



MWPS

Partners in learning

## Assistant Principal Message

### Coming To School Every Day To Learn Together

Hello Everyone,

A very BIG thank-you to all our lovely parents/carers who make a real effort every day to make sure their children are at school EVERY DAY, on time ready to learn. We understand that from time to time children become unwell and are unable to attend school however it is really important that children are encouraged and supported to come to school every day so that they have the best possible chance to maximize their learning opportunities.

We know from research on School Attendance that coming to school every day is important for all young people to succeed in education and to ensure that they maximize life opportunities because being at school provides young people with education and support networks. School gives all children an opportunity to practice important social and interpersonal skills and supports young people to develop important skills, knowledge and values which set them up for further learning and participation in the wider community.

We have put an extremely high focus on Attendance with all our children and our teachers are tracking their individual class attendance rates and making phone calls to parents/carers to check in and find out why a child may be absent from class on a particular day and ways and offering support for the child and family if required. The attendance rate is important because students are more likely to succeed in academics when they attend school consistently. It's difficult for the teacher and the class to build their skills and progress if a large number of students are frequently absent. In addition to falling behind in academics, students who are not in school on a regular basis are more likely to get into trouble with the law and cause problems in their communities.

We are committed to learning and growing together and turning up to school is critical for us all to be able to learn and grow together. Some of the ways in which we have consciously endeavoured to have every child at school every day has included:

Making our school a place where parents and students feel welcome.

Forging strong relationships with our parents and carers through our open communication and various school events.

Calling our parents/carers when their children are not in school to let them know the school is concerned.

Teachers taking the time to talk to students about why they were gone and letting them know they were missed.

We will continue to monitor every child's attendance rate at our school and implement our Attendance Policy (Please see the attached Attendance Policy to this Newsletter). If you are having trouble in getting your child to school please make an appointment at the office and ask to speak with one of the Assistant Principals Jenny O'Connor (P-2) or Kathy Cvitkovic (3-6).

*'Carry out a random act of kindness,  
with no expectation of reward,  
safe in the knowledge that one day  
someone might do the same for you.'* Princess Diana

Warmest Regards,  
Kathy Cvitkovic – Assistant Principal



### Please note:

- P-2 Showcase will now be on the 7<sup>th</sup> September not the 14<sup>th</sup> September due to Grade 1/2 Swimming.
- Book Week Parade for Grade Preps only will be on Monday 28<sup>th</sup> August @ 9:00am.

### Message from our School Vice-Captains

Dear Parents/ Guardians,  
On August 17<sup>th</sup> & 18<sup>th</sup> selected Grade 3-6 students will be attending Athletics, also selected Grade 4/5 students will be attending Girls Footy Day on the 31<sup>st</sup> of August. The Grade 3-4 students will be attending the Hollywood Side Excursion on the 29<sup>th</sup> & 30<sup>th</sup> of August.



School Vice-Captains  
Alith Panthum & Jessica Hodge

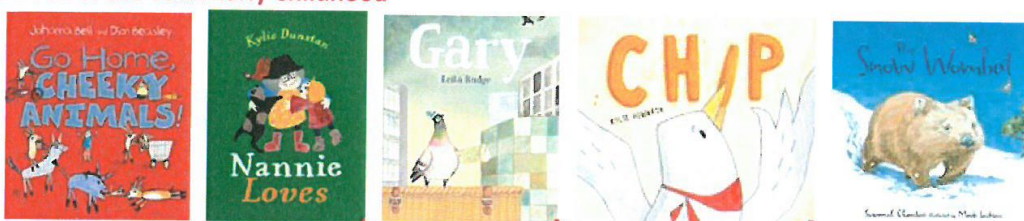
## Getting it right in Reading!

### Quality Literature for Children

"To learn about literacy, young children must have opportunities to see lots of print and must have easy access to books. Children also need to observe their parents, other adults, or older siblings using literacy in everyday situations. Selecting the right book is the first step toward a successful story" (Christie, J. F., Vukelich, C., & Enz, B. (2007).

With our annual Book Week (21<sup>st</sup>-25<sup>th</sup> August) almost around the corner, the Children's Book Council of Australia has recently presented the short list for the book of the year. Below is a list of some of these books. These books are engaging, high quality children's literature that your children will love and won't want to put down. Head to our school library or your local library and check them out!

