

Melton Primary School Newsletter

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Monday 21st May, 2018

WE ARE MELTON PRIMARY SCHOOL

WE ARE ACTIVE LEARNERS

- ✓ We will have a go and try our best.
- ✓ We reflect on our learning and seek to improve.
- ✓ We ask questions to clarify our understanding.
- ✓ We are persistent and determined to succeed.
- ✓ We are punctual and prepared.
- ✓ We take pride in our work.
- ✓ We listen attentively.
- ✓ We are resilient and use a range of strategies to solve problems.

WE RESPECT OTHERS

- ✓ We are polite.
- ✓ We are friendly, honest and caring.
- ✓ We are accepting and inclusive.
- ✓ We have self-control.
- ✓ We listen to others and use words that show respect.
- ✓ We follow rules and accept outcomes for our behaviour.
- ✓ We are grateful.

WE ARE SAFE

- ✓ We make safe choices.
- ✓ We listen and follow instructions.
- ✓ We are cyber safe.
- ✓ We walk within the classroom.
- ✓ We use equipment appropriately.
- ✓ We follow road safety rules.
- ✓ We are sun smart.

WE ARE SUPPORTIVE

- ✓ We are understanding and encourage others to do their best.
- ✓ We give feedback and positive reinforcement.
- ✓ We listen, collaborate and work well in teams.
- ✓ We aim to build positive relationships.
- ✓ We are sympathetic to the needs of others.

From the Principal's desk

Dear Parents/Guardians,

Mother's Day Stall - Thank You

We hope that all of our Mother's, Grandmother's and special ladies in the lives of our students had a wonderful Mother's Day. With excitement, our students purchased a range of gifts from our Mother's Day stall. A special thank you to the following parents and friends who helped to order, set up and supported the stall - Janice, Natalie, Kerryn, Peta, Heather, Deborah, Carly, Renae, Arife, Sheryl-Ann, Donna, Karen and Lauren. We appreciate your support.

Naplan

Congratulations to all of the students in Years 3 & 5 who completed the 2018 Naplan tests. It was wonderful that our students tried their best and completed the tests. The results of the Naplan tests will be available in term 4. We will send them home as soon as we have them. Thank you to all of our teachers and support staff for their organisation and preparation of the Naplan tests.

National Walk Safely to School Day

Last Friday we had encouraged all of our students to walk safely to school as a part of the National Walk Safely to School Day. Some families chose to part walk and part drive whilst others chose to walk all the way. Well done to the families that supported this initiative.

Education Week

Education Week (20th - 26th May) is celebrating the arts. To commemorate this week, we are hosting a free incursion for our students. The Foundation to Grade 2 students will participate in the 'World of Dance' and the Year 3 to 6 students will participate in a Hip Hop session. There is no cost for this incursion and both will take place on Wednesday 23rd May. Teachers will also do some cartoon drawings with students in their classrooms for visual arts.

From the Principal's desk

National Simultaneous Storytime

On 23rd May, our students will participate in the National Simultaneous Storytime. This is an annual campaign that aims to encourage more young Australians to read and enjoy books. This year the book featured will be Hickory Dickory Dash by Tony Wilson and Laura Wood.

Student led conferences

Families will be shortly asked to book in for a student led conference. This will be your opportunity to discuss with your child and their teacher their performance and future learning. These will be held on **Tuesday 26th June 3:30-7:00pm and Wednesday 27th June 3:30pm - 5:30pm**. Please save one of these dates to make yourself available to discuss your child/ren's learning.

SMILES Dental Van

This week we welcome the Smiles Dental Van to Melton Primary School. If you have not returned your child's permission notice, it is not too late! We are accepting them whilst the van is here - the van is scheduled to leave on June 1st so don't be late.

Family STEM Night

We encourage all of our families to come and participate in our **family STEM night THIS Tuesday** from 3:30pm - 5:30pm. A rotation of fun and hands on activities are scheduled with great prizes to be won!

A friendly reminder that Monday 11th June is a public holiday and students are not required at school on this day.

Vanessa Harrison

Principal

Key Dates for Term 2

May



- 21st - 25th Book Fair
- 21st - 1st Smiles Dental Van
- 22nd Family STEM night
- 23rd Education Week Dance Incursions - free event
- 30th Divisional Cross Country - selected students
- 31st Grade 4 Geography Excursion

June

- 1st Grade 6 Interschool Sport Round 3
Swimming Squad excursion to MSAC
Michael Panckridge (Author) incursion Gr 5&6
- 5th Grade 5/6 Soccer - selected students
- 8th Grade 6 Market Manoeuvres incursion

June

- 11th **Queen's Birthday Holiday - No School**
- 15th Grade 6 Lightning Premiership - selected students
- 18th - 20th Performing Arts Incursion during normal class times
- 18th Foundation History Box Incursion
- 25th - 29th Specialist Open Week
- 26th 5/6 Basketball - selected students
Parent teacher interviews 3:30-7:00pm
- 27th Grade 3-6 Athletics Carnival - Day 1
Parent teacher interviews 3:30 - 5:30pm
- 28th Grade 3-6 Athletics Carnival - Day 2
- 29th Last day of term 2 - school finishes at 2:30pm

**Term 3 Commences on
Monday 16th July**



Make Melton Primary stand out as the most exemplary school in Melton

Nominate our outstanding teachers for the National Excellence in Teaching Awards

Recognise our brilliant staff - nominate someone today!

