



Read the MPPS newsletter to stay up to date with the latest information, upcoming events and celebrations of learning.

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[www.mpp.vic.edu.au](http://www.mpp.vic.edu.au)  
<https://mpp-vic.compass.education/>

Out of Hours School Care:  
TeamKids: 1300 035 000  
Email: [info@teamkids.com.au](mailto:info@teamkids.com.au)  
[www.teamkids.com.au](http://www.teamkids.com.au)



WE ACKNOWLEDGE THE WURUNDJERI PEOPLE OF THE KULIN NATION AS THE TRADITIONAL OWNERS OF THE LAND WHICH IS MOONEE PONDS PRIMARY SCHOOL. WE PAY OUR RESPECTS TO ELDERS PAST AND PRESENT AND TO THE ONGOING LIVING CULTURES OF FIRST PEOPLES.



### PRINCIPAL REPORT

I hope everyone has survived the stretch of very hot weather this week. It has been wonderful to see our classes building as communities of learners as they engage through the annual MPPS Establishment Program. It has been a fantastic start to the year!

There is lots of information in this fortnight's edition of the newsletter. This includes information about joining and supporting our School Council and parents Association.

In the next week students in Years 1 - 6 will begin the process for nominating for the Student Representative Council (SRC) and our environmental group the 'Green Team'. These important groups build student leadership skills and help educate and develop our community.

Our house captains are busy preparing the students in their respective houses for our first sports event for the year, our annual swimming carnival. Congratulations to the following year six leaders:

	Lawson	Chisholm	Macarthur	Banks
House Captains	Emily H Owen L	Caitlyn Gus	Rhiannon Logan	Sollie Rosemary
Vice Captains	Lachie Ava	Thomas Harry	Corvin David	Eli Rosie

The next assembly will be next Thursday 23 February at 3pm in the Gym when year 5/6A will present.

As we welcome students back for the start of the 2024 school year, please find information about the following department services and resources to assist:

- Transition <https://www.vic.gov.au/tips-starting-school>
- Help with school costs <https://www.vic.gov.au/help-school-costs-and-fees>
- Health and Wellbeing <https://www.vic.gov.au/health-and-wellbeing-staff-schools>
- What to expect at school <https://www.vic.gov.au/attending-school>

#### 2024 Term Dates:

Term 1 - 31 Jan-28 Mar  
Term 2 - 16 Apr-28 June  
Term 3 - 15 Jul-20 Sept  
Term 4 - 7 Oct-20 Dec

#### Dates to Note:

##### February

16: Years 1-6 Swimming Sports  
20: Parent -teacher exchange  
21: School Photo Day  
23: Year 5/6 Gala Sports day 1  
28: District Swimming  
28: School Council meeting

##### March

1: Year 5/6 Gala Sports day 1

#### Student-Free Curriculum Days

Monday 15 April  
Monday 4 November


#### Camps

3-5 June - Year 5/6 Camp  
21-23 August - Year 3/4 Camp


#### Parent's Association Meetings

AGM next meeting: Thursday 7 March 2024—7.00pm


Access the latest school newsletter through the Compass Newsfeed or through the School Website at:  
<http://www.mpp.vic.edu.au/our-school/newsletters/>



**COMPASS**  
For attendance, excursions, camps, bookings, school payments, emails and school communication via the newsfeed.



**SEESAW**  
Stay connected to your child's learning at school. See photos and videos of school learning experiences and talk to your child about this!



**SCHOOL WEBSITE**  
Access School policies, procedures and resources for families. This includes the newsletter and parent downloads.

## PRINCIPAL REPORT - CONT.

### Information Handbooks & Presentations (Foundation - Year 6)

Information regarding each year level's handbook and presentation will be shared via the Compass Newsfeed. These documents/video presentations include information on classroom structures and processes, curriculum, homework, and other important information.

Once you have viewed the video and read through the handbook, please complete this short survey: <https://forms.office.com/r/y10kMbjTjV>. We will use this information to provide further advice and support to families either through a follow up "FAQ" response or individually at the Parent-Teacher exchange next week.

### Swimming Sports - this Friday 16 Feb

Students in Years 1/2 (9:30am to 12pm) and Years 3-6 (9:30am to 2:30pm) will be attending our swimming sports this Friday 16 February. We look forward to a fun day out at Queens Park pool.

**Please help!!!** We do need more help on the day.

If you are now available to help, please let us know! Email Matt or Jenny (emails below) with your details.

Yr 3-6: Matt Feeley ([matthew.feeley@education.vic.gov.au](mailto:matthew.feeley@education.vic.gov.au))

Yr 1-2: Jenny Clark ([Jennifer.Clark3@education.vic.gov.au](mailto:Jennifer.Clark3@education.vic.gov.au))

Again, this year we have MPPS (silicone) swim caps available to purchase at the office. They are \$8 each if anyone would like to purchase. They will be available leading up to the swim sports and also during our Foundation - Year 4 Intensive Swimming program in Term 3 (29 July - 9 Aug).

