

A Message from the Principal

Dear Parents, Carers and School Community Members

Welcome to the 2019 school year. It has been lovely catching up with students, families and staff – hearing about wonderful trips, fun times and time for rest. If this is your first Newsletter at MSS – Welcome!

Newsletter Distribution

Our fortnightly newsletter is where all important information about what is happening at school, is documented. Currently it is being distributed with your child in a paper copy, however, if you would prefer an electronic copy this option is also available. Please let your class teacher know. Over the next few weeks, we will be using the newsletter to provide information to you all about our School Plan and different initiatives and programs. These newsletters are also on our website should your paper copy get misplaced.

Building News

It is amazing to see all of the hoarding removed from the side and back of one of the new buildings. The students and staff have enjoyed looking through the windows at the new spaces and we are all very eager to move in. At this stage we anticipate the buildings to be ready for the beginning of Term 2 and I look forward to keeping you updated. There is still no news of future funds being allocated to our school for next stages of our master plans. We very much are hoping we are at the top of the list.



School Council Elections

In March we have our Annual General Meeting for School Council and we are actively seeking new members. School Council is a great opportunity to be involved in the governance, policy making and decision making of the school. Our School Council is comprised of 11 members – 3 staff, 6 parents and 2 Community members.

We generally meet twice a Term for about an hour and a half. In the next week, forms will be available at the office for nominations. If you are interested, please feel free to give me a call for more information.

Student safety

Just a gentle reminder about parking and student safety. We remind parents that the bus parking area is a NO parking area. If you are dropping off your child please follow the yellow lines to the parent pick up/drop off zone. These gates will be opened from 8:30am and 2:30pm and supervision will be provided from 8:45 and 2:45 from our staff. Please remember to close the gates when you enter and exit.

REMINDER

ALL TEETH ON WHEELS FORMS MUST BE RETURNED TO THE OFFICE BY WEDNESDAY 13th FEBRUARY



**AFTER
SCHOOL CARE
COMMUNICATION
LINE**

0447 085 696

**Bacchus Marsh
Coaches**

**ABSENCE
LINE**

1800 660 530



School staff

At all times we encourage parents and families to be engaged in our school and their child's learning. If you have any concerns, please first raise them with your child's teacher, if the concern is not resolved, then raise it with the PLC leader and the last step for resolution is make an appointment to see the Principal Class Team. This is the recommended process because your child's teacher is with your child the most during school hours.

Below are the class teams and their members

PLC#1 – Leader: Joyce

Teachers: Jade, Lauren, Shanae, Tara, Penny S, Judy, David

PLC#2 - Leader: Lidia (Acting)

Teachers: Sunita, Tabitha, Dionne, Kerri, Denise

PLC#3 - Leader: Phil

Teachers: Kristy, Kellie, Brooke, Naomi, Michelle C, Lisa, Claire

PLC#4 - Leader: John McKee

Teachers: Andrea, Roger, Tim, Andrea

PLC#5 - Leader: Leader: Vacancy

Teachers: Penny B/Vandna, Pamela, Jamie, Victoria

PLC#6 – Leader: Megan (Acting)

Teachers: Richard, Kerry, Pierre, Bernice

Assistant Principals: Alice (Primary School) Tegan (Secondary School)

Personal devices

Students are discouraged from bringing mobile phones and other personal devices to school. If you would like your child to have a mobile phone with them for use before and after school, then the following procedure is to apply:

The named phone is to be given to the Class Teacher who will store it in a locked cabinet during the day. Please turn it off first.

Students may collect their phone from the teacher at home time. If students refuse to hand in their phones, a member of the Leadership Team will call you to come to the school to collect it.

BlueTooth Speakers are not permitted at school if these are brought to school these will also need to be locked away.

Class placements

Just a reminder that our classes are still not confirmed. We always take the first 6 weeks of term 1 to assess the placement of students in particular groups. Please make contact with your classroom teacher to provide feedback.

Curriculum Days

At the beginning of this year, our staff were involved in some important Professional Development which enables them to work with your child in a more effective and supportive way.

Jim Asimakopoulos OAM opened our school year by reminding us how important our roles are in working with your children. Jim is the Manager of the Abilities and Disability Awareness Program, Victorian Department of Education and Training. He pioneered the program in 1988 and has since delivered many workshops and spoken to many parents, students and staff in schools.

