

Melton Primary School Newsletter

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Monday 6th August, 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,

Curriculum Day

On Friday 10th August students are not required at school as this is a curriculum day. Staff will participate in a Berry Street Professional Development Program on this day. **Students are not required at school on this day**, please ensure that you arrange suitable supervision for your child/ren.

Foundation 2019

Students enrolled in Foundation for 2019 recently participated in their first scheduled transition day. If your child/ren were not enrolled or unable to make it, don't worry it is not too late. Please ensure your enrolment form is lodged at the office and we will contact you in relation to future transition sessions.

100 Days of School

Last week the Foundation students celebrated their first 100 days of school. As a part of their celebrations, they dressed up, enjoyed breakfast together and participated in activities based around the number 100. Our students had an amazing day. Thank you to all of the parents for supporting this event and all of the Foundation staff for your organisation of this special day.

Immigration Museum

Last week the Grade 5 students headed off to the Immigration Museum where they learnt about the journey that many different nationalities had in coming to Australia and making it their home. Thank you to the Grade 5 team for your organisation of this hands on learning experience.

From the Principal's desk

Principal's Day

Last week we celebrated Principal's Day. Mrs Sutherland, Mrs Gilbert and I would like to thank all of the staff, students and parents who helped us celebrate this day. Thank you to all of the staff for their kind words and gifts in recognising this day.

MPSSA District Athletics

On the 15th & 16th of August, a number of our senior students will represent MPS at the District Athletics Carnival. We wish all of these students the best as they give their event their best effort and show great sportsmanship. Good luck everyone! Thank you to Mr Carty Cowling for all of his organisation for these 2 days and to the staff/parent helpers on the day, we appreciate your support.

Parent Opinion Survey - WE WANT OUR PARENTS TO TELL US WHAT THEY THINK!

Our school is conducting a survey to find out what parents think of our school. The Parent Opinion Survey is an annual survey offered by the Department of Education and Training that is conducted amongst a sample of randomly selected parents. It is designed to assist schools in gaining an understanding of parents' perceptions of school climate, student behaviour and student engagement. Our school will use the survey results to help inform and direct future school planning and improvement strategies. **Last Thursday and Friday, our randomly selected parents will have received their invitation to participate from the school email account.**

Approximately 30 percent of parents were invited to participate in this year's survey. All responses to the survey are anonymous. This year the Parent Opinion Survey will be conducted from **Monday 23rd July to Sunday 26th August**. The survey will be conducted **online**, only takes **10-15 minutes** to complete, and can be accessed at any convenient time within the fieldwork period on desktop computers, laptops, tablets or smartphones. The online survey will be available in a range of languages other than English. These include: Arabic, Vietnamese, Mandarin, Chin (hakha), Hindi, Japanese, Greek, Turkish, Somali and Punjabi. The survey results will be reported back to the school at the end of September.

From the Principal's desk

Canberra Camp

Last week our grade 6 students participated in a wonderful camp to Canberra. It was a great experience and opportunity for our students to investigate our nation's capital. A special thank you to our staff who attended this camp. A huge thank you to Belinda Smith who is attending this camp as a parent helper. A survey has been sent to staff, students and parents in relation to the Canberra camp. I ask that everyone involved takes the time to complete the survey so that the results can be utilised to assist School Council in determining if we should do this camp again in 2019.

Book Parade

Put on your thinking hats and start to prepare your child's Book Parade Costume for 2018. The Book Parades are scheduled to take place on Wednesday 22nd August with F-2 at 8:45am and 3-6 at 9:30am. We hope to see every support this event.

Encourage our students to respect our property

Unfortunately, not less than a month after the toilets have been painted, we have had some students scratch words or lines into the paint. The students, staff and parents all requested that we focus on enhancing and making over the toilets. We have listened and actioned this and it is disheartening when people have not respected the changes that have been made. Please take the time to talk to your child about how the school listened, actioned and enhanced the quality of our toilets. Remind them that they need to play their part in keeping them tidy and not scratch into the paint or draw on the walls. Thank you for your support in relation to this matter.