School and centre communities can nominate educators and leaders through the parent association, school board/council, or committee of management. Parents, grandparents, guardians and community organisations can also **nominate independently**.

Note: Teachers may nominate educators or leaders from the school/centre attended by their own children, provided they are not also an employee at the school/centre.

Exclusions: Early childhood educators, centre directors, teachers and principals from the same school or centre are not eligible to nominate each other. This also includes teachers' family members and officials associated with the ASG NEiTA program are not eligible to nominate.

Visit: asg.com.au/neita to find out how



Nominations
close 6th July

Teachers
inspire learning...
nominate your teacher or leader
TODAY

Win a BRAND NEW iPad!!

We have a
BRAND NEW
32gb iPad ready
to give away to a
lucky person.

It is locked away
using a 3 digit
combination lock.
Unlock the iPad
and it's yours.

Buy a 3 digit
combination for
\$2. There is no
limit to how many
you can buy.



Entries can be
purchased at the
office and Mr G will
contact you with
your random
combinations.

Once all
combinations are
sold, you will be
able to try out your
combination!

Your first chance
to do so will be at
our STEM Night.

EDUCATION WEEK 2018

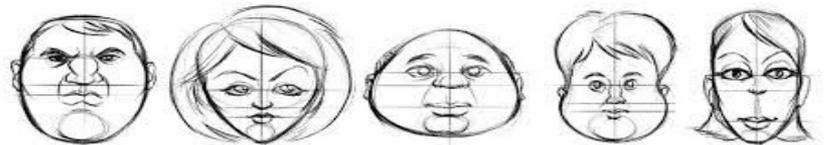
Celebrating the arts

20-26 MAY
#EDWEEKVIC



Education Week 2018 is all about celebrating the arts and is an opportunity for all primary and secondary schools, and early childhood services to showcase the work they are doing for students in arts subjects including dance, drama, music, visual arts and media arts.

Our students are lucky to be exposed to many aspects of the arts. To complement our programs in performing and visual arts, all grades will participate in an enrichment program to enhance their skills in dance and drawing. On Wednesday May 23rd, our students in Foundation to 2 will experience a 'World of Dance', travelling around the globe through dance. Our hip and happening grade 3 to 6 students will participate in a hip hop session. All grades will also showcase the skill of cartooning throughout the day, learning how to develop cartoon characters. All activities throughout the day are being subsidised by the schools arts program.



Student Banking Program!



Congratulations to the following students who received student banking prizes.

Charlotte 3A, Breanna 1C, Justin FE & Blair FA.

If you would like to become a student banker, please see the office.





Reporting an absence.



REPORTING YOUR CHILD'S SCHOOL ABSENCE

At Melton Primary School we understand that children are occasionally absent from school due to illness, medical and dental appointments etc. The Victorian Department of Education (in partnership with MPS) requires that families notify the school on the morning of the absence using one of the following methods;

- ONLINE: log directly into Compass and enter your child's details and the reason for absence.
- TELEPHONE: 9743 5335 and select option 1, and leave a message or talk to the office staff directly. When leaving a telephone message, please state clearly your child's name, grade, the date and reason for absence

Communicating with the school prior to or on the morning of the absence will fulfil your legal responsibility and help us ensure the safety and wellbeing of our students.

For all illness related absences, we require you to provide a Medical certificate on your child's return to school.



WHAT HAPPENS IF MY CHILD'S ABSENCE IS NOT EXPLAINED?

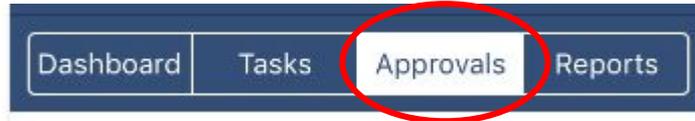
If you do not report an absence, the following will take place;

- The Attendance Officer will attempt to make contact with the parent/guardian seeking an explanation of the absence. This will be via telephone, SMS or email.
- Should communication not be reciprocated, your child's absence will be recorded as 'unexplained'.
- On a regular basis, official 'Student Absence Letters' are sent home, requiring an explanation for the absence dates. This letter is to be returned to the Attendance Officer to update your child's attendance record.
- If MPS does not receive a response of explanations for absence and 5 or more "Unexplained Absences" are recorded, a referral is made to the Health and Wellbeing Support Officer for the South Western Victoria Region, at the Department of Education.