Jim visits schools, community groups and football clubs across Victoria, where he encourages people to believe in themselves.

The aim of his program is to make all people aware of what they can do, not what they can't do and to promote inclusion in schools and Society.



Best wishes everyone and welcome back
Brooke

DATES TO REMEMBER

Tuesday	19th February	School Council 5pm
Monday	11th March	Public Holiday—SCHOOL CLOSED
Tuesday	19th March	School Council 5pm
Friday	5th April	SSG Day—STUDENT FREE DAY—ILP Goals 8.30am-3.30pm
Friday	5th April	End of Term 3.30pm

STUDENT DROP OFF AND PICK UP

To facilitate safe pedestrian and vehicle traffic movement we ask for your cooperation in ensuring that the school car park line marking is used and families park in the marked bay OUTSIDE the school car park. Whilst the restricted access to the car park can cause upset at peak times, the most important thing is the safety of all of our student, staff and families.

No students are to be dropped off before 8.45am, if you arrive before 8.45am you are expected to wait with your child until their teacher collects them after 8.45am.

All students/families who drop off in the morning and pick up in the afternoon will be directed to the Parent Drop Off/Pick Up area. There are signs directing you to this area. This will be open from 8.30am and from 2.30pm.

**PLEASE NOTE THAT THE CAR PARK IS CLOSED TO ALL PUBLIC VEHICLE TRAFFIC FROM
8.30AM TO 9.15AM
2.30PM TO 3.15PM**

Please take note of parking restrictions that operate in the surrounding streets, the Local Laws Officers visit often.



Melton Specialist School is a sun smart school, all students must bring a hat to school during terms 1 and 4 for outdoor play.

Our SunSmart policy is on our website for further information, attached is what is recommended by SunSmart when buying a suitable hat for your child.

STUDENT LUNCHES

As the weather is very hot please ensure that your child has a water bottle with them at school.

The school no longer has any equipment to heat lunches for students so please pack something that is appropriate for your child. If your child prefers warm food please send it in a lunch thermos.

The school no longer has fridges to store food in classroom areas. Please use an insulated container to ensure items are kept cold.

These items are all available to be purchased from local suppliers.

Broad-brimmed hat*

Brims should shade the face, neck and ears.



Bucket hat*

Bucket or surfer-style hats should have a deep crown and sit low on the head. The angled brim should provide the face, neck and ears with plenty of shade.



Legionnaire hat

Legionnaire hats should have a flap that covers the ears and back of the neck to the collarbone/shoulder. The side flap and front peak should overlap to protect the side of the face.



Recommended brim width measurements³

	Indicative age group	Headwear size	Broad-brimmed minimum brim width	Bucket style minimum brim width
Children	Infants 0–1 year	41–43cm	5cm	5cm
	Toddler 1–2 years	49–52cm	5cm	5cm
	3–8 years	50–54cm	5cm	5cm
	8–12 years	55–57cm	6cm	6cm
Adults*	S/M	55–57cm	7.5cm	6cm
	M/L	57–59cm	7.5cm	6cm
	L/XL	59–61cm	7.5cm	6cm
	XXL	62–63cm	7.5cm	6cm

*Greater than 56cm circumference

UNIFORM SHOP

The 12 month change over period finished in 2018 for the introduction of our new school uniform. We thanks you for your continued support and cooperation in ensuring that your children are representing the school in a positive way and wearing full school uniform everyday.

Many families have taken the opportunity to stagger the purchasing of pieces of uniform during 2018.

Our uniform shop is open every **Monday 10am to 12pm and Wednesday from 3pm to 4pm.**

You can pick up an Order Form from our office or download one from our Website.

Just a reminder that we ONLY ACCEPT CASH PAYMENTS at this time.

Due to demand at the beginning of the school year the uniform shop stock is low. We will be replenishing stock shortly.

The Student Dress Code Policy will be enforced in 2019 so please make yourself familiar with the requirements. Copies are available from the Administration Office and it can be found on our Website.

NDIS INFORMATION

As many of you may have heard the NDIS Local Area Coordinator for Melton has been appointed. They are the Brotherhood of St Laurence.



