SCHOOL COUNCIL REPORTS

MAY, 2015

Vision

“The Berwick Fields School Council is striving for a forward thinking team who share ideas and experiences by undertaking meaningful projects alongside the students and wider school community”

Mission

To create a learning environment which allows for our school community to continually grow and develop so that all members have an opportunity to achieve their best.

Values:

Respect, Co-operation, Friendliness and Enthusiasm.

➢ Managing self and relations with others

Principles

Values

• The school’s values need to be reflected in the way individuals interact.

Culture

• The school environment must positively influence the development of social competence. Success is defined as achievement of personal best.

Links

• Individuals are empowered by understanding the links between learning, thinking, emotions and behaviour.

Self

• Personal responsibility for each person’s own wellbeing is fostered.

Prevention and Safety

• People who work in safe and secure environments have the best chance to develop a positive mindset and attitude.

This report focuses on Student Welfare, Staff Welfare, Parent Welfare, Annual Implementation Plan, Integration Program, Occupational Health and Safety and Uniform.

Health and Wellbeing Team Meetings
The Health and Wellbeing Team has met in Term Two on a couple of occasions. Everyone on the team is enthusiastic about the health and wellbeing of all students, staff and families in our school community. Earlier in the term the meeting focussed on the team looking more closely at the survey data. The second meeting has given the team the opportunity to plan our Health & Wellbeing week. They have looked at the Survey Monkey data to determine the activities staff have requested and start the organisation of ‘Wellbeing Week’.

**Connect Groups**

Connect groups have continued throughout Term One and Term Two. We have seen some disruption to our Connect program with the drawn out process of finding our new Chaplain. We are very happy to welcome our new Chaplain, Kylie Nicholson, to Berwick Fields. Already she has settled in and is working steadily through the many children in our connect groups. Overall we have had 25 students attend groups in Term One and 50 in Term Two. We also ran the Boys Club with Ben Boersma during lunchtimes. Currently we are in discussions with Ben Evers and Captain Eric from CHIPS in regard to programs options for Term 3.

**CHIPS Chaplaincy**

We signed the CHIPS agreement for 2015 and continue to be able to draw upon this wonderful service for our school community. Our new chaplain Kylie has had a great start to this term working with small groups of children. Kylie has maintained communication with families and teachers through phone calls and emails. She has already become a valued member of our school community as she is working closely with students, families and staff. We had our CHIPS Sail Away day in Term 1 which was a great success for our Grade 6 School Leaders. Currently Chantelle is organising our term 2 excursion to Mill Valley Ranch on Monday 22nd, June where 16 of our students will attend. We have nominated some families for the Life Gets Better Camp. At this stage we have one student that has already been accepted. The students will spend the weekend visiting the Phillip Island Adventure Resort from Friday 22nd of May until Sunday the 24th of May. The camp is aimed at children who have experienced a traumatic experience. Through small activity groups children will have an opportunity to share experiences and stories with other children and form positive relationships.

**Student Attitudes to School Survey**

Our Grade 5 and Grade 6 students recently completed the ‘Student Attitudes to School’ survey as required. This information will allow us to reflect on our wellbeing practices and how to improve the overall outcomes for students in our school.

**Student Behaviour**

During the Setting Up For Success program each class agreed to a Code of Conduct, Class Vision, Class Mission, Class Values and Consequences. Having the opportunity to set these themselves, students take greater ownership of their behaviours.

Our Rethink database shows the collection of behavioural incidents occurring across the school resulting in a Rethink, Timeout or Warning. Our data related to behaviour management reflects the work that our classroom teachers and yard duty teachers put into making our learning and playing spaces as safe and effective as possible. The following strategies are in place to improve the behaviour of students at Berwick Fields:

- School Values of Respect, Friendliness, Cooperation and Enthusiasm
- You Can Do It! Foundations of Organisation, Getting Along, Persistence, Resilience and Confidence
- Encouraging our children to be ‘Cool Calm Kids’ in all situations by using the ‘3 Step Telling Rule’ and other strategies from the Bully Busters program and to problem solve with the 4 Steps of Communication
- Behaviour Management Plans for student identified ‘at risk’

The following graphs give an indication of our Semester One school behavioural incidents (to date).
Only 3% of all students have received a Rethink/Timeout in Semester One compared to 12% in Semester 1, 2014.

The majority of incidences involve physical harm.

One of the goals in Health & Wellbeing is to continue to build the capacity in our classroom teachers when working through discipline scenarios with our students and maintain consistency of wellbeing processes across the school. We hope to continue to develop their confidence and bank of strategies for problem solving, effective, communication to all parties through Restorative Practices.

**Student Support Group Meetings (SSG)**

As we approach the end of term 2 we currently have our teachers and Education Support (ES) staff planning to convene the Student Support Group meetings for the families of our students funded through the Program for Students with Disabilities. These meetings will involve evaluating students’ previous goal achievement and setting future goals for students focussing on their individual learning needs. Following the SSGs we have sought feedback from all parties involved about the effectiveness of this process to inform our future meetings.

**Staff Wellbeing Week**

The Health and Wellbeing Team are currently organising a Wellbeing Week for staff from Tuesday 9th June to Friday 12th June. Some activities throughout the week included Soothe Mobile Massages, Special Lunch, chip lunch, Teachers’ Health Fund morning tea and Positivity Wall in the staffroom. Overall we have had some positive feedback about the week.

Overall we have had a busy Semester Two in the area of Health and Wellbeing. We look forward to continuing to work to improve the Health and Wellbeing of our school community in Semester Two.

*Mandie Boelen, Kerrie Romey, Lara Schendzielorz and Chantelle Pereira.*

Health and Well Being Leaders
Enabling individuals and groups to act effectively in the world

**Principles**

**Community Building**
- Building links with your community strengthens access to additional learning opportunities.

**Contribution**
- To ensure learners have a purpose for learning we need to provide them with opportunities to use their new knowledge, skills and personal qualities to make a difference to our society.

**Social Intelligence**
- The school actively contributes to the development of human and social capital in the community in order to support student learning.

**Partnerships**
- Parents and adult advocates are seen as partners in their children’s learning and are encouraged to engage themselves in understanding the nature of learning and the complexities of schooling.
- Students are seen as active partners in Learning and Teaching.

**Team Action Learning**
- Professional Learning teams are used to provide the structure which significantly contributes to a learning community culture within the school.

**Commitment**
- The school community is committed to students and their learning and are of the belief all people can learn.

*This report focuses on Professional Development, Community Involvement & Building, Personal/Professional Development Planning, Parent Participation, Publicity, Student Leadership Development and Professional Learning Teams.*

**Vision:** We are striving to build positive relationships that embrace and connect within and beyond our school community.

**Mission:** To make links and develop partnerships within the school and wider community so that the contributions we make are of value.

**Mother’s Day celebrations**
As in previous years the Mother’s Day stall was a great success and the children had a ball choosing gifts for their loved ones. Nearly all the items ordered sold on the day or by Friday afternoon when we ran a session after school. This year we had over 30 parent helpers, many new to BFPS, which made running the stall very smooth. The celebrations were well on the way for our Friday afternoon Mother’s Day pampering sessions in every classroom of the school. Mothers, grandmothers or special guest were treated to a range of ‘delectable’ activities from massages, makeovers and craft activities.
**Family Engagement**

At our last meeting in April parents set up several subcommittees, with 4-5 regular members each focusing specifically on the organisation of Mother’s/Father’s Day, Easter Raffle, Disco, 10 Year Anniversary Celebrations, Xmas Celebrations, Community Choir and much more. The idea being that they focus on planning (and running) the events, with the help of a secretariat (myself) and then report back to the rest of the Family Engagement team. In this manner individuals can direct their time effectively and develop a closer bond with what is most important to them. On Monday the 11th of May the Disco sub-committee met and planned the events for June 12th. The next whole Family Engagement meeting will take place on May 29th.

