Principal's News

A Great Start to the Year
Last week proved to be a smooth start to the school year with the first 2 days utilized by staff for planning and professional learning, followed by a well-attended and most successful Orientation Day. Yesterday I took the opportunity to go into all the classrooms and welcome students for the start of the school year, in particular our new preps, students from St. Pat’s Primary School and new students that have enrolled. I was extremely pleased to see all students present and in their school uniform. In wishing students every success for this year, I emphasized to them the importance of upholding the our school culture, regular attendance, being fully engaged in their learning, giving their personal best and striving for excellence in all that they do. Today as I walked around the school grounds at Recess, it was pleasing to see everyone enjoying the outdoors and in particular our new preps being happy and fitting in their new surroundings.

Bendigo Health CAMHS & Schools Early Action Program
This year the school has been offered the CASEA-CAMHS & Schools: Early Action Program which involved a professional learning day for all staff and will provide the opportunity for parents of Pre-school to Year 6 children in Term 2 to participate in a free parent program. Bendigo Health CASEA presenters Kerry Holland and Denise Robertson ran the staff Professional Learning Day which focused on exploring child mental health, emotion coaching and mindfulness in the classroom. Both presenters did a terrific job of covering the contents of the program which was extremely well received by staff. Letters will be going out to parents this week detailing the program and seeking expressions of interest to participate. I particularly encourage parents of Pre-school and Prep students to find out more about this program and attend a parent’s information session to be held at the school from 2.00 pm to 3.30 pm on Monday 16th February 2015.

Orientation Day
Thank you to parents and students for attending and making Orientation Day a huge success with close to 100% attendance. From talking to staff, parents and students it was obvious that to be given the opportunity for students and parents to meet with Homeroom Teachers to share and plan for the start of the year has been most useful.

School Council Elections
Nominations for the vacant positions on School Council are now called for. Please consider becoming involved in this vital aspect of the College governance. Your views and input would be greatly appreciated and a critical aspect of the effective functioning of the College. Nominations open on Monday 9th February and close on Monday 16th February. A ballot, if needed, will close on Friday, 27th February. The first meeting of the new Council will be on Tuesday 24th March. Parent Representatives whose 2 years term has finished are Rowan Broad, Kelly Stewart and Robert Moon. The DEECBD Representative whose 2 year term has finished is Fiona Moon. For this year there are 4 Parent and 2 DEECBD Representative Vacancies on School Council.
Outgoing members, parents and staff are encouraged to stand for School Council, as a vibrant and active School Council is a key ingredient to the effective running of the College. Thank you to everyone on School Council and in particular to outgoing members for their support, efforts and contributions to the college.

Thought for the week: “You become great by doing small things in a great way.”
Zig Ziglar

Joe Mazzarella,
Principal
Congratulations to everyone for the smooth and successful return to school. Everyone is well organised, with a positive attitude to the new school year. Special congratulations need to be extended to our new Preps who have adjusted so well to our routines and to their mums, as they have the hardest job of all - saying goodbye to their ‘babies’ and welcoming home their new, independent school girls and boys.

Swimming Program - P-6 - Reminder

Please put bathers in a named waterproof bag, but not a recyclable bag, as they break easily and are hard to distinguish for the younger students. We have had a few confusions trying to find the right bag, with the right clothes, as they all looked the same.

I would like to apologize to anyone I may have confused at our interviews - the Swimming Sports are on Friday, February 13th. Students will need to be at the pool by 9 am to start, except for students in Prep-2 who come to school as usual and will go to the pool at lunch time.

Prep students will not be required at school on Wednesdays until after the Labour Day Holiday (9th March).

Homework

All students need to read daily. With students in Prep-3, please listen to your child read, sign their reading diary and write a comment, then return their reader bag daily. Notes will go home in reader bags.

Older students will have ‘extra’ homework which your child or class teacher will tell you about.

Prep Photo

The reporter from the Loddon Times came today to take a photo of the new Preps, so make sure you buy the paper next week.

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**Fruit Harvest**

Yesterday our Year 7/8 students enjoyed picking plums from the school orchard. This year the trees had a huge crop. We picked a total of 8 boxes of fruit which is being stored in the cool room. Starting today students will enjoy eating organically grown fresh fruit grown right here at school. The next lot of fruit to ripen will be apples, pears and nashi.

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**BBQ Lunch - House Swimming Sports**

*Friday, 13th February*

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<th>Item</th>
<th>Price</th>
<th>Quantity</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
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<td>2 Sausages in Bread</td>
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<tr>
<td>Hamburger &amp; Coleslaw</td>
<td>$3.50</td>
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Order to be returned by Wednesday, 11th February

Name……………………………………………………………………………………………………………………

Enclosed: $............................
Welcome to 2015 and our new look Senior Learning Neighbourhood which now encompasses years 7 – 10. We are off to a terrific start with all students back with great attitudes and looking terrific. Our focus for term 1 will be our uniform, appearance and punctuality. We will be making sure we are following the College council guidelines on wearing correct shoes, uniform, having neat and safe hair and not wearing unapproved jewellery, makeup and nail polish.

We are also looking for diligence in attending to homework each week. We ask that parents are in partnership with staff to encourage students to build up their organisational and time management skills. As we all know there are things in life that we hate doing, but they have to be done. If we build positive attitudes to tasks, take a deep breath and get them done, we will have more time to do the things we love.

