



## Partners in Learning Newsletter

### HELPING YOUR CHILD WITH READING

Phonics and phonological awareness are two of the vital building blocks for your child to learn to read and write English. Our teachers explicitly teach both phonological awareness and phonics skills almost simultaneously in their instruction.

**Phonics** is the method of teaching beginning readers to connect the sounds of spoken language with letters or a group of letters part of phonics instruction involves the teaching of children to blend the sounds of letters together to form words (technically referred to as decoding skills). When your child learns that the letter 'A' has the speech sound of /a/ as in Ant, or the letters CH together have the sound /ch/ as in 'Chair', they are learning phonics. Phonics instruction typically starts with letters first and children are taught the sounds that those letters "stand for" or "make".

**Phonological Awareness** is the awareness of sounds only! There is no print. No letters are introduced, no sound to symbol correspondence is taught.

Phonics involves the eyes AND ears. Phonological awareness involves just the ears. You can have phonological awareness without phonics but you cannot have phonics without phonological awareness.

Phonics is a way of teaching children the relationship between letters and sounds to form words, so they can learn to read and write. Keep in mind that most words are in fact unfamiliar to early readers in print, even if they have spoken knowledge of the word. Having letter-sound knowledge will allow your child to make the link between the unfamiliar print words to their spoken knowledge. This transition from slowly sounding out a word, to rapidly recognising it, is what we call "learning to read by sight". Every reader must make this transition to read fluently.

It is true that there are many English words, such as *yacht* and *isle* that do not follow typical letter-sound rules. Even then, **research** has shown that children can still learn these words successfully by decoding some parts of the word (y ... t for *yacht*), with help from spoken vocabulary knowledge to facilitate the learning.

Phonics is important not only because this knowledge allows children to read on their own, but it is also a learning mechanism that builds up a good print word dictionary that can be quickly accessed.

Of course, reading effectively (whether to learn or for pleasure) is not just about phonics or having a decent store of single words. Functional reading requires several other skills such as good vocabulary, the ability to extract inferences, and synthesise and hold information in memory across several sentences. But if your single word reading is not efficient, comprehension is going to be dramatically affected.

#### How can I support my child as they learn phonics and phonological awareness?

Here are a few ideas to help you support your child's learning journey in literacy.

1. **Speak to your child's teacher:** Find out what sounds your child is learning and has already learnt in school.
2. **Play simple phonics word games:** Ones that involve listening and recognising the sounds your child knows or is learning at school, for example:
  - \* *Sound Eye Spy:* E.g. "I spy with my little eye something that begins with the sound...." or "What other things can you find that begin with that sound?"
  - \* *Sound Scavenger Hunt:* Write/draw a list of items for your child to find in the garden/house all beginning with the same letter and they have to tick off & say the sound when they find it. Extend these by getting them to add more to the list.
3. **Don't forget about rhyming games, songs and tongue twisters:** Young children love these and they will support your child in hearing speech sounds that are the same and that are different.
4. **Continue to read to and with your child as often as you can:** Reading will get them thinking about words and sounds from the get-go as well as develop their imagination and grow vocabulary. Alongside printed text, think about sharing an ebook with your child on a tablet, this can make for a fun, highly interactive storytelling experience which will make them want to keep coming back for more.

Kind regards

Jennifer O'Connor  
Assistant Principal Prep- 2 Learning Community



#### IMPORTANT DATES

- **NO SCHOOL FOR PREPS- Wednesday 26th February**
- **3/4 swimming starts Monday 24th February**

# Getting it right in English!

Reading is continuing to be a 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?

### High Quality Texts

There are lots of popular picture books and novels available that peak our students interest. However, there are some classics that are a must for children to read. Many of these can be found at your local library or book store.



*Sarah Mills- Leading Teacher Literacy*



## INSIGHTS

# Making new friends and staying in touch with old classmates



As a parent there is a great deal you can do to help your child adjust socially at the start of the school year. Here are some tips to help.

### Encourage your child to be open to new friendships

An open, friendly attitude is a child or young person's best social asset. Students who open to forming new friendships are more likely to succeed than those who seek solitude, who are critical and who limit themselves to just one or two familiar faces.

Encourage your child or young person to seek out new friendships, even though they may feel uncomfortable or strange at first.

### Encourage healthy relationships

Do all you can to encourage healthy relationships based on respect and common courtesy. Generally, when a relationship is healthy a child feels safe, valued and able to speak up. Unhealthy relationships, such as cliques, are restrictive, one-sided and are full of gossip and criticism.

### Encourage inclusiveness

Studies have shown inclusiveness to be one of the prime social skills shared by socially successful students. Encourage your child or young person to include others in games, conversations, team activities and other group activities. Inclusiveness is not just a wonderful friendship skill, it's strong leadership attribute as well.

### Encourage friendships with both genders

If you are in a co-education environment encourage your child to form friendships with both boys and girls. This is particularly valid if your child has siblings of their own gender, or don't have siblings. It's through these early relationships that we gain the confidence to mix with different genders in the later years. Forming friends across genders helps to break down the mystique that sometimes forms, when a child has little contact with the 'other' gender.

