

ST. MARY MACKILLOP PRIMARY SCHOOL

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PRINCIPAL'S MESSAGE

Dear Community,

Monday 12 March is the Labour Day Public Holiday and then next Tuesday 13 March all staff will be participating in an off-site professional learning day. The school is closed on both days.

Katrina Bourke, from Katrina Bourke Coaching will begin a 12 month long program designed for our staff on the giving and receiving of feedback. Tuesday's focus will be on *Functioning Well at Work*. This is an important area to be exploring. We need our staff to be happy and functioning well every day. When we consider our teachers have the charge of your children, you want to know that the adults caring for and educating your children are happy. As I often say to my staff, "Imagine what it would be like for your class of children, if you are not happy. Happy teachers, equate with a happy class. Now imagine the reverse!"

The desired outcomes of this day are:

- **Self Awareness:** Individuals are empowered to make conscious choices around how they manage and respond to the daily demands of their workplace and professional role

2018 TERM DATES

Term 1-Thursday 1

February-

Thursday 29 March

Term 2-Monday 16 April-

Friday 29 June

Term 3-Monday 16 July-

Friday 21 September

Term 4-Monday 8 October-

Wednesday 19 December

Upcoming Events

Tuesday 6 March

Confirmation Family Night
7:00pm

Monday 12 March

Labour Day Public Holiday

Tuesday 13 March

School Closure Day for
Teacher Development

Thursday 15 March

Sacrament of Penance at 7pm

Thursday 29 March

End of Term 1. School
finishes at 1pm

- **Knowledge & strategies to help self and others:** Individuals build on self-knowledge to develop an understanding of ways they can contribute to the wellbeing of their peers and colleagues
- **Develop healthy & productive relationships:** Staff teams create a vision for effective team functioning and map out strategies and actions for achieving this vision together.

In working towards these outcomes we are addressing two specific goals in our Strategic Plan 2018-2021; those goals being,

- To build strong partnerships for learning.
- To develop dynamic partnerships that nurture and enrich learning for all

Ultimately, everything we do an SMMPS is for the children. Your children are my absolute passion and commitment. The learning we are undertaking as a staff, can only enhance your children's experience of schooling and in turn, improve their learning outcomes, both socially and academically.

I thank your most sincerely for your support.

DIGITAL MEDIA

The use of digital media is an issue that we must be continually addressing. I note our Prime Minister recently saying Principal's need to be on the 'front-foot', when it comes to educating children in the use of digital media. I am committed to the education of children in the appropriate use of digital media. We have many programs happening in our school, which support the children in knowing the value and pit-falls of digital media.

Ultimately though, I would argue it your responsibility as parents to manage your children's use of digital media.

- How much time does your child spend in front of the TV, on a PC, an iPad or a smartphone?
- What social media sites are your children accessing? Do you realise many sites legally specify that a child must be 13 years of age before using particular sites.
- What internet sites are your children viewing?
- Do you understand that the use of digital media can affect the brain and sleep patterns, if used too close to sleep time? Kids do not need digital media in their bedrooms and particularly in their beds before sleep.

And of course, bullying on-line is a major issue in our society. Randomly check your child's use of digital media. Encourage your children to tell you about posts which make them uncomfortable or upset them.

As I used to say to my children and now as I say to my grandchildren, *"I don't care how much trouble you might think you are going to be in. I don't care how bad you think it is, or how ashamed you may be. I don't care if you think it is the biggest secret in the world. If you are upset, scared, worried or being hurt; tell us. **WE CAN HELP YOU and WE CAN DO SOMETHING ABOUT IT!** It is our job to protect you and support you with whatever is worrying you. We will be there with you. Always remember we can help!"*

We only have the children for few hours a day at school. During this time, we manage their use of digital media very closely. It is those hours out of school hours where problems can happen.

I include an article from *Michael Grose Parenting Ideas* that may give you some ideas and support.