### Parent- Teacher Exchange

Our parent teacher exchange will be held on Tuesday 20 February. If you haven't already booked, you can access this information via the Compass Newsfeed.

### Annual privacy reminder for our school community

Our school collects and uses student and parent personal information for standard school functions or where permitted by law, as stated in the Schools' Privacy Policy and the Schools' Privacy Collection Notice.

Our Photographing, Filming and Recording Students Policy (<http://www.mpp.vic.edu.au/wp-content/uploads/2021/08/MPPS-Photographing-Filming-and-Recording-Students-Policy-2021.pdf>) describes how we collect and use photographs, video and recordings of students. The policy also explains when parent consent is required and how it can be provided and withdrawn.

We ask parents to also review the guidance we provide on how we use (Microsoft 365/Google Workspace for Education) safely at the school and what parents can do to further protect their child's information. If after reviewing the guidance, you have any questions or concerns regarding your child using (Microsoft 365/Google Workspace for Education), please contact the school. For more information about privacy, refer to: [Schools' Privacy Policy — information for parents](#)

### NAPLAN

This year the NAPLAN will again be online and will be conducted in March.

To support the transition and help students become familiar with the online environment and format, students will be participating in a coordinated practice test this term (Tuesday 28 February).

The National Assessment Program- Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN) The NAPLAN Literacy and Numeracy tests for students in Years 3 and 5 are scheduled from Wednesday 13 - Monday 25 March 2024.

Students will complete tests in language conventions, writing, reading and numeracy. Students in year 3 will complete the written test on paper, otherwise all other assessments will be completed online using the NAPLAN application.

The school will be supporting students to familiarise themselves with the type of questions and related functionalities of NAPLAN Online. There is also a coordinated practice day scheduled for Tuesday 27 February where students will have an opportunity to experience a "Practice Omnibus". This single test includes questions from reading, conventions of language and numeracy. It will help students to become familiar with the platform and test structure. Students will also have an opportunity to complete a writing practice test.

## PRINCIPAL REPORT - CONT.

NAPLAN is a great tool for Schools to reflect on their strengths and challenges in teaching and learning. It is data that can help measure the impact of programs and identify goals for the future. It is important that when talking to students about NAPLAN we reinforce that this assessment is for the school. All students need to do is show what they have learnt and do their best.

Information about the NAPLAN will be shared with families of students in Year 3 & 5 via the Compass Newsfeed.

### School Council Elections

#### Message from the President:

*"Welcome to the 2024 school year. A warm welcome also to our students, parents and carers who have joined MPPS this year.*

*There are many ways to be involved in your child's education be it volunteering with reading in class, being active in the Parents Association (PA) or becoming involved in School Council. Each year members of council retire and new members are elected so there is always an opportunity to become involved. I'd encourage you to read the information below and think about nominating for school council as it is a rewarding experience."*

Cheers,

Scott Siega (Current President and father of Jasper Yr. 5)

It is now time to begin the process for filling positions on School Council for 2024. Included below is information regarding the role of School Council.

Information regarding the following will be forwarded to families via Compass newsfeed tomorrow:

- 2024 MPPS School Council vacancies
- School Council Elections (and process)

### The role of School Council

#### What is a school council and what does it do?

All government schools in Victoria have a school council. They are legally constituted bodies that are given powers to set the broad direction of a school, in accordance with Ministerial Order 1280 Constitution of Government School Councils, and the Education and Training Reform Act 2006. In doing this, a school council may directly influence the quality of education for students.

#### Who is on the school council?

For most primary school councils, there are several possible categories of membership:

- **A mandated elected parent member category** – more than one-third of the total members must be from this category. Department employees can be parent members at their child's school providing that they are not engaged in work at the school.
- **A mandated elected school employee member category** – members of this category make up no more than one-third of membership. The principal of the school is automatically one of these members.
- **An optional community member category** – members are co-opted by a decision of the council because of their special skills, interests or experience. Department employees are not eligible to be community members.
- A small number of school councils have **nominee members**. (MPPS does not)
- For all schools with a Year 7 and above cohort, there is an additional category of membership: **A mandated elected student member category (two positions)**.

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.

## PRINCIPAL REPORT - CONT.

### Why is parent membership so important?

Parents on school councils provide important viewpoints and have valuable skills and a range of experiences and knowledge that can help inform and 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.

### Do I need special experience to be on school council?

Each member brings their own valuable skills and knowledge to the role, however, in order to successfully perform their duties, councillors may need to gain some new skills and knowledge.

It is important to have an interest in your child's school and the desire to work in partnership with others to help shape the school's future.

School Council will meet a minimum of eight times a year, once of the month in the evening from 7.00-9.00pm. In the past this has been the last Wednesday of each month, however this may change. Councillors are expected also to sit on one of the following committees:

- Finance
- Education
- Facilities
- Out of School Hours Care (OSHC)

The Finance, Education and Facilities sub committees have a monthly meeting schedule (if necessary) and the OSHC is scheduled for one meeting per term.

