PRINCIPAL REPORT

Policy Changes
An important role for school council is the development and review of school policies that fall under school governance rather than operations. Council’s work this and every year is to ensure the school is compliant in policy areas as things (policy, legislation) change at school, Department and Government levels.

The work in this area has already begun for 2013. As part of this work council has already reviewed and ratified two existing policies. The Uniform Policy and the Digital Resources (Responsible Use Agreement) required work due to changes at the school level.

The 2013 Uniform Policy is printed in this newsletter and reflects the change to a primary school and the introduction of the new logo. It is included in this newsletter for your reference. It contains no drastic changes and reflects current practice taking out middle school references and applying the same policies across the school.

The phasing in of the new logo is set for a three year period. As part of that process the fleecy top will, over this time, replace the windcheater as an option. It also contains articulation of the PE uniform that may be worn all day on days students have PE or in the case of grade 5/6 – sport.

The Digital Resources Policy (responsible use agreement) has also been changed not so much in application areas but in wording. The development of the econnect program saw a revision of the policy to more current language (eg using “digital resources” to replace “Information and Communication Technology”) and this is now reflected in the new policy.

All existing school policies are available on the current website and the new policies will be included in the new website to be released in the coming weeks.

Council is currently working on changes to the Anaphylaxis Management Policy in response to changes at a legislative and Government policy level

Student Achievement Awards
After some discussion with teachers and parents late last year and across the first few weeks back, it became apparent to me that there was some tension about student awards and why, where and how we celebrate them.

In my conversations with parents and teachers I heard a range of attitudes and opinions from the cynical “if everyone gets one they don’t mean much” to the disillusioned “that child didn’t get one until last term so mustn’t be very good”. I heard adults from the dichotomous perspectives on the positive impact awards had on children’s self-esteem and behaviour. I also alarmingly heard and witnessed poor behaviour where awards and the merits of recipients were discussed in disparaging terms and where pressure both subtle and direct was placed on teachers to justify their decisions to parents.
Before you despair reading this, I was very fortunate that like the rest of the community I also witnessed the faces of the children when they were announced as award winners at assemblies. Not once did I see reflected in those faces disappointment or cynicism. I saw pride, sometimes shining through humility. I saw surprise but most importantly I saw joy.

I have spent some time pondering what then to do about “awards,” like they are the naughty child in the corner, polarising the community. I took this question to the teachers “Do we want to give awards?” A discussion similar to the one above ensued, listing the reasons why they were sometimes problematic. I asked another “Why do we give student awards?” The answers to this question were more reassuring and encouraging and of course about students and unrelated to the adults in the community.

In response, as a staff, we have spent some time thrashing out the “What to do about awards”. What follows in this newsletter is the collective position of our teachers regarding awards.

**Student Achievement Awards**

**Rationale:** At Moonee Ponds Primary School our Student Achievement Award program acknowledges and celebrates the diverse student achievement within the school community through recognising each individual’s personal growth in all aspects of school life and reflecting our school mission, vision and values.

**What do we give them for?**
All students will get an award. Awards will be given as follows:

- **Academic “Learning Star” award:**
  - Personal growth - Interpersonal/ intrapersonal/ academic
  - Reflection on why we come to school/ Public Celebration/student goals).

- **School Values “ROCC Star” award.**

Specialist teachers may also present an award from across the school (not all students will be awarded).

- **Art (Visual or Performing)/Italian/PE award**

*Each class/ specialist teacher will nominate two awards every fortnight. They will be distributed in class by the end of the week and announced through the newsletter the following Wednesday. Students will also be acknowledged by having their name announced and standing up (within the audience) at assembly.*

Teacher Professional judgement is encouraged and supported; this is only one form of feedback provided for students. Feedback on student’s learning and achievement is given every day and in varying forms both inside and outside of the classroom.

I am very pleased to publish this agreed rationale and protocol for the school community. I hope it resets the discussion about awards to one that is focused on student learning and achievement and on living our school values.

