PRINCIPAL PREAMBLE
Sharon Walker

This year has seen a busy and hectic start to the new school year. Having said that, it has also been a quiet and settled beginning by all children.

It has been a delight to see the way our new seven Foundation children have started the year without apprehension or anxiety. Our extensive transition sessions really do help children to adjust to the expectations and routines of a classroom. Children who are settled at school learn better than those who are anxious and fearful.

The Year 3-6 unit have had an exciting time with a visit from the scientists and their first yoga session. All children enjoyed the ‘Start Smart’ lesson given by Alex from the Commonwealth Bank. Alex told the children to ‘speed towards their needs and wait for their wants.’ Delayed gratification is an important concept for us all to learn.

There are many events coming up in this shortened term. We would love to see everyone come to the Information Night on Tuesday February 16, from 6-7.30pm. We will start in the Year 5/6 room for an introduction to staff and some of the curriculum programs, then break off to hear each classroom teacher speak about their classroom routines, expectations and programs.

If you know of any prospective Foundation families for 2017 or 2018, and beyond, please encourage them to come along to next week’s Information night. All classrooms will be open so prospective parents could sample what we have to offer as a small rural community school.

As principal I have to look forward to project enrolments over the next five years. These projections impact upon the number of staff we employ, the money we can spend and what our building needs are. We must attract new families to the school as most of our current Foundation enrolments are coming from existing families. Obviously we will run out of children if we do nothing. As parents we can ensure that a positive message gets out to the wider school community. Parents listen to other parents and I know we have many families who have been proactive in supporting the school to seek new enrolments. Just keep up the good work!

Please keep a look out for the Yarra Valley Sports Association event notices. Mrs Hannagan and Mr Devisser will send out a schedule for the year shortly. Many of these events are ‘parent choice’ where parents drive their own children and assist with supervision during the day. Some families team with others to share the driving. The school will post a list of children attending so parents can arrange car pooling if necessary.
Always stay positive when talking about your child’s school and teachers. This models the need to think positively and to be resilient. Modelling negativity teaches that mindset to children. Mental health needs to be worked on just like physical health!

**Foundation Orientation Dates 2016**

- Wed May 4 and May 25
- Wed June 15 and 29
- Wed July 27
- Wed August 10 and 31
- Wed September 14
- Wed October 12 and 26
- Wed November 23
- Wed December 7 (9am - 1.30pm)

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**THE IMPORTANCE OF SLEEP**

Up to 40% of children and teenagers have sleep problems. Lack of sleep affects children and adults in different ways, and can have a negative effect on behaviour, emotions, attention, social relationships and school or work performance. For example, your child might be, moody, have trouble concentrating and get sick a lot. When you lack sleep you might have trouble making decisions, get drowsy while driving and have trouble following a conversation. To ensure a better sleeping pattern for school age children follow these tips:

**Keep regular sleep and wake times** If your child is six months or older, help him go to bed and get up around the same time every day. Keep wake-up times on school days and weekends to within two hours of each other. This can help get your child’s body clock get into a regular rhythm. The body clock is just developing in children younger than six months, but you can still encourage a regular bedtime and wake-up time.

**Relax before bed** Reading and listening to quiet gentle music are great ways for children to wind down before bedtime.

**Make sure your child feels safe at night** If your child does feel scared about going to bed or being in the dark, you can praise and reward him whenever he’s brave. Avoiding scary TV shows, movies, computer games or books can help too. Some children with bedtime fears feel better when they have a night light or a personal alarm under their pillows.

**Check noise and light in your child's bedroom** A dark, quiet, private space is important for good sleep. You can check whether your child’s bedroom is too light or noisy. It’ll probably help to turn off electronic stimulation in your child’s bedroom at least one hour before bedtime. This includes loud music, mobile phones, computer screens and TV.

**Avoid the clock** If your child is ‘clock watching’, encourage her to turn her clock around or move it to where she can’t see it.

**Eat the right amount at the right time** Make sure your child has a satisfying evening meal at a reasonable time. Feeling hungry or too full before bed can make the body more alert or uncomfortable. This can make it harder to get to sleep.

**Get plenty of natural light in the day** Encourage your child to get as much natural light as possible during the day, especially in the morning. This will help her body produce melatonin at the right times in her sleep cycle. A healthy breakfast also helps to kick-start the body clock.

