

Assistant Principal Message

Hello and welcome to our first 'Partners in Learning' newsletter for 2017. We hope you and your child/children have settled into the school routines and are enjoying all that our wonderful school has to offer. Our teachers have been working very hard with their classes to ensure that our students start to the year is a positive one. Below is a brief outline of what our teachers are working on with students.

School Values: Melton West Primary School values are **Communication, Respect, Trust and Teamwork**. Teachers and students discuss what these mean and what it may look like/feel like when these values are enacted.

School Wide Positive Behaviours (SWPB) Matrix : The School Wide Positive Behaviours Matrix identifies the expected behaviours in the following areas within the school – corridor, office area, toilets, canteen, playground equipment, school grounds, during assembly and in classroom/specialist time. Teachers have been stepping students through the expected behaviours in the mentioned areas. The SWPB Matrix has been placed in the areas mentioned above so that the expected behaviours are visible to students and can easily be referred to. This practice is helping all our students understand the expected behaviours and have a more productive and enjoyable time at school.

Learning Ladder: The Learning Ladder will continue to be used as a form of consequence for behaviours in every classroom. The Learning Ladder has various levels, with all students beginning, at the Ready to Learn level each morning. The focus of the Learning Ladder is on noticing good/desired behaviours and acknowledging, praising and rewarding students for their efforts through progressing along the Learning Ladder. Please see explanations for the levels of the Learning Ladder, attached to this Newsletter, and have a chat to your child about how it works.

Class Agreements: Teachers are working with students to form Class Agreements that include an individual class Mission Statement. The class Mission Statement includes the school values and reflects what is important for the students to achieve as a community of learners.

Classroom Environment Expectations: We believe that an orderly classroom environment is a precondition to learning. Our teachers have spent many hours preparing vibrant, welcoming classrooms so that your child/ children feel comfortable and want to spend time learning in their classrooms.

Teacher – Student Relationships: We believe that positive teacher/student relationships are the key to students enjoying a productive time at school and being accepting of rules and routines. Our teachers strive to understand, connect with and build trusting relationships with students.

Parent Communication: Our teachers recognise that parents are their child's first and most significant teachers. We value our parent community and are committed to building and maintaining trusting relationships. Our teachers welcome parent input and are dedicated to working closely with parents for the benefit of our students. Please feel free to come and say 'hello' and chat with any one of our professional and dedicated staff. If you would like to speak with your child's teacher please do so before the **8:50am** or after the **3:05pm** bell, alternatively if you require more time to meet please make an appointment for a suitable time, this will ensure we are maximising your child's learning.

"I've learned that people will forget what you said, people will forget what you did, but people will never forget how you made them feel". – Maya Angelou

Warmest Regards,

Kathy Cvitkovic – Assistant Principal (3-6 Learning Community)

REMINDER:

Assembly Performance by 5/6N

Friday 10th February @ 9:00am



Message from our School Vice Captains

Hello parents/ guardians,
Welcome back, we hope you had a great break.
A big welcome to all the Prep students and new students who have started at Melton West Primary School in 2017 ☺

On Friday's the parents and friends cut fruit and distribute it to all classes. ☺

A reminder Meet the Teacher Interviews are on Wednesday 15th February 2017. This is important as the teacher, parents and children get to build a relationship.

☺
Thank you

School Vice Captains
Alith Panthum & Anyang Wal 5/6M



Melton West Primary School

Values – As a school we:

- communicate with each other
- show respect towards each other
- work as a team
- place trust in each other

Excellence
Reward

I have achieved excellence:

I keep a tally of what I have achieved through VIVO points. 20 VIVO points will be awarded when:

- I have a growth mindset while completing my work
- I have completed all tasks to the best of my ability
- I am a good role model
- I respect the safety and learning rights of everyone in the classroom
- I understand our school values and lead by example

Role
Model

I am a role model:

- I show personal and communal responsibility
- I behave in a positive manner
- I encourage others to behave in a positive manner by:
 - Being a good example
 - Reminding others to follow our school values
 - Encouraging others to make good choices

Trying My
Best

I try my best:

- I show personal and communal responsibility
- I show that I am trying my best by
 - Having a go and putting in my best effort
 - Whole body listening
 - Following instructions

Ready to Learn

I am ready to learn:

- This is where we start
- This is what we come back to at re-entry
- We are ready to learn and follow school and class expectations

A Reminder

I need a reminder:

At the moment I am not displaying school values and expectations

- My teacher or classmates may remind me to make positive choices
- I am responsible for the choices that I make
- I will change my behaviour so I am ready to learn again