Vanessa Harrison
Principal

Key Dates for Term 3

August

- 7th Grade 4 visit to Melton Council Chambers
- 8th Grade 3 Melbourne Aquarium Excursion
- 9th Foundation Police visit
- 10th **Curriculum Day - students are not required at school**
- 15th District Athletics for selected students
- 15th School Council 6:30pm
- 16th District Athletics for selected students
- 17th Melton Minis 2:00pm - 3:00pm
- 17th Yard Wars 2 2:00pm - 4:00pm
- 17th Grade 1 Disco 5:00pm - 7:30pm
- 22nd F - 2 Book Parade 8:45am
- 22nd 3-6 Book Parade 9:30am
- 23rd Find Your Treasure Afternoon for Book Week
- 25th Family Portraits for families that signed up
- 30th Father's Day Stall
- 31st Melton Minis



September

- 4th 2019 Foundation Orientation Session
- 7th Grade 2 Sleepover
- 10th - 14th Planning Week
- 11th Grade 1 Toys Over Time Incursion
- 12th Divisional Athletics for selected students
- 14th Melton Minis
- 17th CD Recording for the Senior School
- 18th CD Recording for the Senior School
- 19th CD Recording for the Senior School
- 19th School Council 6:30pm
- 20th F-2 Athletics Day
- 21st 2-6 Swimming Carnival
- 21st Last Day Term 3 Students finish at 2:30pm**

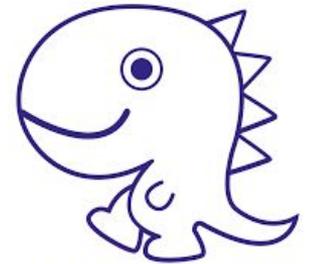


Student Banking Program!



Congratulations to the following students who received student banking prizes this week.
Thomas from Foundation A &
Jovan from Foundation B.

If you would like to become a Melton primary school banker, please see the office.



Well done!

Attendance

Congratulations to all our Term 2 Attendance raffle winners!
WELL DONE



Maddalyn (OE) and Lita-Maria (4A) were lucky GOLD Club winners of baskets of goodies!

GOLD CLUB = 100% attendance
SILVER CLUB = 95% attendance
BRONZE CLUB = 90% attendance



Japadijit (1D) and Zak (4A) were GOLD Club winners of soccer balls and nets!

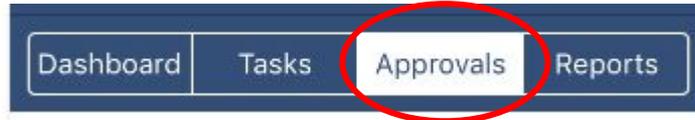
SILVER Club winners were Malachi (OB), Will (2C), Gabriella (OE) and Mikayla (OE).

BRONZE Club winners were Jye (2C), Zac (2B) and Skye (1D).



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. 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 set to '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.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 horizontal separator.

YARD WARS



**THE MELTON PRIMARY SCHOOL
REBEL ALLIANCE WANTS YOU!**

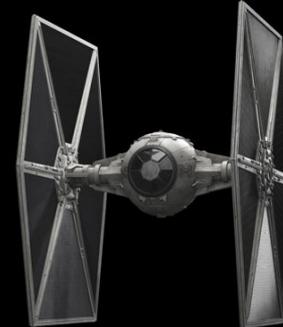


**COME AND JOIN OUR SECOND WORKING
BEE FOR 2018.**



FRIDAY AUGUST 17TH

2PM - 4PM



MAY THE FOURTH BE WITH YOU





Beanies for sale!!



At the end of August, Melton PS will be selling school beanies in the office. They are \$4 each.



If you would like to buy a beanie for those cold winter mornings, please come and see the office.



New paver area!

The new paver/seating area located near the main office is officially complete.

If you didn't get a chance to order a paver, there is no need to worry. Next year there will be another chance to purchase one.

A big thank you to Mitch from No Fuss Landscaping for all your hard work.



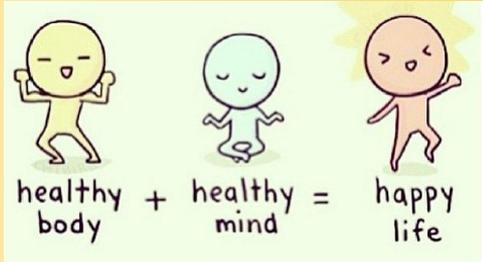
Announcing... Monday 6th to Friday 10th August

Melton PS WELLBEING WEEK!



WHAT DOES

Wellbeing



LOOK LIKE AT MPS?

Stay tuned for fabulous wellbeing activities, where we learn about...