I think it also worth noting that teachers included “all children will receive an award”. This means clearly the awards are not a competition but a formal feedback process that is
publically celebrated and acknowledged. As stated, teachers will use their professional judgements about what the awards will be given for – this allows teachers to shape the awards around learning and/or values depending on the circumstances that best suit the circumstances of each child and their classroom for that fortnight. Obviously given the number of weeks in a school year, some children may receive more than one award. Please be mindful that this is not a competitive lever. Please join us in celebrating every child and every award. Awards will begin in the next newsletter and assembly.

**Birthday Celebrations**

Firstly I would like to thank those who took the time to relay their opinions and feeling about birthday celebrations in our classrooms. This topic has been discussed as a staff and below is the agreed rationale and protocols for your information. I hope that this provides clarity for families and would stress that this is in no way a suggestion that all families need to do anything special at school on their child’s birthday but rather protocols for those who do.

At Moonee Ponds Primary School we believe in celebrating students as individuals, and this may include the acknowledgement of birthdays. Classes may choose to acknowledge this in their own way, such as singing happy birthday or wearing a birthday badge/hat in the early years. At times, parents may also wish to provide a special treat for their child’s class on this day.

If you choose to send birthday ‘treats’ for your child’s class, we ask parents to adhere to the following guidelines:

- Please provide only small, individually portioned items (e.g. cupcakes, freddo frog)
- No nut or nut products (as per our nut policy), if home made please include a list of ingredients
- Bring the items to your child’s classroom before 9:00am, to be left with the teacher to hand out at their discretion. This may vary depending on the most convenient time for the class on that day

**Transition to Secondary School**

I have found myself involved in many conversations with grade 5 and 6 students over the past two weeks as they begin or finalise their decisions about secondary education. I will repeat here what I am saying in those conversations. In my research for the community regarding secondary school transition I have been resoundingly impressed by the quality of the state schools open to our community.

This was confirmed for me recently with a visit to our school from Jillian English, new Principal of Strathmore Secondary College. Jill has visited many primary schools over the past few weeks and was impressed as many of her colleagues are, with the maturity, thinking and positive attitude of the students she met while visiting classrooms.

Obviously the various ceilings that apply to many of the neighbouring schools including Strathmore make zones an issue for some families, depending on which school they would like their child to attend and where they live.

I would say two things here. The first is that there are quality schools within the area without ceilings. One case in point is Mount Alexander College that is one of the geographically closest schools to Moonee Ponds Primary School and may therefore be the closest school to some family residences. I know and acknowledge that this school has been seen historically as less than ideal by some members of our community. I would urge all families to take another look at the school under Principal Alan Davis. It is currently a small school that is capped at 500 odd students. Alan’s mission is to create an excellent school for this immediate neighbourhood and he is well on the way with new facilities, deep and meaningful connections to enhance it
for a class of year 7 students in 2013 as is RoseHill S.C. Both programs require students to sit an exam for selection into the program.

The second point I would make is that many (Strathmore, University High, Buckley Park, Brunswick) run Select Entry Accelerated Learning Programs (SEALP) for a class every year. Access to this program is through examination and creates 25 spaces outside the ceiling processes. As well as this there are curriculum grounds that can be applied. The best example I can give here and one that Jill English asked me to explain to parents is the Strathmore music program. Students can apply to sit an audition for entry to Strathmore based on musical aptitude. This may also govern prior learning in a particular language and at Maribyrnong Secondary College includes entry through the sport program.

Information on these processes and critical dates will be available on school websites and I encourage all families to conduct thorough research on their options. The system process of completing a preference sheet is completed by parents for all grade 6 students regardless of other enrolment processes. There will be more information about this in term 2.

The state sector also offers entry onto Select Entry Schools through a state-wide test for years 9 - 12. There are currently four selective entry high schools in Victoria for students in Years 9-12: Melbourne High (boys only), The MacRobertson Girls' High (girls only), Nossal High School (co-educational) and Suzanne Cory High School (co-educational). I include this information as I find many parents confuse schools with a SEALP class and Select Entry Schools.

