Bushfire Appeal

The school has become the drop off point for any item wishing to be donated to the bushfire appeal. Bruce and Trevor Sharp have kindly donated the use of one of their “Furniture One” trucks to help us take the goods to St Mary’s Church tomorrow morning. If parents have some free time in the morning, we will need some assistance with the loading of the truck from 9.00 onwards, any volunteers would be most welcome.

Today the school raised an amazing $500.00 through a casual dress and hat day for the bushfire appeal. Having your support makes it possible to provide great programs and experiences for the kids. The days of just being able to come in and help are almost gone and schools are now required to ensure that anyone coming in contact with students has a current Working With Children Check (WWCC).

Full details about the WWCC can be found at http://www.justice.vic.gov.au/workingwithchildren . Application forms may be downloaded or are available at the post office.

If you plan to come on any excursions, work in the classroom, help in the garden or any other activity you will need to had a WWCC before you can attend.

Please come and have a chat to Lauren if you need any further details. She is a wealth of information about costs and what ever else is required of you. Please don’t be put off by the process. We would love to see you at school.

House Captains

I would also like to announce 2009’s House Captains and Vice Captains.

School Captains

On Monday, 12 students nominated themselves as School Captains. Unfortunately we were only able to select 4 students.

Our school Captains for 2009 and Ela Rutherford and Jack Reid. Our Vice Captains are Courtney Hill and Keenan Hynes.

Congratulations to all those who nominated and it shows that we will have a great student leadership group this year.

School Council Elections

Nominations for vacancies on our School Council close tomorrow at 4:00pm. We have:

- 4 parent/guardian positions for the period 2009-2011
- 1 parent position for the period 2009 - 2010.
- 2 Department of Education positions for the period of 2009-2011

Continuing School Councillors are:

- Kym Paterson and Sue Robinson (Parent reps)
- Suzi Roberts & Warwick Fraser (Dept reps)
- Michael Doyle and Lou Webb (Dept.)
- Sema Yilmaz and Teena Robinson (Co-opted Community members).

Nomination forms are with this newsletter. Extra copies are available at the office. If you would like to know more about School Council and its roles and responsibilities try this website http://www.education.vic.gov.au/management/governance/schoolcouncils/role.htm . We have also provided a brief overview of one of the documents on the site.

We need some ice cream buckets for our water recycling program. Can you help??

Diary Dates

February
Fri 13 - 3/4 trip to the Grange
Wed 18th - School Swimming Sports Change of date!!

2009 Term Dates for students

Term 1 2 February—3 April
Term 2 20 April—26 June
Term 3 13 July—18 Sept
Term 4 5 Oct—17 Dec

Coming Up
Fri 20 - District Swimming Sports
Fri 27 - Zone Swimming Sports
Mon 9 March closed
Fri 3 April - End of term. 1.30 finish

Red House Captains : Jack Reid & Julia Davis
Vice Captains: Bryce Jones & Nicole Bolleman
Blue House Captains : Keenan Hynes & Courtney Hill
Vice Captains: Rylee Horton & Jade Wilson
Gold House Captains : Ela Rutherford & Joel Hiskins
Vice Captains: Jaimee Herbstreit & Josh Drohan
Green House Captains : Bec Churches & Lachie McDonald
Vice Captains: Chris Millar & Elisha Thompson

These students will lead their houses for the year, organising teams and events, while assisting staff.

Working with Children Check

We really value the support of anyone who is able spare some time to help in the classrooms, excursions, canteen or garden. Having your support makes it possible to provide great programs and experiences for the kids. The days of just being able to come in and help are almost gone and schools are now required to ensure that anyone coming in contact with students has a current Working With Children Check (WWCC).

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Help your children make sense of the natural disasters

As adults we all want our children to live carefree lives and keep them from the pain and even horror of tragedies such as natural disasters. In reality we can’t do this.