Reporting your child absent on the Compass app

1. Click on HOME
2. Click on YOUR CHILD
3. Click on APPROVALS
4. Click on the + symbol in the bottom right corner.
5. Complete the screen that appears



5.1 Select a reason for your child's absence.

5.2 Add further details

5.3 Add in the start and end dates that your child will be absent.

5.4 Click Add Approval

A screenshot of the 'Add Approval' form in the Compass app. The form has a dark blue header with 'Cancel' and 'Add Approval' buttons. Below the header, there is a 'Reason' field with a dropdown menu currently showing 'None'. Underneath is a 'Details / Comments' section with a large white text area. Further down are 'Start Date' and 'End Date' fields, both showing '10/04/2018' with time ranges. At the bottom, there is a 'Missed' section with a blue link 'Activites missed by this approval' and an information icon. A blue 'Add Approval' button is at the very bottom of the form.A screenshot of the 'Add Approval' reason selection screen. It has a dark blue header with a back arrow and the text 'Add Approval'. Below the header is a list of reasons: 'Illness/Medical', 'Dentist', 'Bereavement', 'Truancy', 'Parent Choice', 'Family Holiday', and 'Religious/Cultural Observance'. Each reason is on a separate line with a light gray background.

ATTENDANCE MATTERS !

Congratulations to Grades

1D, 3A, 5B, 6D

For fantastic attendance.



Congratulations to Grade 4D

For the most improved Grade.

Well done!



A reminder to parents

If your child is going to be absent from school, it is a requirement that you notify the school. Please telephone our **absence line**, 9743 5335 and select option 1 to leave a message, otherwise you can use our Compass app or chat to our friendly office ladies. Please also remember that all absences must be explained for students to be eligible for the wonderful end of month or end of term **prizes**. All children arriving late should be brought into the office by their parents to collect a **late pass** from our new machine. Thank you.

ATTENDANCE STATISTICS 4th May – 17th May 2018

Total unexplained full absence days Thank you to the parents who call to let us know of their child's absence.	Total late arrivals to class
132	582

End of Term 1 Attendance Prize Draw Winners

100% Attendance Draw



90% Attendance Draw



Most Improved Attendance Draw



CONGRATULATIONS TO YOU ALL!



Rewards



50 Dojo points

sticker



YES
YES
YES
WELL
DONE

you did it!



Congratulations



100 Dojo points



LITERACY AT HOME - HOW TO HELP YOUR CHILD.

Foundation - Grade 2

Read the Title, Author's Name, and Illustrator's Name-It's important for children to become familiar with what these three things mean. Explain what author and illustrator mean. It's also great for them to understand that every book is written and illustrated by real people.

Ask Your Child to Make Predictions-Read the title and look at the cover, then ask your child to tell you what they think might happen in the book. Most children will be quite uncomfortable with this in the beginning since they don't know the answer, and they want to please you by saying only correct answers. Encourage them by saying that there is no wrong answer, but rather you just want them to take a guess. Ask them again in the middle of the book to make a prediction about how the story will end, and you could even make your own prediction and sometimes model that it's okay to make an incorrect prediction.

Ask Your Child What Is Happening In the Pictures-It may not seem like pictures are as significant of a learning tool as the words, but when your child examines what is happening in a picture and explains it, it develops their inference skills. Just make sure not to do it with EVERY picture. Once or twice during a book will give them a chance to practice without completely interrupting the flow of the book.

Grade 3 - Grade 4

Visit your local public library, and as early as possible, get your child a library card. Ask the librarian for help in selecting books. Have your child join you in browsing for books and making selections.

Check the book review section of the newspapers and magazines for the recommended new children's books.

Tell your child stories about your parents and grandparents. You might even put these stories in a book and add old family photographs. It helps for children to know that stories come from real people and are about real events. When children listen to stories, they hear the voice of the storyteller. This helps them hear the words when they learn to read aloud or read silently.

Find a fable, fairy tale, or other short story for your child to read. Then **ask your child to illustrate** a part of the story he or she likes best or describe a favorite character. Have the child dictate or write a few sentences that tell about this picture.

Grade 5 - Grade 6

Help your child start a journal. Say what it is and discuss topics that can be written about, such as making a new friend, an interesting school or home activity just completed, or how your child felt on the first day of school. Encourage your child to come up with other ideas.

Newspapers are a form of daily communication with the outside world, and provide lots of learning activities for children:

Clip out an interesting news story and cut the paragraphs apart. Ask your child to read the paragraphs and put them in order.

Ask your child to read a short editorial printed in your local newspaper and to underline all the facts with a green pencil and all the opinions with an orange pencil.

