



Dear Parents/Carers,

A Time of Change

Over the next few weeks, the Kindergarten to Prep transition programs will begin. There will also be discussions and activities to assist all children at Melton West Primary School as they transition from one year level to the next. For Melton West Primary School, the dates of prep transition are as follows:

- **Session 1) WEDNESDAY 21st NOVEMBER 2:10 p.m. – 3:00 p.m.**
- **Session 2) WEDNESDAY 28th NOVEMBER 2:10 p.m. – 3:00 p.m.**
- **Session 3) WEDNESDAY 5th DECEMBER 2:10 p.m. – 3:00 p.m.**
- **Session 4) TUESDAY 11th DECEMBER 9:15 a.m. – 10:45 a.m.**

For most children and families, starting school is a very big, exciting step. Do not be afraid to ask for the support that will assist your child to prepare for school, to make the change, and to have a positive start to school. As a parent, you play a vital role in your child's education. There are many things you can do to make your child's first day and time at school more enjoyable.

As your child settles into school, they will be expected to manage a number of tasks independently from early in the prep year. This includes skills such as packing and unpacking their bag, remembering their hat, going to the toilet, fastening their clothing, washing their hands, unwrapping their food and opening lunch boxes and drink bottles. Practice these with your child well before school starts. If your child sees a physio or other therapists, learning these skills might be useful therapeutic goals before they begin at school.

You can help your child prepare for their first year of school by building confidence, strengthening their independence, having a daily routine, packing a healthy lunch, knowing the school and getting involved with the school.

Before your child starts school, you can encourage independence by helping your child to practice daily routines. Daily routines can help children understand what they need to do, when to do it each day and why it is important. To help prepare your child for school, encourage a routine, which includes going to bed early, waking up at a certain time and leaving plenty of time to get ready, having a healthy breakfast needed for energy and concentration, preparing and eating lunch and making time for physical activities.

Before their first day, your child should know how to find their classroom and where to put their things such as their school bag and hat and most important where to meet you each day when school is finished.

We are looking forward to meeting all our new Prep students, parents and carers at the transition sessions.

Kind regards

Jennifer O'Connor

Assistant Principal P-2 Learning Community

VICE CAPTAIN'S REPORT

Last week, we put up fences so the builders could begin building our new playgrounds. This is in preparation for the new buildings, including our brand new gymnasium that we will be getting in the next year. We have chosen new equipment for new playgrounds which includes fun equipment such as a double slide, monkey bars and much more. It will take 2 – 3 weeks for the new playgrounds to be installed and the old playgrounds to be removed. Once this job is completed, then the huge task of moving the portables will take place. In preparation for this some classes will be moving to the GP room and other areas of the school as the portables will be transferred to the existing 3 – 6 playground. The art portable is being completely demolished and we will eventually have a brand new art room. In the years to come, our younger students will be the beneficiaries of all this work.

Have a great week!

Jackson and Samantha – Vice captains



ADDITIONAL GRADE 6/7 TRANSITION DAYS

All students who have received a note, please be aware of the following dates and times for the additional transition

days at the respective secondary schools:

Melton Secondary College	Day 1 – Monday 26 th November: 9:00am-3:00pm Day 2 – Tuesday 4 th December: 9:00am-3:00pm
Kurunjang Secondary College	Day 1 – Tuesday 4 th December: 9:15am-11:00am Day 2 – Tuesday 18 th December: 9:15am-11:00am
Staughton College	Day 1 – Tuesday 27 th November: 9:15am-10:00am Day 2 – Tuesday 4 th December: 9:15am-10:00am

Getting it right in English!

Helping your child at home with vocabulary building

Parents are the first language models for children. The language children use is modelled, or based on, what they hear from their parents. It is important to create an environment that enriches what a child hears. The words your child hears are the words they will use with encouragement.

As much as possible, encourage family discussions. Set a time each evening to turn off the TV and have a chat. One of the best places is the dinner table as it is one of the few times everyone is together. Set up some ground rules such as 'No eat and run', and 'Everyone will have something to talk about' during and after dinner. This is an opportunity for 'hear and tell' time. Model appropriate turn taking and asking clarifying questions during discussions. Things to talk about include what is going on in the neighbourhood, current news events, what happened at school, events that are coming up, family plans, and family decisions.

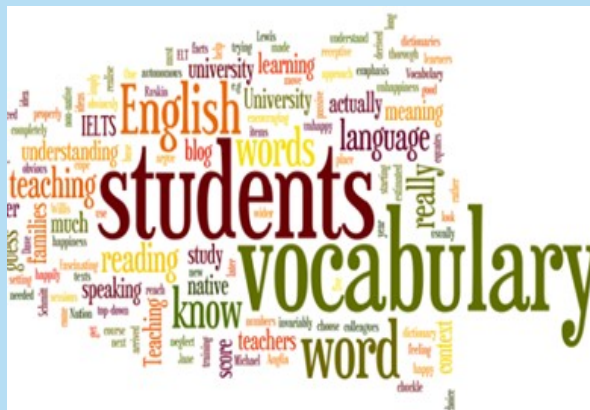


If you have the technology available, make a recording of words. Say the word, define the word and then use it in a sentence. Select words that your children will find interesting. Encourage regular use of the recorded words.