### Code of conduct for school councillors

School councils in Victoria are public entities as defined by the *Public Administration Act 2004*.

School councillors must comply with the Code of Conduct for Directors of Victorian Public Entities issued by the Victorian Public Sector Commission. The Code of Conduct is based on the Victorian public sector values and requires councillors to:

- **act with honesty and integrity** – be truthful, open and clear about their motives and declare any real, potential or perceived conflict of interest and duty
- **act in good faith in the best interests of the school** – work cooperatively with other councillors and the school community, be reasonable, and make all decisions with the best interests of students foremost in their minds
- **act fairly and impartially** – consider all relevant facts of an issue before making a decision, seek to have a balanced view, never give special treatment to a person or group and never act from self-interest
- **use information appropriately** – respect confidentiality and use information for the purpose for which it was made available
- **exercise due care, diligence and skill** – accept responsibility for decisions and do what is best for the school
- **use the position appropriately** – not use the position as a councillor to gain an advantage
- **act in a financially responsible manner** – observe all the above principles when making financial decisions
- **comply with relevant legislation and policies** – know what legislation and policies are relevant for which decisions and obey the law
- **demonstrate leadership and stewardship** – set a good example, encourage a culture of accountability, manage risks effectively, exercise care and responsibility to keep the school strong and sustainable.

### Indemnity for school council members

School councillors are indemnified against any liability in respect of any loss or damage suffered by the council or any other person in respect of anything necessarily or reasonably done, or omitted to be done by the councillor in good faith in:

- the exercise of a power or the performance of a function of a councillor, or

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## PRINCIPAL REPORT - CONT.

- the reasonable belief that the act or omission was in the exercise of a power or the performance of a function of a council.

In other words, school councillors are not legally liable for any loss or damage suffered by council or others as a result of reasonable actions taken in good faith.

### How can you become involved?

By participating in, and voting in the school council elections, which are held in Term 1 each year. However, ballots are only held if more people nominate as candidates than there are positions vacant.

In view of this, you might consider:

- standing for election as a member of the school council
- encouraging another person to stand for election.

### What do you need to do to stand for election?

The principal will issue a Notice of Election and Call for nominations in Term 1 of each year. Council elections must be completed by 31 March, unless varied by the Minister for Education.

If you stand for election, you can arrange for someone to nominate you as a candidate or, you can nominate yourself in the parent member category. You can only be nominated by another member of the same electorate that you are eligible for (e.g. a member of the parent electorate may only nominate another parent of that electorate)

Department employees with a child enrolled at a school where they are not engaged in work, are eligible to nominate for parent membership at that school.

Return your completed nomination form to the principal within the time stated on the Notice of Election. You will receive a Nomination Form Receipt via post, email or by hand delivery.

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

### Remember

Consider standing for election to school council.

Ask the principal for instructions if you are not sure what to do.

Be sure to vote if the election goes to ballot.

Contact the principal if you are unsure about what is required at any stage of the election process.

Further information about School Councils can be found at:

<https://www2.education.vic.gov.au/pal/school-council-overview/overview>

Details of the [2024 vacancies for School Council](#) will be forwarded to families via Compass Newsfeed tomorrow.

### Parents Association (PA)- membership and AGM

The Moonee Ponds Primary School Parents Association (PA) works in partnership with the school leadership team, staff and school council. Our aim is to promote and encourage parents to become active in the school, helping build a strong relationship between families and the school. It is committed to contributing to the wellbeing of the school community; its changing needs and aspirations. To maximise the parent voice in the school, two elected PA representatives take community member positions on School Council. This promotes a two way exchange of ideas between the school's two parent organisations.

The Parents Association meets once a month and all parents are invited to join and welcome to attend the monthly meetings.

## PRINCIPAL REPORT - CONT.

The Association undertakes numerous social and fundraising activities throughout the year. These events and efforts serve to bring the school community together as well as to fundraise. Funds raised are used for educational and recreational needs as identified through consultation with parents, school council and school leadership.

All information regarding the PA including the DET approved constitution can be located on their dedicated page on our school website: <http://www.mpp.vic.edu.au/school-council/parent-association/>

### Parents Association membership

To be an active member of the PA you must join up each year.

As per the DET Constitution parents/ carers are asked to join by filling their details. You can access this through the school website ( [www.mpp.vic.edu.au/school-council/parent-association/](http://www.mpp.vic.edu.au/school-council/parent-association/)) or by clicking on this link: <https://forms.office.com/r/1r32QETZWw> . This process must be completed before you attend any meetings. By becoming a member, you will receive email correspondence for PA matters.

### Annual General Meeting (AGM)

As per the MPPS Approved Constitution we will be holding the PA AGM on Thursday 7 March at 7pm. At this meeting we will be voting in the following volunteer PA leadership roles:

President

- Vice president
- Treasurer
- Secretary
- School Council Representatives (X 2)

These leadership position descriptions were forwarded to families via Compass Newsfeed yesterday (13 February 2024).