Pictures fascinate children of all ages. Clip pictures in the newspaper. Ask your child to tell you about the picture or list adjectives to describe the picture.

Something important happens when children receive and **write letters**. They realize that the printed word has a purpose. When your child expresses a feeling or a thought that relates to a person, have your child write a letter.

LOOK

at the picture

CHUNK
the word

PREDICT

REREAD

the word

REREAD

the sentence

Read
AHEAD

LOOK at the
word ending.

Look at the
beginning
letters.

STRETCH
out the word.

r e a d i n g
r e a d i n g
r e a d i n g
r e a d i n g

What would
make sense
here?





Thank you to our 'Helping Hands' who supported us with the Mother's Day Stall.



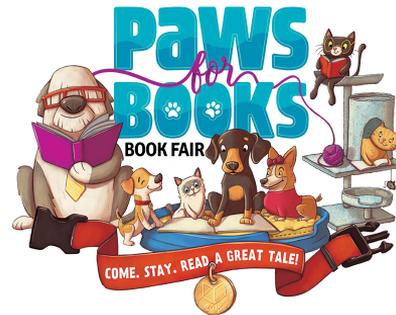
Janice, Natalie, Kerryn, Peta, Heather, Deborah, Carly, Renae, Arife, Sheryl-Ann, Donna, Karen and Lauren

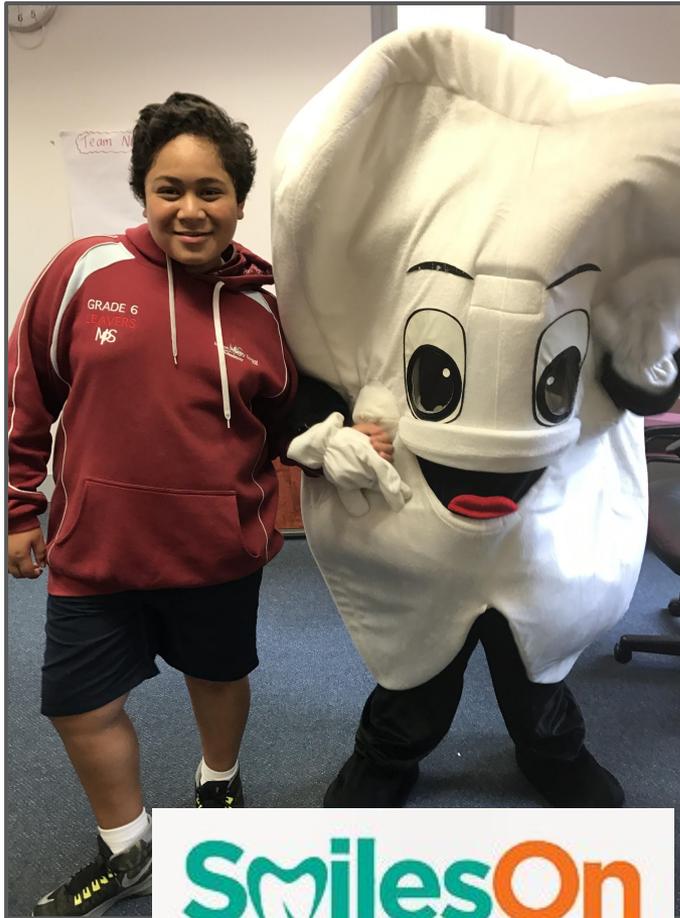


BOOK FAIR



Is on **THIS WEEK - 21st May-3pm till 25th May-3.30pm in the Library.** Once again it will be a huge event with lots of activities to take part in! Come along it will be purrrfect!