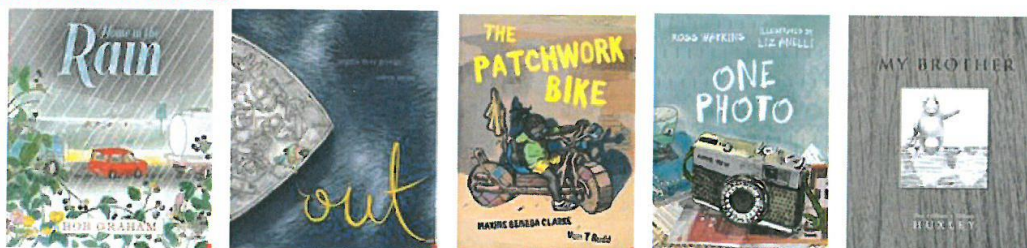
#### The Book of the Year: Early Childhood



#### The Book of the Year: Younger Readers



#### Picture Book of the Year



Further examples of quality literature you might like to read at home can be found on the Children's Book Council of Australia's website: <https://cbca.org.au/>

Head to the **Book of the Year** tab along the top of the page and select from Book of the Year, Shortlisted and Notables.

*Sarah Marshall- Leading Teacher Literacy*

## Marvellous Maths



"Back-to-Front" Maths is a problem-based mathematics resource that teaches students how to work out new mathematical principles for themselves rather than relying on memorising algorithms and formulae. Teaching students how to think and reason like true mathematicians enables students to really understand mathematics, and transforms mathematics into experimentation and investigation.

Back-to-Front Maths uses problem-based teaching, which is a way of saying "if you work it out yourself, then you will understand it better". The idea is to ask kids a series of questions that get them to work out how maths works for themselves, instead of just telling them how to do it. This creates those "aha" moments that increase learning.

Three things to try and remember are:

1. Ask questions and have children think and consider options rather than telling them what to do all the time.
2. Try to get them to evaluate their idea and think it through to see if it makes logical sense rather than just telling them that they are wrong.
3. Memorisation is still really important, but if your child is having trouble understanding a concept then memorisation is not likely to help. They need to know WHY rather than just doing more of the same.

An example of a Back-to-Front problem (level 2):

At the mini sports day the students were having sack races. There were 12 sacks in total. How many students missed out on a sack in each of the following groups?

Group 1 had 20 students. How many missed out?

Group 2 had 18 students. How many missed out?

Group 3 had 23 students. How many missed out?

Group 4 had 11 students. How many missed out?

Students need to show their working out and give an explanation of how they solved the problem as there are various strategies they could use and gives the teacher information about misconceptions or gaps in knowledge.

# Parenting *ideas* INSIGHTS



*Building parent-school partnerships*

WORDS Michael Grose

## It's not okay to be away ... nor to be late to school

When kids miss school, not only is their academic progress impeded, forcing them to catch up on missed work (which some never do), they often miss important interactions with their peers which can compound issues of social isolation and low self-esteem.

One of the most important things you can do to ensure your child has a bright future is to make sure he or she goes to school every day—and gets there on time.

It sounds simple, but it's true. The correlation between school attendance and children's achievement levels is well-established. The more time kids spend at school, the more likely they are to experience school success.

Conversely, according to a report from the Victorian Auditor General, students who are regularly absent from school are at the greatest risk of dropping out of school early, and of experiencing long-term unemployment.

When kids miss school, not only is their academic progress impeded, forcing them to catch up on missed work (which some never do), they often miss important interactions with their peers which can compound issues of social isolation and low self-esteem. Also, many teachers tell me, it's often the kids who can least afford to take time off school who are most likely to be serial absentees.

Of course, most people know this intuitively, yet school absenteeism is a huge problem in Australian schools—and much of it is parent-condoned.

It's hard to get an accurate picture across the country but it would appear that Australian students miss an average of between 12 and 15 days per school year, with parent-condoned absenteeism highest among young primary-aged children.

That adds up to a year's lost schooling over the school-life of a child. In today's highly competitive world, this rate of absenteeism is alarming, putting our kids at a distinct disadvantage.

### **That's not a reason to be away!**

It's now commonplace for children to stay away from school for reasons that would have been unheard of just twenty years ago. These include staying away to celebrate their own or a sibling's birthday; being absent because they stayed up too late watching television; going shopping for clothes; an extended long weekend; and kids not wanting to take part in a

sports day or special school event.

This type of absenteeism sends a strong message to kids that parents don't really value learning or their children's school experiences.

Australian kids only spend 15% of their total time at school. They spend more time asleep than they do at school. So we need to maximise every day to get full value. That means turning up to school every day, on time.

### **Being late is not okay either**

Missing a few minutes each day may not seem like a big deal but your child may be missing more than you realise if he or she is continually late.