'Word of the Week' could be a fun, family game-like activity you could play. Each person selects a word taking turns each week. For example, the first week it might be mum who writes a word on a card and puts it on the refrigerator door. Everyone must use that word as much as possible that week. The next week its dad's turn, then the children's turn and so on. As the words are used, post them on a cabinet door to stimulate continued usage.

When out on family outings, or during family activities such as cooking, use the vocabulary related to those activities as much as possible. Explain and/or show what they mean. For example, when following a recipe use, explain and model words such as dice, shred.

There are some fantastic children's magazines that you can subscribe to. A good example of this is National Geographic Kids or National Geographic Young Explorer. There are children's magazines that cover practically every interest area of children: cars, sports, computers, the out-of-doors, animals. The information from the articles makes an ideal subject for family discussions.



Sarah Marshall- Leading Teacher Literacy

Spotlight on fractions

Fractions are a maths topic that is very relevant to everyday life. We use our knowledge of fractions to solve problems and make decisions all the time. Support your child by using mathematical language to talk about fractions.

Here are some maths language terms that your child will be using at school:

- Fraction – any part of a whole, a group or a number.
- Numerator – showing the number of parts of the whole.
- Denominator – the number of parts the whole is divided into.
- Proper fraction – numerator is less than the denominator.
- Improper fraction – numerator is greater than or equal to the denominator.
- Equivalent fraction – fractions that have the same value or amount.
- Mixed numbers – a whole number and a fraction.

As children learn about fractions, they gain new mathematical skills:

Children begin by learning that there are many numbers between whole numbers. A number line is an effective model to start with.

Exploring maths with your child Year 3 – Year 6

In the beginning, children are able to recognise and make models of familiar fractions, for example $\frac{1}{2}$ (half) or $\frac{1}{4}$ (quarter). Everyday examples include sharing an apple or cutting a piece of toast.

When children begin to add, subtract and multiply fractions they use models to help.

- Decimals – a numeral system based on 10, for example, 0.75 or .75
- Ratio – compares the value of two amounts, for example, $3:4 = 3:4$
- Percentage – is a number out of 100, for example, $3:4 = 75\%$

Talk positively about how you use fractions in everyday life. Making models of fractions for your child will support their understanding of fractions.

Try some of these ideas making use of everyday objects:

Can you cut up the apple to make six equal pieces?

What fraction of the glass is filled with water?

How do the hands on the clock face show the time quarter past?

Can you show me halves and quarters as you cut the orange?

If you fold a towel three times equally, what fraction does it show?

insights



Why developing empathy in your child matters

by Michael Grose

Parenting is a socialisation process during which parents develop in their children and teenagers the skills and attitudes that will enable them to fit into the different groups they encounter. These groups will exist inside the classroom, in friendship groups, during sports and leisure activities and elsewhere.

This socialisation process needs to begin from a young age.

Initially, most kids believe that their world and everyone in it revolves around them. “I want” is their mantra. Patient, firm parents will continually remind children that they need to think of others. “It’s your brother’s turn.” “Nana doesn’t feel comfortable listening to that language.” “Think about how your behaviour affects others.” These are the types of appeal to a less self-centred approach that many parents make.

The socialisation process operates on two levels. On one level its focus is on teaching and helping kids to follow social rules or conventions that exist to help them get along with each other. At a deeper level successful socialisation develops empathy in a child or young person.

Empathy – the ability to understand how another person is feeling or how they respond to a behaviour or an event – is the basis of all respectful relationships. Without empathy it’s impossible for someone to enjoy a relationship based on respect and equality. It’s easy for a person who doesn’t practise empathy to reject, bully, intimidate or hurt someone else.

Empathy learned in childhood carries on to adult life

Empathetic adults enjoy better personal relationships and experience less stress. They also make better leaders who are more likely to get the best out of people than self-centred, result-focused leaders.

Anecdotal evidence suggests that empathy, if neglected in childhood, can be difficult to develop in adulthood. In some adults it takes a traumatic event or a ‘road-to-Damascus’ moment for them to adopt an empathetic perspective.

So, rather than wait until adulthood, let’s focus on developing empathy in your children and adolescents. There is a good chance they will benefit very soon in terms of enjoying better friendships, improved wellbeing and more success at school. Here are five ideas to get you started:

parenting*ideas

1. Model empathetic behaviour. Be kind even though the person in front of you in that queue is slow.
2. Read fiction stories to kids or encourage them to read fiction. People who read fiction score highest on tests that ask them to infer other people's thoughts and emotions.
3. Praise kind and compassionate behaviours. The behaviours that parents focus on, even with teenagers, are those that tend to expand, so bring their empathetic behaviours to the fore.
4. Validate your child's feelings. When a child shares difficult stories or emotions let them know you understand, without offering solutions or advice.
5. Invite your child to walk in someone else's shoes. Occasionally ask your child a question like, "What would it be like to be feel tall like Tanya?"

Empathy is too important to wait until adulthood so make it a priority to develop a sense of 'other' in your child from an early age.



Michael Grose

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*.

It is the mission of Melton West PS to work collaboratively to ensure high levels of learning for all.