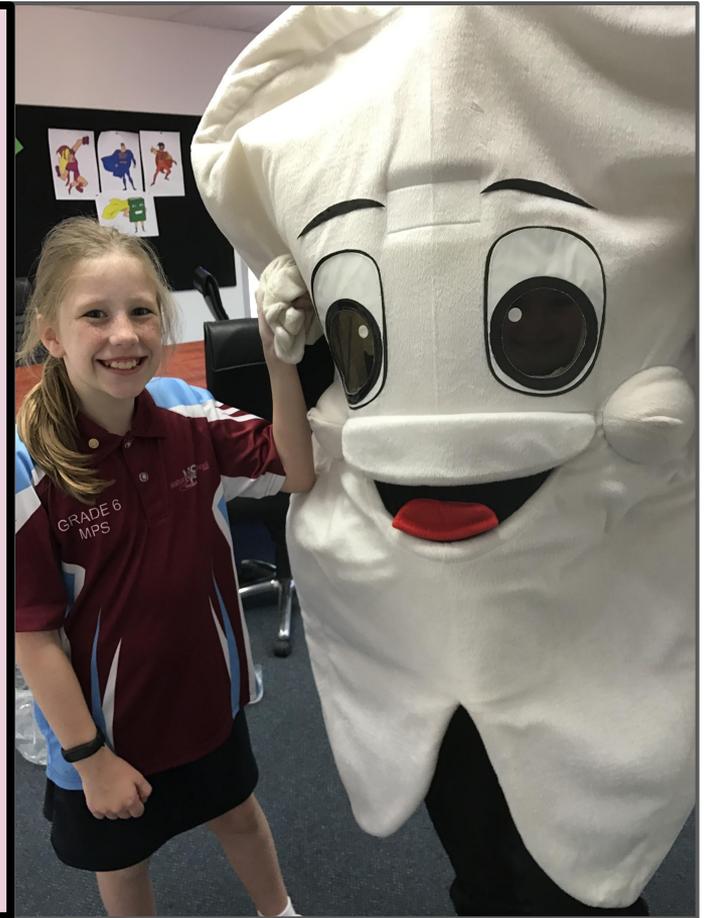




The SMILES Dental Van arrives this week!

It is not too late for your child to participate in a dental van visit. Simply complete the permission form (available from the office) as soon as possible.

The van is scheduled to leave on June 1st.



SmilesOn
Site

Foundation

Foundation classes had a lovely afternoon with our mums and VIPS for Mother's Day!

We painted nails, made bookmarks, gave massages, made bracelets and created flower pictures.



Quick Reminders:

- There will be a walk to the library on Thursday (times will be different for each grade).
- Dancing incursion this Wednesday (times will be different for each grade).
- Please ensure that all students' swimming equipment is labelled.
- Homework Expectations are:
 - Reading 4 times a week for 20 minutes
 - Playing prodigy
 - Spelling/M100W
 - Talk homework

YEAR 2

Our grade's showing off some of their awesome AUSLAN clay sculptures

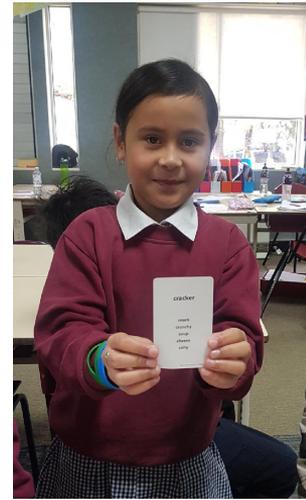


In grade 2 we have been focusing on:

- Making captivating narratives using known stories and using our own key ideas.
- Identifying characters and settings in a variety of stories.
- In maths we have been looking at different aspects of 2D and 3D shape.
- In health we have been celebrating our health work by making a variety of presentations.

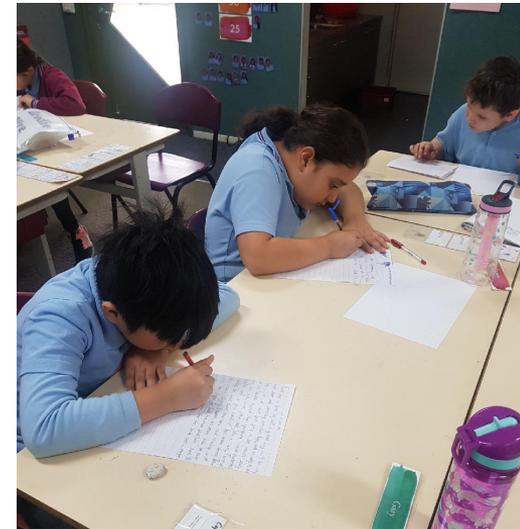
YEAR 4 - BIG WRITES!

This week the students completed their final narrative Big Write. These writing pieces were made even better by the contributions at home during the 'Talk Homework'. Thank you to all the parents, grandparents, brothers, sisters, aunts, uncles...whoever you are, for helping our students prepare for their Big Write! It makes a huge difference.



What does a Big Write week look like?

- 'Talk Homework' goes home Monday, students talk about their ideas to help prepare
- Lessons during the week support their ideas and help with the genre they are writing about
- Before the Big Write students participate in games aimed to support their writing goals
- The Big Write! A set time to plan, write, edit and revise their writing piece.
- Finally, the reflection time. Students read over their work with a buddy and offer feedback. They also set themselves goals for next time.

