



**Edition20 – 10<sup>th</sup> December 2024**

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## **PRINCIPAL'S REPORT**

As this is my last Principal report for 2024, I'd like to take this opportunity to reflect on what has been a great year for the school and thank those that have helped along the way.

Like any year, 2024 has provided its highlights and its challenges. Our student achievement data has soared to heights we haven't seen before. Our school received the highest ranking possible and is now ranked amongst the top few in our fifty 'Similar Schools' category. We know these improvements have grown from three things in particular:

- our teachers collaborate and plan together to provide consistent, research backed practice
- our teachers are supported in their practice by high quality coaching and monitoring
- our school has high expectations that enable a calm working environment for our students

We are also proud of our student, parent and teacher survey data. We closely monitor this data and create goals from it each year on different ways we can improve. Each of these groups completed survey data throughout the year and each was of an extremely high standard.

Schools are complex learning environments and 2024 provided some complicated challenges for us to navigate. In each case, we try to sort issues with student learning our most important focus. I want to thank our parents and carers for their loyal support and respect for our staff and students. This relationship is intricate and relies heavily on trust. We thank you for trusting us with the care and teaching of your children. The magnitude of this we never take lightly.

Finally, I want to thank our parent representatives on School Council. Each councillor ensured the smooth running of our school by raising questions, providing ideas and feedback, celebrating milestones and supporting the school in all its endeavours. Beautifully led by Kate Thomas, we are extremely fortunate to have such a united council. Similarly, special thanks to our Parent Connect group who continue to provide fun and entertaining opportunities for our school community. Events such as a car boot sale, trivia night, colour run and graduation are some of the highlights of our year as they bring us all together and highlight our great community. Thank you to everyone who has helped out at different stages throughout the year and especially to those hard workers for their coordination of different events.

Have a safe and happy Christmas everyone and congratulations on a fantastic year.

***Gene Vander Zalm, Principal***

## **CALENDAR**

### **Current - 10<sup>th</sup> Dec – 20<sup>th</sup> Dec.**

10 <sup>th</sup> Dec	State-wide transition day
10 <sup>th</sup> Dec	School Council EOY dinner
11 <sup>th</sup> Dec	LSC transition day
12 <sup>th</sup> Dec	Grade 6 Graduation
16 <sup>th</sup> Dec	End of year awards assembly at 2:45pm
18 <sup>th</sup> Dec	Grade 6 Pool Party
18 <sup>th</sup> Dec	Class Parties
19 <sup>th</sup> Dec	Students last day - 3:20pm Finish
20 <sup>th</sup> Dec	Last day of Term 4 (Student free day)

### **Upcoming**

28 <sup>th</sup> Jan	First day of term 1 (Student free day)
29 <sup>th</sup> Jan	First day of term for students
29 <sup>th</sup> Jan	First day cuppa at Meeniyian Store from 8:45am

## **GRADUATION**

This Thursday 12<sup>th</sup> December our grade 6 students will attend their graduation night at the Meeniyah Hall. This is a very exciting night for these students as they enter the last week of their Primary School years. We wish all our grade 6 graduates the very best for their future as they step into their Secondary College years and beyond!

## **COMMUNICATIONS CHANGES**

We are excited to announce that in 2025 we will be introducing our new look digital school newsletter. Due to the ever-increasing popularity of images, our old newsletter just can't keep up with the content. The new digital newsletter will streamline the publishing process, saving administration time and helping our environment by sending out digital copies rather than using all that paper and ink every fortnight. We look forward to sharing this new version via Compass and the school website in 2025.

In order to streamline our administrative tasks in the office, we will no longer be taking cash payments for curriculum contributions, camps, excursions and activities.

We will put all events (except camps) on Compass where you can pay and consent at the same time.

You can still direct deposit to the school bank account if that suits best.

If you have any questions or concerns, please contact Kylie 56647382.

## **ABSENCES**

As we are nearing the end of the year, you are reminded that **all student absences** (past, present and future) **must be explained by the end of the school year!** So please help by taking some of the load off the admin staff, by checking your child/children's attendance and lodging any unexplained absences via the Compass App or by phone or in writing to the school.

If you would like any help with this, please don't hesitate to contact the office – 5664 7382.

## **COLOUR SPLATACULAR**

The Colour Splatacular was held on Friday the 29<sup>th</sup> of November and was a big success!

The weather gave us perfect conditions and the kids and adults all seemed to have a great time!