Interestingly and related was an article I saw in a weekend newspaper titled “Parents pay to find best school.” The headline left me torn between admiration for entrepreneurial genius that recognised the niche market and anger that someone had found another way to separate caring parents from hard earned money to satisfy a fear that they had not done everything conceivable to advance their child’s future.

The tips were worth noting:

Focus on what is a good fit rather than whether it is a “good” school.
Beware of people’s biases and carpark gossip.
Schools now are not necessarily the same when you were at school.
What was right for you might not be right for your children.
Visit schools when they are operating, rather than weekend open days.
Ask lots of questions.
Visit schools not on your radar in order to make meaningful comparison, much like you would when buying a house.
Try not to be too influenced by facilities.

I include these tips as they echo advice I would and do give parents when asked. I would add however that research also suggests that the quality of the teachers and the school leaders is critical in student learning.

This newsletter carries some advertisements from neighbouring schools and some from a little further afield. This is in response to requests from schools and to give parents information that may assist them in their research.
**Events**
The past few weeks have seen the grade 1/2 classes involved in “healthy eating” incursions where students created fruit salad as part of their study of healthy bodies.

Last Friday also saw grades 5/6 student in the first day of Gala Sports. The House Captains and “leader writer” - Lilly Tye will bring you reports of the event in detail after the second day (this Friday). With the long weekend and Divisional Swimming Carnival, meeting our publication deadline has been difficult. I would add however, that I attended and was impressed with our students. Their excitement was palpable in the school yard in the morning before leaving and this was matched by skill, positive attitude and team work at the events. Despite the heat, smiling faces told a story of a fun day participating and doing everything to do their personal best.

Lilly Tye and Devlin McCarthy are representing the school at Divisional swimming carnival at the time of writing this newsletter after qualifying at the District swimming sports last week. I would like to thank them both for their efforts, as well as all the swimmers who competed at District level.

Joanne Ryan

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**Forms**
Forms can now be collected from the office. Enrolments are now being taken for next year. If you know of anybody, ie: neighbours, family, friends etc. Please advise them we have begun the enrolment process and tours are available by contacting the school.
UNIFORM POLICY

Rationale:
A consistent school uniform creates a sense of collective and individual pride in students and supports their identification with the school.

Aims:
The purpose of this policy is to:
- Promote equality amongst all students.
- Create a positive sense of belonging regardless of gender, cultural and socio-economic background.
- Assist in group security and safety when on excursions and away from the school.
- Represent the school in a positive image to the school population and wider community.
- Assist in bonding students and establish a strong school identity.
- Meet Sunsmart requirements.

Implementation:
All students are required to wear the correct school uniform:
- During school hours (unless specified).
- While engaged in school activities out of school hours or when representing the school.
- School photo days.
- While attending all excursions.

All students are required to wear a school hat for all outdoor activities including PE classes, recess and lunchtimes from September 1st to April 30th.

The compulsory uniform is available from Campus Choice Uniform Shop.

New Logo:
The new school logo will be phased in over three years. Campus Choice will make stock with the new logo available as particular articles or sizes are sold out. As part of this process the windcheater will be phased out leaving the pullover, fleecy top and bomber jacket options.

The Uniform (Formal)

- School Dress (summer)
- Culottes – Navy gabardine
- Trousers – navy
- Red Short Sleeve Polo
- Windcheater
- Fleecy Top
- School Tunic (winter)
- Shorts – Navy gabardine
- Skivvy – red or white
- Red Long Sleeve Polo
- Pullover
- Bomber Jacket
Public Education Funding - The Gonski Review

You may have heard in the media recently references to the Gonski Review of Education Funding. This was the first review of the way schools and students are funded in almost forty years. The recommendations from the review form the basis of a new funding model for all schools across Australia.