### Stay in touch with former classmates and school friends

Encourage your child to maintain friendships with former classmates and groups outside of school as this helps to insulate against unfriendly behaviour that they may experience with their close social circle.

## Provide social scripts

Your child may benefit from being provided with some social scripts that they can use in common social situations such as meeting a new friend, joining in a game or asking someone else for help. Boys, in particular, can benefit when given the words to use in a variety of different social situations.

## Forming new friendships can take time

Meeting new students and forming new friendships can be anxiety-inducing. If this is the case for your child, then it helps to acknowledge their feelings of discomfort, but also remind them that these feelings will pass. As well discuss the fact that feeling comfortable with new friends often takes time, particularly if your child by nature is reserved or slow to warm up in social situations.

Helping kids work through friendships can be tricky for a parent as you don't have a great deal of control over what happens at school. However, with empathy, patience, encouragement and a supportive attitude you can do a great deal to help your child make a smooth social transition.



### Michael Grose

Michael Grose, founder of Parenting Ideas, is one of Australia's leading parenting educators. He's an award-winning speaker and the author of 12 books for parents including *Spoonfed Generation*, and the bestselling *Why First Borns Rule the World and Last Borns Want to Change It*. Michael is a former teacher with 15 years experience, and has 30 years experience in parenting education. He also holds a Master of Educational Studies from Monash University specialising in parenting education.

## METRO EMPLOYMENT NEWSLETTER: For Providers AND Candidates



## 2020 Authorised Officer (AO) Campaign – INFO Session for Women

Metro has a strong commitment to increasing diversity and inclusion in our workplace and this includes gender and candidates who are facing barriers to employment. We are holding a Diversity Information session for Women looking to become an Authorised Officer or want to learn more about Metro's employment opportunities. We have a Socially Responsible Employment Program that has supported many applicants who are looking to get back into work. We partner with many providers, JVENs and community orgs who support candidates in their job searching journey, and together we want to open doors for people to get jobs with us.

### What and for who:

Information session for **Women** interested in knowing more about becoming an Authorised officer **AND** supporting organisations **helping candidates get into work**. You will hear about the role, hear from Women who are currently working as an AO and some of Metro leaders.

### Details:

Monday 24<sup>th</sup> February

12:45pm – 3pm

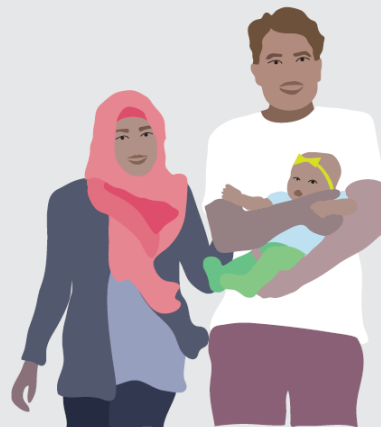
Address outlined in booking link. Limited spots so get in quick. Supporting Orgs please send to candidates to register their interest.

### Click below to register to attend:

<https://app.acuityscheduling.com/schedule.php?owner=16441278&appointmentType=13156774>



# MINDS



# MATTER



## MENTAL HEALTH FORUM FOR FAMILIES

**SUITABLE FOR FAMILIES WITH YOUNG  
CHILDREN AND THOSE STARTING THEIR  
PARENTING JOURNEY**

**HEAR JAMILA RIZVI'S EXPERIENCE OF  
MOTHERHOOD AS WELL PRACTICAL  
TIPS AND INFORMATION FROM MENTAL  
HEALTH EXPERTS**

### **FEATURING**

- Jamila Rizvi – Author, Presenter, Speaker, Mum
- Professional speakers
- Expo showcasing local service providers working in mental health and parenting support

### **Registration essential!**

To register visit: <http://bit.ly/MHFHF>

**Thursday  
27 February, 2020  
5-8pm**

Fraser Rise Community Centre  
46 City Vista Court, Fraser Rise

**Expo 5-6pm** (light supper served)  
**Forum 6pm sharp**

**Families of all types are very welcome**

This event is family friendly. You are welcome to have your baby with you during the forum and there will be free activities for children aged 2-8. Bookings essential via registration.

**FREE  
EVENT**

FOR MORE INFORMATION PLEASE CONTACT MELTON CITY COUNCIL ON  
**9747 7200** OR [SOCIALPLANNINGPROJECTS@MELTON.VIC.GOV.AU](mailto:SOCIALPLANNINGPROJECTS@MELTON.VIC.GOV.AU)

PRESENTED BY  
Melton City Council







# MELTON WEST PRIMARY SCHOOL

## UNIFORM SALE

Melton West Bag	WAS \$51.95	NOW \$39.95
Melton West Bucket Hat	WAS \$15.95	NOW \$9.95
Melton West Slouch Hat	WAS \$17.95	NOW \$13.95
Melton West Bomber Jacket	WAS \$51.95	NOW \$40.95
Melton West Windcheater	WAS \$40.95	NOW \$25.95
Melton West LS Polo top	WAS \$33.95	NOW \$23.95

## FLOOR STOCK ONLY

ONLY WHILE STOCKS LAST

**LOWES MELTON**

**\*Instore/Online only.** Cannot be used in conjunction with any other offer.

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