I will keep publishing bits and pieces around this topic as I come across them.

Have a good week everybody.



Anthony McCluskey
Principal

THE WISDOM OF ST. MARY MACKILLOP

In each Newsletter, I provide a quote from the writings of St. Mary MacKillop. Mary was an extensive letter writer to the sisters within her congregation (Sisters of St Joseph of the Sacred Heart, or the Josephites as they were known). She also wrote many letters to her family.

These wonderful words of wisdom provide us with much to reflect on... I know they inspire me in my personal life.

"I hope that you had more charity and trust that you have not judged by appearances." (05.03.1900).

Parent Engagement

Easter Raffle-

We are holding a raffle at the end of term. We are asking for donations to go towards the prizes. From Easter eggs, baskets, Easter soft toys, Easter story books etc...

Raffle tickets will go home next week.

Please send all donations to the office.

St. Patrick's Day-Monday 19th March. You can order a green iced donut for \$2.00. I will let you know when it is available to order on www.flexischools.com.au

Pie Day-Wednesday 28th March. You can order a pie and juice for \$5.00. I will let you know when it is available to order on www.flexischools.com.au

Mother's Day Stall- A call for volunteers: please see Kellie. More details next term.

More Important News

PARENT ENGAGEMENT

I am absolutely delighted with the number of parents who have volunteered to assist us with our fundraising efforts. We have 30 plus parents supporting us with the sales of Icy Poles and our Food Days. If we have not yet called you, it is because we are simply working through the list. We will get to you and yes, we do sincerely appreciate your offer.

We have ordered products to sell at the Mother's Day Stall. Kellie and Jenny will be in touch closer to the stall regarding the organisation on the day.

Note the Food Days coming up in the next weeks.

Thank you to the parents who are assisting with PMP. Your support ensure the success of the program.

Child Safety Inductions which we are bound to do by legislation is happening on an as needs basis. All parents supporting us in any way, must do this induction.

Parents as Reading Partners.

On **Wednesday 14th of March at 2.20pm** and **Friday 16th March at 9am** we will be holding a **Parents as Reading Partners** briefing in the library. Parents as Reading Partners give children the much needed opportunity to read aloud to a supportive adult and thus build their confidence as a reader.

All interested volunteers will need to sign a Child Safety Code of Conduct before assisting at SMMPs. You will also be required to produce or apply for a Working with Children's Check.

Once this induction has been completed we will work through the role of a parent assisting as a reading partner in a classroom. We will discuss how children make meaning from print and various strategies to support their reading.

Your support is greatly appreciated.

We look forward to seeing you soon.

Rita Krnac and Anna Yorston – Curriculum Leaders

Unexplained student absence: New Requirements

A review of school Attendance Guidelines was undertaken by the Minister for Education in Term 4, 2017.

The Minister of Education has said that all:

'schools must advise parents/guardians of unexplained absences, on the same day, as soon as practicable'.

The changes in the Attendance Guidelines will be introduced at St Mary MacKillop P.S. as of Wednesday 14th March, 2018 (next Wednesday)

- If your child/ren are going to be absent from school for any reason, we ask that you log onto the skool bag app, then go to eForms, hit Absentee Form and complete the details of the absence then hit submit.
- All Absentee forms go to the front office and to Anthony D'Amico. They are then forwarded to the classroom teacher.
- If your child is away and we have not been notified, you will receive an SMS message asking you to contact the school. If we do not hear from you within a certain time we will call your emergency contacts. If we cannot reach the Emergency contacts we will then need to call the Police.
- If you have not yet downloaded the Skoolbag app we ask that you do this as soon as possible.

These practices are to ensure the safety of your children.

Thank You for your support

Anthony D'Amico
Deputy Principal

Enrolments for 2019

Enrolments for 2019 are now open. If you are an existing family and have a child coming to school next year, please see Kellie at the front office and we can either send home an enrolment form or email it to you.

