11 May 2016

PRINCIPAL’S REPORT

MOTHER’S DAY BREAKFAST AND STALL
What a huge success the Mother’s Day Breakfast was! It was wonderful to see so many mums with their children, over 230 people. Some mums even had their breakfast brought to them! Many thanks to the Dads, Mums and the many staff who helped on the morning and very special thanks to Liesl who organised the entire event. Liesl offers all of her time to the school as a volunteer, like all our volunteers, it is truly invaluable.

The Mother’s Day Stall was also very successful on Friday morning all but selling out. Seeing the younger children selecting gifts for their mums is always a treat. We hope that the mums enjoyed the surprise on Mother’s Day.

EDUCATION WEEK – Open Evening Thursday 19 May
Open Evening is on Thursday 19 May between 7:00pm and 8:30pm for those who wish to visit the classrooms or tour the school. There will also be an Open Morning on Saturday 21 May from 10:00am to 12noon for schools tours.

Remember everyone is welcome to attend the open events whether you are a current or potential member of our school. Grandparents and other family members and friends are also very welcome.

FREEZER ANGELS, QUESTACON and KITCHEN GARDEN - SATURDAY 21 MAY
We are looking for some of our students to volunteer to be in Questacon or make scones in the Kitchen during the Open Morning on Saturday 21 May between 10:00am and 12 noon.

We are also holding a Freezer Angels session on the same morning. We are already in need of some food for our freezer. For those of you who work this is a great opportunity to help out. Notices will be going home for these events today.
CURRICULUM DAY – FRIDAY 20 MAY
Just a reminder that Friday 20 May is the first Curriculum Day for the year and children will not be required at school on this day. OSHC will be operating so if you require OSHC please make sure that you book through Karen on 0403 197 821.

GRADE 3/4 CAMP
The Grade 3/4 Campers had beautiful weather for their time at camp, only raining at the end of their last activity and coming home. The children are to be commended on their willingness to take on new challenges even when they were nervous and unsure. Also for the gentle and positive encouragement and care they showed each other. I had the opportunity to see this first hand and it is a credit to both the children and the staff. Congratulations to all!

SHARING PARENTING INFORMATION SHEETS
You will find on the next pages the first two parent information sheets we mentioned in a previous newsletter. We are hopefully that the information is of some help. We will share other information from time to time.

NAPLAN
As you may already be aware this is NAPLAN week. The Grade 3 and 5 children throughout the country are all required to sit the test on the same day and the same time. It can be a stressful time for all involved however, we do try and keep this all to a minimum as much as possible.

SCHOOL COUNCIL AGM
Our AGM, which will form part of the next School Council meeting, is next Tuesday 17 May at 7:30pm. Anyone who wishes to attend is most welcome. The meeting is held in the conference room.

Kerry Wood

NEW ART SCULPTURE FOR THE CREATIVE PLAY SPACE
We are pleased to announce that Whitehorse Primary School has been successful in winning a Whitehorse City Council “Artists in School” grant. The successful application proposed a sculpture for the creative play space by the renowned naturalistic artist, Glenn Romanis.

Glenn Romanis has created well over 150 large scale artworks and his career as a working artist has involved using various kinds of media and context which reveal a deep concern for the relationship between storytelling and the environment.

Glenn will produce a large wood carved sculpture as a central focus. This will enhance the area’s emphasis on diverse play, imagination and creativity. He will talk to the students about his work on 17 May.

We will look forward to working with Glenn in Term 2.

Julia Martin
Art teacher

PURPLE DAY
Purple Day was a huge success!
From purple ties to purple ponchos everyone helped raise over $400 for the Epilepsy and Spinal Muscular Atrophy Foundations.
Thank you to all who contributed to the successful day!

PURPLE DAY
What Makes Great Parents Great?

by Michael Grose

“They are such great parents!”

I’ve heard this statement a lot over the years. Sometimes it’s said about someone who is doing a wonderful job raising difficult kids or who is raising a family in challenging circumstances, such as following the loss of a partner or parenting while ill.

I think there’s more to it than that. I’ve spent the last twenty-five years thinking about the essentials of parenting and that includes figuring out what makes great parents great. What exactly is it that sets them above others? Whether instinctive or learned I’ve listed a number of behaviours, attitudes and skills that set great parents apart from the rest of us.

Great parents:

1. Separate themselves from their kids.
All parents naturally have hopes and dreams for their children. Great parents don’t let their aspirations for their children cloud their judgment or worse, take autonomy away from children who want to follow their own path.

