

PRINCIPALS REPORT Week 3 Term 1 2016

I wanted to start by thanking the P and C again for their generosity and dedication to the school. I also wanted to reiterate that it has been a true pleasure to work with you and I have really felt we worked closely together. I loved being part of the team at the BBQ's and Broccoli Tree Cinema. When I came to Yeo Park I saw this as an opportunity.

This school is quite unique. You have all chosen it for a reason. I feel there is an opportunity to be different and to really build on the uniqueness of the place. I feel we need to move away from just being like a K-2 section of a bigger school. At the moment I feel that much of what we are doing could be seen in another school and that there is opportunity to be different and really cater very specifically for K-2. The introduction of investigative learning and utilising the Walker based approach, building strong resilient kids and really looking at ways we can foster exploratory, creative, investigative learning and play and build on how we use the park, is exciting. These are the things we will build this year. I am excited and look forward to a continued great relationship with this wonderful P and C and the prospect of the new P and C after the AGM.

- **Enrolment-** for the year seems to be stabilising. We had two children leave that we were not expecting. Our enrollment this year though remains healthy and up on last year which means we secure the fourth teacher. 18 in KG, 17 in KC, 24 in 1/2W and 21 in 1/2A. There is a student who is awaiting a visa which will take us to 81 and this student will enter year 2 in 1/2A.
- **Thanks –** for the wonderful welcome back BBQ. As usual a festive and fun event. I loved the relaxed, friendly nature of it and wanted to congratulate the P and C for being able to manage something that is quite big scale and make it relaxed and comfortable for all involved. Thank you so much to the wonderful parents who gave up their time to sort out the guided readers and home readers. This has meant that we can see what is damaged, what needs replacing and also streamlined the system for ease for teachers. It is now benchmarked according to PM levels which is how Reading Recovery and how most schools operate.
- **Thanks –** to staff for their amazing efforts in the clear up of the school. Many days and some seriously heavy lifting was involved and it was all managed in fun. Thank you for the enthusiasm in getting ready and having the classrooms looking magnificent.
- **Staffing –** as you know, Kris, Dianne, Kathi and Deborah have taken leave for 2016. Renee Gare, Michael Armiger and Megan Capper will be at Yeo Park for 2017 and Carol Hale will be in the office. It's a great team and we are working really well.
- **Resourcing and clean up –** during the holidays Renee, Michael, Megan, Carol and I met and did a massive clean up. Old and broken furniture, unused items and resources that were gathering dust was cleaned out. We did an initial stocktake and sorted resources meaning that we will not triplicate resources anymore and can ensure we are being fiscally responsible and equitable in terms of resourcing. There is more to do in terms of clearing out. The renovations in the office have streamlined the office area.
- **Sport–** is brilliant! The kids are loving it and the enthusiasm of the trained teachers. I feel it is excellent professional development for the staff but also want to say that in a small school, with lots of pressures, the support for PE which can be a bit busy is greatly appreciated. Thank you to the parents for paying for this.
- **Scripture –** I appreciate all the volunteers giving up their time. We have managed to create room for a kindy ethics class. However, historically Ethics has been the classes which have caused the most disruption in terms of behaviour. I would appreciate parents speaking to their children and letting them know that we expect them to behave respectfully as we would on any occasion.
- **Communication–** The communication methods are notes, newsletter and Skoolbag. Morning lines is problematic as I am finding it hard for the students to hear me. Staff are questioning whether morning lines are valuable as it takes up teaching time and as students cannot hear. Therefore staff will look at problem solving this and working towards other ways of coming in in the morning. At times, as in any busy work place there are miscommunications or the need to revise dates. It is a busy school with lots happening and we appreciate your understanding. However, all date changes are then notified in Skoolbag or in a note. The age old...my child did not receive that note....I can tell you that no teacher singles out one or two students to not receive a note. Train your child to be responsible for their notes. We would like every parent to buy an A4 plastic folder that will be called "Note folder" with the child's name

on it and then this is kept in their schoolbag at all times. Students will place any notes or homework in this folder and this can live in their bag. We cannot put each note in each child's bag however those responsibility skills and ownership of a mistake skills are lifelong learning. For students who are absent, teachers will send home a note on the return of the child unless that note has become redundant (ie the date has passed).

- **Surveys and forums**- thank you to those who attended the session tonight. This will help to shape the direction of the school. Thank you to those who filled in the survey on wellbeing. As reported, this has helped us to understand the need for revision of policy, the need for parent information on Restorative Justice and the need for some training of friendship skills, relationship skills and resilience skills. We have already put in place Bounce Back. We will let you know more about this at the meet the teacher night. Terry is coming...stay tuned. This will be a live changing event! We have a forum planned for parents about reading as well and we are looking at lots of other ways to get your feedback and get parents having a real say on real issues. I so appreciate your feedback and welcome it at any time. I did have a parent approach me about the difficulty of babysitting. I don't mind kids here when we have forums at all as we are a little kids school but if your child is not coping, it may be that you may need to give them a break. Where we can we will offer support in terms of someone to look after kids or other possible solutions.
- **TPL**- staff will hold an extra professional development day on the weekend of March 19/20th to upskill all staff on Bounce Back and investigative learning (Walker approach).
- **Observation of cultures and inclusivity** – This was a parent concern and I appreciate the feedback. I know in my class last year we looked at Hindu Festival of Lights, Chinese New Year, Channukah and Buddhas birthday. We also spent a term looking at our nearest neighbour , Indonesia and the culture, current issues such as palm oil plantations and geography. Teachers are always looking at ways to include learning about other cultures. This year we will hold some special days that celebrate diversity. This is also a big part of bounce back and wellbeing learning.

Upcoming events

- New Director – Christopher Charles will visit on Friday 12th February
- Meet the teacher evening – February 15th
- Scripture starts – February 16th
- Fiona to Principal Induction Conference – Monday February 22nd until February 24th

PLEASE NOTE A CHANGE TO SCHOOL PHOTO DAY TO THE WEDNESDAY SO THAT WE DO NOT HAVE THE PROBLEM OF SPORT – SCHOOL PHOTOS WILL NOW BE WEDNESDAY 16TH MARCH.

SAVE THE DATE – MARCH 24TH 9.30AM EASTER HAT PARADE.

Staff would like the P and C to consider

- With a new financial system coming in, we would prefer the system where (as per last year) P and C were asked to vote on a wish list of items prepared by staff. Once the P and C have voted, we would prefer this sum was deposited in the account for Carol or the SAM to utilise in the voted on sub- dissections. This will simplify this greatly and work more efficiently within LMBR.
- Consider the possibility of phasing out uniforms with the exception of an 'excursion or outings vest or shirt'. A subject to talk about on another day but one to begin considering.
- Rather than the drama tutor as we voted on, putting on a show in term 3. All classes will be taught the dance, drama and performance skills to perform in the show. The money dedicated for the drama teacher could go towards this, drama resources, professional development and could also be redirected to other important areas.