Healthy Body & Mind

- drink water
- eat natural foods
- think positive
- exercise daily
- sleep well

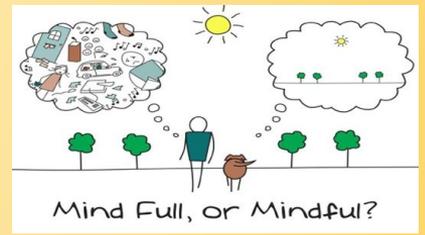
callanajones.com

Better health through a healthy environment

HEALTHY CHILDREN LEARN BETTER

Practice Acts of Kindness Everyday

- Hold the door for a friend
- Say Hello to someone new
- Smile - it makes others feel good
- Don't tease, try a kind word instead
- Share what you have with others



Be Healthy ☀ Be Happy

Foundation

On Wednesday the 1st of August, the Foundation student's celebrated their 100th day of school! It was a very exciting day for the students and foundation team. We are very proud of the foundation students and all they have achieved so far this year. Thank-you to all the parents and families for their support on the day. It was so much fun!



100 DAYS OF SCHOOL!



What has been happening in Grade 2...

Reading - This week we have been exploring the text features of a non-fiction text. Students have used a range of non-fiction texts to identify different features such as contents, page numbers, tables of content, glossaries, chapters, headings and subheadings.

Writing - Students have been working on writing information reports. They have been trying really hard to use various sub-headings and ensure they include a few text features.

Numeracy - Students have been working on telling the time using both analogue and digital clocks.

Inquiry (History) - Students have been learning about the history of significant places and people in Melton. During week 1 and 2 students took part in two excursions.

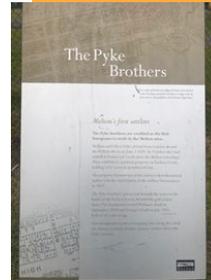
1. The Willows

2. The Melton Historical trail course.

The Willows



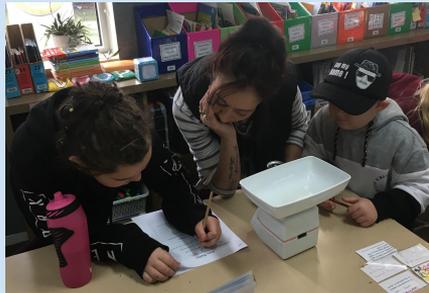
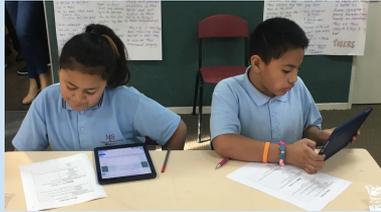
The Melton Historical trail course.



YEAR 4

Last Term

We would like to thank all the parents who came to our Parent Afternoon. It was a hit. Students were engaged in different measurement activities such as capacity, length, time and volume. We rotated around and were able to put our skills and knowledge to the test. With the added bonus of parent help.



This Term

We have many exciting things to look forward to this term. Such as our Council Visit and Book Week.

Here are our focuses for this term:

Reading: We are learning how to analyse, critique and make predictions for texts.

Writing: We are learning the art of persuasive Writing and are exploring new techniques to support our opinion.

Numeracy: We have been working on our multiplication and division by solving worded problems and developing strategies to use.

Inquiry: Our topic this term is Civics and Citizenship. We have been looking into community and the local services our council provides.

Updates

A few updates and reminders:

- **Homework:** Students are expected to continue reading every night with their log book signed. They are to practice their times table facts and their spelling words.
- **Talk homework:** Students will be having talk homework in Week 3 and 5 related to persuasive texts.
- **Fun Friday:** To promote our agreements and the expected behaviour, students who constantly demonstrate this will be able to participate in activities of their choice (e.g. dodgeball, dancing, art etc.) Students who do not follow the agreements at anytime will miss out.