To nominate for one of these roles parents/ carers are asked to fill out the attached 'PA Nomination Form' and either drop it at the school office in a sealed envelope or email the form to the my email ([matthew.bott@education.vic.gov.au](mailto:matthew.bott@education.vic.gov.au)) before the meeting and by 4pm Wednesday 6 March. If more than one nomination is received, we will hold an election at the AGM meeting. Please note that you must be an active member of the PA and also be in attendance to vote for PA Leadership positions.

Of course if you have any queries about the roles or process, please do not hesitate to ask.

### Parent Payments

The 2024 Parent Payment information was shared with parents/ carers via Compass last week. These can be paid online through the Compass portal using Compass Pay. Alternatively, you can use the information and payment form and return to the school office with your payment details. Parent contributions continue to provide an important and critical source of funding which enables us to supply resources necessary to maximise successful delivery of our learning programs. For further information please refer to the Parent Payment Arrangements Policy - [Parent Payment Arrangements Template \(Primary\) \(mpp.vic.edu.au\)](#)

If you have any questions or require any further information, please do not hesitate to call Milissa in the school office.

### Sun Smart

With the hot weather and summer conditions, it is important for us all to be wary of the sun and the UV rays. We have a school sun smart policy which can be found at [MPPS Sun Protection Policy](#) . With the swimming sports in the coming weeks and the hot weather continuing, please ensure you read through the document and ensure students have hats and sunscreen available when outdoors. Rash vests, hats and sun screen are recommended at the swimming carnival. Staff will be on duty reminding students to be sun smart; however, I encourage parents to discuss this with your child beforehand as well. Remember students need to be wearing a hat during recess and lunch until the end of April.

If you have any queries or questions, please do not hesitate to contact me via phone or email (Compass).

Regards,

Matthew Bott  
Principal

MPPS Parents Association  
presents the 2024

# TRIVIA NIGHT

SAVE THE DATE

2024	MPPS
March 15th	Sports & Performance Centre
7:30pm	All money raised will go to the MPPS PA to purchase STEM equipment for our new STEM centre.
Tickets \$30	

**PRIZES AWAIT OUR WINNERS!**

**Please look out for Trivia Night  
Tickets and Raffle Tickets**

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# MPPS Parents Association Newsletter



Term 1 - Newsletter 1

## TERM 1

Wed & Fri - All Term  
Icy Poles

Friday – 15<sup>th</sup> March  
Trivia Night

Dear Parents & Carers – Welcome to Term 1. We hope you and your children have had a successful start to the School Year!

### Trivia Night *Save the Dave!*

The PA are arranging a Trivia night to be held on **Friday 15 March 2024**. This is the PA's major fundraiser for 2024, with proceeds going towards the new STEM Centre developed as part of the Capital works.

This will be held in the SPC. Tickets will be \$30 per adult and the night will start at 7:30. We will be holding a raffle as well – if you have any items to donate to a raffle or would like to help in organizing the event, please let someone on the PA know via [mppsparentsassociation@gmail.com](mailto:mppsparentsassociation@gmail.com). Tickets and further information will be available on Compass shortly.

**PA Leadership Positions 2024** As per the PA constitution, all PA leadership positions become vacant at the March AGM to be held on Thursday 7<sup>th</sup> March at 7pm in the SPC. People are able to volunteer for positions of President, Vice President, Treasurer and Secretary, and further information on how to apply is on the Compass posts shared this week. We will require these positions to be filled in order for the PA to continue so please consider if you are able to donate your time.

**Co-ordinator Needed – End of Term 1 Lunch** We are looking for a co-ordinator to run the End of Term 1 Lunch. We are hoping to do a Pizza Lunch for Roy's Pizza on Thursday 28<sup>th</sup> March. Previous information from the Term 3 2023 pizza lunch is available and can be used. Without a co-ordinator and volunteers, the lunch will not be able to be run, so please let the PA know on [mppsparentsassociation@gmail.com](mailto:mppsparentsassociation@gmail.com) if you are able to help.

**3D Printer Purchase** In late 2023, the PA has approved the purchase of a 3D printer for the new STEM Centre, totaling around \$2,500. This purchase was used with funds raised from the Chocolate Freddo Frog fundraiser so thank you to those in the School Community who participated in this fundraiser. The kids will love using the new printer!

**2<sup>nd</sup> Hand Uniform Shop** Due to the ongoing capital works, the School Office will run the 2<sup>nd</sup> hand uniform shop for Semester 1.



Thank you – our events cannot run without your support!

## The PA Team

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**AGM and Monthly PA meeting to be held Thursday 7<sup>th</sup> March 7pm**

If you would like to be a member of the PA or continue your membership in 2024, you will need to register for 2024

## SIGN UP

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CAN YOU VOLUNTEER SOME TIME?

The Parents Association **only** runs with the help of Volunteers. More Info.