The Queensland floods and the Victorian bushfires continue to wreak incredible havoc on so many people’s lives and will no doubt leave an indelible imprint on our collective psyches. These two natural disasters will be brought into our living rooms via the media over the coming days and weeks.

As adults we all want our children to live carefree lives and keep them from the pain and even horror of tragedies such as natural disasters. In reality we can’t do this.

So what is a parent, teacher, or other caring adult to do when the natural disasters fills the airwaves and the consciousness of society? Here are some ideas:

1. **Reassure children that they are safe.** The consistency of the images can be frightening for young children who don’t understand the notion of distance and have difficulty distinguishing between reality and fiction. Let them know that while this event is indeed happening it will not affect them directly.

2. **Be available.** Let kids know that it is okay to talk about the unpleasant events. Listen to what they think and feel. By listening, you can find out if they have misunderstandings, and you can learn more about the support that they need. You do not need to explain more than they are ready to hear, but be willing to answer their questions.

3. **Help children process what they see and hear, particularly through television.** Children are good observers but can be poor interpreters of events that are out of their level of understanding.

4. **Support children’s concerns for others.** They may have genuine concerns for the suffering that will occur and they may need an outlet for those concerns. It is heart-warming to see this empathy in children for the concerns of others.

5. **Let them explore feelings beyond fear.** Many children may feel sad or even angry with these events so let them express the full range of emotions. They may feel sadder for the loss of wildlife, than for loss of human life, which is impersonal for them.

6. **Help children and young people find a legitimate course of action if they wish.** Action is a great antidote to stress and anxiety so finding simple ways to help, including donating some pocket money can assist kids to cope and teaches them to contribute.

7. **Avoid keeping the television on all the time.** The visual nature of the media means that images are repeated over and over, which can be both distressing to some and desensitizing to others.

8. **Be aware of your own actions.** Children will take their cues from you and if they see you focusing on it in an unhealthy way then they will focus on it too. Let them know that it is happening but it should not dominate their lives.

9. **Take action yourself.** Children who know their parents, teachers, or other significant caregivers are working to make a difference feel hope. They feel safer and more positive about the future. So do something. It will make you feel more hopeful, too. And hope is one of the most valuable gifts we can give children and ourselves.

Children’s worlds can be affected in ways that we can’t even conceive of so adults need to be both sensitive to children’s needs and mindful of what they say and how they act in front of children.

In difficult times, it is worth remembering what adults and children need most are each other.

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Michael Grose is one of Australia’s leading parenting educators. For more parenting information and resources visit www.parentingideas.com.au
Active After-School Program
Registration

Dear Families,
We are very lucky to be able to run the Active After School program again this year. If you would like your Child/Children to participate please fill in the registration form they are kept at the office. Please fill in and return ASAP to the office. We have three new trainers starting with us this year. And Gayle has returned as the Co-ordinator. We will be running 2 groups each night.

As part of the program we will receive funding to run an active after school program two days a week from 3.35—4.35. This program will be open to all students at no cost. Participants will, however, need to be registered so that numbers can be monitored. 

It is not possible just to turn up on the night.

After School Fun!

The Australian Sports Commission’s Active After-school Communities Program (AASC) will commence at the Primary School this term ASAP.

The program will be running on Monday and Thursday
The sessions are based on the Playing For Life philosophy to coaching, which incorporates a strong focus on providing a non-competitive environment and activities that improve children’s motor skills through challenging them to achieve realistic goals. Over the course of the program children will be introduced to a host of activities, games and sports. Individuals who coach the sessions will have completed an accredited course with the Australian Sports Commission. A healthy snack is provided to each participant as part of the healthy lifestyle message the AASC promotes.

Attendance is FREE.

If you would like to enrol your child in the AASC program please complete and return the form to the office by Monday 16th February. So that we have time to sort through the forms and put groups together. Parents will be notified when will have final numbers.

More information about the program can be found at http://www.ausport.gov.au/aasc/index.asp