Swimming Sports
All students are required to attend the sports. It is not ok to be away. If for any reason a student is unable to participate, there are always leadership and helper roles that need to be filled. In order for a student to feel comfortable in all school settings they must be present. Being absent only makes anxieties worse.

Berwick Students to Visit
A group of year 9/10 students from Berwick Secondary College will be visiting our college on Wednesday 4th and Thursday 5th of March. Traditionally this has been a great chance for our year 9/10 students to make new friends and introduce the city kids to a little of our country lifestyle. All students from both schools will undertake a session of community service on the Thursday.

VET Studies
This year we have five students travelling to Charlton on a Thursday to undertake Nationally Accredited Certificate II studies. Bailey Pickersgill and Jhon Magdao are doing Building and Construction, Daniel Hercott is undertaking Sport and Recreation, Tanisha Golding is doing Hospitality and Brianna Lindberg is studying Beauty. Steven Gunther is just finishing up his Cert II in Agriculture as well. We wish these students well as they value-add to their repertoire of skills and assure themselves of extra pathways to their futures.

Level 2 First Aid
All year 9 students will be receiving their First Aid workbooks in the next couple of weeks, plus any year 10 who haven’t previously completed the course. Students will complete these booklets in homeroom meetings and at home, then they will undertake a day of training and assessment. Year 10 students with their First Aid Certificate will update on the same day. This $180 course is provided by the College at no cost to the students.

Mrs L. Talbot
Neighbourhood Leader

Red Sports Polo Shirts
Are available for PE and Sports - if you are new to the school or have grown out of your current shirt, please fill an order form, (available from the Office) order form and return to school
Shirts without names - $17
Shirts with logo and name on back - $20

School Requisites
Payment for all school requisites should made as soon as possible please. If you are unsure about what is owing, please contact the office. Parents are able to use EFTPOS (available in the office) or Online Banking for any payments to school.
Banking details are:
BSB 083-693
A/c No. 60880 2159
Please identify your payment when processing.

Education Maintenance Allowance
Unfortunately, this allowance has been discontinued, so parents will be required to pay for school requisites etc. Some funding should be available to assist with excursions/camps through the year and details will be advised.

Homework Night
Will start on Wednesday, 18th February and will be on every Wednesday after that
In the BER from 3.30—4.30
(Healthy Snack included)
Teacher assistance available
All students from Years 5-10 welcome

Every Day Counts
We have reactivated the “Student Whereabouts” book in the office, so if a student is late to school or leaves early, they must sign in and out giving a reason for their late arrival or early departure.
Students will also need to account for their absence with a note/phone call/diary entry as to why they have been absent.
There's no doubt that the best outcomes for kids happen when teachers and parents work together to support children's learning. Here are 10 ways you can work with your child’s teacher to maximise your child’s chances of school success.

1. **Know what your child’s teacher is trying to achieve**
   Like children, every teacher is different with their own specific expectations, goals and interests. Get to know your child's teacher and gain an understanding of their approach and aspirations for your child’s class.

2. **Keep your expectations reasonable and positive**
   If your expectations are too high your teacher may give up. Too low and they will meet them! The trick is to keep your aspirations for your child in line with their ability and their interests. Also be realistic about what your child’s school can deliver. Sometimes our expectations of schools are not in line with their capabilities or their roles.

3. **Support your teacher’s expectations & activities at home**
   One practical way of supporting your child is to take a real interest in their home-based learning tasks and follow the guidelines laid out by teachers.

4. **Send kids to school ready to learn and on time**
   Maximise your child's chances of success by sending them to school in a good frame of mind, with plenty of sleep and a good breakfast. Also make sure they get to school on time. It's estimated that many kids miss up to two weeks of school a year when they are routinely late by just five minutes a day.

5. **Inform teachers of your child’s challenges and changes**
   Life's not always smooth sailing for kids. Family circumstances can alter. Friends move away, illness happens. These changes affect learning. Make sure you keep your child’s teacher up-to-date with significant changes or difficulties your child experiences, so he or she can accommodate their emotional and learning needs at school.

6. **Skill children to work with others**
   Schools are social places requiring children to work and play with each other much of the time. Teaching manners to kids, as well as encouraging them to share their time, space and things with others are practical ways to help kids with their social skills. Talk through any social challenges they may have, helping them develop their own strategies to get on with others.

7. **Respectfully seek joint solutions to problems and difficulties**
   Resist the temptation to solve all your children’s problems or think you have the only solution. Most learning and social problems can be resolved when teachers and parents work together in the best interests of the child.

8. **Participate in class & school activities**
   There is a huge body of research that points to the correlation between parent involvement in a child’s schooling and their educational success. Quite simply, if you want your child to improve his learning then take an interest in his learning, attend as many school functions as you can, and follow the lead provided by your child's teacher. This simple strategy will have a massive, long-term impact.

9. **Trust your teacher’s knowledge, professionalism and experience**
   Your child's teachers are your greatest allies. Their training, their experience around kids, and their objective professionalism puts them in a strong position to make judgements about your child.

10. **Talk up what happens at school**
    Your child will take their cues from you about how they see their school. If you want your child to value learning, and enjoy their time at school then you need to support your school and make sure he or she hears positive messages about learning, teachers and the school itself. You can set a strong educational agenda at home by talking up your school.

This type of 10-point plan is easy to read but hard to put into practice, particularly when you get busy or your child has significant difficulties. Choose two or three ideas from this list to really focus on in the coming year and you’ll find that the rest will fall into place. Good luck and nurture the partnerships you have with your child's teachers.