Time to
Think

I need time to think:

- What choice did I make?
- What could I have done differently?
- How can I fix this?
- What will I do differently next time?
- I will talk with my teacher at a suitable time about my choice
- I am ready to learn again

Time Out

I need time out:

- If I keep making poor choices, I will be sent to another classroom for 10 minutes with my reflective sheet
- My job is to reflect on my choices and be ready to talk to my teacher about my behaviour
- When I have calmed down I can return to my classroom and show that I am ready to learn
- My teacher and class will welcome me back

Parental
Involvement

I am not able to stay in a classroom if I continue to make poor choices:

- If I am asked by a teacher to go to the office, I will follow these instructions
- I know my parents may be contacted
- I will talk with my teacher at a suitable time about my choices
- I will accept the consequences
- When I have calmed down I can return to my classroom and show that I am ready to learn

Learning Maths: Connecting School and Home

Children are exposed to maths every day and everywhere. However, once your child goes to school, they'll start learning maths in a more formal way. You can help your child with maths at school by supporting their schoolwork at home and highlighting maths in daily life.

Learning maths doesn't begin and end in the classroom. Once your child starts school, you still have a big role to play in helping him build maths skills and numeracy.

Here are some ways that you can **support your child in learning maths skills at home** at all ages:

- Show an interest in what your child is learning at school, and be available to help your child with maths revision and skill-building.
- Use objects, words, numbers, pictures, drawings or symbols to help your child understand maths problems. For example, you could cut an apple into four to help your child understand the basics of fractions. Or you could add up the items on your family shopping list.
- Use open-ended questions to encourage your child to show you how she worked out a maths problem. For example, 'How did you figure that out?', 'Is there another way to figure this out?', 'Can you describe ...?', 'I wonder what would happen if ...?', 'Does it make sense?'
- Welcome wrong answers. When your child shows you how he worked out a problem, you can see what he does and doesn't understand. Learning maths isn't just about finding the right answer – it's also about learning processes for solving problems.

Numeracy is the **ability to apply maths concepts in all areas of life** – and there are endless ways you and your child can do this together.

For example, by building maths questions into activities that your child enjoys, you're helping your child develop numeracy. You can ask your child questions, and encourage your child to ask you questions, to help make sense of everyday situations.

Here are some **examples of questions** you could ask your child about different everyday activities:

- You have one minute. How many things can you name?
- Does this block fit in that hole?
- What's the volume of the milk carton?
- Which way will we go when we get to the end of the street?
- How much money do you need for the treat stall at school?
- Will there be enough pasta for our dinner tonight?

And here are some **examples of everyday activities** you can do with your school-age child that involve maths concepts and skills:

- **In the car:** look at number plates and ask your child to read the numbers, order them from highest to lowest and add them up.
- **On public transport:** look at maps, timetables, numbers and signs to work out how many stops to your destination, time of arrival, time between stops and the cost of your ticket.
- **In your neighbourhood:** look at patterns of tiles, bricks and stones on houses and driveways. Look at house numbers and predict number patterns. Look at the shapes of different plants, stones and objects outside. Ask your child, 'What's the same about these patterns? How are they different?'
- **At the playground or oval:** check out how many times a child throws a ball through a hoop and guess whether the next throw will go through the hoop.
- **At the shops or markets:** look at price differences. Compare prices of fruit and vegetables. Guess how many pieces of fruit you get in a kilogram. Talk about which item is cheaper and why something is a good buy.
- **In the kitchen:** ask your child to measure out different amounts of wet and dry ingredients. Ask your child how many ingredients will be enough for a family meal. Ask your child to set the table and see how many different ways she can arrange the settings.

Getting it right in Reading!

The importance of regular home reading

You were your child's first teacher and taught them many important skills, including how to speak. As partners in learning, your child will experience the most success in reading when school and home work together. Children learn about the importance of reading as they watch family members use reading and writing for everyday purposes. Reading for pleasure, sharing a story with your child, using a recipe or reading street signs teaches them that reading is a useful skill in today's world.

Reading with your child at home will help your child in all areas of school. Research shows the importance of reading on a daily basis in developing their use and understanding of vocabulary.

