



Class Newsletter

Year 4

Week 7, Term 1, 2016

Dear Parents

It is so hard to believe we are over half way through the term. Students have been working productively and learning to become more independent and organised. We would like to share with you some of the wonderful learning undertaken so far this term.

The Year 4 students had a fabulous time during their swimming lessons at Unley Swimming Pool. We were delighted to be approached by the instructors at the end of the four days with some wonderful comments about the way the students conducted themselves. They were also appreciative that the students thanked them and identified aspects they enjoyed during the lessons. Thank you to all the parents who were able to assist us throughout the week.

Our inquiry into the central idea “Global citizens have responsibilities to themselves, each other and to the Earth itself” is well under way. Students have enjoyed discovering many individuals and organisations who have worked to help their communities and the world through both small and large actions. They have become aware that individuals can make a difference through even the smallest of actions. Last week the children enjoyed presenting their understanding of what it means to be a global citizen at the assembly and they need to be congratulated on their enthusiasm and confidence in presenting to a wider audience.

The excursion to Wingfield Waste and Recycling Centre was a great way to initiate the children’s thinking about how their actions can make a difference. They learned how materials from household waste and organic bins are processed. We encourage you to discuss actions that can be taken at home to reduce the amount of waste your household produces. Remember one small change can make a huge difference. Thank you to the parents who assisted us on this excursion.



The children will be provided with opportunities to develop an understanding of the properties of materials and how they relate to use. Through investigations, students will explore how to test the properties of materials fairly and how to use this knowledge to choose materials wisely. The children will consider how the properties of materials affect the management of waste and can lead to pollution.

Our second unit of inquiry will begin towards the end of this term and is under the transdisciplinary theme of **How the World Works**. The students will be investigating the central idea “Earth’s surface changes over time as a result of natural processes and human activity.”

Our Religion unit on “We are stewards of God’s creation” has tied in well with our unit of inquiry. Students have gained a deeper understanding of the responsibility God has bestowed upon them to care for and conserve all aspects of nature. As we prepare for Easter, Lent will be an ongoing focus.

In Mathematics we continue to focus on number and place value – introducing addition, multiples, investigating the properties of odd and even numbers and the mental strategies of doubling and near doubles. Students will also be investigating different methods for data collection and representation. They will involve constructing data displays from given or collected data.

The Numerical Acumen Semester One challenge has begun and runs from 15 February 2016 to 16 June, 2016. Numerical Acumen helps students with their mental calculations. The Challenge aims to:

- Increase the speed at which students recall basic number facts and other mathematics facts.
- Improve their accuracy when using their brain as a calculation device.
- Improve their speed when using their brain as a calculation device.
- Improve their understanding of when not to, and when to, use an electronic calculator.

Students are encouraged to spend at least five minutes a day on this challenge to help develop their mental calculation skills.

<http://www.numericalacumen.com/>

In Literacy we have begun our novel study of *Rowan of Rin* by Emily Rodda. This book has been an excellent way to commence the school year, as it is fast-moving story that quickly pulls readers and listeners in. It takes the form of a journey, which can be likened to the journey of the school year ahead. It has allowed the children to focus on improving comprehension strategies such as visualisation and prediction.

This term our mornings have been a hub of activity as we establish the routines around Word Work. Students are explicitly taught skills in small teacher-directed groups whilst other students are investigating commonalities and differences in words. They are completing a variety of activities to consolidate their understanding of the word sort. The word sorts are available on the Year 4 Jimdo page.

iPads & iPad Apps

Just a reminder that the children are required to bring their fully charged iPads to school every day. They complement existing learning methods and will be used in class to supplement the curriculum in a variety of ways and it is therefore, important that the core list of apps have been downloaded and ready for use. We have attached the core list of apps and we thank you for your support in ensuring that your child has access to these.

BEBRAS Australia Computation Thinking Challenge

The Bebras Australia Computational Thinking Challenge was established in 2014 to enable Australian primary and secondary school students to have a go at Digital Technologies without programming. The format is designed to engage students in a light and problem-oriented way.

The challenges consist of a set of short questions called Bebras tasks that are delivered via the inter-net. The tasks can be answered without prior knowledge about computational thinking, but are clearly related to computational thinking concepts.

Working alone or in teams to solve the tasks, students are required to think about information, how information is organised, how data will be processed, and make decisions that can both demonstrate an aspect of computational thinking and test the talent of the participant.

Year 4 students will be participating in this challenge. Please visit the website www.bebbras.edu.au.

A participation and Privacy Consent form is attached with this newsletter. Please return the consent form to school as soon as possible.



MERCEDES COLLEGE

Dates for your Calendar

March

- 9-11 Year 5 Camp, Victor Harbor
- 14 Adelaide Cup Holiday
- 15 Year 5 Excursion to The Botanical Gardens
- 15 Year 4 Incursion – KESAB Compost & Worm farm workshops
- 16 Year 2 Excursion to Wetlands
Catholic girls Swimming Carnival, 6:00-8:30pm
Parent Session on “Friendships”, 7:00-8:30pm
- 17 R-5 Class Photos, Family Photos
SAPSASA State Metro Swimming Championship, 9:00-3:00pm.
- 22 SACPSSA Swimming Carnival, 10:00 – 1:00pm, Burnside Pool.
- 24 Student Dismissal, 1:05pm
- 29 R-5 Learning Reviews, 2:00-7:00pm
- 30 R-5 Learning Reviews, 4:00-6:00pm
- 31 JS Open Parent/Care Giver Afternoon OSHC, 4:00-6:00pm

April

- 1 R-5 Swimming Carnival, Unley Swimming Centre
- 3 Community Day, 11:00-4:00pm
- 14 Year 4-7 Athletics Carnival, Mercedes College.
Autumn Concert.
- 15 Caritas Day
End of Term 1, 3:30pm dismissal.

We have certainly had a busy start to the term. We would like to thank you for all the effort and support you have given us this term, whether it be through monitoring homework or supporting and encouraging your wonderful children to achieve their best. It is all greatly appreciated.

Kind regards

Franca Iskra

Janine Crookes

Melissa Buske

The Year 4 Teaching Team