**PRINCIPAL’S REPORT**

**PFA Welcome Picnic**

A reminder to families about the PFA Welcome Picnic that will take place on Friday March 14th from 6:00-8:00 pm. The PFA would love to see as many families as possible join in for a pleasant evening in the school courtyard, especially new families to the school. There will be live music provided by a band comprising some past Essex Heights students, a jumping castle for the children as well as a sausage sizzle for those who would like the night off from cooking.

Look forward to seeing you there!

**Birthday Books**

Last year I wrote in Contact about a different idea for celebrating birthdays that I thought was terrific. Traditionally children bring some cakes or treats to share with their classmates on their birthday. However, last year a Yr 1 boy bought a lovely picture story book to donate to the class. It had been inscribed in the front cover and at the end of the year will be donated to our Library collection.

I was really pleased to visit a Yr 6 class recently to deliver a Birthday Card and another boy had embraced the idea. This was his gift (pictured) to Essex Heights in celebration of his birthday.

I like this idea as it celebrated the birthday, the importance of reading and left a lasting legacy that will remain in the school. It also avoided the ongoing concerns we have at school about food allergies and sugar based treats.

Just an idea for your consideration?

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**CALENDAR DATES**

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<th>TERM 1</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
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<td>28th February</td>
<td>Last day to lodge Education Maintenance Applications</td>
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<td>3rd March</td>
<td>Parent Teacher Discussions</td>
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<td>4th March</td>
<td>Parent Teacher Discussions</td>
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<td>5th March</td>
<td>Religious Education classes begin</td>
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<td>5th March</td>
<td>PFA Annual General Meeting – 7.30 p.m.</td>
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<td>6th &amp; 7th March</td>
<td>School Photos</td>
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<td>10th March</td>
<td>Labour Day Public Holiday – children do not attend school</td>
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<td>11th – 14th March</td>
<td>Year 6 Camp – Forest Lodge</td>
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<td>14th March</td>
<td>PFA Welcome Event – 6.00 p.m. – 8.00 p.m. outside Library</td>
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<td>19th March</td>
<td>Ride to School Day</td>
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<td>20th March</td>
<td>School Council Meeting – 7.30 p.m. staffroom</td>
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<td>26th March</td>
<td>PFA Meeting – Staffroom – 7.30 p.m.</td>
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<td>4th April</td>
<td>Last day of Term 1 – 2.30 p.m. finish</td>
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<td>22nd April</td>
<td>Term 2 commences</td>
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**Parent/Teacher Discussions**

Online bookings are now open for these Parent/Teacher Discussions which have been scheduled for Monday, March 3rd and Tuesday, March 4th. This is a great opportunity for parents to meet their child’s class teacher to discuss matters of mutual interest, to ensure that the year is a most successful experience for all involved. Please contact the Office if you need assistance to book a timeslot.

Please also remember to return the Student Questionnaire that was circulated last week as this also provides useful information to class teachers as the year gets underway.

**Importance of Reading to Children**

Last year I saved a Sunday Age article by John Elder that was very interesting. I have included it here for you as I believe it makes some very pertinent points about the importance of reading to children that would be endorsed by all teachers.

*Melbourne researchers have proven what parents have intuitively known all along – the more often you read to your children from an early age, the greater the positive effect on their reading and thinking skills.*

*The Melbourne Institute of Applied Economic and Social Research has not only proven a causal effect between the frequency of reading to a child and his or her development, but have also for the first time measured the benefits.*

*Children four to five years old who are read to three to five times a week have the same reading ability as children six months older (who are read to only twice or less a week).*

*Reading to children six to seven days a week puts them almost a year ahead of those who are not being read to.*

*It was also found that reading to small children has a positive effect on the development of numeracy skills.*

*“It does appear to be the case that children who are read to more often keep doing better as they age than other children,” said Professor Guyonne Kalb, director of the institute’s Labour Economics and Social Policy Program, and co-author of the study.*

*The research – which was funded by the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development – found the positive outcomes occurred in children regardless of parental income, education level or cultural background. That is, children with poor backgrounds or parents of limited education or ability have the same benefit of being read to frequently.*

*“We wanted to try and determine whether reading itself is leading to better outcomes, or do parents who read to their children have other things going on,” Professor Kalb said.*

