**A MESSAGE FROM THE PRINCIPAL**

Dear Parents,

What a great evening our Bush-Wah-Zee night was. Thank you to all who came along and participated. It was a very nice way to see off the school year with our community. A special thank you to Heidi and her team of supporters who made the evening go off without a hitch.

Last week we formally said goodbye to our grade 6 students at their graduation ceremony. This was a wonderful evening led by our student leaders. We heard stories from students and parents about their time here at school and what our students plans are for the future. Our students danced and sang the evening away and had a lovely celebration of their primary school life with tears from students, teachers and parents alike. A very big thank you to Michael Uzunovski and Emilly Rose for their co-ordination of the night, and for all who contributed to the evening. Today those same grade 6 students are spending the day at Adventure Park as their less formal goodbye, and tomorrow at our 1:00pm assembly we shall farewell them with a guard of honour.

It’s this time of year where we say goodbye to some of our staff as they move to other schools to further develop their teaching career. Of course we thank them for their hard work and dedication to our students whilst they were here, and wish them every success in the future. Goodbye and best wishes to: Chloe Gray, Michael Uzunovski who heads to Albanvale Primary School as a Leading Teacher, Kathleen Gannon who heads to Kingsville Primary School, Emilly Rose who will be teaching at Solway Primary School, Kate MacCubben who will be changing to the Catholic system to teach at St. Margaret’s Primary School, Lorraine Cahill moves to Bayside P-9 College, Prue Ainsworth will be teaching at Blackburn Primary School and John Deigan who heads to Tarneit P-9 College.

Goodbye and best wishes to a variety of students not in grade 6 who will be leaving us at the end of the year. We know that their time spent here will have been rewarding; full of fun, laughter and lots of hard work. I have no doubt that their education will be all the better for having spent time at our school, and the skills and values they have developed will serve them well moving forward.

A reminder to parents that student reports are accessible via Compass. Our records indicate there are several parents yet to access their child’s report. If you have any login issues, please contact the school office.

Over the holidays there will be a variety of tradespeople here installing synthetic turf, our new sand-pit, painting all of our classrooms in the main building, tidying our gardens and installing three more water tanks behind the grade 4 portable. These people will be easily identifiable with their vans and tools. If anyone sees any other people in our school grounds over the break, we urge you to contact the police on 000 as they should not be here.

On behalf of the staff and school council of Newport Gardens Primary School, we wish you all a very Merry Christmas, and a safe and happy New Year. We look forward to seeing many of you on January 31st refreshed, and ready for another exciting year at our wonderful school!

*Simon McGlade*
Principal

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HAPPY BIRTHDAY

Cailen Young, Kay-Ella Egan-Cram, Luca Fraser, Noah Campbell, Merlin Tzaros, Ciara Gowty, Willow King, Jazmine Kearley, Zoee Vasiadjis, Jack Munro, Abbie Martin, Aidan Lala, Joshua Godfrey & Oliver McNair.

WE HOPE YOU ALL HAVE A WONDERFUL DAY

NOTICES

312 Melbourne Rd, Newport 3015
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REMINDERS

FREE DRESS DAY
WITH A GOLD COIN
DONATION

LAST DAY OF TERM, 20TH DECEMBER

Be SunSmart
Slip!
Slop!
Slap!
Seek!
Slide!

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LAST DAY OF SCHOOL

FOR 2016

TUESDAY 20TH DECEMBER

FINISH TIME 1.30PM
FIRST DAY OF SCHOOL

FOR 2017

TUESDAY 31ST JANUARY
Parenting ideas
INSIGHTS

Building parent-school partnerships

WORDS Catherine Gerhardt

Digital social skills

Just as we teach children social skills for real life, there are important social skills for the digital world. It is imperative that parents teach children to follow a few basic rules.

The internet is a portal into some of the most amazing places, and just like any new place we visit, we are likely to make a few social stumbles. If travelling the world, every culture you visit would have its own social nuances that you are likely to have to work your way around. It would be easy to misunderstand what others say or take offence to something that was not intended.

Young people, at the best of times, are still learning social rules and developing their critical thinking skills around collective interactions. Well-meaning personalities can make all kinds of mistakes when they enter this new online culture.

As parents we want to do whatever it takes to minimise the mistakes our children make online. Netiquette is a set of general guidelines for cyberspace behaviour. Here are some basic principles parents can use to help children solve their own ‘netiquette’ dilemmas.