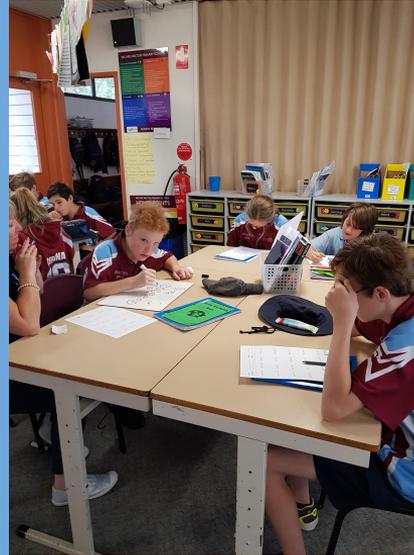


YEAR 6

A FEW REMINDERS

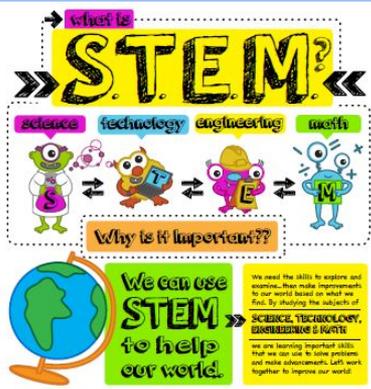
- Final camp payments are due by the 1st of June.
- It's Education week this week so there will be a hip hop dancing incursion this Wednesday
- Homework Expectations are:
 - Reading 4 times a week for 20 minutes
 - Talk homework
 - Literacy task from matrix

Netball Team



Maths Workshop groups in action. The students are working hard on division problems. This week we are focusing on fractions. To support your child's learning, please speak to your child about fractions and how they link to the real world.

Congratulations to all the interschool sports team.



Have you heard the exciting news?
of course you have!
Tomorrow is **Tuesday May 22nd**
and it is a super exciting day on the
Melton Primary School calendar.

Check this out...

Starting at 3:30 pm, students can take part in a range of fun and exciting STEM rotations for 20 minutes each.

3:30 - 3:50 pm, 4:00 - 4:30 pm,

A new challenge will start every half hour.

4:30 - 5:00 pm, 5:00 - 5:30 pm.

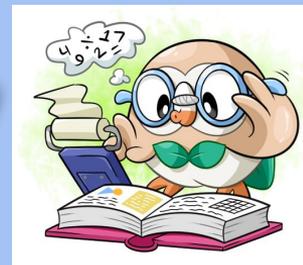
They will receive a special card on arrival, which the teachers will then initial once they have taken part in the rotation.

When the STEM night is over, students can place their card into the barrel at the office and stay tuned during assembly to see if they are one of the lucky prize winners!

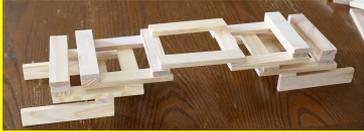
It's our...



And you can win an awesome prize - one of ten Melton Cinema vouchers worth \$50!



Rotation 1 - Planks



Where? Room 1 and 2

Use planks to solve a range of different challenges printed in the classroom.

Rotation 2 - Robotics

Where? In the Grade 3 Building (The BER)

Use Dash and BeeBots to code the robots

to move around the room and avoid the objects on the floor.



DON'T FORGET TO HAVE YOUR CARD INITIALED BY A TEACHER AT THE END OF THE CHALLENGE! AND TO PUT YOUR CARD INTO THE BARREL NEAR THE OFFICE BEFORE YOU GO HOME!

Rotation 3 - Keep the Family Dry Challenge!

Where? In the STEM Room

Design, construct and test a shelter to keep the family dry!



A new challenge
will start every
half hour.
3:30 - 3:50
4:00 - 4:30
4:30 - 5:00
5:00 - 5:30

Rotation 4 - Weather Science

Where? Room 8 and 9

Create a Tornado in a Bottle
and

Cloud in a Jar!



SPECIALIST OPEN WEEK

PERFORMING ARTS WITH MISS TIMPANI

	TUES	WED	THURS	FRI
1		FA		2B
2	1A		1D	2D
3		FC	2A	2C
4	1B	FD		
5		FE		

GET READY TO ROCK! YOU CAN FIND THE PERFORMING ARTS ROOM AT THE BACK OF THE LIBRARY!

POP ON YOUR ARTSMOCK AND HEAD OVER TO THE ART ROOM! YOU CAN FIND THE ART ROOM NEAR THE LIBRARY!

VISUAL ART WITH MS DOBSON

	TUES	WED	THURS
1	3C	6B	3A
2	4B	5B	
3	5A	5D	4C
4	4D	3B	5C
5	6D		

PHYSICAL EDUCATION WITH MR CARTY-COWLING & MR POCERVINA

	TUES	WED	THURS	FRI
1	5C	4C	3B	2A
2	3C	5A	0B/0C	4A
3	2C	6A	2B/2D	1A/1B
4	5B	3A	5D	1C
5	6C	4D		0E/0D

BRING YOUR ACTIVEWEAR! YOU CAN FIND US IN THE GYM OR OUT NEAR THE OVAL!

COME AND LEARN AUSLAN! THESE SESSIONS ARE HELD IN THE CHILDREN'S NORMAL CLASSROOMS!

AUSLAN WITH MS BARTA

	TUES	THURS
1	0B	1A
2	1D	0D
3	2B	0A
4	1C	1B
5	0E	

Do you need support to pay for school camps or excursions?