[www.mpp.vic.edu.au/school-council/parent-association/](http://www.mpp.vic.edu.au/school-council/parent-association/)

SCAN THE QR CODE



CLICK THE LINK

Parents Association Registration Structure 2024



Dear Parents/Carers,

Welcome to another year of Sport and Physical Education at Moonee Ponds Primary School.

Please find below the key information regarding School Sport Victoria trials.

The School Sport Victoria (SSV) Team Vic representative program provides a development platform for Victoria's emerging student athletes to participate in the annual School Sport Australia (SSA) Championships. SSV coordinates the selection process for Team Vic teams in partnership with relevant state sporting organisations.

Please read the Team Vic Information Sheet on the sport page before registering. This document contains important information on the SSV Team Vic Program, in relation to eligibility, registration, multiclass, selection, participation costs, and financial assistance.

<https://ssv.vic.edu.au/team-vic/Documents/2024TeamVicInformationSheet.pdf>

Please also read the Team Vic Principal Endorsement process for the following teams in 2024:

<https://ssv.vic.edu.au/team-vic/Documents/TeamVicPrincipalEndorsementProcess.pdf>

- Australian Football 12 Years and Under Boys
- Basketball 12 Years and Under Girls
- Basketball 12 Years and Under Boys
- Cricket 12 Years and Under Boys
- Football (Soccer) 12 Years and Under Boys
- Netball 12 Years and Under Girls

Please also find the Sport and Registration Dates for 2024. These are the key dates you need to be aware of for when registration dates for each sport closes.

<https://ssv.vic.edu.au/team-vic/Pages/2024TeamVicKeyDates.aspx>

We are currently seeking any experienced tennis players for a trial in our district. We can only send 1 student from Moonee Ponds Primary School. Please email Matt Feeley if you believe your child is a strong candidate:

[matthew.feeley@education.vic.gov.au](mailto:matthew.feeley@education.vic.gov.au)



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# MOONEE PONDS TEAMKIDS NEWSLETTER



## WHAT'S BEEN HAPPENING

Welcome back to 2024! We hope you have had an amazing summer holidays and we are so excited to get started this term!

We have many fun things planned this term, Pancake Day, Harmony Week, and the Mad Hatter's Tea Party, are just some of the fun events that we will celebrate at TeamKids!

The year has gotten off to an amazing start with many fun excursions and incursions held over our summer VAC program. The children went to the movies, a basketball play centre and even the Melbourne Zoo! We also had visitors come and show us magic, science, music and more.

Once again welcome back to the year to everyone and we hope to see you soon with us at TeamKids!

- Aleesha (Director of Service)

## IMPORTANT DATES



 **TUES 13<sup>TH</sup> FEB**

Pancake Day!

 **WEDS 14<sup>TH</sup> FEB**

Valentines Day!

 **SAT 17<sup>TH</sup> FEB**

Random Acts of Kindness Day!



**Service Mobile:** 0431 888 685

**Office Phone:** 1300 035 000

**Service Email:** [mooneepondsp@teamkids.com.au](mailto:mooneepondsp@teamkids.com.au)

**Office Email:** [info@teamkids.com.au](mailto:info@teamkids.com.au)

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It's Party Time!

YOU'RE INVITED!

Team Kids

5<sup>TH</sup> FEB

TEDDY BEARS PICNIC



13<sup>TH</sup> FEB

PANCAKE DAY



Random Acts of Kindness Day

17<sup>TH</sup> FEB



25-29<sup>TH</sup> MARCH

Mad Hatter's Tea Party

YOU ARE INVITED



WORLD WILDLIFE DAY

WEEK 5



WEEK 6

CLEAN UP AUSTRALIA DAY



HAPPY EARTH HOUR

23<sup>RD</sup> MAR



DON'T MISS OUT!

BOOK

TEAMKIDS.COM.AU

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# Extra-Curricular Activities

## at Moonee Ponds Primary

**ENROL ONLINE NOW!**



### CODING

- ✓ Mon, 1:30 - 2:20 pm
- ✓ Starts on 5 Feb
- ✓ \$170.63 for 7 sessions
- ✓ For Years 3-6
- ✓ Room: Library
- ✓ Devices: BYOD

While many jobs of the future are yet to be even imagined the future of work undoubtedly points in the direction of the technology space. This coding course using the Scratch application will introduce students to the world of coding in a fun and engaging way. Experienced coaches will guide students through a series of hands-on lessons with real world applications.

### SOCCER

- ✓ Mon, 1:30 - 2:20 pm
- ✓ Starts on 5 Feb
- ✓ \$153.13 for 7 sessions
- ✓ For Years 1-2
- ✓ Room: Gym
- ✓ To Bring: hat and water bottle

Why try out one of the fast growing sports in Australia? Football or soccer is truly a world sport loved by fans all over the globe. Coaches will take the time to introduce students to the sport or provide drills and skills to improve established players, all in a supportive environment.

**TRIALS AVAILABLE!**  
PLEASE CALL TO BOOK ONE IN



Scan or click the QR code to enrol online!

