Dear Parents/Carer

Welcome back Everyone

It was great to see so many happy faces return to school this year and to listen to all the exciting holiday news about our students and their families. It was also good to hear some exciting news about our staff. We have one staff member who is now engaged to be married and another who is expecting their first grandchild.

We also welcome Mathew Turner to our school. Mathew will be at the school for three days per week and will be taking our specialist P.E Program whilst I am sitting in Robyn’s chair. As you know Robyn is on Long Service Leave for Term 1 and I am Acting Principal for the Term.

We also welcome some new starters at Mornington SDS, students, Harley and Matthew, our first ever identical twins, Teleah who is in Room 2 and Noah and Tane in our EEP program.

Permission Forms and Student Emergency information

Thank you to all parents who have signed the numerous permission forms, student information forms and community access excursion forms. If you haven’t updated your child’s details for this year please do so as soon as possible so that we have the latest contact details and emergency details for your child.

It is also pleasing to have so many parents organise a simple fortnightly payment plan with Chris Wade our Business Manager, to make it easy to pay for all the extras that are not covered in the normal education program. These include costs associated with the swimming, Cooking, excursions, RDA and the like. Please let us know if you need help with these extra expenses and we can work out a payment plan to suit you.

Relatives or friends picking up students

Please let the office know if someone other than yourself will be picking up your son or daughter from school on a particular day. This can be done either via the communication book or a phone call to Karen in the office.

Special Assembly and Morning Tea

A special Assembly will be held on Wednesday 4th March to present School Badges to our School Leaders and Student Voice Representatives for 2015. The assembly will be followed by a family morning tea and everyone is welcome. Our School Leaders for 2015 are: Dylan, Lucy, Vicky, Adriana, Ben and Tommy. Our Student Voice Representatives for 2015 are: Sophie, Bailey, Jarod, Billy, Tommy and Mathew.

School Council Elections

This year there are Four parent vacancies for School Council. School Council provides an opportunity for parents to get involved in the running of the school and to ensure that the school is providing the very best educational opportunities it possibly can.

If you are interested in being part of our School Council just fill in the nomination forms at the back of this newsletter and return it to the school.

From the Principal’s Desk

Susan Page (Acting Principal)
### Principal
Robyn Simmonds

### Assistant Principal
Sue Page

### Business Manager
Chris Wade

### Office Reception
Karen Binks

### Room 1
Suzanne Smith (Teacher)
Melinda Cole/Jane Hanafie (ES support)

### Room 2
Danielle Cooper (Teacher)
Keryl Edwards (ES support)

### Room 3/4
Stephanie Nash (Teachers)
Jodie Hosking/Emily Quinton (ES support)

### Room 5 EPPs
Karen Goodwin (Teacher)
Lisa Saunders (ES support)

### Room 6
Sharon Kenny (Teacher)
Julie Finch (ES support)

### Room 7
Susan Spruce (Teacher)
Heather Stansbury (ES support)

### Room 8
Chris Brown/Angela Holland (Teachers)
Gale Peters ES support)

### Music Specialist
Karen Goodwin

### (Mon/Tues)

### Physical Education
Matthew Turner (Wed, Thursday)

### Speech Therapist
Sarah Gracie (Mon, Thurs & Friday)

### Occupational Therapist
TBA

### Physiotherapist
Cheryl Taylor (Thurs AM)

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**STUDENT FREE DAYS 2015**

Wednesday 28th January 2015

Thursday 29th January 2015

Tuesday 9th June 2015

Monday 2nd November 2015

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**Donations**

Room 6 would like donations of

Tiles, large or small

Old CD’s or DVD’s

Ceramic pots or bowls

Boxes and cardboard tubes
Mornington Special Developmental School

School Council Election 2015 - Information for Parents

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 key directions of a school within statewide guidelines. In doing this, a school council is able to directly influence the quality of education that the school provides for its students.

Who is on the school council?

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

- A mandated elected Parent category - more than one-third of the total members must be from this category. Department of Education and Training (DET) employees can be Parent members at their child's school as long as they are not engaged in work at the school.
- A mandated elected DET employee category - members of this category may make up no more than one-third of the total membership of school council. The principal of the school is automatically one of these members.
- An optional Community member category - members are coopted by a decision of the council because of their special skills, interests or experiences. DET employees are not eligible to be Community members.

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.

Why is Parent membership so important?

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 in itself and may also find that their children feel a greater sense of belonging.

How can you become involved?

The most obvious way is to vote in the elections, which are held in Term i each year. However, ballots are only held if more people nominate as candidates than there are positions vacant.

In view of this, you might seriously consider:

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

Do I need special experience to be on school council?

No. What you do need is an interest in your child's school and the desire to work in partnership with others to help shape the school's future.

What do you need to do to stand for election?

The principal will issue a Notice of Election and Call for Nominations following the commencement of Term i each year. All school council elections must be completed by the end of March unless the usual time line has been varied by the Minister.

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.

DET employees whose child is enrolled in a school in which they are not engaged in work are eligible to nominate for parent membership of the school council at that school.

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

Remember

- Ask at the school for help if you would like to stand for election and are not sure what to do
- Consider standing for election to council this year
- Be sure to vote in the elections.

Contact the principal for further information.
Early Education Program News!

It has been a great first week or so in the Early Education Program. All students have settled in perfectly and are enjoying the program so far. Some highlights have included PMP in room 10, Music, Dressing Up and Painting. We are looking forward to a great first term, which will go very quickly!