Two years ago a group of independent industry leaders, led by David Gonski, were charged by the Federal Government with the task of reviewing the current funding model and coming up with a more equitable model. A model which would mean every child in the country would have enough funding throughout their education journey to help them reach their full potential. The quality of education, including resources, would no longer be determined by the ‘wealth’ of the school’s demographic. Funding would be needs based; students with additional needs would receive additional funding.

The Gonski panel researched and consulted widely within the education sector for 12 months before releasing its recommendations. Those recommendations require additional education funding from both Federal and State/Territory governments.

In its basic form, the Gonski model would mean every student would be funded at the same base level (regardless of sector) and then additional funding, or loadings, would be applied for students with additional needs. These loadings could relate to students with physical or intellectual needs, those living in rural or remote communities, indigenous students, those from non-English speaking backgrounds – the list is varied.

For all students in our public schools, the recommendations would mean that, on average, every student would receive an additional $1,500 of funding per year on top of the current funding. Over their 13 years of schooling, this would be an incredible $19,500 EXTRA per student.

Leaders will meet in Canberra next month to vote on whether they will endorse the Gonski funding model. At present our State Government is refusing to sign on to these recommendations. They believe they have a better model, developed at the eleventh hour internally and without consultation. The Victorian Funding Model would still require additional funding from the Federal and State governments, but would deliver an additional $440 million per year to Victorian schools, instead of the $1.6 billion per year the Gonski review is recommending.

You need to let the Victorian government know now that you believe our Victorian children deserve the same educational funding and opportunities as every other child in Australia. You can send a message directly to the Premier via the I Give a Gonski campaign website, asking him to support the Gonski Funding Recommendations. You can also phone or email your State or Federal member asking for their commitment to the implementation of the Gonski Recommendations.


Gonski Week of Action – March 10 - 17
On the 1st of March 2013 we had our first Moonee Ponds Primary School SRC meeting. So we first of all came into the Multipurpose Room and sat down. Next we, Amelia and I, were sent to get free icypoles, as we were doing this it kind of felt like we were robbers. She gave us a pack of twenty, and in my mind I said “Score!” After that we were told to walk around the room and find out three weird things about other people.

Next we came back into the room and Anthony said that we will be getting buddies for SRC. My buddy’s name was Rufus. We all got together and told each other about ourselves. After that Rufus and I were going around the room writing down our ideas for SRC. We were told that the older buddies must write what we came up with. After the bell went Anthony kept all the school captains for 10 minutes.

by Jack McLeod

There are some outstanding fees that have not been paid. These fees are required to be finalised by the end of this term. Please send contracts and payment to the School Office.

Matt Bott

Brunswick Kindergarten is in the unusual position of having a number of four-year-old kindergarten places still on offer in 2013. The program is run in two big, beautiful kindergarten rooms in the kindergarten’s historic building in Glenlyon Road in the centre of Brunswick. It runs a progressive, sessional, play based program (15 hours/week). If you know of anyone who missed out on a four-year-old spot next year please let them know that they may be able to take up a place at Brunswick Kindergarten by calling on 93808948.
The Sport Uniform
The sport uniform is to be worn ONLY on days when students have PE, when grades 5/6 have sport, represent the school in sport or at whole school carnivals.
- Navy shorts/Netball skirt (with navy sports briefs/bike shorts underneath)
- Track Pants Navy
- Runners

During grade 5/6 sport or when students are participating in whole school carnivals the t-shirt below is worn in place of the school shirt.
- A plain house colour t-shirt: red, blue, green, yellow – no logos or patterns.

Hats (compulsory from September 1st to April 30th)
- MPPS Legionnaires Hat (Navy)
- MPPS Broad Brim Hat (Navy)
- MPPS Bucket Hat (Navy)

Footwear
- Plain black shoes

Approved Uniform (optional)
- Bike Shorts (navy knit) - may be worn under summer dress (available from the uniform shop)
- Navy tights
- Navy scarf
- Navy beanie with school logo
- Book Bag
- School Bag
- Hair accessories in the school fabric or plain colours

Items Not permitted (for safety reasons)
- Earrings (other than studs or sleepers) are not to be worn.
- Jewellery other than a wrist watch is not to be worn externally.