Current research shows that mornings for most children are the most productive time of the day, with 10.00am the peak period for productivity. When children arrive late and take time to settle as they inevitably do, valuable learning time is lost.

more on page 2 >>

Stay one step ahead of your kids with great ideas & expert advice from Michael Grose. Join Michael's **NEW Parentingideas Club** today at [parentingideasclub.com.au](http://parentingideasclub.com.au). You'll be so glad you did.



## ... It's not okay to be away ... nor to be late to school...

### It takes strong parenting ...

As a parent myself I know how persuasive children of all ages can be when it comes to taking a day off school. It takes a strong will to resist the persistent pressure that kids can bring to bear, particularly if they play the guilt card with comments such as "It's not fair that I have to go to school today because Aunty is coming to visit!" Nice try. But the answer should be "No!".

As parents we need to make a commitment that our kids make the most of their precious time at school. That means that we send them to school every day, on time and ready to make the most of the school day.

Of course, there will be times, such as illness or genuinely extenuating family circumstances, when kids should be away. But these need to be a rarity rather than the norm.

It's reassuring to know that you increase their chances of future success just by making sure they turn up to school every day. And of course regular school attendance also helps kids prepare for the workforce, where it will be expected that they turn up each day work-ready. The real world is unforgiving of those who stay away with NO EXCUSE.

### AS A PARENT:

- ✔ Commit to sending kids to school every day.
- ✔ Make sure kids arrive at school and class on time.
- ✔ Inform the school when they are away, sending medical certificates and other evidence of genuine absence.
- ✔ Consider catching-up on missed work.
- ✔ Make kids who are away stay in their bedroom – that is where ill kids should be.

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|                   |                                   |                 |
|-------------------|-----------------------------------|-----------------|
| <b>Policy No.</b> | <b>MELTON WEST PRIMARY SCHOOL</b> | <b>Reviewed</b> |
|                   | STUDENT ATTENDANCE POLICY         | 8/8/16          |

## **1. PURPOSE**

Daily school attendance is important for all children and young people to succeed in education and to ensure that they don't fall behind both socially and developmentally. School participation is important as it maximises life opportunities for children and young people by providing them with education and support networks. School helps people to develop important skills, knowledge and values which set them up for further learning and participation in their community.

## **2. POLICY STATEMENT**

- 2.1 To improve the attendance of all students.
- 2.2 To develop habits of regular attendance.
- 2.3 To reduce unauthorised absences.

## **3. IMPLEMENTATION**

- 3.1 The school's Attendance Policy will be distributed to parents at the commencement of each term and included in the Enrolment Package.
- 3.2 Parents are required by law to ensure their child attends school every day and provide an explanation for their child's absence from school via phone message or note.
- 3.3 If a student arrives at school after 9:05am, they must go to the office and receive a Late Pass before going to their class.
- 3.4 Students who return to school after an unexplained absence, will have a note sent home to parents requesting an explanation as to their child's absence.
- 3.5 Students will be given a Monthly Attendance Letter requiring parents to notify the absence reason for any unexplained days that the student has not been present at school within that month.
- 3.6 If a student is absent from school for one day due to illness, parents must notify the school (via phone, Skoolbag app or note) of the reason.
- 3.7 If a student is absent from school for two days due to illness, parents are encouraged to provide a medical certificate explaining the reason for absence.
- 3.8 Students who are picked up early from school must complete the Early Departure forms at the office providing a reason for the early departure.
- 3.9 Students with less than 85% attendance will be identified as Attendance Concerns and their attendance will be monitored closely by the Attendance Support Personnel.
- 3.10 When a student's attendance rate falls below 60%, an Attendance Support Group Meeting will be scheduled involving a member of School Leadership, Attendance Support Personnel, Classroom Teacher and Parents/Guardians.
- 3.11 The school will ensure that the MWPS Attendance Procedures Flow Chart is followed by all staff.
- 3.12 Teachers shall make contact with home when a student has been absent for two consecutive days and have not notified the school as to the reason.

- 3.13 The school will implement the 'Be An Attendance H.E.R.O. (Here, Every day, Ready, On time)' Program to promote the improvement of student attendance and to acknowledge those students who have received 100% attendance within a given week.
- 3.14 The school will provide a whole-class support program called 'Blast Off Your Attendance', for classes who have an average attendance rate that deviates from the cohort data.

#### **4. EVALUATION AND REVIEW**

- 4.1 This policy will be reviewed as part of our school's regular three-year review cycle.

#### **5. RATIFIED**

- 5.1 This policy was ratified by Melton West Primary School Council on the 8/8/16

