do…

GYM Sports Epping - is an artistic Gymnastics and Gym sports program for kids. There are great holidays programs to explore. For more info visit www.gymacademy.com.au.

YMCA - The YMCA provide holiday programs for kids. For more info visit www.victoria.ymca.org.au

For more ideas visit www.kidspot.com.au/thingstodo/vic-melbourne/school-holidays

On Behalf of the wellbeing team we wish you and your family a safe and happy holiday. Looking forward to seeing you again in 2017.

Take Care,
Tim Brown

Hi Everyone,

Wow, what an amazing afternoon the students in grades 3 – 6 and their teachers had on Wednesday! We had the privilege listening to Burundian born refugee, Fablice, tell the inspirational story of his life journey of resilience (bouncing back) against a number of extremely difficult life events, through storytelling and his rap music. We also met his mentor, rocker Paulie Stewart. This year Fablice won a Victorian Young Achievers Award for his wonderful work in the community.

The students clapped and danced along to his rapping. Their teachers displayed some inspirational dance moves!!

Fablice and Paulie would like to thank Thomastown West PS for their invitation to our school. They were touched by the effort staff and students made by dressing as rappers and participating so enthusiastically.

It's not how many times you fall down that's important; But how many times you get up that counts!! - Fablice Manirakiza

TOUGH LOVE

If you are a parent of even just one child you understand that parenting is the toughest job anyone could have. Of course there are also many joys that accompany bringing little ones into the world, with all the cute little things they say and do. As children grow in age and size the tough responsibilities of parenting become even clearer.

We love our children, doing our best to provide for their need of food, clothing, shelter, personal attention, guidance, direction, appropriate discipline when needed, a good education, recreation and more. Sometimes this may require ‘tough’ love, especially when we need to say ‘no’ or need to insist our children do something they don’t want to do.

Please read educational psychologist, Michael Grose’s article on Tough Love below.

Playgroup – FREE TO EVERYONE – Thursdays, 10 am & Fridays at 9 am in the HUB at the school

If I can help you and your family in any way, please contact the office. My days at school are usually Tuesday, Wednesday & Friday.

Robyn Mulholland, Student Well-being Team
Kids shine with tough love parenting

...research suggests that if parents want kids to develop the characteristics to succeed, then they should default to authoritative or tough love parenting.

Children with parents that use a tough love parenting approach are best prepared to do well in life, according to a recent British study.

Kids that experience a mix of discipline and warmth are more likely to develop important character traits, such as self-regulation, empathy and application by the age of five than parents that use permissive, authoritarian or disengaged styles.

The Millennium Cohort Study involving 9,000 UK households, found that while family structure and parent income levels impacted on children’s development, it was parenting style that had the greatest influence on outcomes for kids.

An analysis of school results is revealing. One quarter of kids with authoritative parents were in the top 20 per cent at school. Next came permissive parenting with 18 per cent, 15 for authoritarian and 11 per cent of this top cohort going to kids of disengaged parents.

Parenting style is not necessarily fixed. It changes over time according to children’s needs, our well-being and their ages. Common sense suggests parents need to be stricter with some children than with others and there will be times when parents need to adopt a more permissive approach.

Certainly, parental mood and well-being contributes to how parents respond to kids. But most parents will default to one style. Recent research suggests that if parents want kids to develop the characteristics to succeed, then they should default to authoritative or tough love parenting.

Here are 10 tough love parenting strategies to use in your family:

1. Set limits and boundaries that expand as kids get older and become more capable. Boundaries make kids feel secure and teach them how to behave well.

2. Use a negotiable style with children according to their age and stage of development. Parents also need to realise that not everything is up for negotiation. There are times when the word ‘no’ needs to be heard as parents act in the best interest of their kids.

3. Use consequences and other tools to teach kids to behave well and develop a sense of personal responsibility. Resist the temptation to let kids off the hook when they do the wrong thing. Firm, but fair, is the key here.

4. Put family rituals, such as shared mealtimes, in place to make sure you interact regularly with your kids.

5. Praise kids for improvement, effort and contribution rather than their ability at school, in sport and other areas of their lives. Focus your positive comments on their participation rather than the results of what they do so kids learn that trying and persistence are important.

6. Recognise cooperative behaviours with positive attention such as praise, physical touch and rewards and minimise negative behaviours through a range of measures such as ignoring and using consequences.

7. Teach kids the skills needed for independence from an early age so they learn to look after themselves. Avoid regularly doing things for kids that they can do for themselves.

8. Adopt an open communication style in your family where kids learn that there’s nothing so bad that they can’t talk about it.

9. Encourage a sense of empathy in children by recognising their emotions and giving them permission and assistance to talk about their feelings.

10. Encourage generosity and kindness in your kids. They do this by sharing toys and other items, helping others and doing chores that benefit their family. This sense of community that authoritative parenting promotes is the real strength of the style.

At a time when a parent’s voice can be drowned out by the din of modern life, this research is a great reminder that it’s effective parenting not media, celebrities or peers that have the greatest impact on future outcomes for kids.

Published by Michael Grose
Presentations.
All rights reserved. For more ideas, support and advice for all your parenting challenges visit:
www.parentingideas.com.au

PO Box 167 Balnarring VIC 3926  P: 03 5983 1798  F: 03 5983 1722  E: office@parentingideas.com.au

Great news for students….

According to all sources, the multipurpose room is the place to go
'Cause on Wednesdays for the first time this year Icy Poles will be available from the multipurpose room on Wednesdays but not for free!

**Lunchtimes and cost is $1 each.**

---

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>7/12</td>
<td>Grade 3 Melbourne Zoo camp</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12/12</td>
<td>Book Award Presentation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9/12</td>
<td>Parent Helper Morning Tea</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14/12</td>
<td>Grade 6 Graduation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15/12</td>
<td>Grade 6 Graduation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20/12</td>
<td>Last Day Term 4 Finish @1:15</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>