A Message from the Principal

Hi Everyone,

Welcome to the 2013 school year and an especially warm welcome to all the new students and their families who are joining us for the first time this year. Our school continues to grow and our numbers are now in excess of 200 students.

I also have a great deal of pleasure in welcoming new staff, we have Jocelyn, Vanessa, Sumintra, Andrea, Annette and Luke joining our teaching team. Katrina and Heather, join our ES staff and Meera is a speech therapist who joins us on a full time contract.

A big thank you needs to go to all staff for such a smooth start to the year, there was a lot of planning, preparation and setting up of classrooms during the holidays which really facilitated a great start to the school year.

Everyone has settled beautifully and the groups appear at this point to be very well balanced and harmonious. The Preps have started their Student Support Group Meetings on Wednesdays and the rest of the school will soon be sending notes home for these meetings. The therapists and teachers are currently engaged in professional conversations and a lot of work is being done to prepare for the implementation of Individual Learning Plans.

On a somewhat negative note we are currently engaged in industrial action with the State Government and are highly likely to be on Strike next Thursday Feb. 14th. Many staff have advised me that they intend to take strike action on this day and I fully support them to do so. We will be sending home detailed letters as soon as we have definite numbers but I am letting you know in advance that it is highly likely there will be no staff at school on the 14th February, and can you please start to think about alternative arrangements for the supervision of your child. Fingers crossed that this situation is resolved soon. None of our staff take strike action lightly and we are fully aware of the ramifications for our families.

Looking forward to a really happy year!

Cheers Sue.

Please Note:

Dr Kylie Jackson is available for appointments on Wednesday 27th of March. This may benefit parents and carers who are not available for the more usual Friday appointments. As always appointments can be made by contacting the office.
Changes to the Education Maintenance Allowance (EMA) for 2013:
The EMA continues to help families on lower incomes with financial assistance to cover the cost of educational expenses including textbooks, stationery, uniforms and excursions for their child up until the age of 16.

From 2013, the Victorian Government is restructuring the EMA to better target financial support to families on lower incomes. Payments made direct to parents will be increased for eligible recipients at all year levels up to age 16, with an additional increase for parents with students in Years Prep and 7 in recognition of the additional costs at these transition points.

In 2013 the annual EMA payment for families with children in primary school (years 1-6) will receive a payment of $150. Families with children in secondary school (Year 8 up until the age of 16) will receive an annual payment of $250.

The School Start Bonus which was previously received by EMA families has been discontinued as a separate payment from 2013. However, additional funding has been incorporated into the EMA meaning that parents of children in Prep and Year 7 will receive boosted EMA payments of $200 and $300 respectively in those years.

From 2013, the EMA will no longer be paid 50/50 between the parent and the school. The 50% school portion of the EMA will no longer be paid to schools on behalf of parents. However, $62 million over four years will be redirected to the State’s most needy schools to assist families on lower incomes. These funds will form part of the school Student Resource Packages to be allocated at the local level.

New EMA payment option

From 2013, on the EMA application form you can choose to have your EMA payment;
  Paid by direct deposit (Electronic Funds Transfer) into your nominated bank account or
  Paid by cheque which will be posted to the school for collection or
  Paid to the school to be held as credit which you can use towards education expenses

The introduction of the new payment option to have the EMA payment directed to the school provides parents with extra flexibility to assist with budgeting towards education expenses.

Eligibility:
To be eligible for the EMA in 2013, you must:

be either a parent or guardian of a primary or secondary school student up to the age of sixteen; and
be an eligible beneficiary of a Centrelink pension, allowance or benefit within the meaning of the State Concessions Act 2004* or
be a Veterans Affairs (TPI) pensioner or be a temporary foster parent.

* i.e – the parent/guardian must be the holder of a valid Health Care Card or valid Pension Card.

The eligibility criteria must be met as at 29 January 2013 (Instalment One) and 15 July 2013 (Instalment Two).