Australian Government

Department of Human Services

Centrepay is a free bill paying service. Use Centrepay to arrange regular deductions from your Centrelink payment. You can start, change or stop using it whenever you like.

You can use it for your regular bills and other ongoing expenses – such as rent, electricity and phone.

You'll need to give us permission to pay your bills using part of your payment.

How it works

You tell us:

- who you want to pay
- how much you want to pay them
- which Centrelink payment you want the money to come from

We take the money out of your payment:

- before you get it, and
- send it to businesses you want to pay

<https://www.humanservices.gov.au/individuals/services/centrelink/centrepay/you-need-know/about>

F
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R



Help Melton Primary School raise funds this year and book your \$15 family photo today! Include your whole family in the session or just the kids. Book now to secure your place.

Enquiries?
Call 03 8689 0033
Email info@visionportraits.com.au
visionportraits.com.au

\$15

Your photoshoot takes place at Melton Primary School & includes one 10" x 13" photo with frame. \$15 of your booking fee is fundraised for our School.

  @visionportraits



There are limited sessions available so bookings are essential.

Important information:

Our photographers capture fun, wacky and those special family moments. Each session includes photos of different members of the family, children, parents, grandparents and relatives - whoever you request. Immediately after your photo session, you join one of our viewing consultants to view, choose favourites and select your fundraising prize. Members of the community whose organisation are encouraged to also book an appointment, their contribution will be donated to the hosting organisation.

Only 1 booking per family/group. Each person can only appear in one 30' fundraising photo but can appear in all other photos in any session. If you miss your appointment or are late, your booking will be forfeited. Therefore, we recommend you arrive 15 minutes before your session starts. There are no refunds for no shows or late bookings. However, take comfort in knowing that this money will still be donated to the hosting organisation's fundraising efforts.

On the day, we also offer opportunities to purchase additional photos in digital format and order professional prints. If you cannot make the date of this event and would love some photos, then please contact us directly on 03 8689 0033 for further information. Some schools only offer indoor or outdoor photo sessions so please check your online booking schedule.

Bookings Now Open

Melton Primary School
Family/Kids Photo Fundraiser
Saturday 25th of August
Book online now using this link:
<https://meltonps.eventbrite.com.au>



Vision
Portraits

See you in
the Art room

2018 Melton Minis

2:00pm

Melton Mini's was a huge success in 2017 and we are looking forward to running it again this year!

Melton Primary School is inviting Melton Mini's to come and participate in some group activities throughout the year.

These activities will include storytelling, art and craft, puppets, music and more!

WHO IS A MELTON MINI?

A MELTON MINI IS A YOUNGER SIBLING OF AN MPS STUDENT THAT HAS NOT YET STARTED SCHOOL! THAT'S RIGHT, KIDS OF ANY AGE THAT ARE YET TO START SCHOOL!



FRIDAY MAY 25
FRIDAY JUNE 8
FRIDAY JUNE 22



www.facebook.com/cheekymonkeyscraftandplay

Cheeky Monkeys is a program for **kids aged between 2-4 years of age** that involves craft, music and other fun activities to encourage creativity and learning through play.

Sessions are held at 10:30am on Tuesdays during the school term at Q Lounge Melton.

Cost is \$12 per session

For more details, please check out our Facebook page or email us at cheekymonkeys melton@gmail.com





The language of Independence-building.

by Michael Grose

Independence-building is vitally important for parents. It's the pathway to children's competency, confidence and creativity, and the short cut to resilience and real learning.

Families always develop shared language around the values that have strong meaning for them. If resilience is a shared value then there invariably will be a strong set of words and phrases about resilience factors such coping, flexibility and perseverance.

Similarly, the values of independence and self-sufficiency are reflected in a family's proprietary language. In fact, it's through shared language that culture exists. If you are looking to building a culture of independence in your family then creating your proprietary language around independence is a great way to start.

These following twelve examples of independence-building language, and the principles behind them, will help you create your own family's language.

1. “Never regularly do for a child the things a child can do for him or herself” – Goal: Independence

This is perhaps the original parenting-for-independence manifesto, and it’s a philosophy that guides many teachers and parents today. In effect, this sentence means that wherever possible – we give children the skills and competencies to look after themselves physically and emotionally. It requires a great deal of patience, time and courage from parents and teachers as the sentence is easier to say than to put into practice. But it’s a worthy guiding principle that leads to self-sufficiency in children, and ultimately redundancy as parents.

2. “Is this something you can do?” – Goal: Self-help

Independence takes many forms but perhaps the most common is the development of self-help skills. The confidence, pride and, for most, sheer pleasure that kids doing the simple things for themselves such a toddler tying his shoelaces or a child making her own lunch is immeasurable. Yet it is so easily denied by well-meaning parents and adults who see it as their job to do everything for children. Independence begins at home with the development of self-help skills.