Variation in the amount of independent reading

Percentile rank	Minutes/Day	Words/Year
98 th	67.3	4,733,000
90 th	33.4	2,375,000
70 th	16.9	1,168,000
50 th	9.2	601,000
30 th	4.3	251,000
10 th	1.0	51,000
2 nd	0.0	---

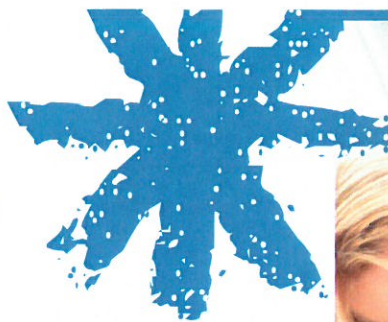
Anderson, R., Wilson, P. & Fielding, L., *Reading Research Quarterly*, Vol.3, 1988
"Growth in reading and how children spend their time outside of school"

Students from Grades Prep to 6 will have been sent home with a take home reading folder and books from Day 1 of the school year. With this, a letter will have been sent home outlining the requirements for home reading for each grade level. If you are unsure of the process and requirements for your child, please speak with their class teacher.

Rad Readers is open every morning for students from 8:30am. This is another great opportunity for your child to read to/with an adult or older student.

Sarah Marshall
Leading Teacher- Literacy





Moving beyond asking, "What did you do at school?"

By Michael Grose

Ever found yourself asking your child the same bland question about school?

"So, how was your day? What did you do at school today? What did you learn?"

If these are your default questions the chances are that you'll get a one or two word reply along the lines, "Fine!" "Good!" "Okay" "Nothing much."

These answers don't really tell you a lot. On the other hand, these types of questions don't ask a great deal.

So how can you move beyond the mundane when you talk with kids about their school days?

Set the atmosphere

It helps to create the right atmosphere for conversations. A quick "How was your day?" as you pick a child up from after-school is a rapport-builder or mood checker, but little more.

If you drive you may learn a bit on the trip home, particularly if you keep the radio off and are able to keep some distance between kids and mobile devices. Alternatively, walking home together may loosen up your child's tongue and put them in the mood for talking.

Give kids a chance

Most kids need some time and space to unwind before expecting them

to talk about their day, particularly if you are going to launch and ask them questions. This makes sense as most adults would feel annoyed if they were assaulted as soon as they walked in the door about their day, "How was your day? What did you do? Who did you see?" Ahh! Stop!

Create conversations rather than ask questions

The dinner table makes a great place to talk, if all televisions are off, mobile devices are left behind and you take the time to make it more than a pit stop. One way to kick off a conversation is to ask kids if they'd like to hear about your day. From my experience kids are often interested in the most mundane things that go on in an adult's day so don't think you have to make it sound grander than what it is. This gives kids permission to talk about their own days; your story can stimulate conversations which provides openings for kids to ask questions and share a little or in some cases a lot about their own day at school.

Interesting questions lead to interesting conversations

The questions you ask to prompt a conversation will often say a great deal about you and what you value. If you focus only on academic or learning questions then it indicates that's what you value.



Moving beyond asking, "What did you do at school?"

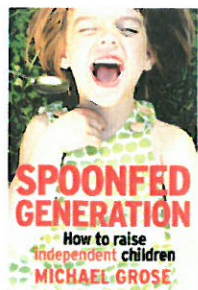
It helps to take conversations and your questions in different directions to get a multi-faceted window into your child's school life but also an indication of your child's interests, social skills and welfare. Here are some examples of question starters that may prompt different responses from kids about their time at school:

- 1 Tell me what made you laugh today?
- 2 Who did you play with at recess today?
- 3 Did you do anything that was brave?
- 4 If I spoke to your teacher, what would she tell me about you?
- 5 What did your teacher talk about today?
- 6 Is there anyone in your class who needs to be in time out?
- 7 Where's the best place to hang out/play at school?
- 8 Tell me one good thing that happened to you today?
- 9 Who were you nice/kind/friendly to today?
- 10 Did anyone push your buttons today?
- 11 What did you do that you were proud of/happy with today?
- 12 What's something you learned with a friend today?
- 13 What's your teacher's most important rule?
- 14 If today was a musical instrument what would it be? Why?
- 15 If you were a teacher tomorrow, what would you teach the class?

Next time you ask a clichéd and dull question about your child's day stop yourself before you utter the words. Instead think outside the square and ask questions that may stimulate a response beyond "Fine" or "Nothing." And remember they may not feel like talking, which is fine too. Like adults, kids need to be in the right mood and the right environment if they are going to share a meaningful conversation about their day.



Visit our website
for more ideas and
information to help you
raise confident and
resilient young people.



Special note: I'm thrilled to announce that my latest book *Spoonfed Generation: How to raise independent children* is out. It's available at parentingideas.com.au