Payment Amounts - 2013:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Prep</th>
<th>Years 1 - 6</th>
<th>Year 7</th>
<th>Year 8 – Age 16</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Instalment One</td>
<td>$140</td>
<td>$105</td>
<td>$210</td>
<td>$175</td>
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<tr>
<td>Instalment Two</td>
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<td>$75</td>
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<tr>
<td>Annual Total</td>
<td>$200</td>
<td>$150</td>
<td>$300</td>
<td>$250</td>
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*Student year level (or age for ungraded and special school students) will determine the amount payable. Parents of students turning 16 years in 2013 are paid on a pro rata basis.

Contact: School Office for an EMA application form and to lodge your application. The closing date for EMA application forms to be submitted to the school is 28 February 2013.
Please provide a copy of your Health Care Card for correct name and number identification or present your card at the office so that we can create a copy for you.
A very big thank you to all our families for the smooth start to the new school year and especially for the tolerance and understanding shown as our school bus runs settle in. As we have mentioned in the past, for our students to continue to enjoy the wonderful, free, door to door service that they do, requires changes to the bus runs every year as students leave the school and new students enrol. This obviously impacts on pick-up and drop-off times and while we appreciate this may inconvenience families there is very little we can do. Times as advised at the end of 2012 were obviously estimates only but accurate run times should become clear in the next week. Any queries regarding bus transport should be directed to the school, not the Bus operators. Further information can be obtained from DEECD Student Transport Branch:


student.transport@edumail.vic.gov.au

Thank you!!
Communication Corner

It is lovely to welcome familiar and new faces to start the year 2013.

We would like to introduce ourselves as the
Speech & Language Therapy Team at Dandenong Valley

Laura Seeley: seeley.laura.l@edumail.vic.gov.au (Middle School)
Meera Ratanje: ratanje.meera.m@edumail.vic.gov.au (Junior School)
Snehal Mehta: mehta.snehal.s@edumail.vic.gov.au (Senior School)
Helena Redmond: redmond.helena.r@edumail.vic.gov.au (Senior School)
Julie Thompson (STA)

We will be offering regular information sessions for parents over the coming year as well as publishing hints and tips to support communication with your children in the school newsletter. However, if you require information about something specific, please don’t hesitate to contact us via email in the first instance, or via the main switchboard number.

Here’s to a great year!

SCHOOL EMERGENCY CLOSURES

To all parents/carers,

As of 1st January 2013, all information about closures and cancellations can now be viewed from the Department’s external website by clicking on the ‘EMERGENCY CLOSURES’ button at the bottom of the Department’s website home page.
"My Time"
Dandenong Valley

Venue
Dandenong Valley SDS
Victoria Road
Narre Warren

Time
Mondays Fortnightly
10.00am - 12.30pm (2.5hrs)

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<tr>
<th>MY TIME DATES 2013</th>
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<tr>
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<td>February</td>
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<tr>
<td>March</td>
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<td>24&lt;sup&gt;th&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
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<th><strong>Term Three</strong></th>
<th><strong>Term Four</strong></th>
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<td>September</td>
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<td>16&lt;sup&gt;th&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>9&lt;sup&gt;th&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>September</td>
<td>December</td>
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For details please contact:
Lynne Wood 0459 517 558
The Recreational Respite Program supports carers of a young person with disability who is aged between 6 and 24 years of age and who has high support needs. The Program provides funding for use primarily over school holidays, to help the young person access community activities where possible.

What are the criteria?

The young person being cared for is required to have high support needs in one of the following three areas: medical, physical or challenging behaviours.

Who can make a referral?

Carers can apply directly as well as case managers, schools or other services on behalf of carers. Funding can be used to access community based activities, camps or activities to support young person with a disability with high support needs.

Who runs it?

The Commonwealth Respite and Carelink Centre Southern Region is funded by the Department of Human Services to offer the Recreational Respite Program in the southern region.

For more information, or to make a referral, please telephone Michelle Holmes on 8781 3401 or email at mi.holmes@alfred.org.au

If you’d like information about other respite and recreation options in the southern region, please visit the Respite South website at www.respitesouth.org.au
Belgrave South Community House

Individualised Support for people with Disabilities

Services Include:
- Personal Care
- Home Help/ Domestic Assistance
- Independent Living Skills
- Travel Training
- Every day activities and Recreation Support
- Weekend Group Activities

Eligibility:
16 years plus with no local government area restrictions!