CANBERRA CAMP - YEAR 6

Canberra camp was a wonderful experience. We got to see the old and new Parliament House, the AIS (Australian Institute of Sport), The Royal Mint and lots more. We also got to enjoy the wonders of Questacon. I really liked the magic mirrors where we could see ourselves in different shapes and sizes. The food was delicious and I slept well. The bus trip was long but fun. I hope other students will get a chance to explore Canberra like I did.
– **Ava 6A**

Canberra camp was a fun adventure through the concrete jungle that is, Canberra! On the camp we visited many fun and historical sites like the Australian War Memorial, Old Parliament House, Questacon and many more. We learnt so much about the history of Canberra and the federation of Australia! I really hope everyone can experience this one day! - **William Mc 6B**

The best part about the Canberra camp was the AIS and the Old Parliament House. I liked it because we completed an activity where we had a key card where got to scan circles which gave us information about the place. We also had to wear white gloves. –
Eddie 6D

Camp was so beautiful looking and amazing. It was the best experience I've had all year. I loved everything, apart from waking up at 4.30am! The place I enjoyed the most was the Mint and the titanic Telstra Tower. They keep everything clean, I give it 10/10. It was definitely worth the 10hr drive there. You should definitely go to Canberra! – **Ryan 6C**

I liked the high court of Australia because we got to hear real life stories about real things that have happened in the court like how a lady slipped on a chip outside Big W and she sued them for \$500,000. Big W then took the lady to a higher court and then she lost so the lady took it to the high court and she won. – **Mia B 6D**

The Canberra camp was one of the best experiences of my schooling. We visited nearly every place there was to go, such as the Australian War Memorial, Questacon, The High Court of Australia, Telstra Tower and so much more. I enjoyed camp because I learnt all about how Australia was federated in 1901 and I got to spend time mucking around with my friends. Camp was so much fun and I hope I will be able to go back to Canberra one day to teach my family all about it. - **Brodie 6A**

Canberra camp was an amazing experience for all of us. During camp we visited many places all around Canberra, such as The Royal Australian Mint, where we were introduced to a dancing robot, the AIS and heaps more. The accommodation was great and the food was delicious. I wanted to thank the teachers for all of the hard work they put into this camp trip, and say a big thank you to Belinda (Lucas' mum) for keeping us entertained and happy. I hope many more students will be able to experience Canberra. - **Marlee 6B**

Canberra Tour 2018

Students from our school recently undertook an education tour of the national capital. Students were given the opportunity to participate in a variety of educational programs with a focus on Australia's history, culture, heritage and democracy.

The Australian Government recognises the importance of all young Australians being able to visit the national capital as part of their Civics and Citizenship education. To assist families in meeting the cost of the camp the Australian Government contributed funding of \$30.00 per student under the Parliament and Civics Education Rebate program towards the cost. The rebate is paid directly to the school upon completion of the camp.



What is Auslan and why should we learn it?

There is not one universal sign language

Many countries around the world will have their own unique documented sign language. Sign languages have been known to exist as far back as Egyptian times in 5000BC. As with spoken languages, sign languages developed to meet the needs of a particular group of people.

Australian Sign Language

The Deaf community in Australia uses Australian Sign Language, a community language, known as Auslan. Early convicts and settlers in the Australian colony brought British, Irish and Scottish Sign Language with them. When schools were established, the differences in some signs were evident as a result of the backgrounds of the people who worked in those schools. The differences in signs still exist today. Learners of Auslan sometimes comment on these differences and the difficulties at times to remember a variety of signs for the same thing. Auslan has two dominant dialects: Northern and Southern (Vic). These dialects are very different from each other. They have different signs for things like colours, days of the week, and animals. However, there are no major differences in grammar and the dialects work well together, especially as signs are used with facial expressions and gestures to add meaning. It is beneficial to learn the different signs for different things, e.g. learning both of the signs for the animal, cat. Auslan, like any true language, is a living and constantly growing language with new signs, expressions and gestures constantly being added by the Australian Deaf Community.

Deaf people are visual people

Sign languages are known as visual-gestural languages. This means movements of the hands and body are made in the space in front of a signer and seen by the person they are communicating with. Auslan uses a different structure to English. Signs in an Auslan sentence do not occur in the same place as words in an English sentence. Signs are combined with facial expressions to show the different emotions and meaning.

· English written and spoken sentence: ***I am going to the movies tomorrow at 2pm.*** Auslan signed version: ***Tomorrow 2pm me go movies.***

Why Learn Auslan?

Auslan is an excellent language to learn. You will be able to use the language regularly because there are many deaf people within the community. You can be bilingual in Australia - fluent in both Auslan and English and can use these languages anywhere in Australia. Being fluent in Auslan also increases your job opportunities. Using appropriate facial expressions, gestures and body language is an important part of any communication.



Don't our mosaic letters look great! You will see them up around the school soon.