Exemption
The Principal may grant an exemption upon receiving written application from the parents/guardians. The application should state the grounds for the exemption and this may need to be referred to School Council for approval via the principal.

Uniform Shop
A uniform shop operates from the school and uniforms can be purchased from this shop at reasonable prices. Opening times are Thursday afternoons from 2.45pm till 3.45pm. Orders can be phoned through to the uniform shop and picked up from the office.

Second Hand Uniform Shop
The school has a uniform shop where items of clothing can be purchased at a very reasonable price.

Evaluation: This Policy will be evaluated on a 3 year review cycle.
Key Person responsible for development of the Uniform Policy: Principal

This policy was last ratified by School Council in....  February 2013
On Monday the 4th of March 10 students from Moonee Ponds P.S. competed in the Essendon District Primary School’s Sports Association Swim Trials. Those who participated included Tait Pascoe, Ben Gray, Melina Vampatella, Jack Leury, Devlin Mc Carthy, Molly Kilpatrick, Alexander Craven, Thomas Bowden, Christian Chan, and Lilly Tye. Mali Mc Leod also made it through to the District Swim Trials but unfortunately was unable to participate. Congratulations to all students, they swam extremely well, achieving some great results with Lilly Tye and Devlin McCarthy advancing to the Division Swimming Championships.

Individual results were as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Boys</th>
<th>Place</th>
<th>Girls</th>
<th>Place</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Freestyle - 10yr old</td>
<td>Tait Pascoe, Ben Gray</td>
<td>3rd, 4th</td>
<td>Mali Mc Leod</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Freestyle - 11yr old</td>
<td>Jack Leury</td>
<td>4th</td>
<td>Molly Kilpatrick</td>
<td>4th</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Freestyle - 12+yr old</td>
<td>Alexander Craven</td>
<td>2nd</td>
<td>Lilly Tye</td>
<td>4th</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Backstroke - 10yr old</td>
<td>Ben Gray</td>
<td>6th</td>
<td>Melina Vampatella</td>
<td>2nd</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Backstroke - 11yr old</td>
<td>Devlin Mc Carthy</td>
<td>2nd</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Backstroke - 12+yr old</td>
<td>Thomas Bowden</td>
<td>5th</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Breaststroke - 10yr old</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Melina Vampatella, Mali Mc Leod</td>
<td>n/a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Breaststroke - 11yr old</td>
<td>Devlin Mc Carthy</td>
<td>2nd</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Breaststroke - 12+yr old</td>
<td>Christian Chan</td>
<td>3rd</td>
<td>Lilly Tye</td>
<td>2nd</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Butterfly - 10yr old</td>
<td>Tait Pascoe</td>
<td>3rd</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Butterfly - 11yr old</td>
<td>Christian Chan</td>
<td>7th</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Butterfly - 12yr old</td>
<td>Christian Chan</td>
<td>3rd</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Freestyle Relay - 12yr old boys 4 x 50m</td>
<td>Tait Pascoe, Devlin Mc Carthy, Christian Chan, Alexander Craven</td>
<td>3rd</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medley Relay - Open boys 4 x 50m</td>
<td>Thomas Bowden (Backstroke), Devlin Mc Carthy (Breaststroke), Tait Pascoe (Butterfly), Christian Chan (Freestyle)</td>
<td>1st</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
DISTRICT SWIMMERS

CONGRATULATIONS TO OUR DISTRICT SWIMMERS
- A GREAT JOB!
Trading table cake stall results

The 3/4 Trading table made $440. Many thanks to our wonderful Grade 3/4 parents for putting on such a great spread last Thursday, especially in the heat!
Thanks to Alli Beaumont for coordinating it. Our next Trading table cake stall will be Term 2 for the Grade 5/6’s

AGM

The Parents Association AGM is this Thursday @ 7.30pm in the SPC followed by the usual monthly meeting. All welcome. We will be seeking 2 representatives for school council on the night. Please take the time to consider nominating for these roles, they are very important in the communication between the 2 committees and need to be filled.