An Option for your ISP...

Belgrave South Community House
Gilmore Court Belgrave South 3160

For more Information Contact
Disability Services Coordinator
Leanne Skinner on 9754 2274
bsch-extend@netspace.net.au

www.bsch.org.au
Marillac Enhancing Vacation Care – Cardinia

Giving people with disabilities support and respect

Marillac’s EVC service can help you join in with mainstream vacation care activities that are run for primary and high school age children during school holidays. These activities can include art and crafts, sport, gardening, cooking, science, excursions, movies, relaxation and playtime.

This service can help if you:
→ Are aged from 5 to 17 years old
→ Have a disability (and you are on the DHS Disability Register)
→ Want to join in mainstream holiday activities,  
    and would be able to join in with some support
→ Live in the Shire of Cardinia.

Holiday programs in the Shire of Cardinia are either for:
→ Primary school age (5 to 12 years) or
→ High school age (12 to 17 years).

If a vacation care program wants to be part of Enhancing Vacation Care, and become accessible to young people with disabilities, we provide them with training, advice and extra support staff.

You do not pay for any of this extra support. You only pay if the program you choose has a set cost (some programs are free, some have a small charge to cover expenses). These costs are the same as for any other child or teenager who attends the program.

The Shire of Cardinia website publishes a list of activities and costs before each school holidays.

If you want to join in, you apply first to Marillac, so we can help make sure the program you choose can support you to fully participate.

We have detailed guidelines for young people who want to join in (and their families and carers), and for holiday program providers who want to make their activities accessible to young people with a disability.

CONTACT OUR PROJECT WORKER TO FIND OUT MORE
Email: vacations@marillac.com.au
Phone 9591 6488
Address 5 – 7 Main Street Pakenham 3810
Autism Spectrum Australia (Aspect)  
Positive Behaviour Support Workshop

ASPECT POSITIVE BEHAVIOUR SUPPORT WORKSHOP  
For Parents and Carers of Children and Young Adults with Autism Spectrum Disorder  
(see eligibility criteria below)

Aspect Victoria is pleased to offer our highly successful, contemporary, evidence-based three (3) day Autism specific Positive Behaviour Support Workshop in the Southern Region of Victoria.

More than 1200 families have participated in Aspect’s Positive Behaviour Support workshops. Post workshop evaluations showed an effectiveness of the workshops, with participants reporting decreases in challenging behaviours and increases in confidence and capacity to support their children and young adults.

When: Monday 4th, Tuesday 5th & Wednesday 6th March, 2013  
Where: Department of Human Services - GSO Building  
Conference Centre / Level 4 - Rooms 15 & 16  
165-169 Thomas Street, Dandenong, Vic, 3175  
(enter via the professionals entrance turnstiles)

Time: 9:30am-2:30pm (9:15am for Registration)

Cost: FREE (Morning tea included~ participants to bring own lunch)

Register: Online registration at www.autismspectrum.org.au

Contact: Amber Day or Heather Kirkhope:  
Phone: 03 9377 6600 or email aday@autismspectrum.org.au

Eligibility to participate in this Workshop:
- Parents or carers of children and young adults aged between 8 and 25 years, diagnosed with an Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD)  
- The individual with ASD must be living at home  
- Participating families are encouraged to invite professionals or service providers working with them to attend the workshop

Families participating in this workshop will:
- Develop an understanding of autism and how an ASD impacts upon learning and behaviour  
- Learn how to be proactive by creating an autism friendly environment at home  
- Learn how to write an autism specific behaviour support plan for one of their child’s behaviours  
- Learn how to write a plan to respond confidently when challenging behaviour occurs  
- Learn how to teach new skills to promote their child’s independence and quality of life

What participants say about Aspect Positive Behaviour Support Workshops:

“Brilliant information and concrete strategies to use, thank you. I have learnt very important self-reflection, being able to step back and really look at and examine behaviour, so valuable. I really value the focus on being positive and improving my child’s, my own and my family’s quality of life. Great workshop – I will highly recommend it to others.”