Be kind Remember the human behind every screen. Every user is an independent person with individual thoughts and feelings. It can be easy to misunderstand another person’s intentions or even be rude to others when you are not interacting with them in person and given the grace of viewing facial expressions and emotions.

Perhaps the best mantra we can go back to as parents is the golden rule of “Treat others how you would like to be treated.” Developing empathy and trying to see that comment, post or photo from many different perspectives takes practice. How would you feel if someone said that to you? Treating others with respect is paramount. Yes, there may be times when you might have to stick up for yourself, however it needs to be done in a responsible and respectful way.

If you wouldn't do it there, don't do it here Social standards apply to both online and offline spaces, and standards of online behaviour should be consistent with real life expectations. As parents we put many rules and expectations in place as to how we expect our children to behave in a public space. I know I expect my children to show respect, use their manners, help others out, practice kind language, etc.

Online is the biggest public place your child will ever find themselves, which is all the more reason to work on exceeding those standards of behaviour.

Respect privacy With the world wide web being a public place, privacy is paramount. Learning how to protect personal information and the importance of looking at a website’s privacy policy can help develop skills around internet privacy.

Asking for permission before creating accounts and downloading files, strategies for identifying scams and limiting the type of information kids give about themselves or others can help set a strong foundation for their digital lives. Children do not always appreciate that they may be putting their information in jeopardy, because the warning signs are not always obvious. Respecting other people’s right to privacy is also crucial; don’t tell other people’s stories, spread rumours or give away personal details without permission.

more on page 2

Want more Ideas to help you raise confident kids and resilient young people? Subscribe to Happy Kids newsletter, my FREE weekly email parenting guide at parentingideas.com.au. You’ll be so glad you did.

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Develop their internal filter
Parents may feel that they have some control over their child’s use of technology and many use programs and apps that allow for monitoring and filtering content. Despite the best intentions, there are times when filters are re-set, not set up correctly or not even in place. For example, when your child goes to their friend’s house, gets online and no safety mechanisms have been established. What this means is that we need to help our children develop their internal filter, as this is the one they will always have and may need to rely on. Research is clear that the best way to teach morals and ethics is through example.

Teach them to do the right thing
Parents can nurture moral principles that will guide their children to stand up for their beliefs and act right even without us. Know what you stand for so that your child knows. Parents with clearly identified moral convictions are more likely to raise children that do the right thing. Pursue opportunities to look for moral issues and talk about them as they come up: from TV shows and news events to situations at home, school, and friends. Discuss with your child how you feel about the issue and why.

Be upstanding
There will be times online when your child will have to be brave and stand up for others, when they will have to go against social pressure to do what is right. When someone they know is being deliberately upset or harassed by another person, expect your child to move from bystander to upstander, because this is the right thing to do. In most cases, many people contribute to the cyberbullying. Many know about the situation, but choose not to get involved. Encourage your child to stand up, speak up and act up against online abuse. They can support the target by letting them know they are there and provide empathy. Encourage your child to report what is happening to a trusted adult; someone who they believe will listen and has the skills, desire, and authority to help.

Technology is moving forward quickly, and it continues to evolve at an unprecedented pace. Taking the time to impart digital social skills at an early age is vital for our children as they move from playground friends to social media and gaming friendships.

These simple rules apply all along the developmental spectrum. They also give us a clear understanding of what we can do as parents, to help our children manage a positive digital reputation.

Catherine Gerhardt

TOP TIPS FOR PARENTS

1. **PRACTICE MAKES PERFECT** keep reinforcing positive digital social skills and a strong foundation will be laid.

2. **COACH** about privacy in a public place.

3. **FOLLOW** the social code of good people.

4. **MANNERS** are necessary.

5. **COMPLIMENTARY** conduct is proper.

6. We are **FREE** to follow group rules. We are not **FREE** to hurt others.

7. Encourage the **THINK** rules.

Catherine Gerhardt is a dedicated advocate of critical thinking skills in children and young people. As a parent of school-aged children, she understands the commitments and challenges parents face ensuring they provide the right information to young people in a way that empowers them to develop their personal and social capabilities. Catherine is a certified training provider through the Office of the Children’s Safety Commissioner.

Want more ideas to help you raise confident kids and resilient young people? Subscribe to Happy Kids newsletter, my FREE weekly email parenting guide at parentingideas.com.au. You’ll be so glad you did.

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