Phonics and Spelling Parent Information Session

Facilitated by David Hornsby



WHEN: Monday May 7th

TIME: 7.00 - 8.30pm

WHERE: Multi Purpose Room

SMMPS would like to invite all Parents and Caregivers to attend an information evening exploring the place of **Phonics and Spelling** at our school. We are pleased to have David Hornsby a highly respected education consultant and author host the evening. Some of the topics David will address include:

- *What are the spelling strategies?*
- *How can we help our children with spelling?*
- *Why is phonics always in the news?*
- *Debunking some of the myths around phonics*
- *Why can't phonics work without meaning?*
- *Teaching phonics, in context, and as one of the essential spelling strategies*
- *What's the place of spelling lists?*

David has worked with the staff of SMMPS and shared his knowledge of using authentic literature to teach Phonics and Spelling. Many of the strategies David will discuss are implemented in our English program and across other learning areas.

We would love to have you join us for the evening. If you are interested in attending please complete the CareMonkey form.

Please Note: This information session is for **Parents / Caregivers only**.

MICHAEL GROSE... PARENTING IDEAS

I will publish some relevant articles from Michael Grose, **Parenting Ideas**, as I come across them. I trust that they might provide you with some support as you navigate your way through the task of parenting your child.

What rules should you have around digital devices?

(Primary School)

- **TECHNOLOGY AND PARENTING BY MICHAEL GROSE**

Children's digital technology needs to be managed and monitored by parents. That means we need to have some rules and guidelines in place. I'm often asked about rules and guidelines for children in the early and primary school years about digital devices such as tablets and mobile phones. This is new ground for most people whose own parents didn't have to worry about digital technology. How to persuade kids to leave the television and play outside was the extent of the screen worries of the previous generations of parents.

Digital technology, with all its advantages is here to stay. It connects us to each other in ways we couldn't imagine even a decade ago. It enables us to communicate to our kids when we don't know where they are. It creates new interests and cultivates creativity.

You'd have to be living under a rock to not realise that digital technology also presents new challenges such as cyber-bullying, worries about social media and children's exposure to inappropriate images. Digital devices give kids access to a virtual world that is totally seductive particularly for those with poor impulse control. Also the nature of technology means that children can spend a lot of their time heads bent and staring into a screen, which is not healthy in the long-term.

Children's digital technology needs to be managed and monitored by parents. That means we need to have some rules and guidelines in place. Each family makes up their own rules to suit their circumstances but the following suggestions will help you put some order into the digital devices that come into your home.

1. Hold off as long as you can

The age when a child first gets a mobile phone is getting younger. Now most young people seem to have a mobile phone when they start secondary school. I'm currently working with parents who are struggling to hold off on their child's mobile phone until secondary school but it's a continuous battle as cries of 'everyone else has a phone' is ringing in their ears. If you took all these messages from kids seriously you'd think that they were all born holding a mobile device and they've had an Instagram account since they were two.

Kids pester power works in a way that you tend to feel guilty that you are somehow denying your child a basic right or access to something vital to survival such fresh air. Best to develop an easily repeatable mantra such as "That's great. But every family is different and we do things our way." They may whine when you say it but stick to your own way of parenting, which is not always easy. Alternatively, take the compromise route of allowing a child to borrow your phone, or having a family phone that all kids can use.

2. Be prepared to learn

Giving a digital device to a child has more parent strings attached to it than say, giving a box of Lego or most other items of play. With most toys you can leave them to their own devices to play by themselves, which is the basic point really. It's not so simple with a digital device. Be prepared to learn some new games and stay up-to-date with social media trends. Snapchat anyone?

3. Put rules in place first

This is an interesting one. If you give your child a device, then later place restrictions on when its overused or used poorly then there's every chance that you'll be seen as the bad guy/gal. Better to put restrictions on in the first place and loosen them later, or better still reward their responsible use with greater freedom. Timing is everything.