**Student Leaders**

The student leaders have been busy presenting the different grade assemblies and are all feeling confident and capable of performing their duties to a high level. Some of the Leaders were involved in presenting the whole school ANZAC assembly a few weeks ago and those who were involved did an exceptional job in presenting what was an outstanding assembly. The overall opinion of the school leaders is that they are feeling a lot more confident and are starting to enjoy the experience.

**Minister’s Visit**

On April the 28th the Deputy Premier and Minister for Education, Mr. James Merlino and the State member for Narre Warren South, Ms. Judith Graley, visited our school to view all the wonderful programs that we offer our students and deliver a grant to develop a new learning space as part of the Eco-cubby project. Student Leaders organised a terrific tour for the Minister to experience first-hand our creative and rich learning environments. They planned the tour and their dialogues prior to the Minister’s visit and were confident when showing him around the school. The feedback received from both the Minister and State member was very positive.

**Narre Learning Centre News**

On April the 16th and 23rd nine students from the Narre Learning Centre took the opportunity to do their community placement at our school and thoroughly enjoyed their visits, during two consecutive weeks, in Grade 3. The students lent a hand with various classroom activities and reported a positive learning experience for all concerned. The feedback from all the teachers was really positive and many commented on how mature and helpful the young people were. We hope to continue this relationship in the future.

**Kinder to Prep Transition**

As part of our kinder to school transition program various session have been planned starting with a Library visit in June followed by Garden visits in July. Kym Williams, the liaison officer and 4 year old kinder teacher from Gwendoline Pre-school, has been in constant contact with us to ensure that the children coming in the 2016 are comfortable and relaxed about the next chapter in their development. Visits to the Performing Arts and Kitchen will take place in semester two. Later in the year some of our Preps will be spending time with the current 4 year kinder students and share their experiences, so far.
Junior School Council
The focus of Junior School Council at the beginning of Term 2 has been the organization and running of a fundraiser for Crazy Hair Day held on Wednesday 22 April. Over $1,700 was raised on the day from student gold coin donations and payment for having their hair sprayed. JSC members helped set up and sprayed students hair during recess and lunchtime. JSC will now be focusing on selecting a next fundraising event to take place in the second half of term 2.

Global Communities
During April and May a number natural disasters were experienced, world-wide. To help the cyclone in Vanuatu we have teamed up with Aspendale P.S who will be sending a shipment container of items useful for all school aged students. We are asking our community to donate any unwanted materials used in classrooms, books, tarpaulins, school furniture to be dropped off at our school and we will deliver it to Aspendale, by June 4th. In addition, we are planning to run a free dress day with a gold coin donation, (subject to Council approval), during term 3 to help with the recent earthquakes in Nepal.

School Grounds for Learning
SGFL are in the midst of the design phase for a mural which will depict detailed images and some information of the frog species found in our wetlands area. The mural will be on the picket fence facing inward to the wetlands. It is hoped that this will be useful during environmental education classes or when generalist classroom teachers are out in the wetlands and wanting to refer to the frogs for any reason. It is also hoped that students playing out in the wetlands area might be interested in looking at the murals. After the working bee on 24th May (when hopefully the fence will be painted a background colour for us) the students in the SGFL group will begin painting the mural. During the working bee we are also planning to decorate suggestion boxes for the family member to use in various parts of our school grounds. The idea is that specific suggestions will be posted in each relevant boxed, then cleared by members of the JSC and acted upon by SGFL and/or Leadership.

Japanese culture
Our Preps had a ball using these resources, from Monash University, free of charge. We were fortunate to borrow Kimonos and wooden toys for the kids to experience a ‘slice’ of Japanese culture. Lots of lessons were learnt.

Work Experience
We have had a steady request for Work Experience and SEDA (Sports Education Development Academy) placements. We currently have one SEDA student every Tuesday working in the PE department/Art, along with two others on a Friday also in the PE department. We have had several other requests but due to teacher availability in the areas of request they have found alternative placements. So far we have had one work experience student complete five days in prep with Bec Sparks. We have another three Year 10 work experience students due to come next term, each for a five day period. One will be in PE, another one in Prep with Collette Griffith and another one in Grade 2 with Kerryn Sweeney.

Student Teachers
We continue to have a large number of staff volunteer to support Pre Service Teachers. This is a great opportunity for our staff to not only develop many professional skills and reflect on their practice, give back to the education
community. In total we have 17 staff who will be taking on this responsibility throughout this year. A majority of the placements will begin in April and we look forward to sharing all that Berwick Fields has to offer with them.

Suzy Gaymer
Community Development Leader

Understanding the world in which we live in

Principles

Responsibility
• Give the learner increasing responsibility and ownership for their learning.

Future
• Learning is increasingly global, adaptable to change and enabled by technology.

Learning
• Knowledge, skills and behaviours need to be developed within and across disciplines in order to prepare students for success.

Authenticity
• School learning must be connected to life and career learning.

Monitoring
• Accurate monitoring and assessment of progress is essential.

Pedagogical Intelligence
• If you know ‘how to learn’ then this knowledge can be applied to a variety of situations.

This report focuses on: VELS Implementation, Literacy (including Early Years), Numeracy (including Early Years), Middle Years, Learning Technologies, Environmental Education, Extended Learning, Annual Implementation Plan and Special Programs.

Grade Professional Learning Teams

Foundation

Aisha Shorrock and Bec Sparks

During Term 2, the Preps have settled back into school well and are now attending school for the whole week. Our inquiry topic this term has been focusing on Diversity. The students have really enjoyed exploring and learning about what makes them special and how they are the same and different to others around them. Throughout Maths session this term students have been exploring 2Dimensional Shapes and Counting Objects to 10 and above. We would like to acknowledge and thank the
help from Tania Johnson (Maths Mentor) in assisting us to plan our Maths program on our planning day.

Also this term the Prep students have been very lucky to have the opportunity to learn Japanese and experience different things that people in Japan would use on a daily basis. The students have participated in a range of activities that link to understanding the culture of Japan including using chopsticks to eat food, learning about the daily differences between Australia, dressing up in Kimonos and learning to count to 10 in Japanese. The Prep team would like to acknowledge the assistance from Emma Malinowski in preparing and planning for our Japanese lessons.

Over this term we as a team have continued to focus on our reading project. Through our Professional Learning Team meetings we have developed sessions focusing on guided reading, running records as well as reflecting on our entry reading data and coming up with strategies to cater for all the needs of our students. We would like to thank Alison McIntosh (English Mentor) and Rachael Rydqvist (English Mentor) for their assistance with our running record and guided reading focus.

We are excited to continue our growth with our students and as a team over the Term 3.

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**Grade One**

In Term 2 the Grade Ones have been enjoying learning about the past for our inquiry unit “Family Life Past and Present”. One of the main guiding questions in our unit was to ask: How was life in the past different to our lives today? The students have developed their understandings of this question in a number of ways and have had lots of fun doing so.

In what was a fantastic start to the unit, the Grade Ones were very excited to get the opportunity to meet Miss Shannon’s grandma Margret and her mother Jane and ask them questions about life in the past and how it has changed over the years. The students viewed Grandma Margret’s photos and listened to her stories about growing up and going school in the 1940s. The students also enjoyed getting the opportunity to see Grandma Margret’s old toys.

Later in the term, the Grade Ones got to go on their first excursion of the year to Coal Creek. At Coal Creek the
students got to experience what school was like in 1901 in a real historic classroom. The students also developed their understandings about life in the past by playing old fashioned games and making craft toys. The children and teachers all had a fantastic day.

To further complement our theme, the grade ones brought many different olden day artefacts to school to talk about with their class. In doing this, the children got to further develop their understandings about things from the past and also developed their speaking and listening skills.