**Kids Unlimited**

✉ [info@kidsunlimited.com.au](mailto:info@kidsunlimited.com.au)  
🌐 [www.kidsunlimited.com.au](http://www.kidsunlimited.com.au)  
☎ 1300 424 377



AUSTRALIAN GIRLS CHOIR



Is this your daughter?

Look no further than the Australian Girls Choir because we encourage, challenge and inspire girls as they learn to sing, dance and perform.

# Join us at our FEBRUARY OPEN DAY




AUSTRALIAN SCHOOL OF PERFORMING ARTS



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INSIGHTS

happy families. 

## Play is Declining, and so is Mental Health

In primary school it was bike rides, cubby houses, climbing trees, playing marbles, jumping on the trampoline, and being outside – always outside... and it was almost always with my best buddies: Andy Lucas, Ben and Jay Walter, Richard and Ian Duddy (I've never done a shoutout to my old buddies before...but here it is, after so many years).

In my teens, it was ultra - long bike rides (of 50 kms or more – that was a lot for a 15-year-old who wasn't a cyclist), surfing, skateboarding, and exploring the bush in the mountain behind my house.

I was lucky to grow up in the 80s.

It was probably the last decade where kids had the sort of freedom that I had. With every decade since, research shows that children have become more restricted, more structured, and less able to play and explore in their neighbourhoods away from adults. It's well documented that the amount of time available to kids for free play is declining.

Unfortunately, that's not the only thing that has changed since the 80s.

In 1980, less than 10 in 100,000 teen boys died by suicide, and for girls it was only 2 in 100,000. By 2000, it had increased to 13 in 100,000 for teen boys and 6 in 100,000 for teen girls.

While in 2020, the number of suicides among teen girls remained steady, for our teen boys it jumped again to 17 in every 100,000.

Behind those stark numbers is the equally alarming doubling in the prevalence of anxiety and depression in our teens and young adults over the last 15 years.

### Why?

Screens are the most commonly-blamed culprit. While the scientists behind this argument make a compelling argument, there are alternative explanations. One is that parents are more controlling than ever before. A related idea is that children don't get to play anymore.

I'm not the only one who believes that the decline in free play is a contributing cause. Kids are constantly being pulled away from the opportunity to engage in real life, physical (and outdoor) play because:

- Screen-based activities entice kids away from the outdoors.
- Parental concerns about safety leads to restricted opportunities for independent exploration.
- Many children find their afternoons and weekends filled with structured activities such as organised sport and extracurricular activities, leaving little time for unstructured play.

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- The focus on academic achievement and structured learning means that most of our kids' time is spent either in school, doing homework, or engaging in other adult-directed activities, dramatically limiting the time available for free play.

The problem with reducing play time is that play is a direct source of happiness for our children. Studies show that kids prefer outdoor play with friends to screen based activities, and outdoor play is consistently ranked by parents as the activity that makes their kids the happiest – *if we can get them to do it!*

## What exactly is it about play that has such a big impact on wellbeing?

Play satisfies all of our basic psychological needs. By definition, play is self-directed. Play is the vehicle through which kids build skills. Play is how children make friends.

## As parents, how can we give our children the freedom to play?

1. Strengthen autonomy – allow our kids more choice in how they spend their time. Cut back on structured extracurriculars to enable them more time for free play. Move away from adult-directed activities to unsupervised play (as developmentally appropriate).
2. Build competence – set up the environment with equipment for open ended play. Open Ended toys build competence because there is no right way to use them, and the materials can be modified to meet the level of play that your child is ready for.
3. Relatedness – build a community of people your kid can play with easily. Things like introducing your family to other families in the neighbourhood is a great start.

Giving our kids an idyllic childhood with freedom to play and explore isn't just good for them now. It helps them build the resilience they need for healthy adulthood too.



### AUTHOR

#### Dr Justin Coulson

Dr Justin Coulson is a dad to 6 daughters. He is the parenting expert and co-host of Channel Nine's Parental Guidance, and he and his wife host Australia's #1 podcast for parents and family: The Happy Families Podcast. He has written 7 books about families and parenting. For further details visit [happyfamilies.com.au](http://happyfamilies.com.au).



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### LUNCH ITEM ONE

#### SALADS

- Greek Style Salad with Feta and Olives (V, GF)
- Pic(k)nic Box – Vegetarian (V, GF)
- Pic(k)nic Box with Ham (GF)
- Pic(k)nic Box with a Whole Egg
- Falafel with Tabouli Salad (V,G/DF, H)
- Mexican Inspired Salad (V, GF)
- Tuna Mix with Brown Rice & Quinoa Cakes (V, GF)

#### SUSHI

- Teriyaki Chicken Hand Rolls (2)
- Cooked Tuna Hand Rolls (2)
- Avocado Hand Rolls (2)
- Cucumber Hand Rolls (2)
- Vegetarian Hand Rolls (2)
- Tofu Hand Rolls (2)

