

*Partners in Learning Newsletter*  
*Moving forward With the Passion to Succeed*

**Assistant Principal**

Dear Parents,

This evening is our first Parent-teacher interview for the 2018 year. The teachers are really looking forward to meeting you and finding out about your child. This first interview is an opportunity for you to tell the teacher all about your child. The main focus for this interview is to help the teacher understand more about you child.

Parent-teacher interviews give you a great opportunity to:

- learn more about your child's academic, emotional and social development
- meet and get to know your child's teachers
- help your child's teachers understand more about your child
- make plans with the teacher about how you can both support your child
- build a relationship with your child's school.

If you don't have any particular concerns, you might wonder whether it's worth going to parent-teacher interviews. But going along is **one way to show your child that you're interested in his or her learning** and what's happening for him or her at school.

Of course, if you do have concerns, it's a chance for you to raise them with your child's teacher if you haven't done that already.

If you don't get through everything you want to discuss, you might need to arrange another meeting with the teacher.

Also remember, if you have any concerns about your child's social or academic development you don't have to wait for a formal parent-teacher interview to talk about them. Just contact the school and set up a time for a meeting.

Jennifer O'Connor

Assistant Principal Prep – 2 Learning Community

**IMPORTANT DATES**

**5/6 Canberra Camp:**

Deposit due by  
Monday 26th  
February 4pm.

**A Word from Our School Vice Captains**



Welcome back to School! We hope you had a great weekend.

Last week we met our 2018 ESmart leaders. We would like to congratulate those who got the position.

This year our main focus at Melton West PS is RESPECT and we hope you'll respect our school community.



The 5/6's are going to attend Canberra Camp and Somers Camp to learn about teamwork!

Sincerely,

Samantha And Jackson.

## Getting it right in English!

Reading is big focus at Melton West Primary School this year. Teachers are working hard at modelling and instilling a love of reading in students. Each classroom in our school, including specialist rooms, contain classroom libraries that are co-designed by students. Teachers have spent a lot of time working with students to understand how to organise their library, care for the library but most importantly, select books that are engaging and interesting. Our classroom libraries are the focal points of our rooms.

### Why not set up a mini-library at home?

#### 50 books every child should read before the age of 16- The Age

The Age has recently released a list of high quality books that they encourage children under the age of 16 to read. Many of these can be found at your local library or book store. For more books, Google the above heading.



*Sarah Marshall- Leading Teacher Literacy*

## Children can learn Mathematics through cooking.

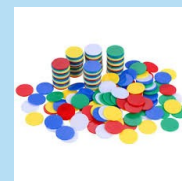
Cooking provides wonderful opportunities to help your child learn mathematical vocabulary. How better to learn phrases like 'more than' or 'less than' than by weighing out ingredients. Let your child feel a 1kg bag of sugar to feel how heavy it is. He or she could also feel other packages to help to develop estimation skills.

Your child will gain experience in counting and recognising numbers. If decorations are to be added to cakes, let your child add a specific number and counting opportunities can arise while setting the table. Through the use of different cutters, children can learn the names of various 2D shapes. You can discuss how many corners or sides these shapes have so that children will learn the properties of many shapes. Your child can learn about timing too.

Below is a list of important mathematical vocabulary which your child needs to be able to understand and can learn through cooking experiences.

### Counting

enough, not enough, nearly, just over, count, how many ...?



### Comparing

same as, bigger, smaller, biggest, smallest, less, least, fewer, first, second, third.... tenth, last, most, the same number as



### Addition and Subtraction

one more, how many are left over/left, how many more to make...?, how many more than...is?, how many have gone?

### Measuring

measure, enough, not enough, too much, too little, too many, too few, nearly, close to, about the same as, just under, just over, thick, thin, long, short, longest, shortest, weigh, weighs, heavy, light, heavier, lighter, weight, scales, full, half full, empty, holds



### Exploring Pattern and Shapes

shape, flat, curved, straight, round, corner, nearly, sides, edge, circle, square, triangle, rectangle, star

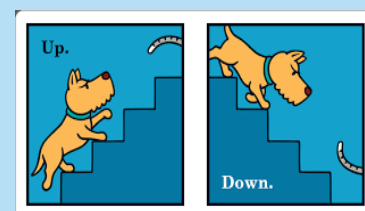
### Position

on top of, top, bottom, side, forwards, backwards, over, under, in front, behind, next to, between, roll, turn, stretch

### Instructions

carry on, start from, put, place, what comes next?, arrange.