End of Term lunch- Thursday 28th of March

This Term we will be trying something different and offering a Subway lunch for end of term. More details will be going home shortly.

Fun Run

You may have noticed some of the Fun Run posters dotted around school. Forms and notices will be going home shortly.
If you are able to assist with this fundraiser or indeed on the day of the Fun Run (Friday April 19th) please jump on board by contacting:
Melissa Darlington melissajdarlington@gmail.com or
Sandra Katsikis sandra@soothingsouls.com.au
Dear Parent and Guardians.

The Premiers Reading Challenge is a wonderful initiative which encourages students to read a targeted amount of books whilst providing them with a challenge. It promotes the importance of reading and encourages parents and families to support their children’s reading in and beyond school. Students who complete the challenge receive a certificate and are eligible to have their name printed in The Age newspaper.

This year will be Moonee Ponds Primary’s 5th consecutive year of participating in the challenge and we’d love to see 100% participation. Last year we had quite a number of student’s who read 100 books or more, which is an amazing effort.

The Challenge will be held over the next two terms and the students are expected to read a certain number of books to reach their set targets. Students have until the 5th September, 2013 to complete the challenge.

The reading targets for each level are as follows:

- **Prep to Year 2** – Challenged to read or experience (which means they have books read to them) 30 books; 20 or more from the Reading Challenge Booklist.
- **Year 3 – 8** – Challenged to read 15 books; 10 or more from the Reading Challenge Booklist.

This year we are lucky to have 4 wonderful and enthusiastic parent co-ordinators along with Library staff who you can contact for assistance with any aspect of the Challenge.

The co-ordinators are:

- **Preps** – Sonya Musgrave (parent of Finn, yr PB and Angus yr 1/2D)
- **Yr 1/2** – Leah Manion (parent of Jacinta yr 1/2B and Ebony yr 1/2A)
- **Yr 3/4** – Jackie Pope (parent of Alicia yr 3/4C)
- **Yr 5/6** – Susan Russell – (parent of Thomas yr 5/6A and yr James 1/2A)

Please don’t hesitate to contact them if you have issues or concerns about the Challenge.

What you need to do to participate in the Challenge:

1. Return the Consent Form
2. Log onto the website using the username and password that will be issued next week.
3. Record the books your child reads.

We look forward to another successful Reading Challenge at Moonee Ponds Primary.

Happy Reading everyone!!!

Kim and Vicki
Library
Once again Moonee Ponds Primary School will be involved with Ride2School Day! The benefits of riding, skating or scooting to school include reducing traffic around school and increasing the amount of physical activity kids take part in helping to improve health outcomes like being more alert and attentive in class! Moonee Valley Council will be offering the school with the highest participation rate a $500 prize!!

On the day children who ride, skate or scoot to school will need to arrive at the bike shed near the oval to park their ‘vehicle’, it will be open from 8.20am. Tokens will be given to every student who comes on a bike, scooter or skateboard. They can redeem the token from 8.30am for a FREE breakfast organised by our Parent’s Association. We ask that parents get enthusiastic about the day and try to be involved in any way they can!! We will need parent helpers for the breakfast setup/serving/cleanup, distributing tokens and helping students at the bike shed. Please speak to or email Clare Walker clare.walker@live.com or Ally Kane ally.kane@optusnet.com.au if you can help on the day.


JOIN IN THE FUN WITH A GROUP!!

On Ride2School Day there will be a supervised group ride catering for three levels of ability:

* Confident riders / geared bikes.
* Able but less confident riders / non-geared bikes.
* Beginner riders (including those with training wheels) and scooter/skateboard riders.