**Avoid caffeine** Encourage your child to avoid caffeine – in energy drinks, coffee, tea, chocolate and cola – or avoid offering them in the late afternoon and evening.
YEAR TWO SLEEPOVER

Parents of Year 2 children please be aware that each child will need a sleeping bag and tent unless sharing with others. We leave it to parents to arrange sleeping details. It is great for a few children to share a tent however some children prefer to sleep alone. The tents are put up with the children on Thursday February 25, at 3.30pm. The $20.00 cost of the sleepover includes entertainment, dinner, supper and Friday’s breakfast. We encourage all Year 2 children to attend. Please note that forms and money need to be returned ASAP.

INFORMATION NIGHT

The principal, and teachers, will conduct a school Information Night on Tuesday February 16, from 6-7.30pm in the Year 5/6 room. Topics covered will include the school discipline policy, homework, uniform, School Council elections, Sexual Education, eSmart and Drug education programs for 2016.

At 6.45pm the teachers will conduct information sessions in their classrooms. Parents will have the opportunity to hear the teachers talk about classroom routines, expectations and specific curriculum.

We encourage parents to ask questions during both parts of the evening.

SCHOOL COUNCIL NOMINATIONS

We invite parent members of the school community to nominate for a position on School Council. There are three two year terms vacant. Thank you to Robert Burpee, Rodger Koth and Trudy Banks for their terms on School Council. Thank you also to our 2015 co-opted member, Kimberly Hannett who assisted with research around Drug and Sexual Education programs.

Parents may self-nominate or others may nominate a parent. Forms are available from the office for the two nomination categories. School Council meets twice each term to discuss school policies, finance and accountability.

Meetings are conducted from 6-7.30pm in the staffroom at school. Ongoing members of school council include: Mark Hull, Jane Toop, Meridie Jackson Smith, Michelle Maffescioni and Hayley Bawden. Sharon Walker acts as the Executive Officer each year.

Please return nomination forms by 4pm Friday February 26. If nominations exceed places available a ballot will be conducted.

SCHOOL YEAR BOOK

Cindy watts is willing to work on a Dixons Creek School Year Book for 2016 but she will need a parent helper to do this. Sandra Hannagan has kindly opted to be the teacher assistant so please see Cindy if you enjoy photography, or graphic design, and would like to be on the team! Great idea Cindy!

DON’T FORGET SCHOOL PHOTO DAY IS TUESDAY MARCH 8 FROM 9AM!
Mrs Hoogie’s F-1

In grade F-1 we have had a wonderful time getting to know each other and becoming familiar with class routines. We are learning about friendships, emotions, being organised and how to work well with each other. Last week we planted seeds and talked about the things plants need to grow, we made an analogy and talked about personal growth at school and the ways we can best learn and grow. We studied our fingerprints, eyes and faces with magnifying glasses and mirrors and discovered that we are all very different and quite unique. We made talking telephones and used our inquiry skills in Science to predict, question and evaluate what would happen with M&M’s when we added them to water. We have learnt how to play new maths games and we used streamers to measure each other. We have also been learning about computers, how to be cyber-safe and how to publish our own writing!

YEAR 1/2 S

This week in 1/2S we were settling into a routine. We investigated what it means to be a good team member and even played cooperation games to demonstrate when everyone cooperates it improves whole class outcomes. We talked and wrote about what ‘we would like to be when we grow up’ and we even did some science that had us dissolving Smarties in water. Finally we welcomed Parsley the sausage dog into our class. He will be our class mascot and everyone will have a turn at bringing Parsley home. It was a busy and fun week.
YEARS 3-6

YOGA

On Monday the Years 3 to 6 classes had their first yoga session. We will be doing yoga twice a week for 3 weeks with our Yogi, Diana. We will be doing yoga because we are learning about how we can keep our bodies and brains healthy. Yoga stretches out our bodies and makes us feel calm, relaxed and free from worry. The sessions are for half an hour and finish with a meditation. For Monday’s meditation we had to sit with our legs crossed, close our eyes and picture ourselves walking down a forest path and into a clearing. This was fun and relaxing. Diana had a singing bowl that, when she played it, made a ding, followed by a calming vibration sound.

BRAIN SCIENCE

Last week neuro-scientists, David and Emma from the Florey Institute spoke to the Year 5/6 students about the brain and how it works. Chloe says “the experience was great and very intriguing. We learnt what neuro scientists do.” The brain dissection taught us that there is grey matter and white matter. Also there are 2 hemispheres, the right hemisphere controls the left side of the body and the left hemisphere controls the right side of the body. Jess says “that the brain dissecting was very wet but also very different. I really enjoyed it and would like to do it again.”