This week in Auslan we have been learning to sign Happy Birthday and learnt various 'party' signs. We had fun playing pass the parcel.



Check out 1B on class dojo signing Happy Birthday.



Ask your Prep, Grade One or Two student to show you the signs for:

Cake
 Balloon
 Party
 Dancing:
 Birthday:
 Happy:
 Present:



2018 Melton Minis

See you in the Art room at 2:00pm

Melton Mini's was a huge success in 2017 and so 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!



TERM 3

FRIDAY JULY 20TH FRIDAY AUGUST 31ST
FRIDAY AUGUST 3RD FRIDAY SEP 14TH
FRIDAY AUGUST 17TH



Congratulations

50 Dojo points

sticker



100 Dojo points

badge



150 points- balloon

YES





Melton Primary School - Book Week Parade

Wednesday the 22nd of August

Foundation - Grade 2 8.45am - 9.30am

Grade 3 - Grade 6 9.30am - 10.15

Tennis Court

Prizes for best dressed book character.

FIND YOUR TREASURE

***OPEN SCHOOL
AFTERNOON***

Thursday 23rd of August

2.00pm - 3.00pm

Come and join the school community as we search for “treasures” around the school.

How many book characters and their treasure can you find? Use the map to find them all.

BOOK WEEK WRITING COMPETITION

What do you imagine when you hear the word 'treasure'?

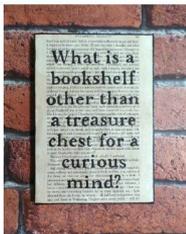


A pirates chest filled and overflowing with riches

A person or a memory you treasure

An experience

Time spent pursuing your favourite activity



A favourite book

**You may treasure animals, the environment,
marine life or a location**



**Perhaps you think you might discover a
treasure**

Write and tell us about what you treasure. Add illustrations or photographs if you choose. You can write in any genre, and present your piece in any way you like. Be creative. A winner will be selected for each year level and minor prizes will be awarded to all entrants. Your writing pieces will be displayed in the library. Selected pieces will feature in Jetsetter magazine with photographs of the authors.

Due: Friday 17th August- Please submit your entry to the Library



Any questions please
contact Mrs Partridge in
the Library.

BOOK CLUB

Book Club orders will
be sent home as
soon as they arrive.

DON'T FORGET!



SCHOLASTIC

Book Club

orders are due:

6th August

SCHOLASTIC

Book Club **LOOP** for Parents

LOOP is the Scholastic Book Club
Linked Online Ordering & Payment platform for parents.

To order and pay for Scholastic Book Club by credit card visit:

www.scholastic.com.au/LOOP



Please
note we
do not
accept any
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for Book
Club.
Payments
should be
made
through
LOOP.

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from little things big things grow

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GEOGRAPHIC

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- SAVE 16% plus FREE
Gift Valued at \$59.95



Redgum will now be our 2nd Book Club supplier. This is to give you more variety and options when ordering. Any questions or feedback please don't hesitate to contact Mrs Partridge in the Library.

FREE FIDGET SPINNER
WITH EVERY ORDER!



redgum
book club

5 EASY WAYS TO ORDER:

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Phone: (02) 8445 2355

Post: Reply Post 30, PO Box 935,
Mona Vale, NSW 1660

Orders Due by 6th August



FREE BASKETBALL COACHING SESSIONS

WOLFPACK BASKETBALL CLUB IS OFFERING FREE BASKETBALL TRAINING SESSIONS AT THE MELTON REC CENTRE FOR ALL BOYS AND GIRLS AGED 5-8 YEARS

TO REGISTER:

Please email the following details to wolpackbasketballclub@outlook.com

- Child's name and Date of Birth.
- Parents name and contact details

TO BE HELD WEDNESDAY 5.00—5.30PM
FOR 4 WEEKS STARTING 22ND AUGUST 2018



Melton

FREE - Father & Kids Night
Thursday 30th August 6-8pm



FREE – Kids D.I.Y. workshops,



including Ryobi helping to build a truck with Dad & the kids

FREE – Photo Booth & Fairy Floss

FREE – Sausage Sizzle cooked by Bacchus Marsh Model Aircraft Association

Bloom – **FREE** hearing test

Melton City Council Pop Up Display – they will be giving away **FREE** Local Coupons

Please Book in at the Service Desk
Or call - 03 9971 0300

Or email – MeltonWHAO@bunnings.com.au

MPS HELPING HANDS NEED YOUR HELP

MPS Fathers Day Stall
Thurs 30th August
Can you lend a hand?