Anyone interested should speak to or email Sonya Musgrave sonstu1@gmail.com for further details.

REMEMBER TO BE SAFE WHEN RIDING TO SCHOOL BY WEARING A HELMET AND HAVING AN ADULT WITH YOU IF NEEDED. HAVE FUN!!
NATIONAL RIDE 2 SCHOOL DAY
FRIDAY 22 MARCH
RIDE • SCOOT • SKATE
Be part of the fun!

Supported by

State Government of Victoria
The pitfall of using other children as benchmarks

Benchmarking children’s progress with that of other children is not a wise parenting strategy. Inevitably, it will lead to parent frustration as there will always be a child who performs better than your own on any scale you use.

Have you ever compared your child’s behaviour, academic progress or social skills with a sibling or your friend’s children? Comparing your child with others is a stress-inducing and, ultimately, useless activity.

But it’s hard to resist, as we tend to assess our progress in any area of life by checking out how we compare with our peers.

When you were a child in school you probably compared yourself to your schoolmates. Your teachers may not have graded you, but you knew who the smart kids were and where you ranked in the pecking order.

Now that you have kids of your own do you still keep an eye on your peers? Do you use the progress and behaviour of their kids as benchmarks to help you assess your own performance as well as your child’s progress? Or perhaps you compare your child to yourself at the same age?

Benchmarking children’s progress with that of other children is not a wise parenting strategy. Inevitably, it will lead to parent frustration as there will always be a child who performs better than your own on any scale you use.

Kids develop at their own rates

Each child has his or her own developmental clock, which is nearly impossible to alter. There are slow bloomers, early developers, bright sparks and steady-as-you-go kids in every classroom. The slow bloomers can cause the most concern for parents who habitually compare children to siblings, their friends’ kids and even themselves when they were in school.

The trick is to focus on your child’s improvement and effort and use your child’s results as the benchmark for his or her progress and development. “Your spelling is better today than it was a few months ago” is a better measure of progress than “Your spelling is the best in the class!”

Gender matters

It’s no secret that boys’ and girls’ brains were developed by different architects. One major difference lies around timing, or maturity. The maturity gap between boys and girls is anywhere between 12 months and two years. This gap seems to be consistent all the way to adulthood.

Quite simply, girls have a developmental head start over boys in areas such as handwriting, verbal skills and relationship skills. Boys benefit greatly from teaching strategies designed for their specific needs. They also benefit from having teachers and parents who recognise that patience is a virtue when teaching and raising boys, as it seems to take longer for many boys to learn and develop.

Kids have different talents, interests and strengths

So your eight-year-old can’t hit a tennis ball like Novak Djokovic, even though your neighbour’s child can. Avoid comparing the two as your child may not care about tennis anyway.

It’s better to help your child identify his or her own talents and interests. Also recognise that the strengths and interests of a child may be completely different to those of his or her peers and siblings.

Avoid linking your parenting self-esteem to your child’s performance

As a parent you should take pride in your children’s performance at school, in sport or their leisure activities. Seeing your child do well is one of the unsung pleasures of parenting. You should also celebrate their achievements and milestones, such as taking their first steps, getting their first goal in a game or getting great marks at school.

However, you shouldn’t have too much personal stake in your children’s success or milestones, as this close association makes it hard to separate yourself from them. It may also lead to excessive parental pressure for kids to do well for the wrong reasons – to please you!

The maxim “You are not your child” is a challenging but essential parental concept to live by. Doing so takes real maturity and altruism, but it is the absolute foundation of that powerful thing known as “unconditional love”.

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Michael Grose

parentingideas.com.au parentingideas.co.uk parentingideas.co.nz

Michael Grose Presentations

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It’s time to get excited about this year’s Cross Country & Fun Run! This is a cracker of a school fundraiser & sporting event as the kids have fun getting fit, raise money for their school AND they earn fantastic prizes at the same time! What’s not to love?!