#### BAKERY

- Cheese and Bacon Roll
- Cheese and Vegemite Scroll (w/m)
- SCROLL with Ham & Cheese
- Semi Dried Tomato and Olive ROLL
- Topped with Only Cheese Roll
- GOZLEME - Lamb & Beef (H)
- GOZLEME - Spinach and Cheese (V, H)

#### BAKED FRESH PIZZAS

(Thin & Crisp, Served at room temp)

- Margherita Pizza
- Ham and Pineapple Pizza

#### SANDWICHES, ROLLS & WRAPS

- Turkey, Cranberry, Lettuce and Cheese Sandwich
- Gluten Free Ham & Cheese Sandwich (GF)
- Simple Salad Roll (V)
- Cucumber & Ham Sandwich (GF)
- Vegemite Sandwich (2)
- Mild Salami and Salad Roll
- Plain Cheese Sandwich (2)
- Roast Beef, Fruit Chutney, Cheese and Lettuce Roll
- Cheese and Salad Roll
- Wholegrain ROLL with Cheese and Tomato
- WRAP (GF, DF) Ham and Salad
- Wholegrain Ham and Cheese Sandwich
- Chicken MAYO and Lettuce Roll (H)
- Garden Salad Wrap (GF,DF,V)

### LUNCH ITEM TWO/THREE

#### FRESH FRUIT & VEG

- Freshly chopped strawberries with Grapes
- Fresh Fruit Combo
- Lightly Steamed Corn wheels & Broccoli pieces
- Celery & Carrot Sticks with Sultanas
- Chopped Carrot, Cucumber, Red & Yellow Capsicum
- Apple pieces with Lemon Juice, Cinnamon & Brown Sugar
- Chia Bowl with Banana, Coconut & Strawberries
- Sugar Snap Peas, Beans & Cherry Tomatoes
- Cantaloupe & Honeydew pieces
- Edamame (Lightly Salted)
- Cherry Tomatoes with Tasty Cheese & Rice Crackers
- Freshly chopped Orange Segments
- Whole Fruit – Banana OR Mandarin

#### YOGHURT

- Strawberry Chobani Yoghurt
- Blueberry Chobani Yoghurt
- Passionfruit Chobani Yoghurt
- Plain Chobani Yoghurt

#### BAKED GOODS

- Choc Chip Cookie
- Cornflake Cookie
- Finger Bun with Sprinkles
- Hedgehog Slice
- Choc Cup Cake (GF,DF)
- Blueberry Muffin
- Fruit Bun
- Jam Drop Biscuit (GF, NF, H)

#### DIPS & CRACKERS

- Tzatziki Dip with Rice Crackers
- Avocado Dip with Rice Crackers
- Spring Onion Dip with Rice Crackers

#### POPCORN/SNACKS

- Dried Fruit Medley with a Yoghurt Frog
- Popcorn - Lightly Salted
- Popcorn - Slightly Sweet, Lightly Salted
- Lightly salted Fav'va Beans
- Chickpeas with Lime & Black Pepper
- Balsamic & Sea Salt Fav'va Beans

#### DRINKS

- Apple Juice
- Orange Juice
- Full Cream Milk
- Nippy's Chocolate Milk
- Strawberry (Lactose Free) Milk
- So Good Soy Milk

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**[www.classroomcuisine.com.au](http://www.classroomcuisine.com.au)**





# LEARNING STAR awards



LEARNING Star...	Name	Reason
1/2 A Chris Mizis	Ulysses P	For making a great start to year two by having a go at all tasks and completing his work. Well done
1/2 B Antony Brock	Amalia D'O	For showing a growth mindset, being brave and having a go at all your work- Well done and welcome to MPPS Amalia!
1/2 C Libby Haigh	Elijah W	For demonstrating focus and independence during your math task. Well done, Elijah!
1/2 D Jenny Clark	Cassian LE	For doing some amazing writing about your holidays! Well done Cassian!
3/4 A Lee Pregnell	Alex T	For her great start in setting up her Writer's Notebook. Well done Alex!
3/4 B Erin Mullin	Bailey C	For making a fantastic start to Year 3, listening carefully and trying his best in all learning tasks! Well done Bailey.
3/4 C Rebekah Stone	Liana P	For a wonderful start to year 3 by working hard to meet all task and classroom requirements. Well done Liana!
5/6 A Steph Thompson	Harriet M	For making a great start to year 5, sharing her thinking with the class and collaborating well with others. Well done An-nabel!
5/6 B Candice Ryan	Callum P	For a great start to Year 6, showing engagement towards your learning and working hard to get class tasks finished. Well done!
5/6 C Paul Luu	Zara S	For showing a positive attitude towards learning and being open to learning new things. Keep it up, Zara.
Arts Christine Caminiti	Jo A (5/6C)	For drawing a sea shell with much care and attention to detail in visual arts class. Well done!
Italian Nancy Berardone	Jack M (5/6B)	For his positive attitude and engagement in our first Italian lesson of the year. Ottimo!
Physical Education Matt Feeley	Louis B (1/2B)	For showing effort and improvement in your first PE lesson of the year!