3. “Have you checked the help roster today?” – Goal: Contribution

A great way to develop a sense of independence is to give kids opportunities to help out at home. There is no need to overburden children with jobs, but a sensible allocation of chores according to their age and study requirements is not only a great help to you, but fantastic training for them. It also builds accountability and a work ethic, both highly valued characteristics for continuing success at school and later in life.

4. “Which of these two would you prefer?” – Goal: Decision-making

Parents as wise leaders need to call the shots on how the family life is conducted, including health and welfare issues such as appropriate bed and bath times. Some things are not up for negotiation. But there are areas where parents can rightfully hand autonomy to children and say, ‘It’s your call!’ Choice of clothes, how they keep their bedroom, what they eat and who they play with are the types of decisions they can make. Naturally, this is age-related and you do need to have some influence on their choices.

5. “How can you make this happen?” – Goal: Problem-solving

Kids get used to bringing their problems to parents to solve. If you keep solving them, they’ll keep bringing them. A problem-solving approach relies on asking good questions, which can be challenging if you are used to solving your child’s problems. The first question when a child brings you a problem should be: ‘*Can you handle this on your own?*’ Next should be, ‘*What do you want me to do to help you solve the problem?*’ These questions are not meant to deter children from coming to you; rather, to encourage and teach them to start working through their own concerns themselves.

6. “We rely on you to do this.” – Goal: Reliability

Reliability is closely connected to responsibility and other aspects of independence. Every child over the age of five, at the eldest, should do something that someone else relies on whether it’s looking after a pet, clearing the meal table or emptying the garbage on a regular basis. Having others rely on you has its challenges and can be a learning curve. They’ll inevitably forget to put the rubbish bins out on garbage night, meaning your bin will be overflowing for the next week. They’ll need to be reminded about feeding the pet or clearing the table. Kids inevitably won’t get things right, but that doesn’t mean we should stop giving them responsibilities.

7. “What can you learn for next time?” – Goal: Self-sufficiency

Learning from mistakes is part of the independence-building process for children. Often adult impatience or unwillingness to put up with errors prevents us from giving kids the chance to do things for themselves or take real responsibilities. If independence is to be a major part of your family’s culture then it’s imperative that we help kids learn from their mistakes whether social, behavioural or just messing up while helping out at home.

8. “How do you feel about this?” – Goal: Emotional intelligence

An often over-looked aspect of independence is the ability to self-manage your emotional state. Emotional self-management starts with the recognition of how you feel about a particular event or action and then labelling that feeling. If possible prompt to identify their emotions before they act on them. You can also revisit events and ask children about the feelings that may have led to a certain behaviour such as hurting or yelling at a sibling.



9. “When you muck up, you make up.” – Goal: Accountability

Kids of all ages will make mistakes. In fact, mucking up is part of the learning process. But kids will just repeat their mistakes unless they experience the consequences of their decisions. The use of behavioural consequences is a way of teaching children to take greater responsibility for their lives and to learn to make smarter choices.

10. “How will you fix this?” – Goal: Restoring relationships

Independent kids are usually socially-smart kids who don’t operate in a bubble. They know that their behaviour impacts on others they are mindful of the thoughts, feelings and behaviours of others. They also make amends or restore relationships when their behaviour impacts negatively on others. Relationship restoration is a lifelong skill and involves the following: swallowing your pride, making up, giving something back, not holding a grudge and moving on.

11. “You need to do what’s right, not what’s easy.” – Goal: Integrity

A sense of integrity is important for a child’s independence because it’s the basis of reasoned and socially focused self-control and self-management. The job of parents is to move their children from ‘Me’ to ‘We’. Integrity is the great socialising agent for a child. They may get by without courage, endurance and grit but they won’t get far socially without integrity.



12. “Let’s find a way to make this happen.” – Goal: Positive risk-taking

One of the ways to develop independence is to work with them to build their skills and abilities to safely navigate an ever-broadening environment outside of the relative safe confines of their home. Ideas include adults and kids doing things together such as catching public transport until they are ready to go it alone or with friends; and giving kids smaller freedoms that lead to bigger liberties such as allowing a young child to walk part of the way to school on their own and then extending the distance as they get more experience and feel more confident.

Independence-building is vitally important for parents. It's the pathway to children's competency, confidence and creativity, and the short cut to resilience and real learning. We've gradually retreated from this approach over recent generations much to our children's detriment. It's time to help kids reclaim their independence. Getting our language right is a good place to start as family change always begins with shared language.

Michael Grose, founder of Parenting Ideas, is one of Australia's leading parenting educators. He's the author of 10 books for parents including Thriving! and the best-selling Why First Borns Rule the World and Last Borns Want to Change It, and his latest release Spoonfed Generation: How to raise independent children. Michael regularly appears in the media throughout Australia in programs including The Project, The Today Show and ABC radio.