The other main event of Term 2 was the Grade One Swimming Program at Casey Race. This involved a total of eight swimming lessons over four consecutive weeks and during this time, the children developed their swimming skills, water confidence and knowledge about water safety. It was great to see the Grade Ones demonstrate responsibility on the bus and at the pool and also develop their organisational skills.

**Grade Two**

Term Two has gone off with a bang! Most students participated in the school swimming program, which ran each Tuesday and Thursday morning from Week 2-5. Students have reported that the program has helped them with their confidence in the water. It has been a great way for students to focus on their personal organisation by looking after their belongings at the pool and taking responsibility for how they do this.

Our big idea for this term is ‘patterns’. We are seeking answers to the following questions:

- How do patterns have an impact on our lives?
- How can we use patterns to further our understandings of the world around us?

We have been investigating patterns that help us with our addition and subtraction skills. We have discovered number patterns such as doubling and halving, subatising and skip counting are very helpful when we add and subtract. We have taken on a science inquiry into patterns, with a particular focus on Chemical and Physical Science. We are learning to make predictions, observations and explanations of what we discover. Our 6 week science rotation has begun in earnest and our students are learning things such as what happens when chemicals mix, the forces of push and pull (to name but a few activities) to help us make sense of the world around us.

Grade Two students have begun the weekly homework program and are busy at home consolidating the skills taught in class that week. Most students have been able to manage their time effectively and stick to deadlines by handing their homework in on time; skills that all good learners have! Soon it will be assessment and reporting time and we look forward to sharing with our students their areas of growth and opportunities for improvement so that they can be empowered to take responsibility for their learning in Term 3.

**Grade Three**

In PLT 3, our focus in Term 2 has been on history with our overriding inquiry question being; “Who were the first Australian’s and how were they able to survive in this country for tens of thousands of years?” We are all looking forward to our upcoming excursion to the Melbourne Museum on Thursday 21st May during which we will be attending the “First Peoples” exhibit to further build our knowledge of indigenous cultures. For the first few weeks of the term, we had access to a resource kit from the museum which had a number of genuine artefacts including an axe head, ochre, aboriginal flag and a prehistoric Australian animal tooth. It also contained videos and CDs with Aboriginal music. This was terrific for engaging the interest of the students.

Another focus for early Term 2 was the presentation of student portfolios to parents. The teachers and children worked very hard to ensure these were an accurate representation of the student’s work. In our PLT we had 86 families coming along during the afternoon. This was a terrific turnout and demonstrated how valuable the parents regard this opportunity.

A big part of our previous 6 weeks has been preparing the students for the NAPLAN tests. We wanted to give the children every chance of success and at the same time increasing their confidence when the tests finally arrived. There was a real consistency in our approach to this as we engaged the students in a range of activities including
opportunities to work in pairs and small groups. At the time of writing, we have just one test to go, that being mathematics. The children seem to be going quite well although it is difficult to tell until the results come in. Certainly in the Writing task the vast majority of students seemed to be on track with most putting forward a number of valid reasons why their chosen sport, activity or hobby should be recommended to others. Nearly all children were able to break up their writing into paragraphs.

A couple of significant changes to staffing have occurred in our PLT. We were sad to lose Lucy Mills who has returned to P.E. replacing Amy Tivendale. Lucy has been wonderful to work with this year and has made a significant contribution to our team. The positive is that she has been replaced by Sharon Anamalay, who showed last year just how well she can fit into any team. Sue Johnston will also be leaving us to embark on an exciting overseas adventure. She is being replaced by Kate Malone. Kate has had a wealth of experience including three years teaching in Istanbul, Turkey. Kate already strikes us as being enthusiastic and dedicated so we look forward to working with her also. We wish Lucy and Sue all the best.

Grade Four

Luke Batchelor and Hayley Adie

The Grade Four team has had an extremely productive Term Two. Teachers and students have displayed their enthusiastic and persistent attitudes throughout the entire term and as a result we have achieved success. We have looked at different ways we can increase student independence and social emotional wellbeing in our classrooms including circle time and investigations.

In the area of Mathematics the grade four students have been participating in lots of challenging and engaging activities to extend their learning. Addition and Subtraction have been explored in a variety of ways where students have been encouraged to make connections between the two applying a variety of strategies. Students have focused on both letter writing and narratives throughout the term, developing their awareness of both structures drawing upon multiple literary techniques to entertain their readers. Some of these include; The Seven Steps to Writing Success and VCOP (Vocab, Connectives, Openers, Punctuation) as strategies to make their pieces more interesting.

Throughout the term, students have delved into Australia’s History investigating the question ‘What are the causes and effects of change?’ ANZAC Day’s presence at the beginning of the term enabled students to make authentic connections with our overarching topic as well as share their own ideas about why it is such a significant day. We have investigated European explorers, the First Fleet and the impact of British settlement on the Aboriginal people. All Grade Four teachers have utilised student interest to drive their exploration of Australian History. Students have used various programs on the computers and iPads to explore how to research effectively, including the features of quality information and the reliability of sources.

While all of this learning has been going on we can’t forget to acknowledge all the time and effort that has gone into preparing for and writing our Semester One reports. The teachers have worked tirelessly this term to assess, moderate and write comments for each student, ensuring that each report accurately reflects and celebrates individual student achievement. We are looking forward to another fun and of course busy Term Three!

Grade Six

Sam Knight

The Grade 6s have had a terrific start to term 2 in which they are embarking on a unit of inquiry titled ‘How well do you know your neighbour?’ which explores the theme of immigration. We began the term by commemorating ANZAC day and discussing what it means to be an Australian. Our team captains presented a thoughtful commemoration service at whole school assembly. Through a range of cross curricular inquiries students will learn about the effects immigration has had on Australia’s history and the development of Australian communities past, present and future. In early June we will

[ANZAC Ceremony]

Galipoli

Australia

New Zealand
have an excursion to the city to visit the Immigration Museum and the Chinese museum.

This term also brings the excitement of our first inter school sport of the year. Each Friday students compete against teams from other schools in football, soccer, netball, kickball and t-ball. Thank you to Amy Tivendale and the PE department for their assistance and management of the logistics of taking our large cohort to sport at different schools each week. The kids absolutely love it!

In week 4 our Grade 6s were excited to be involved in the visit by James Merlino, Judith Graley and their teams with our Team Captains preparing and presenting a special school tour and 6G being one of the classrooms visited to see Berwick Fields learning in action! Our students demonstrated respect, cooperation and great pride in Berwick Fields which was terrific to see.

We are very excited to celebrate the achievement of 5D 2014 (who make up most of 6A 2015) with their ‘Project Frog’ which won Healesville Sanctuary’s Love Your Locals Competition for 2014. They researched the Southern Corroboree Frog and through this research realized that many Australian frogs were endangered. They wanted to do something to help raise awareness of this so they developed cooperative card game that reflected the current situation several of our endangered frogs face. In June, CEO and a group of staff members from Zoos Victoria will be visiting Berwick Fields to congratulate 6A on their project, interview them and recorded them in action. A short film about their project will be presented at a special presentation evening where 6A student, Fletcher Campbell will represent the grade, as elected by the class for his terrific speech. You can read more about their project here: http://www.actwild.org.au/feed/project-frog/

This term Grade 6s are involved in personal development, where they learn about their bodies and the changes that take place as they become adolescents. We have been impressed with the respectful and responsible way the students are going about this program and congratulate them on asking some terrific questions!

As we move through the Grade 6 year students and their families are carefully considering their secondary school futures. Late in term one the cohort spent the day at Kambrya College having a taste of what secondary school will be like. We have also been visited by staff and students from Berwick Secondary who ran a question and answer session for our students. Families have been attending information nights at local schools and it seems that as usual, our students will be heading to a wide variety of schools. We look forward to continuing to work with students and families to support them through this important transitional phase.