*“We worked with children representing a whole range of families, from all different backgrounds and economic circumstances. We found it doesn’t matter if a child is from a poor or rich family, or if the parents are highly educated or not, doing this basic thing of reading to them leads to better developmental outcomes.”*

*The longitudinal study followed the reading skills of more than 4000 children, aged four to five years in 2004, through to age 10 to 11.*

*Victorian Minister for Children and Early Childhood Development Wendy Lovell said the research was “an exciting step forward” in understanding the importance of reading to young children.*

*“These findings send a clear message to parents, grandparents, teachers and carers that the benefits of reading go way beyond a shared bonding experience.”*

*Copyright © 2013 Fairfax Media*

See you around the school,

Andrew Crossett
Principal
School Photos

Fotomakers will be coming to our school, on Thursday the 6th March and Friday the 7th March, to take class and individual photos.

By now, each child should have received a named envelope with details of the photo selections available to you. After deciding what type of photo you want, the envelope with the appropriate money needs to be returned on or before the photo date.

On the day of the photo shoot, your child will be given a slip of paper with your individual Key Code on it which will enable you to order the special photos, such as a family shot or school group or you may E-mail Fotomakers direct and give them the details. The address for this is given in their brochure.

This is an opportunity to catch a memory for you and your child to look back on in years to come. Even a class photo speaks volumes: friends at school and teachers etc.

PARENTS & FRIENDS ‘NEWS’

Friday 14th March the PFA are organising a welcome event for all the families. There will be a sausage sizzle and drinks for sale or you could bring a picnic, and enjoy a great night with the family.
Past students will be our entertainment in a band called unit two, last year they entertained us and were fantastic so we are very excited to be entertained by them again. If weather permits there will also be a jumping castle, but if its raining we will hold the event in the stadium, more information is attached or you could see more information under notices on the Essex Heights website.

Looking forward to seeing you there.

Enjoy your weekend

Betty Ciorciari

FROM THE HEALTH CENTRE

CHILDREN WITH FOOD ALLERGIES

Essex Heights Primary School has a number of children who suffer from severe life threatening food allergies known as anaphylaxis. Any food can cause anaphylaxis but generally these foods account for 90% of all reactions: Peanuts, Tree Nuts, Shellfish, Fish, Milk, Egg, Sesame, Soy and Wheat. Any food brought into the school can have serious consequences to children at risk. We ask parents, students and staff to be sensitive to the critical needs of these children at school who have severe food allergies. If food is brought in to share for a birthday or special occasion, please provide the teacher with a printed list of ingredients before distributing. Parents of children with food allergies may choose to provide an alternative “treat “ to be kept with the class teacher for these occasions.

We thank you for your co-operation with this.

HEADLICE

Please take the time to read the attached information provided in this week’s newsletter re Headlice. There appears to be quite a few new cases of head lice and I ask that you take the time to look and treat your child accordingly so we can hopefully eliminate these. Strategies such as tying long hair up in pony tails or plaits and regular home checking with the comb and conditioner method described in the information attached are effective in minimising the spread of headlice. If you want any further information or advice, please ring Julie in the Health Centre.
BASC
The April Vacation Care Program will be out on the 17/3/14.

Could you please ensure that you have provided me with your CRN and your children's CRN. These numbers are essential for you to receive your rebate and benefits.

**Active After Care** is back this year every **Wednesday** and **Friday** with Jesse McCarthy and his team from Sports Development Services.

Jesse McCarthy and Sports Development Services are endorsed by The Australian Sports Commission. He has had extensive experience in the field of High Performance Coaching working with local, national and international athletes and teams.

**He is committed to the betterment of children's health and well being.**

Jesse has developed a program that expands and nurtures children's physical skills through problem solving and strategic activities and these skills translate into many other sports.

Jesse's philosophy is to develop children's abilities through fun and engaging activities rather than continual dour and laborious skills sessions associated with so many other fitness coaches and companies. He realises, at the end of a hard day in the classroom **children need to be stimulated in enjoyable activities** as opposed to receiving a lecture in the field of sport skills and philosophies.

If you attend After care on a Wednesday or Friday your children can participate in Jesse's program at **no extra charge**.

Your children will also receive a tasty and healthy afternoon tea.

If you are interested in attending and you are not enrolled please call me on 9807-2615.