Jennifer O'Connor





# insights

## Helping children who struggle with learning

by Michael Grose



*Parenting is easy when you have a child who is talented and finds learning relatively easy. You can marvel at their performance and feel some measure of parental pride.*

On the other hand it's frustrating and, at times, heartbreaking to watch your child struggle to attain even mediocre levels of success at school, in sport or in leisure activities. It's even more difficult if your child repeats a year of learning.

When your child has difficulty at school, your approach as a parent makes huge difference to their self-esteem, the relationship with their teachers and their attitude to learning.

Here are some ideas to keep in mind if you are parenting a child for whom success at school, or in other high-status areas such as sport, just doesn't come naturally.

### 1. Avoid using other children as benchmarks

Benchmarking your child's progress against that of other children is not a wise parenting strategy. Inevitably it will lead to frustration as there will always be a child who performs better than your own on any scale you use.

Each child has his or her own developmental clock which is nearly impossible to alter. There are slow bloomers, early developers, bright sparks and steady-as-you-go kids in every classroom. It's the first group that can cause the most concern for parents who habitually compare the slow bloomer to siblings, friends' kids and even themselves when they were in school.

The trick is to focus on your child's improvement and effort and use their results as a benchmark of progress and development. *"Your spelling is better today than it was a little while ago"* is a better measure of progress than *"Your spelling is the best in the class!"*

### 2. Focus on your child's talents

Be mindful that many successful people including Bill Gates, Richard Branson and Facebook founder Mark Zuckerberg struggled at school. Traditional learning wasn't for them. However they each had supportive adults in their lives who helped them find their interests and fostered their talents. Help your child see beyond any limits they put on themselves (*"I'm hopeless at school"*) to see the many other talents and strengths they have.

### 3. Develop a growth mindset

Recent research shows that people who believe they can increase their intelligence through effort and challenge actually do get smarter and do better in school, work and life over time. It's exciting to know that your child's talent and smarts aren't fixed. Their brain can always learn more, continue to grow and be stretched. Communicate a growth mindset to your kids by focusing your praise more on their level of effort rather than on their natural abilities or talents. Praise the strategies they use and look for opportunities to stretch their capabilities.



#### **4. Be your child's cheerleader**

Kids who have to work really hard to achieve need someone in their lives who is able to boost their self-confidence, particularly when they are struggling. Make a fuss over small successes so your child can puff up their chest every now and then. Many adults find it easy to encourage the kids who do well but balk at encouraging kids who struggle or find learning difficult. But it's these children who really need encouragement. As much as humanly possible, comment favourably about your child's effort, contribution and improvement in all areas of life. You can do it!

#### **5. Increase their time in activities where they experience success**

As a young teacher I remember when a father banned his son from playing football as his school results were poor. I was incensed. This boy found school learning very difficult and football was one area where he was able to shine. I suggested to the father that his son should spend more time, not less, playing football, as this was the activity where he experienced the most success. Children who struggle at school benefit from spending more time in environments where they feel confident and capable, as those feelings can eventually transfer over to other areas – including the classroom.

#### **6. Be mindful that persistence pays off**

Children who have to work hard and persist learn an important life lesson: that success in most endeavours takes effort. Those kids who sail through their childhoods without raising a sweat can struggle when eventually they do have to work long and hard to succeed.

Raising kids who find life a breeze is easy. However, parenting kids who take longer to mature, or kids that must put in a 110% effort to achieve, is challenging for any parent. Parenting a child who struggles, or has to repeat a year level, requires you to develop a growth mindset, focus on kids' strengths, be liberal with encouragement and have realistic but positive expectations for success.



#### **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.*