Specialist Programs

Kitchen

The kitchen has been very busy this term as the students have been using their ever increasing skills to cook up some delicious Autumn/Winter delicacies! We’ve been using this change in season to educate the students of the importance of seasonal availability in the kitchen and recipe planning, a key point that was a factor for Stephanie Alexander launching the program in 2001.
The Gr 6’s have continued to impress us with their enthusiasm for both learning new cooking skills and techniques, as well as, their ever present enthusiasm for trying the foods we make. This term we have been on a global exploration in the kitchen with Mexican and Chinese Menu sessions. These were supported by ‘masterclass’ sessions in between that helped them gain a further knowledge of the cuisines of these countries, the ingredients, utensils and the skills required to prepare the dishes. We have thoroughly enjoyed this term with the Gr 6’s as their enthusiasm and desire to try new tastes and flavours in our ‘global exploration’ was outstanding.

Some of the dishes they’ve enjoyed include:
- Tortilla’s
- Cheesy Mexican Vegetables
- Salsa
- Mexican Rice
- Steamed Vegetable Dumplings
- San Choy Bau
- Fried Rice
- Homemade Spaghetti
- Crepes with Caramelised Apple
- Butterscotch Scrolls

The Grade 6’s have enjoyed having some visitors coming into the kitchen this term and seeing them in action cooking up a feast. Mr James Merlino and Mrs Judith Graley had the opportunity to visit 6B ( Mrs Norder’s grade) making spaghetti in the kitchen on their school visit- the children loved this special visit and feel like celebrities after seeing a photo of this in the local newspaper!

We have also had Melanie Reynolds and Lisa Murphy (Food Technology Teachers) from Kambrya College visit us for a session to watch 6C ( Mr Kirby’s grade) in action in the kitchen and to share a meal with them. This visit gave them a great opportunity to see the program in action at BFPS and how they can extend on the skills our children already have with the introduction of their Masterclass Program for Grade 7’s next year. The feedback from the Kambrya teachers was so positive regarding the skills they could see in the children, the content of the program we have offered this year’s Gr 6’s, and of course the behaviour and attitudes they saw on show by the children.

It has also been great this semester seeing quite a few new parent faces coming in to help after we sent home another notice requesting much needed parent involvement.

The Grade 3’s have continued to keep developing their skills and knowledge of the kitchen environment. This term has seen a big improvement in so many of their skills, such as measuring, egg cracking, sifting, mixing, recognising and locating kitchen utensils, washing up (which they love to do- the more bubbles the better !!) and cutting. We have put these skills to good use making a range of different foods, which they have all shown an eagerness to eat! They have achieved a lot considering they are only in the kitchen for 1 hour sessions.

Some of the recipes they have made include:
- Anzac Biscuits
- Kebabs
- Sausage Rolls
- Scones
- Strawberry and Coconut Slice
Fortunately there had been no damage done to the garden during the holidays and with the milder weather and some rainfall, the garden plants were looking particularly good. Due to the additional help given by the garden volunteers, much of the weeding and tidying up of the garden beds was already done and so we could prepare the beds for planting new seedlings.

**Week 1 – Insect Investigation – Friend or Foe**

We commenced the new term investigating the different ‘mini beasts’ present in the garden and whether they were a Friend or Foe to the garden. Using some identification charts, borrowed from the Environmental Education room, the students were able learn to visually identify and then learn the names of familiar, and some unfamiliar, garden creatures. After doing some Internet research we were able to clarify which creatures were beneficial to the garden and those that needed to be discouraged. The students were then able to search the garden areas looking to see how many of these creatures could be located in the garden.

**Week 2 – How can we protect our crops?**

This session continued on from the previous week, as we were now able to recognize which harmful creatures were present in the garden and what type of damage they were doing. We then discussed what ways we could find to protect our plants, particularly the seedlings, from any further destruction. Once again, we used the Internet for research and discovered a few more environmentally friendly ways of keeping snails away from the plants. The students particularly enjoyed roaming the garden beds looking for snails, which were then relocated into an old fish tank set up as a ‘snail hotel’ complete with plant material for them to feast on. It was interesting to then observe the snails making their way up the glass walls.

**Week 3 – Chicken Week**

This is loosely referred to as ‘Chicken Week’ by the students, as we once again brought a couple of the chickens into the outdoor classroom for the students to be able to observe them more closely. We chose our two most placid chickens, Rusty and McFluffy, as Donna and I found that it was increasingly challenging trying to catch some of our livelier chickens. It also served a double purpose, as these two were the lowest in the pecking order and would have been the last to get the best food. This way they were given special treat food to feast on daily and at the end of each day their crops were totally full. The Grade 3 students were given the usual lesson about the chicken’s digestive system and egg development, and due to some additional research undertaken by Donna the Grade 6 students were able to learn some new interesting facts related to the chickens that we hadn’t known before.

**Week 4 and 5 – Student report test and reflections**

The students were given a short test on some of the work covered during the semester, to see how much they had remembered. They were also encouraged to include tasks that they had particularly enjoyed doing during the garden sessions. The student reflections were slightly different this year as it involved them reflecting on what they had done with the use of prompt questions.

**Grade 3**

- What have I learnt in the ‘Garden’ that has made me a better ‘gardener’?
- In the ‘Garden’ this semester I was challenged by ……

**Grade 6**

- What have I learnt in the ‘Garden’ that has made me a better ‘gardener’?
- In the ‘Garden’ this semester I was challenged by ………
- In the ‘Garden’ this semester something new for me was ………
- In the ‘Garden’ this semester I am really improving in ………

**Week 6 - A self-guided tour of the garden**

Due to Curriculum Day falling on a Monday when we usually have three of the six Grade 3 classes, we have decided to just plan for the remaining three Grade 3 classes to participate in general garden work tasks. The Grade 6 students will be working on their own plan for a ‘Self-guided tour of the garden’. They will be encouraged to choose six stations to stop at and decide what they will focus their information on, so that people unfamiliar with the
garden could find out more by reading their descriptions. Some of these could possibly then be chosen to produce a booklet for use during future ‘Open Garden’ sessions.

**Week 7 - Seeds of change**
We have regularly given the students seeds to plant and have discussed the way that seeds are spread, but this topic focuses more on how different plants have adapted their seeds to the environment through the conditions they require for germination. We will also look at the way that humans have used their knowledge of seeds to make decisions about how to manage land. We will discuss how saving seed from previous plants will help to make us more self-sufficient.

The students will plant bean seeds in plastic cups which will enable them to observe the growing root system.

**Week 8 - Words in the garden/Word trees**
We have already purchased some street sign markers for the garden, which will hopefully be in place soon. The students will be encouraged to make their own markers and action signs to be placed around the garden bed areas with statements such as: Plant Me! Pick Me! Smell Me! Leave me to grow. This should be an interesting project for the students to work on and create something new for visitors to look at when visiting the garden.

**Environmental Education**

**Grade Prep**
The grade Prep students have been learning about the five senses and how these are used to explore and investigate the environment around them. They have had fun venturing to the garden to smell various herbs and flowers, they visited the wetlands to touch and feel items that were smooth, hard, rough and soft, they have listened to different animal sounds both loud and quiet, they have tasted food that is sour, sweet and bitter, and observed nature using their sense of sight.

**Grade One**
The Grade 1’s have been learning about different types of habitats and the types of animals/humans that would live in these habitats. They have had the opportunity to explore the wetlands to search for different types of habitats and made animals to live in our wetlands, they have used play dough to create their own habitats and even created their own ‘crazy’ human habitats focussing on the three main needs: water, food and shelter.

**Grade Two**
The Grade 2’s have been learning about life cycles of humans, animals, insects and plants. They have had the opportunity to explore how these life cycles are both similar and different.