Thank you
Paul Davis

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### Canteen Menus

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<th>Date</th>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Staff</th>
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<tr>
<td>FRIDAY</td>
<td>21\textsuperscript{st} February 10.00 a.m.</td>
<td>Anna Ascar, Caroline Thomas, Karen Lam</td>
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<tr>
<td>MONDAY</td>
<td>24\textsuperscript{th} February 11.00 a.m.</td>
<td>Sonia Mattingley, Tara Hickcox</td>
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<td>WEDNESDAY</td>
<td>26\textsuperscript{th} February 10.15 a.m.</td>
<td>Erica Baddeley, Jo O’Mara</td>
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<td>FRIDAY</td>
<td>28\textsuperscript{th} February 10.00 a.m.</td>
<td>Christine Gunawan, Robyn Perkin, Polly Chiu</td>
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Proudly sponsored by

**Pinewood Community Bank® Branch**

65 Centreway, Mount Waverley or phone 9886 6477
There is still time to place your bid for the Silent Auction to win a cricket cap signed by Glen McGrath. To do this just go to pinkstumpsEHPS@gmail.com. All proceeds will go to the McGrath Foundation supporting the placement of Care Nurses in communities across Australia.

LAST DAY FOR LODGING APPLICATIONS IS 28TH FEBRUARY, 2014

Closing Date:
Application forms for EMA can be obtained from the school office and need to be lodged by 28 February 2014. A valid Concession Card will need to be presented and photocopied at the time of lodgement.
Family Welcome Picnic

Essex Heights PS
Friday 14th March 2014
6:00 pm - 8:00 pm

SAUSAGE SIZZLE $2 and Drinks $1 will be available

OR

BYO everything - Food, Drink, Family & Friends.
Outside the Library on the courtyard, or in the Stadium if raining.

Entertainment: unit two

Jumping Castle as well (if weather permits)

Bring balls and games for the kids.

________________________________________________________

FAMILY WELCOME EVENT PFA
For Catering purposes, can you please indicate if you are attending.

YES  NO  MAYBE (please circle)  Number attending: _________
### FEBRUARY 2014

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<td>17&lt;sup&gt;th&lt;/sup&gt; Prep Info Eve 6.30 1 &amp; 2 Info Eve 7.30</td>
<td>18&lt;sup&gt;th&lt;/sup&gt; 2nd Hand Uniforms 3 &amp; 4 Info Eve 6.30 5 &amp; 6 Info Eve 7.30</td>
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<td>5&lt;sup&gt;th&lt;/sup&gt; PFA AGM – 7.30 pm</td>
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Called South Oakleigh College

Open Night

Wednesday, 2nd April 2014 at 7pm

New enrichment programs and scholarships available

Respect • Responsibility • Resilience

Vermont South Special School

Fair

Saturday 29th March 2014

11am - 4pm

Calling Mount Waverley High, Mount Waverley Secondary College ex students & staff

Mount Waverley Secondary College turns 50 in 2014, and we are calling on both alumni, ex-students and staff to help us celebrate. Our celebration is planned for October 11, and we will have reunions, memorabilia displays, a cocktail party and rooms themed for each decade.

Join our Facebook page to receive exciting updates:
https://www.facebook.com/MountWaverleySecondaryCollegeAlumni
PUBLIC SPEAKING and COMMUNICATION SKILLS for PRIMARY SCHOOL STUDENTS

These workshops are aimed at building confidence in students to communicate fluently, effectively and expressively. Students are taught in small groups of up to five and will participate in a variety of speaking activities:

- Public Speaking
- Impromptu Talks
- Prepared Speeches
- Book Reviews
- Creative Drama
- Conversation Skills
- Speech Exercises
- Storytelling

Students will learn and practise vital communication skills including; making eye contact, use of body language, voice projection, listening and speaking skills.

In addition, they have the opportunity to prepare for Public Speaking and Drama examinations conducted by Trinity College London.

For enquiries and reservations, contact:

Barbara John B. Litt. (Hons), F.T.C. Lond. (Speech and Drama), L.T.C. Lond. (TESL)
Voice and Speech Coach, Drama and Speech Examiner, Trinity College London
6 Hazel Street, Camberwell, Vic. 3124
Tel: +613 9889 5654 Mob: +61 403 260 847
e-mail: barbarajohn@voiceaerobics.com web: www.barbarajohn.com.au