2. Change as their child changes.
You know how it goes. You finally understand what makes a nine-year-old tick and then he moves into adolescence and the whole game changes. Great parents have the knack of matching their parenting style to their child’s developmental age.

3. Know how to lead the gang.
Great parents know how to get their kids singing from the same song sheet, at least some of the time. While their children may fight, you can count on them to stick together when the chips are down. This is more than a case of ‘blood is thicker than water’. Their parents have somehow managed to develop a sense of ‘we’ rather than ‘me’ in their kids. That’s real leadership.

4. Know when to nurture the individual.
As well as leading the gang great parents know how to give individual children what they need. This comes from keeping their ear to the ground and knowing what’s happening in their children’s lives.

5. Love their kids but don’t expect to be liked in return.
It’s a given that parents love their children, but this unconditional love is not always reciprocated. Great parents don’t always expect to be liked. In fact, they know at times they must live with their child’s contempt but that is a part of the parenting journey.

6. Have difficult conversations with kids.
Sexuality, dealing with loss, teen drinking and forgiveness! This is a sample of the many difficult conversations that parents should have with kids, but often avoid.

7. Don’t shirk discipline!
The job of parents is to socialise their kids so they can fit into the wider world. That means parents expect kids to behave and insist that kids factor in the rights and concerns of others when in public. Some parents will divest the discipline role to others, including their children’s school. Great parents roll up their sleeves and teach their kids what it means to be safe and social, which is what discipline is about.

8. Aren’t afraid of swimming against the tide of popular opinion.
Peer pressure gets to parents just like it gets to kids. Sometimes it seems that every parent, say pays their kids to help at home, but you feel like the odd one out because you believe that they should help regardless of recompense! It’s hard to swim against the tide but that’s what great parents do.

9. Seek to influence rather than control.
Great parents aren’t parenting autocrats. They recognise that some kids have minds of their own so they cut them some slack and seek to persuade and influence rather than control their kids.

10. Continually learn and add to their parenting toolkit.
Know a parent who either yells or nags at their kids when they don’t co-operate? If so, you know a parent with a limited parenting toolkit. Discipline, like confidence building, requires a broad kit of tools, which enables you to nuance your discipline according to different situations. Otherwise, like a carpenter building a house with only a hammer and saw in his toolkit you’ll be severely limited with what you can achieve.
Recently I spoke on ABC Melbourne radio about helping kids to cope with anxiousness. It’s great to be back on the radio and to hear firsthand from parents who are dealing with this issue day-to-day.

For those with no personal experience of anxiety it can be hard to understand how debilitating it can be. “Come on, get on with it,” seems so obvious. Of course, this response is nowhere near adequate.

Most kids experience some anxious moments or have fearful thoughts and feelings from time to time about certain events. These thoughts and feelings prompt them to proceed with caution.

But anxiety and fear can be paralysing. Some kids simply can’t stop their ‘bad thoughts and feelings’. They can’t silence the voice of fear that whispers to them continually.

Anxiety is a normal part of life and can be managed, but it takes time. It’s also contagious so it’s the job of parents to stay calm, think clearly and role model confidence when kids get anxious.

Calm is created through your words, voice and facial expression. When children become anxious, help them recognise what’s happening. Some kids get angry, some become upset and others withdraw. Work out the pattern for your child and help them recognise when they are anxious.

Accept your child’s anxious feelings. Your child needs to trust that you are with them, and then they will be more willing to let you help them cope. It’s hard sometimes to differentiate between what may be a bad case of negative thinking and true anxiety.

Is a child being negative when she doesn’t want to join a new club because she thinks no one will like her, or is there something more going on? Try to confirm whether there is any validity in their fears. If not, point out diplomatically, that they may be catastrophising. If you feel there is reason for concern, help them to overcome their anxiety.

Challenge the validity of your child’s fears and anxiety, using logic and rational thinking. Don’t allow kids to wallow in self-pity. Move their thoughts towards the future rather than allow them to mope around.

Encourage your child to overcome their anxiety through action.

Anxiety is normal, and part of everyday life. However, it can be debilitating unless it’s managed. Anxiety management takes time for kids to learn, but it’s one of those valuable life skills that parents can teach their kids.
Chicken Roster

Help needed

Thank you to everyone who helped looking after the chickens over the school holidays.

We are now seeking volunteers to care for the chickens each weekend during Term 2 from the weekend of 28 & 29 May

If you are able to help us please contact the office.