The grade 5-6s really enjoyed it and would love to say a big thanks to Emma and David for coming and helping. Also thank you to Mrs Hannagan for organising them to come to the school and talking to the children.

Jessica Rothwell YR5 / 6

Creating Body Systems.

Last Wednesday the 3-6 unit had a fantastic time undertaking a multi age learning activity. To complement their "Body Systems" unit of study the 3-6 children were given the open ended tasks of "creating a body system." The children worked in groups and each group was allocated a particular body system to create. Some of these body systems included: the respiratory system, the digestive system, the circulatory system and the skeletal system. The children cooperated and worked so well together. They were engaged throughout the whole session. The children used a range of materials such as balloons, tubing, straws, tape and paper clips to create different elements of each body system.

To finish off the day, all the groups shared their body systems explaining the functions of the different elements in each body system.

We had lots of fantastic feedback from the children about how they enjoyed this open ended task. A favourite part, enjoyed by Riley in Year 3, included using straws and plastic packages to demonstrate how the lungs work.
Yarra Glen Craft Market Car Parking Roster

It’s a new season of car parking duties for the Yarra Glen Craft Market held at the race course.

On the first Sunday of every month 6 parents from the school, are needed, to volunteer their time from 7.30am to 12.30pm. The market season runs from February to June and then restarts on September until December. There is an additional market in December which is usually on a Saturday evening and this one is known as the Xmas Twilight Market (2pm to 7.30pm). Our volunteers help direct cars to parking spaces. It can be a lot of fun and a way to meet others in the community.

To volunteer please TICK the box on your preferred date below.

We require volunteers for March, April, May and June 2016. Please consider helping as we desperately need to fulfil our quota of volunteers. Some parents have done several markets each year so we really need others who have not helped to step forward. We will earn $600 a market for the school.

Please complete the form below, circle a date and return to the office no later than Friday February 19, 2016.

Should you nominate a date but then find you are unable to participate, you will be required to find some else to take your place.

Thank you from Emma Moore, Car Parking Coordinator

Yarra Glen Craft Market Car Parking

Name: ...........................................................................................................

Students Name: ......................................................................................

Contact Phone: .....................................................................................

Contact email address: .........................................................................

7th March 2016

3rd April 2016

1st May 2016

5th June 2016

Please return by the 12th February
...YOGA...

Dear Parents,

After successfully implementing a Yoga program as part of a Health and Wellbeing initiative by the staff in term four last year, we are planning to continue it during 2016. It was terrific to welcome members from the whole school community last year and we would love to build the numbers even higher. Parents, grandparents and friends are all welcome.

The Bhava Yoga class facilitates the exploration of the energetic body, mind and physical body via the breath, meditation and movement. It is a fantastic way to nurture inner health and wellbeing, strengthening the body, mind and spirit.

**When:** Thursday afternoons 4:30-6:00pm (Please, NO children)
**Where:** Dixons Creek Primary School
**Tutor:** Dianna Tarr
**Cost:** Approx. $15 per class based on a minimum of 6 participants
Payment will need to be made upfront for a 5 week block. Subsequent blocks will follow according to interest.

If you would like to sign up for a place, beginning 18th February, we need to know numbers now to determine whether it will be viable. Please fill out and return the attached slip below to indicate your interest ASAP.

Kind Regards,
Amanda Hull

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Name: ____________________________

I would like to sign-up for the first 5 Yoga classes beginning in term 4. I understand that I will need to pay the fees upfront. 
Signed: ____________________________ Date: ____________

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**EASTER RAFFLE**

Time for the annual Easter Raffle! What a fabulous way to end the term – taking home a basket brimming with Easter goodies. We need donations though! Donations should be items that families would enjoy during the Easter break. Ideas could include: chocolates, wine, gourmet foods and spreads, table decorations, games for children to play over the break, a good book to read, vouchers for dinner, gourmet dips and cheeses, festive serviettes, soft toys, perfumed candles or pampering bubble baths! The list is endless! Our hampers have always been popular and the community does a great job with donations. We know this one will be well worth winning too!

All items can be brought to the school office any time from tomorrow onwards. Hampers will be made up during the last week of the school term.