Respect Optimism Care Collaboration



# ROCC STAR AWARDS

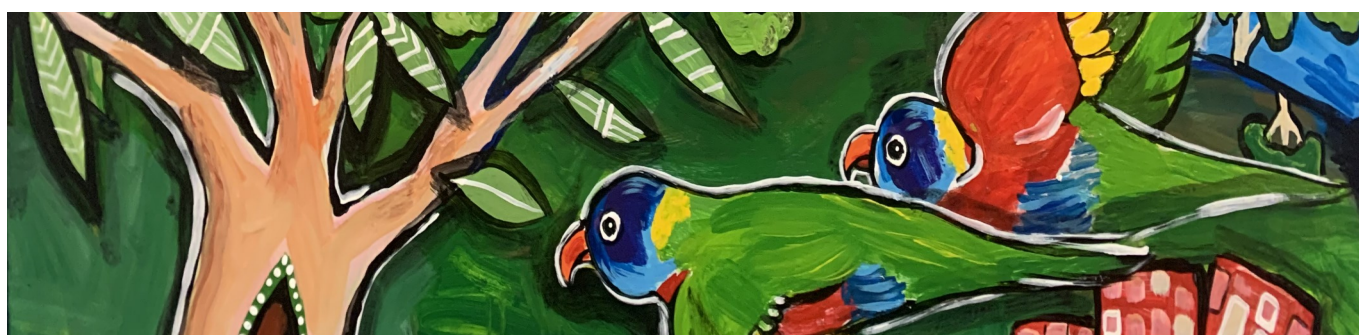


ROCC Star...	Name	Reason
1/2 A Chris Mizis	Theo DP	For being a kind and caring, member of our class and helping others with their work. What a great start to year 2.
1/2 B Antony Brock	Caleb M	For showing wonderful optimism in everything you do- Well done and welcome to MPPS Caleb!
1/2 C Libby Haigh	Sidney P	For being an outstanding leader in our class. We love the way you model the school values! Well done, Sidney!
1/2 D Jenny Clark	Allegra M	For being so optimistic and trying so hard in everything you do! Well done, Allegra!
3/4 A Lee Pregnell	Lucy C	For the focused and optimistic approach she has brought to the start of a new school year. Well done Lucy!
3/4 B Erin Mullin	Jules M	For being a kind and respectful class member, including others both in class activities and in outside games during lunch and recess. Great work, Jules!
3/4 C Rebekah Stone	Sam T	For a fantastic start to year 4 by being a caring and supportive role model. You have really taken responsibility for your new role as a grade level leader Sam, well done!
5/6 A Steph Thompson	Marcella I	For making a positive start at MPPS and showing kindness and respect. It has been a joy to have you in 5/6A! Well done Marcella!
5/6 B Candice Ryan	Grace D'O	For showing optimism as you settled into your new school and being a kind and respectful member of the class. Well done!
5/6 C Paul Luu	Jo A	For being a welcoming and caring friend. You are a fantastic person to have in 5/6 C.
Arts Christine Caminiti	Bol A (3/4 C)	For being a caring and engaged learning during the first visual arts lesson of the year. Well done for your focus during the lesson and for drawing a beautiful sea shell. Great work!
Italian Nancy Berardone	Leo C (3/4B)	For being an engaged and enthusiastic learner and for being a kind and respectful member of the class. Ottimo!
Physical Education Matt Feeley	Elliott D (1/2C)	For showing outstanding sportsmanship qualities in your first PE lesson of the year!

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# TERM 1 2024 CALENDAR

MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
February 12	February 13 Foundation Info Evening 6pm	February 14	February 15	February 16 School Swim Sports
February 19	February 20 Parent Teacher Exchange	February 21 School Photo Day	February 22	February 23 Yr 5/6 Gala Sports #1
February 26	February 27	February 28 District Swimming School Council	February 29 School Photo Day (catch up)	March 1 Yr 5/6 Gala Sports #2
March 4	March 5	March 6	March 7 Divisional Swimming	March 8
March 11 Labour Day Public Holiday	March 12	March 13 NAPLAN	March 14 NAPLAN Parents Association AGM	March 15 NAPLAN
March 18 NAPLAN  Harmony Week	March 19 NAPLAN	March 20 NAPLAN	March 21 NAPLAN  School Cross Country	March 22 NAPLAN
March 25 NAPLAN concludes	March 26	March 27 School Council AGM	March 28 End of Term 1	March 29 Good Friday



## Newsletter

The newsletter will be published fortnightly all year. The newsletter is the main source of communication from the school and I urge everyone to read it! The newsletter will be sent out to all families via Compass. Families will be able to access the newsletter via Compass and on the school website.

How to access the school newsletter:

1. View it on the COMPASS Newsfeed: <https://mpp-vic.compass.education/>
2. Visit the school website: <http://www.mpp.vic.edu.au/our-school/newsletters/>