**Resource Smart**
We have met all of the requirements for the Core Module and will be receiving our first star soon! In recent weeks, the focus of the Resource Smart program has been on implementing the Energy Efficiency Grant. The majority of the funds are going towards refitting the lights in the gym and the main building to LED lights. This will reduce our energy usage and save on lighting costs. At the end of June, two Grade 6 classes will be going on an excursion to CERES to participate in Energy focussed activities. We have also purchased some resources and Emma Malinowski will be attending a PD, Curriculum Connections in a Changing World in June.
Nude Food
Nude Food every day has continued at Berwick Fields this term. We continue to work hard to have no rubbish in every classroom each day. We congratulate Mrs Hofinger and her grade 3’s on winning our Fun Day with Mr Wigney for Term 1. We look forward to seeing further improvement across the school and a decrease in the amount of rubbish being brought to school.

Upcoming Environmental Education events
On June 5th Berwick Fields will be participating in World Environment Day. Throughout the day we will be running a number of small events that will help raise awareness for how we can make a difference to the environment around us. This year’s theme is ‘Seven Billion Dreams. One Planet. Consume with Care.’
On 17th June our four Grade 6 Ambassadors for the I Sea, I Care program will be participating in a Catchment program with ambassadors from schools around our area. They have also taught their lessons from Term 1 to Grade 1F. It has been wonderful to see them working hard in their ambassador roles, sharing their knowledge of how we can all make a difference and help the environment.

We would like to say a big thank you to all of the families who kindly donated play dough to the Environmental Education program. The Grade 1’s and 2’s have thoroughly enjoyed using it this term to create life cycles and habitats.

Performing Arts
Bianca Banks and Carol Ray

Prep: This term, the Preps have continued to develop their music and movement skills. They have used the puppets and have started learning an item for their Prep assembly. Students have sung a variety of songs and developed their beat and rhythm skills using the percussion instruments. They have also learnt some basic drama skills, performing with and to the class.

Grade One: Students in Grade One have continued to develop their rhythm and beat skills using a variety of instruments and body percussion. They have been involved in percussion ensembles and created their own rhythm patterns. Students have developed their miming skills and performed in a variety of group tasks. They are beginning to learn an item for their Grade One assembly.

Grade Two: Students in Grade Two have focussed on movement and music lessons this term. They have listened to a variety of music styles, performing a variety of movement tasks with the ribbons. Students have worked in groups to create their own movement phrases and have continued to develop their music skills using the instruments.

Grade Four: Students in Grade Four have focussed on different plays from around the world. Each week, students are involved in learning and performing scripts from different cultures. They work together in small and large groups and perform these plays for the class. At the end of this semester, we are hoping to hold an in school showcase for the Grade Four students to show each other and their families what they have been learning about in Performing Arts. Each grade will perform something from this semester, allowing all Grade Four classes to perform a different cultural piece.

Grade Five: The Grade Five students are busy learning their items for the production. Each grade is performing two items, plus the finale song. Each grade is representing two different cultures from around the world. The story is about six students who end up at school without any teachers. Clues are left around the school to give the students an idea as to where their teachers may have gone. The dates for the production are Tuesday 16th, Wednesday 17th and Thursday 18th June.

Our choirs and Show Stoppers groups are full of eager and enthusiastic students. Students in the Junior Choir, Senior Choir and Happy Harmonies are learning a variety of songs. The Junior Choir is working towards a performance for the teachers in the staffroom. Students in the Show Stoppers dance group have been learning a hip hop routine; developing their dance, performance and rhythmic skills.
We have also been entered into the Casey Arts show in August, where our Show Stoppers and Choir will perform for other schools. More information still to come.

**Visual Arts**

Michelle Ferguson and Sara Fleming

In Visual Art in term two, we see Prep and Year 1, 4 and 5 students.

Preps have been focusing on developing their understanding of primary colours and basic colour mixing. The activities completed have been aimed to allow children to experiment with the materials provided so that they are making exciting colour discoveries in an independent way. These activities have included magic crayon pictures (white crayon resist), where students used food dyes in the primary colours and allowed the colours to mix on the page. Prep students have also been introduced to the art of Eric Carle through tissue paper collage. The overlapping techniques in the tissue paper collage have also allowed the students to experiment with colour mixing.

Year 1 students have continued to explore pattern and colour. They have created oil pastel ladybug pictures and snail pictures whilst learning about complimentary colours and pattern/symmetry. Grade 1 students have also used clay to make a snail and used the clay tools to create patterns on their snail’s shell. These will be painted once dry. Preps and grade ones have also explored colour mixing through ink blowing their Crazy Hair pictures in celebration of Crazy Hair Day.

Students in years 4 and 5 have been exploring the art element of Lines and the art principle of Movement. They have created landscapes in response to the work of Renie Britenbucher and Vincent Van Gogh using soft pastel. They have been challenged to incorporate the use of line to show movement in their landscapes such as wind blowing or water moving.

Students in years 4 and 5 have also studied the art of Claude Monet. In response to Monet’s water lilies, students have created paper relief/paper sculpture work depicting water lilies and insects that they might find on a pond. They created their paper sculptures from paper they had created using the print-making technique of “marbling” (printing from the surface of water)

**Physical Education**

Amy Tivendale and Petrina Blackmore

The P.E department is ACTION PACKED & FULL OF EXCITING TIMES!
Swimming: The Grade 1 and 2 students enjoyed their 8 day intense swimming program at Casey RACE in term two. Soon it is the Prep’s turn….The prep students begin the prep swimming program next term on the 4th of August which has been a great success in the past and we are very happy to see the students becoming more confident in their swimming ability.

Prep – Grade 2: The Prep, 1/2 classes have enjoyed the variety of the fundamental motor skill activities; catching, rolling, throwing and kicking, as well as enjoying their running games to keep them fit and active. They have also have the opportunity to be involved in a few different clinics run by organisations/groups in the wider community including, SEDA cricket, SEDA basketball, Hockey Victoria and Tennis.

Grade 3-6: Grade three to six students have been enthusiastic in their efforts to try out new sports, including basketball, cricket, football and hockey clinics. The grade 6 students are enjoying the winter interschool sports; kickball, netball, football, soccer and tee ball. We compete every Friday morning with Berwick Primary, Berwick Lodge Primary, Maramba Primary, Beaconhills, Oatlands Primary, Kilberry Valley and Bentwood Park Primary. Lightning Premiership day is coming up on Wednesday the 10th of June!

Sports Clinics news: We have had SEDA football, soccer and cricket students out to gain experience in their local community assisting in our P.E classes with our students which the students have really enjoyed having the ‘big kids’ around. We have also had a SEDA Soccer and a SEDA Cricket student in every Tuesday/Friday which our students have really enjoyed and the SEDA work placements students are also enjoying getting out in the community to see what a P.E teachers life entails!

Cross Country: Well done to the 60 students that made it through to the District Cross Country team. They will go and compete at Sydney Pargetter Reserve in Endeavour Hills on Tuesday the 19th of May. Good luck runners!

Hoop Time Basketball: On Thursday the 23rd of July we will have approx. 175 grade 3/4 students travel to the Dandenong Stadium for the Basketball Victoria McDonald’s Hoop Time competition.

On Wednesday the 5th of August there will be 170 grade 5/6 students travel to the Dandenong Stadium for the Basketball Victoria McDonald’s Hoop Time competition.

Wednesday the 19th of August we will have approx. 144 grade 1/2 students travel to the Dandenong Stadium for the Basketball Victoria McDonald’s Mini’s Hoop Time competition.

Hallam Secondary College Sports Academy: Will be assisting on our three Hoop Time days again this year by the yr 10 & 11 students coaching a Berwick Fields team each, which is a great connection we have established together.

Netball news: On Thursday the 7th of May we took two mixed netball teams to St Margaret’s School in Berwick for the Kea Cup. One of our teams finished runners up in their pool and the other team won their pool and played off in the finals, finishing 3rd overall out of 24 teams. Both teams displayed excellent sportsmanship and determination throughout the day.