The new Melton NDIS Office is now open and is located at High Street Melton (old Westpac Bank) near IGA.

There are many free information sessions that are being hosted to support families through the application process. Keep a look out on social media or for flyer in our newsletter.

We have had an increase in requests for support in filling out forms for the NDIS. Unfortunately we are unable to carry out this task, but can supply copies of reports held in your child's student file. We cannot create new reports to support the application, this is something that your child's medical practitioners can assist you with.

If you do require copies of student related reports, please send an email to melton.ss@edumail.vic.gov.au or phone 97434966. Please allow a minimum of 5 working days for the request to be processed. Please note that copies of Cognitive Assessments can only be collected directly from the Administration Office and not handed to your child to bring home.

We thank you for your patience with these processes.

If you require more information about the interface between the Department of Education and the NDIS please download the Fact Sheets on our Website.

CAMPS, SPORTS AND EXCURSIONS FUND (CSEF)

If you are eligible for CSEF in 2018 your application will be rolled over for 2019.

If you have not applied or in the past not been eligible and feel you now meet the eligibility criteria, please contact the administration office and we can send a form home, alternatively you can visit the school website and download the form.

Application forms are for new parents who now have a health care/pension card or any students over 16 who are getting a Disability Pension.

FAMILY PAYMENTS

The 2019 fees and payment options letters are available from the office if you have not received a copy. Our school fees are an important part of ensuring that our school can be a well resourced learning environment for your child.

Please contact the Business Manager if you are having any difficulty in making payments. There are payment plans available for families that require assistance.

If you are eligible for CSEF this will cover the family payment amount for the school year.

REPORTING A STUDENT ABSENCE

Coming to school every day is vital, but if for any reason your child must miss school, there are steps you can take to ensure they don't fall behind:

- Speak with your classroom teacher or section leader and find out what work your child needs to do to keep up.
- Or contact the Wellbeing Team to get some family support guidance.

Remember, every day counts. If your child must miss school, speak with your classroom teacher or year level coordinator as early as possible.

How to report your child's absence



Call 97434966



Press **1** to



leave a message



Your child's name



Child's Teacher's name



Reason for absence



Date/s of absence

OR



Write a note in your child's Communication Diary

COMMUNICATION WITH FAMILIES

At Melton Specialist School we understand the importance of communication with our families.

We utilise a range of ways to communicate with you:

- Notes in the Communication Dairy
- School Newsletter
- Melton Specialist School Website
- Letters to families
- Compass Parent Portal
- Bulk Text to mobile phones

The Compass Parent Portal will become the main avenue for online communication with our families.

Shortly, families will be receiving a letter via the MAIL containing your User Name and Temporary Password along with instructions. If you have not received your information in the mail by 22nd February, please contact the Administration Office for assistance.

Parents can use Compass for the following:

- Updating personal contact information
- News Feed information
- Attendance reporting and viewing
- Newsletter
- Downloading Reports and ILP's
- Approving Excursions, Camps and Activities

SCHOOL COUNCIL ELECTIONS

All government schools in Victoria have a school council. They are legally constituted bodies that are given powers to set the key directions of a school within state-wide guidelines. In doing this, a school council is able to directly influence the quality of education that the school provides for its students.

There are three possible categories - a mandated elected Parent category, a mandated elected DET employee category and an optional Community member category.

Generally, the term of office for all members is two years. The term of office of half the members expires each year, creating vacancies for the annual school council elections.

Parents on school councils provide important viewpoints and have valuable skills that can help shape the direction of the school.

Those parents who become active on a school council find their involvement satisfying and may also find that their children feel a greater sense of belonging.

The principal will issue a Notice of Election and Call for Nominations following the commencement of Term one each year. If you decide to stand for election, you can arrange for someone to nominate you as a candidate or you can nominate yourself in the Parent category.

Once the nomination form is completed, return it to the principal within the time stated on the Notice of Election. Y

You will receive a Nomination Form Receipt in the mail following the receipt of your completed nomination.

Generally, if there are more nominations received than there are vacancies on council, a ballot will be conducted during the two weeks after the call for nominations has closed.

Nominations Forms are attached. Please return to the Administration Office by 18TH FEBRUARY 4PM