The main focus of this event is on participation. Family support is most appreciated as we encourage all students to get involved. Sponsorship Forms are coming home today so the kids can start collecting sponsors for the big event! This year there will even be an online sponsorship option for family and friends who don’t live close by.

We ask all parents to read the Sponsorship Form and sign the front page to grant permission for their child to fundraise and participate in this event. Students who raise just $10 or more will receive a reward for effort. In the Sponsorship Form you will also find many other benefits like the chance to win a family holiday to Disneyland! Forms and money are due back on first day of Term 2, Monday 15th April.

Friday 19th April is the day of the run and we would love an army of helpers on the day, but in the interim we do need volunteers to help us coordinate each year level in the lead-up over the coming weeks. No experience necessary!

If you are available and interested in helping out in any way, shape or form please contact Melissa on melissajdarlington@gmail.com or 0422 708 234.

End of Term Lunchbox Package

THURSDAY 28TH MARCH
ONLY $5 PER PERSON!

YOUR $5.00 ORDER INCLUDES:
A SIX INCH SUB OF YOUR CHOICE
A DRINK (VARIETY)
AND A PIECE OF FRUIT (VARIETY)

Order forms will be going home with your child shortly
Year 7, 2014

Brunswick Secondary College will continue to offer a Select Entry Accelerated Learning Program for year 7 entry next year. Students in the SEALP complete Years 7 to 10 with a focus on extension material and learning in greater depth in the key learning areas of English, Maths, Science and Humanities.

Students suited to this program are those who;

- Have above average academic ability and excel in most areas of the curriculum
- Are creative
- Have high levels of maturity and commitment
- Have strong and positive self concept
- Are capable of independent learning

Students are selected into the program on the basis of ability and achievement testing, teacher report and interview.

For further information visit the school website at www.brunswick.vic.edu.au or contact Marilyn Hardy or Tim James on 9387-6133. Applications close Friday 17th May, 2013. Test date Saturday 25th May 2013.
### DATES TO NOTE 2013—TERM 1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>MONDAY</th>
<th>TUESDAY</th>
<th>WEDNESDAY</th>
<th>THURSDAY</th>
<th>FRIDAY</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Labour Day Holiday</td>
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<tr>
<td>18 March</td>
<td>19 March</td>
<td>20 March</td>
<td>21 March</td>
<td>22 March Ride 2 School Day Whole School Photos Assembly 3pm</td>
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<td>25 March</td>
<td>26 March</td>
<td>27 March</td>
<td>28 March End of Term Subway Lunch 2.20 pm Finish</td>
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<td>School Council AGM</td>
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### DATES TO NOTE TERM 2

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>15 April</td>
<td>16 April</td>
<td>17 April</td>
<td>18 April</td>
<td>19 April School Fun Run/ X Country</td>
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<td>Term 2 Begins</td>
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<tr>
<td>22 April</td>
<td>23 April</td>
<td>24 April</td>
<td>25 April Anzac Day Holiday</td>
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### SUNSMART

Don’t forget that the school’s sunsmart policy indicates that sun-screen be applied before school and students must have their own sun-screen in the bags for re-application by the student.

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**Website** Don’t forget that our newsletter is on-line and can be found at [www.mpc.vic.edu.au](http://www.mpc.vic.edu.au)

If you would like to be on a reminder email list to let you know that the newsletter is uploaded on our website, please email Kaye at: moonee.ponds.ps@edumail.vic.gov.au

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**Excursions / Camps / Special Events:**
- March 14th—PA Annual General Meeting
- March 15th—Year 5/6 Gala Sports Day
- March 22nd—Whole School Photos
- April 19—School X Country
- April 25—Anzac Day Holiday

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**A reminder to all that the Campus Choice Uniform Shop**

Will be present at school every Thursday for any uniform requirements. They will be in attendance from 2.45 pm until 3.45 pm