A huge thank you goes out to all those who helped organize and run the day!



## **BIKE ED**

Last week Mrs Browne and Mr Reid ran the Bike Ed program for students in grades 3-6.

The aim of the program was to provide students with the opportunity to learn about safe riding behaviours, road rules and riding in a shared environment. It was a very warm few days, but it was a great opportunity to promote safety, physical activity and the enjoyment of getting outside and on your bike!

On the last day they rode along the rail trail to Koonwarra or Stony Creek and back to the Meeniyan recreation reserve for a BBQ before heading back to finish the day at school. Thankyou to everyone that helped out and made this run smoothly!



## **RESPECTFUL RELATIONSHIPS**

*When I was in grade prep I met my friend Sue. She lived on Inglis Road in Dumbalk East and I lived on Dollar Road in Dollar. This is back when it meant something to play tennis for Dumbalk East and if you came from Dollar people would look at you puzzled, wondering where on Earth that might be.*

*Sue and I both had a palomino pony, my girl was called 'Georgie Girl' and Sue's 'Tip-Toe'. We were so excited to have matching horses and would plan a ride together most afternoons. To do this I would have to ride town to the crossroads at Dollar and Dumbalk East Road and Sue would come up Dumbalk East Road to meet me. After a while we got tired of taking the road, it took up too much time and we were not getting home until dark. One day we looked out over the landscape and realised that we might be able to get to each other quicker if we cut through 2 different farms. So, we called up the farmers and asked them. They were happy to let us come through and this made our rides together much more fun. Our afternoon rides would usually go for about 4 hours and so many of these adventures are embedded deep in my brain and taught me so much about friendship, community, nature and animals.*

*This morning when I was running, I listened to an interview about the average times people are on screens, 4-5 hours a day!! I could not believe this, and I wondered – are those hours spent as rich and as fun and as purposeful as those long summer rides with Sue, Georgie Girl and Tip-Toe? Will we look back on this screen time with the warm memories? What is the trade off in a life with 4-5 hours of screen time a day?*

**Donna Giliam, Primary Welfare Officer**

### END OF YEAR AWARDS ASSEMBLY

All MPS families are invited to come along to our end of year awards assembly at the school amphitheatre from 2:45pm on Monday 16<sup>th</sup> December.

### CLASS PARTIES

This year's end of year class parties for grades P - 5 will take place on Wednesday 18<sup>th</sup> December, while the grade 6 class has their pool party. Notices regarding this should be sent to parents/care givers from classroom teachers in the next day or so.

### FAREWELL 2024



We would like to remind everyone that Thursday 19<sup>th</sup> December is the last day for students and the day will finish at the usual time of 3:20pm and busses will run as normal.

We would also like to invite any of our school parents/care givers to catch up for a cuppa on the student's first day of school next year, Wednesday 29<sup>th</sup> January 2025 at the Meeniyen Store after school drop off, from 8:45am onwards.

**As this is our last newsletter for 2024, we would like to take the opportunity to wish you all a very Merry Christmas and a happy and prosperous start to the new year!**

## COMMUNITY NEWS

The following Community News articles promote community connections and communications.  
They are not considered school activities.

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### Meeniyen-Stony Creek CFA



### Santa's Lolly Run

Friday 20<sup>th</sup> December 2024

5pm- Meeniyen Township

6pm- Meeniyen Rec Playground

7pm- Stony Creek Playground



### CHILD SAFETY STANDARDS WHAT WE EXPECT AT MEENIYEN PRIMARY SCHOOL

- ❖ Everyone connected to our school can help children be safe.
- ❖ We have zero tolerance of any abuse of children.
- ❖ We have policies and procedures in place to protect the care, safety and welfare of children.
- ❖ There are clear boundaries about how adults in our school community may interact with our students.
- ❖ The new Child Safe Standards go further than child protection arrangements did in the past.
- ❖ The Child Safe Standards apply to school staff, volunteers, contractors, visitors and students' family members. Keeping children safe is everyone's responsibility.
- ❖ To ensure you know how we are keeping your children safe at school, and how we would like you to support us.
- ❖ Unsupervised contractors will be asked about their child safety arrangements as a condition of working with us if they work with children enrolled in the school (or children can reasonably be expected to be present while they are at the school).

Please see further information on Child Safe Standards on our school website.

Community members are encouraged to raise any concerns about child abuse with the Principal or report directly to Child Protection / Police.