WED
AUG
29TH

Help set up
the Fathers
Day Stall
1:00-3:00pm

THURS
AUG
30TH

Help out at
the stall for as
much time as
you can.
8:30-12:30pm

Performing Arts room

COMMUNITY ROAD SAFETY FORUM



Are you a young adult driver or the parent of a young adult driver? Don't miss this forum and your chance to improve your road safety knowledge

FREE EVENT To register please visit the Melton Learning Website: meltonlearning.com.au/event/community-road-safety-forum/

- ▶ GUEST SPEAKERS
- ▶ FREE SHOWBAGS
- ▶ BROCHURES
- ▶ INFORMATION

Learn more about road rules and the effects of road trauma including serious injury and fatal collisions.

The information provided in this forum will be about the impact of road trauma on our community and may be confronting.

WHEN Thursday 30 August 2018
TIME Welcome & registrations 6.20pm
Start 6.30 – 9.00pm
WHERE Melton Library
(Balam Balam Seminar Room)
31 McKenzie Street, Melton

WIN FREE DRIVING LESSONS!



Community Events and competitions!



Get involved make a difference!

"WRITING IS THE PAINTING OF THE VOICE!"
VOLTAIRE

MELTON CITY LIBRARIES

SHORT *Story* COMPETITION

Stretch your writing muscles and you could share in almost \$2000 worth of prizes in the Melton City Libraries Short Story Competition!

Entries can be submitted in print, illustration, video, verse, voice or in combination, with prizes for first, second and third in Junior, Teenage and Adult sections.

Grab an entry form at your local Melton City Libraries branch or visit our website.



Entries open: Monday 16 July
Close: Friday 31 August



FUNDRAISER



Vision
Portraits



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, happy and those special family moments. Each session includes photos of different members of the family, children, parents, grandparents and relatives - whatever you require, immediately after your photo session, you will see one of our viewing consultants to view, choose favourites and select your fundraising print. Members of the community outside your organisation are encouraged to also book an appointment, their contribution will be directed to the hosting organisation.

Only 1 booking per family/group. Each person can only appear in one (01) 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 five minutes before your session starts. There are no refunds for no shows or late bookings. However, cake corners 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 venue 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

Talking to kids makes them smart. *By Michael Grose.*



The links between school achievement and parents' ability to talk with kids from a young age are now well established.

The language stimulation children receive when they talk with parents is one factor. But engagement in conversation with parents benefits kids in a far broader sense. In many ways it is through conversations that kids get a real sense of us as parents. It is through talking with kids that we impart some of our knowledge, ideas, wisdom and thoughts while also gaining access to a window into their worlds and the way they think.

1. Turn screens off. Are you competing with televisions, computers and electronic games for your kids' attention? If so, take control of the screens to create some conversational space. Start with a screen-free day each week or screen-free hour each day if you have a



2. Turn screens on. If you can't beat them, join them. Some television programs provide great conversational fodder, particularly for older children and teens. Topics can range from "Who's going to win *My Kitchen Rules*?" or "What happens to the winners of *My Kitchen Rules*?" to "What is the point of *My Kitchen Rules*?"

- 3. Have regular mealtimes.** The family that eats together talks together. Meals are great social occasions – more than just refueling stops. They provide terrific opportunities for families to get together and talk. It's no coincidence that families who enjoy and appreciate food generally enjoy close relationships as well. However, for this to work it's important that meals are screen free, so turn off the television and ban phones at the table.
- 4. Move more.** If sitting and chatting is not your child's thing then try to get some action happening. Boys, in particular, tend to talk more when they are playing, walking or involved in activity with an adult.
- 5. Talk with kids on their own turf.** Many children will open up in the privacy of their own bedroom where they tend to feel more relaxed and secure. If you have something important to discuss then choose a comfortable place and a time that promotes good conversation.
- 6. Try shoulder-to-shoulder parenting.** Travelling together in a car with the radio off, washing the dishes together or playing a game can all provide opportunities for talk. Paradoxically, many teenagers will talk more when they don't have to concentrate or make eye contact with the other person. That's why cars can be great conversation catalysts for parents.

Every family has their own way of getting the talk happening. Figure out what works for your family. The best communication in families happens when no one is working at it, but you do need to work on their communication rather than leave it to chance.