Athletics: The 3-6 students have been practising for the district athletics day. From our school athletics day we selected our Berwick Fields Athletics team to go on to represent our school at the Edwin Flack District Athletics day which will be held at the Casey Fields Aths track on Tuesday the 18th of August.

Golf school team: Berwick Fields had 55 Grade 5/6 students participate in the Golf ‘Come and Try’ day at Sandhurst golf course, which was a huge success for many of the students to experience a new sport which they may not have been given the opportunity to otherwise.

EXCITING EVENTS TO COME IN P.E (Term Three & Four).......

- Rugby clinics
- Grade 5/6 Rugby Gala day
- Grade 6 Lightning Prem day
- BMX team day
- Grade 6 Friday Summer Interschool Sport
- Grade 5/6 Hoop Time day
- Grade 3/4 Hoop Time day
- Grade 1/2 Hoop Time day
- Prep Swimming Program
- District & Divisional Athletics Days
- Kanga 8’s cricket day
- Skip-a-thon
- Grade 3-6 water safety program
- Wilsons Prom Grade 5 hike
- Grade 5 Wheelchair basketball
Konnichi wa! The foundation students have had a busy start to term two! A group of Year 10 students from Kambrya visited our students and conducted mini Japanese lessons in small groups. Although the Year 10 students were a little bit nervous (and so were the Preps), the lessons ran very smoothly and everyone involved had a great time and learnt some new Japanese words and phrases.

The foundation students have been learning about how Japanese people eat their food. They have had a red hot go at using chopsticks to pick up various items. Great fun!

We have also been lucky enough to have some resources from Monash University for the students to use. I would like to thank Suzy Gaymer for obtaining these resources for us to use. The students enjoyed playing with Japanese games and dressing up in kimonos. We also had a wedding kimono on display in the school foyer.

The students have had fun learning to sing Head, Shoulders, Knees and Toes. They all joined in at Prep assembly, singing along together.
The students have also been introduced to counting from 1 -10 in Japanese. We have been singing a song and playing number games to help learn the numbers.

1- Ichii
2- Ni
3- San
4- yon
5- go
6- rocku
7- Nana
8- Hachi
9- Kyu
10- jyu

The students will continue learning about culture and language for the remainder of the term.

**Language Support**

Rachelle Classz

It was great to resume classes the first week back of Term 2. At present, groups are working through some assessment as we approach the end of term. Next term LSP will be working primarily with prep and grades 3 and 4.

Junior students have continued to develop reading skills by practising specific strategies that help to decode tricky words. One of these involves skipping the tricky word and reading to the end of the sentence to see if they can work out the word from context, which we call “skippy frog”. The groups also focussed on understanding what they have read by encouraging them to ask who was involved and what happened at the end of each page, with the aim being that they can independently check their own understanding before reading on. During writing activities the focus has been on hearing and recording sounds so writing can be read by others. This is a challenging process for students because it contains so many steps so we practise with words and build up to sentences and will continue with this until the end of the term, along with editing sentences.

Senior students have explored spelling strategies during writing sessions. The groups have explored using mnemonics or memory tricks to teach themselves how to spell words they want to learn. Another strategy was morphemic knowledge, which involves using the spelling of a base word to help spell variations of the same word (possible, possibility, impossible, possibly). Next we will be working on writing paragraphs and introducing colour semantics to assist students who find structuring sentences challenging. In reading sessions, students have been developing comprehension skills. In particular, we’ve been practising inferring, which requires the reader to “read between the lines” by using prior knowledge to make a prediction about what is happening in the text. We will continue practising comprehension strategies as well as reading with fluency until the end of term.

**English as an Additional Language**

Bridget Stein

The students are working hard in the ESL room this term. The focus for ESL/EAL support groups this term has been on continuing to nurture relationships and ensuring students feel comfortable in their learning environment and confident to learn and practise their English. We have continued to be involved in small group and one on one reading, writing and speaking listening activities.

In prep and grade one, we have continued to play games, sing songs, read stories and share our experiences. We have continued to work on building confidence in oral language and also build vocabulary skills which, will aid in comprehension and also expressive language. We have also been using the strategy ‘Colourful Semantics’ to help students learn how to write a grammatically correct sentence.
In grade two, three and four we are focusing on learning about grammar and vocabulary through discussions, games and targeted small group sessions. We are working on practising correct sentence structure, tense and prepositions. The students are involved in various reading, writing and speaking and listening activities.

In grade five and six we are playing targeted board games to help students learn about grammar and expand their vocabulary. We are learning about VCOP to assist in up levelling our writing and focusing on vocabulary, connectives, openers and punctuation. Guided reading and comprehension activities have been designed to help students’ understanding during and after reading. Many opportunities for the students to engage in rich conversation are being included in the program.

Domains

English Team

The English Mentor program has been operating in the school for just over 16 months. The three English Mentors work across all year levels with a focus on supporting English classroom program planning and effective curriculum implementation. There has been a focus on writing throughout this time and a strategic, whole school approach has been adopted to ensure the development of consistency throughout the school in English program implementation.

The Mentor program has been adapted after the initial implementation in 2014 to respond to individual teacher’s identified needs. During 2014, Mentors worked closely with one PLT/year level and supported members from that team. The teachers indicated in a review of the Mentor program at the end of last year that they would like access to both English and Mathematics, along with Engagement Mentors to extend their opportunities for learning. There has been a change in the structure of the mentor program accordingly to respond to this identified need. In 2015 Mentors were matched with teachers according to the individual teacher’s needs and the mentor’s expertise. This now means that Mentors are working across year levels e.g. P-2, 3-6 rather than with one year level.

A Whole School focus on Writing

The support of writing in 2015 has included targeted professional development which has extended the teacher’s knowledge, understanding and skills in implementing two effective writing program approaches. The mentors have lead after school professional development for staff with a third one planned for Term 3.

The Writer’s Notebook approach has been undertaken by teachers from all year levels who are now developing this approach with their students. Rachael Rydqvist has lead staff in their exploration of this excellent approach and has been supported by Alison McIntosh. The two sessions have offered staff an opportunity to understand the research behind Writer’s Notebook that make it an exemplary literacy practice. Staff engaged in a practical session where they learnt how to set a notebook up for success from a student’s perspective. A range of thinking tools and resources were shared that connect strongly to any classroom from Foundation to year six.

The second session provided participants with opportunities to ask clarifying questions and share their successes thus far. The group developed their understanding of writing seeds and how to collect, plant and grow writing ideas through a writer’s notebook. The second session was implemented through a circle time structure which connects to Health and Wellbeing to provide staff with a model of how circle time can be used with a curriculum focus.

The third, and final session will focus on connecting the writer’s notebook to a weekly writing program.

Big Write – VCOP (http://www.andrelleducation.com.au/) has been led by Amy Coath and Leonie Wigney. The VCOP writing assessment criteria was implemented as an assessment tool for the whole school in 2014 and we now continue to develop staff understanding of the teaching and learning connections. Research has indicated that the areas of Vocabulary, Connectives, Openers & Punctuation are the key elements which require
development to improve student’s writing skills. Having a chance to celebrate learning opportunities and to demonstrate student skill development is a key element of the program undertaken through the Big Write opportunity. We will undertake further exploration of the Assessment Criterion Scale and the effective implementation across all year levels during Term 3.

**Writing Moderation**
Linking assessment, teaching and effective learning are the goals of each writing approach being supported and developed throughout this year. Teachers are using the VCOP assessment criteria to moderate their marking of students work across their year level team and across the school. This ensures effective and consistent marking for evidence based results. Students writing is also being analysed by themselves in order to set individual goals for improvement. This self-assessment is a very powerful method of improving self-awareness and ensuring students understand which aspect of their writing development requires focused endeavour.

We have planned one more professional development opportunity for the staff to continue their exploration of Writer’s Notebook and Big Write – VCOP in Term 3 and will look forward to sharing the teacher’s exploration and implementation throughout this process.