“Fantastic presentation. Very interactive, affirming & capacity building. Ideas not just discussed but taught how to follow through on.”

“Best information session on Autism I have been to. So much clarity about getting to the core behaviour, unpicking the onion. Enjoyed all the visuals. Thank you so much.”

Autism Spectrum Australia (Aspect) is Australia’s largest not-for-profit autism specific service provider. Established in 1990, Aspect provides a wide range of services and support. In 2010 Aspect commenced operation in Victoria. Aspect has been funded by the Department of Human Services to provide a range of positive behaviour support programs across Victoria.
Club Profile - Elwood Angling Club

Elwood Angling Club members are optimistic about the summer fishing season after a bumper catch of snapper in a club competition in late October.

Club History
The club, established in 1901 as the Prahran Angling Club, changed its name to Elwood Angling Club in 1939 when work was completed on a new clubhouse on Elwood Beach foreshore. The durability of the club owes much to the enticing attractions of the sport of angling - a relaxing but challenging recreation away from worldly bustle that fosters strong friendships and opens up new horizons because of the people you meet and the places you visit.

Becoming a Member
Many of the club’s skilled anglers joined as novices, and the club welcomes new members regardless of their knowledge of the sport. New members will acquire skills in a practical way through fishing with experienced members and through the discussion that takes place at the fortnightly club meetings, which are open to the public and include talks by members or visiting experts covering a wide range of angling topics. Sometimes, instead of a meeting, members gather for a BBQ and a casual fishing competition off the beach in front of the clubhouse.

Upcoming event
The club traditionally has had a close involvement with the Port Phillip community. Its best known current community activity is the annual EAC Children’s Fishing Workshop, which is on Sunday, February 10, and it brings crowds of children, accompanied by family members, to St Kilda Pier to enjoy a morning’s fishing with the Elwood anglers as part of the St Kilda Festival. This event is open to children of all abilities and all children must be accompanied by a parent and guardian in order to register on the day.

If you are interested in finding out more information about the club, visit www.elwoodanglingclub.com.au.
CRAZY OFFER
BUY 10 VISIT MULTI-PASS CARD

Great Gift Idea

10 Visit Multi-Pass

only $50 Normally up to $125

AWESOME FUN AND VALUE
You pay $5 Entry Not $12.50

60% OFF
Hurry!
Offer valid until 28/02/13

*Conditions*
Cards are Non-Transferable
1 card per child
Not Valid with any other offer
Fountain Gate Only

Lollipops Playland & Cafe
Brechin Drive, Westfield Fountain Gate Shopping Centre
Sporty Tackers is a new weekly program for young people 8 - 15 years with an intellectual disability, combining a range of fun indoor sports all in one safe and central location.
Activities undertaken each week include:

Basketball • Soccer • Volleyball • Table Tennis
Swimming • and much more...

The program runs every Saturday through the school term at Melbourne Sports and Aquatic Centre and only costs $8.70 per person with no booking necessary.

For more information please contact Jeff Torney:
(03) 9926 1547
jefft@msac.com.au
We cannot wait to see you there!
Modified Sports - Sporty Tackers and Sporty All Stars are weekly programs for people with an intellectual disability, combining a range of fun indoor sports all in an inclusive, safe and central location. Sporty Tackers is for ages 8 to 15 and Sporty All Stars is for ages 15 to 55.

**When:**
Saturday’s during school term
Sporty Tackers - 12:30pm to 1:45pm
Sporty All Stars - 2pm to 4pm
Meet at main reception before listed start time

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Term 1</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Sport</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Program</td>
<td>9 February</td>
<td>Basketball</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>16 February</td>
<td>Cricket</td>
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<td></td>
<td>23 February</td>
<td>Soccer</td>
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<td></td>
<td>2 March</td>
<td>Badminton</td>
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<td></td>
<td>9 March</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>No session</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>23 March</td>
<td>Basketball</td>
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**Where:**
Melbourne Sports and Aquatic Centre (MSAC)
Aughtie Drive, Albert Park

**Cost:** $8.50 per session

**Contact:** Jeff Torney 9926 1547