4. Change rules if need be

Most families seem to have a child who thinks that rules are made to be broken so they always push boundaries, limits and parent patience. Parents, on the other hand, should work from the notion that rules are made to be changed. Be prepared to change your rules based on your child's behaviour, maturity, sleep patterns, incompleteness of homework, bullying or other issues that will invariably crop up and cause you to realise that the rules you set just aren't working.

5. Keep digital technology out of bedrooms

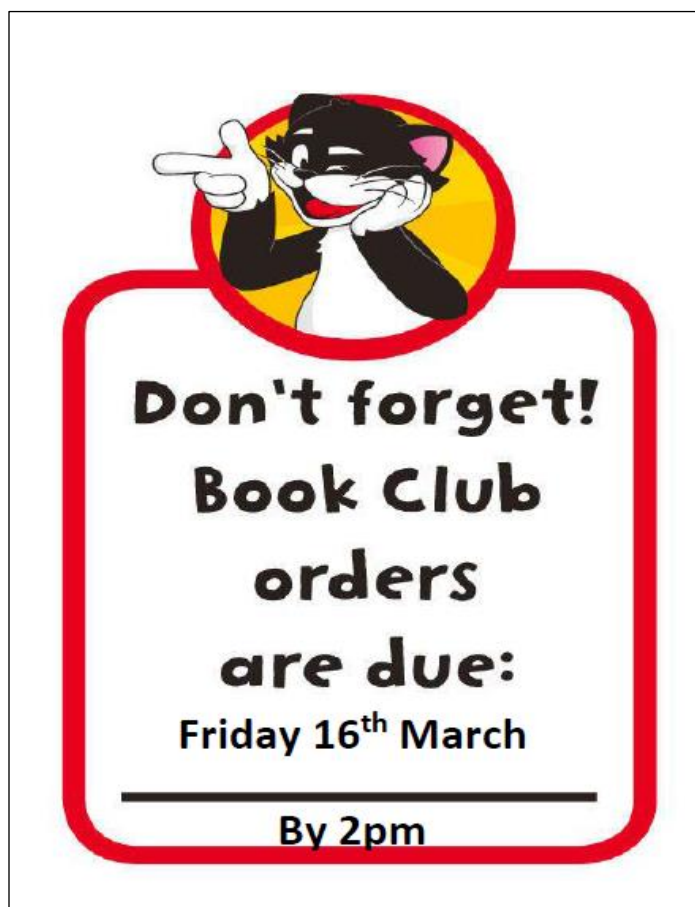
If there was one rule that you should stay firm on, then this is the one. Many of our children are in sleep deficit as it is, without bringing digital devices into the frame. They may say they want to charge it in their room. If so, keep the charger in a public place. They may even want to use their mobile or tablet to wake up in the morning. I applaud them for taking on this task but insist they use an alarm clock instead.

6. Have a digital detox one day a week

The only way that this idea will work is if you join them in making one day a week a digital technology free day. They will probably not like it, and neither will you, but the point of having one day off is to prove that they can live without their digital device and to engage them in different forms of communication and entertainment.

Book Club

Brochures will go home this week to all students. If you wish to place an order, it must be done online. Details are in the brochure. Please do not send cash to the office.





Enrolment Year 7, 2020

Enrolment Information Evening
Wednesday 21 March, 2018 at 7pm
For parents of students in Grade 5, 2018
Bookings not required

2018, Term 1 Tour

Wednesday, 21 February at 9am
Bookings required
Phone: 9361 5900
Email: office@crcnk.vic.edu.au



Catholic
Regional College
North Keilor

2018
THE YEAR OF

Faith

1c Santa Monica Drive Keilor Lodge VIC, Phone 9361 5900, www.crcnk.com.au



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We would love your help collecting Coles Sports for Schools for our school.
Tell your friends and family to get involved as well, because the more
vouchers we collect, the more sports gear our school will receive.