**Supporting PLTs**
In supporting PLT’s the mentors undertake professional development at fortnightly meetings which has involved a variety of things. Some examples include: teaching writing forms, analysing running records which are a record of early reading behavior, supporting guided reading, using THRASS as a basis for teaching phonemic awareness and using Circle Time to introduce new learning approaches. The variety is extensive and tailored for individual teams requirements. On-going professional support of teachers is the key element of the Mentor program. Learning opportunities are taken from their requests for support to clarify, extend or introduce them to new approaches. The staff at Berwick Field’s Primary School are indeed lucky to have this support to mentor their development in a continuous improvement opportunity.

**Spelling**
Spelling has also been a focus for some Mentors in their classroom support roles in 2015. The staff were introduced to the Single Word Spelling Test during 2014 and have developed individual and class profiles which indicate word study program requirements. SWST is a whole school assessment tool for monitoring the development in Spelling and informs teachers for effective classroom program planning.

The Sound Waves spelling program resources have been purchased to support the implementation of a whole school approach to word study and this program includes teacher resources along with access to on-line support for students. The teachers have found these resources to be easy to use and effective in their support of spelling development with their classes. Many thanks to library staff for processing these resources in a timely manner to enable staff to use this valuable resource.

**Mathematics**
The main areas of focus for Mathematics have been professional development, mentoring and managing the resources.

**Professional Development**
Tania and Anita have both been attending professional development days based on the EMU program. This is an intervention program for students who are finding some concepts of mathematics difficult. Tania is completing this course in a grade 6 grade and Anita will be completing it in a grade 5 class. The skills that they learn through these professional development days are shared school wide to build the capacity of others.
Janelle has been attending a Create Leaders course at Bastow which is developing her skills to lead teachers in their practice to improve student learning. Janelle has been working with PLT 1 to develop their understanding in different mathematical areas.

At a staff meeting we provided the staff with a professional development opportunity based on the format of a mathematics lesson. Janelle took a session where the staff were able to get a better understanding of the introduction of a maths lesson. Anita gave the staff a detailed idea of how to structure the bulk of the lesson and Tania was able to share a variety of Reflection Tools to equip staff for future planning. The response from staff was overwhelmingly positive as most staff members said they would use our ideas in their classroom.

**Mentoring**

In 2015 the staff were able to identify what area they would like to develop. The staff that chose mathematics are either working with Anita, Tania or Janelle. The staff had ownership over their own development which has been extremely powerful. We are able to work on their individual goals and learning needs during planning and classroom times. Each mentor has been allocated a PLT where we attend their meetings on a fortnightly bases. These meetings are where we have an opportunity to share ideas, provide professional development and review current practices.

**Managing Resources**

During the last week of 2014 the mentors collected and redistributed the classroom resources to ensure everyone had what they needed to start 2015. We also moved the resource room to allow more space for the English resources and mentors. At the moment the mentors are looking over a yearly budget plan as the 2015 budget is considerably lower than 2014. We are deciding what we will spend the money on in the near future.

*Dale Mills*

Essential Learnings Leader

➢ Improving the capacity of individuals, groups and the school to have a positive impact in the world.

**Principles**

*Support*
- Managing and monitoring learning is seen as a major responsibility of all community members.

*Improvement*
- The school must understand and use strategies that lead to sustained improvement.

General

Since my last report in March I have had the pleasure of accompanying about 120 Year 5 students to Cave Hill Creek camp, near Beaufort which turned out to be another wonderful experience for all concerned.

I have also administered the Department of Education’s Year 5/6 ‘Attitudes To School Survey’, with some of those results being published in a recent School Newsletter. This is a really important survey for our school community as it provides our students with another voice in terms of telling us how they feel about school and providing us with a guide to seek further improvement for the following year.

I have been busy following through with a couple of concerns regarding our processes to support students with learning difficulties, especially looking at dyslexia. Consequently we have a parent, Jason Henham, President of SPELD (Specific Learning Difficulties), booked in to talk with School Council at our August 10th meeting about best practice in schools supporting students with a learning disability. Jason is also going to provide us with the names of a couple of schools who he believes we could learn from in terms of our approach. Next term staff will also listen to a consultant from SPELD talk about children with specific learning disabilities and practical ways the school can go about providing additional assistance. This is on top of the professional development individual staff members have undertaken in this area and the significant resources (I provided members at our April meeting with a summary of how we endeavour to meet individual student needs – to the tune of over $1,000,000 annually) that we allocate. Thanks to Kerrigan for his work in bringing to my attention the concerns of those parents mentioned above.

In between we were visited by the Deputy Premier of Victoria, James Merlino, to announce the $100,000 grant for our Eco Cubby project. As Suzy mentioned in her report our team leaders were fantastic in the way they talked about our school to him. James told our Team Leaders that this was the best tour he has ever experienced from a school.

At the moment teaching staff are working extremely hard to put together our Mid Year report package that you will receive on the second last Friday of this term. This package contains the Mid Year report and the student portfolio. Together, I believe, it provides students and their families with a fabulous record of their learning achievements so far this year. The recent curriculum day, devoted to the report writing process, has certainly been appreciated by staff, even though many more hours is spent, out of school time, to make this happen. Student Conferences will occur shortly after term 3 begins, and as we state every year, we invite parents to make contact with their child’s teacher if they believe a more formal one on one chat is required. This can be done at any time during the school year.

Another important responsibility that staff are also working on at the moment is the development of their Performance and Development Plan. Each plan involves individual staff members developing goals in the domain areas of Professional Knowledge, Practice, Engagement and Student Outcomes. These domains are based on the Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership professional standards. This is a part of our school’s continuous improvement agenda and integral to building the capacity of our staff, as outlined in our current School Strategic Plan. It requires staff to provide a variety of evidence, as part of their End Of Cycle review, that substantiates improvement and/or growth in either themselves, their students and/or their parents. At a School Council meeting in Term 3 last year I provided School Council members with an overview of this process and am happy to do that again if requested.

Over the next few months our school, in particular Amanda Ellaby, Sue Willoughby and myself, will be involved in a Department of Education pilot project with other selected schools, across Victoria, to develop a ‘tool kit’ that will assist schools in the future with the selection of staff. We have already been visited by a consultancy firm to talk with us about our staff selection processes and last Wednesday participated in a workshop in Melbourne to help the Department better understand how different school’s approach the selection of staff. We were recommended by our Region as a school who could add value to this project.
You would have been made aware, through the media, of an inquiry that the Independent Broad Based Anti Corruption Commission is undertaking into the dubious actions of some members of the Department of Education in terms of financial mismanagement and possible fraud. This is causing all members of the teaching service with a great deal of concern in terms of how our Education system may be perceived because of the actions of a small minority. I want to reassure School Council members that we are regularly audited by independent accountants, in terms of our processes, practices and documentation, and have always been assessed as working within the regulations as set out by the Department and State Government. For Government schools it is hard enough working within the budget we receive without misappropriating funds. I hope when you look around our school you can see that we have maximised the resources allocated to us to support all our students with their learning and social/physical development.

Enrolment Information

As of today (19th May) our enrolment is 1104, an increase of 11 students on the last report (March 2015).


At the moment the class sizes are:

Preps. (7 classes): 20 to 24.

Accommodation

No change

Staffing

Since the last meeting Amy Tivendale (Phys Ed leader) has started her maternity leave. To accommodate this we have moved Lucy Mills back to Phys Ed to replace Amy and appointed Sharon Anamalay as the teacher of 3E, Lucy’s previous grade. Sue Johnston has taken long service leave and has been replaced by Kate Malone. Lianna Askraba begins her maternity leave as of Friday 22nd May and has been replaced by Lisa Halloran. Sharon, Kate and Lisa were appointed to our school after writing an application and being interviewed by myself and other selection panel members. We are confident that they will be excellent additions to our staff. Carol Baillie will be returning in August to provide support to the Health and Well Being team.

John Painter has just been appointed to Hampton P.S as an Assistant Principal. John is a Foundation Member of Berwick Fields and has much to be proud of in terms of his contribution to the learning of many students, including my son, the well being needs of our school community and the development of a wonderful learning environment. John, is still a young person in terms of his career, and felt a move to broaden his experiences in terms of how another school operates was important for his continued leadership development. The selection panel that interviewed him was extremely impressed with his integrity and his understanding of how students learn best, especially in relation to preparing students to be effective 21st century learners. John will be missed greatly for his passion for teaching and compassion for others.
Financial Statements
See reports.

Major & Minor Works Program Update.
General maintenance undertaken over the past month. Nothing significant.

Eco Cubby
Since the last report we have had official notification that $100,000 has been given as a grant to our school for this project. School Council, at its April meeting, requested that a steering committee be set up to work with the architect to make sure this project maintained its integrity of student ideas but also was cost efficient for the school. Notices inviting school community members to be involved have been publicised in our newsletter and on our website. So far staff members, Suzy Gaymer, Emma Malinowski, Danni Hofinger and Donna Egglestone have joined the committee. Unfortunately no parent member has made contact with me.

I have also sought interest from a registered builder to help oversee the project. No response yet. Two tradespeople, parents of the school, have contacted me to volunteer their labour and so I have set up a data basis to record their names.

A Project Officer from the Department of Education has also been assigned to monitor our project. This is normal practice. Our next step is to arrange for the steering committee to meet with the architect to begin to develop proper plans for the Eco Cubby.

An application to SITA, as part of their sustainability grants program, has just been made. We are asking for $5000 and will know in July. We will continue to apply for similar grants as they become available.

Stephanie Alexander Kitchen Garden Project (SAKG)
No report

School Grounds For Learning
No report

School Strategic Plan, Annual Implementation Plan and Annual Report.
No Report

From Amanda
Portfolio Preview and Our Mid Year Reports!

Thank you to those families that attended our recent Portfolio Preview evening. Your reflections, as collected on the Two Stars and Wish Tool have indicated that this was a valuable opportunity to view your child/ren’s work and supported you to understand your child’s progress to date.

Below is a selection of the Stars and Wishes!

- I’m struggling to think of a wish I enjoyed reading the portfolio immensely.
- I like the feedback, your comments.
- I would like to see some work that he is struggling in, so we can hopefully see improvement in the second half of the year.
- I like seeing the piece of writing and spelling.
- I like seeing the first few activities of his schooling in items from the 1st day.
- I like seeing the childrens work with the teachers comments.
- A bit like a parent/teacher interview without the interview!!
- A great example of different work that is done in class.
- A brief list of what they will be working on next term.
- I think everything is in there.
- I like seeing the teachers comments & how well student is doing or where improvement is needed & may be suggestions on how to improve.
- This provides time to ask the teacher about the progress of the child.
- I like the portfolio slips on the top of the page, with both positive feedback and areas that need work.
- The little completion slips on the top of the page, with both positive feedback and areas that need work.
- A good example of different work that is done in class.
- It was great to see my child excited about showing me her work and achievements so far.
- Great way to see strengths/weaknesses, so they can be worked on at home.
- It was great to see my child excited about showing me her work and achievements so far.
- A good example of different work that is done in class.

Additional Comments: This was a pleasant surprise to us, so we think the chance to do this at any other school. I also believe that this:

- I liked being able to read comments from teacher to see progress and areas that could be improved upon.
- I liked being able to read comments from teacher to see progress and areas that could be improved upon.
- I liked being able to read comments from teacher to see progress and areas that could be improved upon.

Lorr the ease of coming in when you

- I liked being able to read comments from teacher to see progress and areas that could be improved upon.
- I liked being able to read comments from teacher to see progress and areas that could be improved upon.
- I liked being able to read comments from teacher to see progress and areas that could be improved upon.
To ensure that these portfolios continue to offer each family a comprehensive snapshot of their child’s learning they will act as an integral part of the mid year report that will be sent home on Friday June 19th. This will see that every family will receive their child’s semester one portfolio of which will include the mid year report, offering the following components:

- Work samples will be included in the portfolio to report on the child’s learning strengths and opportunities for improvement. Most samples will include a teacher comment, peer comment or self evaluation.

- A ‘Student Reflection’ page, along with Specialist Reflection pages that detail personal reflections by your child about their progress.

- A chart with an A-E rating, showing your child’s current progress against the expected standards. Please note the Learning Areas shown on this chart will depend on your child’s year level.

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<th>Learning Area</th>
<th>Rating</th>
<th>Year 4</th>
<th>Year 5</th>
<th>Year 6</th>
<th>Year 7</th>
<th>Year 8</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Health and Physical Education</td>
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<tr>
<td>Interpersonal Development</td>
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<tr>
<td>Personal Learning</td>
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<tr>
<td>Civic and Citizenship</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

- A chart showing their level of effort and class behaviour, along with details about your child’s attendance at school. This is a Department of Education requirement.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Work habits</th>
<th>Needs Attention</th>
<th>Acceptable</th>
<th>Good</th>
<th>Very Good</th>
<th>Excellent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Effort</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Class Behaviour</td>
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- Attendance
Stuart has been absent 17 days prior to December 1st. For 2014 Stuart has missed 7% of learning time. Even though Stuart’s daily attendance appears to be satisfactory, he has been late X out of X days and this is severely affecting his learning. It is important that children are in school at the beginning of the school day. A child is greatly disadvantaged if they arrive after that as they miss vital instructions. This also impacts on the learning time of others as the teacher has to repeat information and instructions.

- An overall comment will be written by the classroom teacher to the child to acknowledge and celebrate their effort, attitude and behaviour this semester.

Teacher’s Comment
What a fantastic year you have had Stuart! I have been most impressed watching you grow as a learner over the year, maturing in your approach to learning and the way you apply yourself. You have become much more …….

- Strategies that the school will implement to support your child, along with what you can do at home to support your child’s progress will be detailed.

To build on learning, next year the school will:

- To build on learning, at home you could:
An overall comment written by each of your child’s specialist teachers will be included, along with a rating on their attitude, behaviour and effort when attending specialist classes. In addition the specialist subjects will be recognised within the portfolio samples with a reflection on each subject, including a photograph, student reflection and description of the semester’s learning.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Visual Arts</th>
<th>Teacher: Dale Mills</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Attitude: Good</td>
<td>Behaviour: Good</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The grade six students have participated in a variety of learn and individual games and activities, using and building on strategies from other sports as well as continuing to develop new, sport-specific skills. They have been working to effectively use strategic thinking in game situations with</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A comment written to the child from a member of the school’s leadership team will be included along with and a space where you can prepare a comment to your child. We encourage you to write this directly on the report and keep it in the portfolio. This will ensure

We ask that you comment on your child’s efforts, achievements and attitude over the past semester in the space provided. Here are some questions to guide your thinking:

- What achievements are you proud of in this report?
- What do you notice about your child’s effort this semester?
- How has your child’s attitude contributed to their learning this semester?
- How could you support your child next semester?

Once you have read and reflected upon all of the information offered in the mid year portfolio we are requesting that you return your child’s portfolio to school by Thursday June 25th. This will ensure that your child can prepare for their student led conference that will be held on Wednesday 22nd July. Further information about this event will be made available closer to the date.

We ask you to remove and retain the plastic pocket from the portfolio that contains your child’s mid year report which details the home and school strategies. This will ensure that you can refer to them throughout the semester.

If you have any questions or queries about the way we are approaching our mid year assessment and reporting process I encourage you to contact me at school on 8788 9988 or via email as elliaby.amanda.a@edumail.vic.gov.au

Amanda Eilaby
Assistant Principal