Oak Park Primary School will work collaboratively to provide a stimulating, safe and challenging learning environment that promotes resilient, innovative thinkers.

Principal’s Column

Pardon my rant, but….

I have had enough of the amount of rubbish that gets dropped every day in the yard.

Each morning when I open the toilets and gates, I have a quick walk around and I pick up any rubbish that I happen to see lying around. But every single day, there is more to pick up.

There are days when I think we are winning the war, but usually I think we are a long way from it. There are bins outside and rubbish lying on the ground within metres of them. There is a huge amount of food on the ground too and many plastic containers that kids bring to put their food in. No wonder the pigeons are so attracted to our school. You shudder to think what else might be attracted to the scraps lying around.

I went out on yard duty the other day and saw a Grade 6 student walking towards the oval with a packet of popcorn. I was going to say something, but thought I’d just watch and see what she did with the wrapper. I watched from a distance. She was with a few other girls, one of whom also had some wrapping. After a while, the first girl finished the popcorn and put it into the fork of a tree next to the oval. The second girl walked from way over near the neighbour’s fence to a bin that was near the shelter shed next to the staff car park and put her rubbish in it before re-joining her mates on the oval.

CAFE LEARNER’S COLUMN

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Thought for the Week

There aren’t many things that are universally cool, but it’s cool not to litter. I’d never do it.

Matthew McConaughey
What makes one student walk all that way to dispose of her rubbish and the other to simply not bother? (By the way, I did follow up with the litterer).

It starts from home. Both in terms of what students bring to school as well as their general attitudes to the disposal of their rubbish.

But we also need to do more at school to teach them what is the right thing. We do this with maths or reading or whatever, and we should do it with this too. It has to be a concerted effort from everyone, all the time. All the time. We all have to do lessons on it and we have to remind each other constantly. It has to become ingrained in our children. In us.

Our kids are great kids. They are smart, hardworking, friendly, happy and will do what is asked of them without fuss. If you asked them about littering, they would give you beautiful responses about how it damages the waterways and the environment in general and it is a big no-no. They know the words, just like we do. But the thing is, to get them, to get everyone, to do the right thing, when no one is watching. Do the right thing because it is the right thing!

I have thought many times about how we get the message and the necessary actions across. Do we fill the yard with bins? Nope, tried that and it simply doesn’t work – certainly not without support from home and some follow up in the classroom by all teachers, consistently. Do we simply stop the kids from taking rubbish outside? That would work, but it means everyone has to be vigilant and stop their kids from leaving their classroom if they have rubbish with them. No finishing off their lunch/snack in an eating area – simply never take anything outside. And this should be followed up in the home and in the classroom too; why we would do this, why we reduce, recycle etc.

Teachers may have to stick around with their students while they finish their lunch/snack. And students may feel they are missing out on playing time while they eat inside. And that would be a bit of a pain. But it would become less of an issue if we could stop kids bringing rubbish into the school in the first place. But regardless, I believe it is an important enough issue and that teachers should monitor it anyway. Besides, whatever we are currently doing, isn’t working. And the definition of insanity is to keep doing what you are doing and expect to get different results.

Do you think this is important? Do you realise what actually happens to rubbish left on the ground? Where ends up? Or is it simply a case of ‘out of sight, out of mind’?

There are many, many short videos about littering I came across to share with teachers. Below is a link to an old (1990s I think) Aussie TV commercial about anti littering. It’s got a catchy tune and an important message. The second link is to a funny video where a couple of guys dispose of their rubbish in skilful ways.

But there are millions of little videos and resource materials that teachers and parents could use with their kids and you don’t need me to point them out. Some of them are very
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depressing, when you see what actually happens to animals, birds and sea creatures when we litter.

I know John has some strong ideas on this and he shares my sadness about the rubbish in the yard. He talks to kids about some of this stuff within his program but it will never work unless we all live it and follow up in the home and in the classroom, every day.

John also points out the money that we could save by limiting the amount of rubbish we need to dispose of. Money that could be put back into great programs for our kids – loke the Sustainability Program.

I would be happy to hear any of your thoughts on this. Meanwhile, I ask that you speak to your children. Blame me - tell them what a bad man I am and that they will not be allowed to go outside with any rubbish or food from Monday. Let’s get everyone thinking about what we bring to school. We actually do have a Rubbish Free Lunch policy!

We have to do something about this.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9lv7HFReCTU
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aHU3DLTa6_w

Transition

Starting primary school is a major milestone for children and their parents, marking the start of a new phase of life for both. The transition to school is an experience that starts well before, and extends far beyond, your child’s first day. Your child may start school after going to kindergarten or child care or they may not have attended any formal service before going to school. All children will have developed a range of skills and abilities that will form the basis of their positive school experiences.

Below is information about the transition programs offered at our school:

Preschool to School

Oak Park Primary School conducts a transition program over four sessions for those children leaving preschool and commencing their primary education. During the transition program, our new students have the opportunity to familiarise themselves with their new school environment, meet many of the staff they will be interacting with and experience some of the structures and programs they will encounter next year. The next Kinder – Foundation session will be held on Tuesday November 29th 2016.

Primary to Secondary

All Year 6 students participate in a state-wide transition program that enables our exiting students to attend their 2017 secondary school and experience a day as a secondary student.

This year’s Orientation Day is Tuesday, 6th December 2016.
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Writer’s Festival

Today, we opened the 2016 Oak Park Primary School Writer’s Festival. We had a very special guest author in Alison Reynolds the famous author of over seventy books including the Pickle and Bree books, the Littlest Bushranger and the Marmalade series – among many, many others.

Of course, Alison was just one of the authors who participated in the Festival opening today. We had over 400 other authors who were there sharing their work with us.

This year was the fourth of our Annual Writers’ Festivals and each year it just seems to get bigger and better. The festival came about as a way of celebrating children’s writing and to showcase the amazing writing talents of our students and has developed into something that we are all very proud of. Our students have been on a writing journey over the past 6 weeks. Some have written descriptive pieces, others have created narratives as well as poems.

Each year, we have a theme that we ask students to write about. This year, it was ‘What A Wonderful World – Let’s Be Grateful’.

I would like to express my gratitude to wonderful writers who worked very hard to make this year’s festival such a success. Thank you to the many people who helped in a million ways to put it all together. And a very huge thank you to Jill Ridgwell who devised it, developed it and delivered it!
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November 10th 2016

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2017 Enrolments

Oak Park Primary School continues to accept Foundation enrolments for the 2017 school year.

We remind you that, for a child to begin Foundation in 2017, he or she must turn five by April the 30th next year. Enrolment forms are available from the General Office during school hours, but please remember that proof of age (eg. Birth Certificate or passport) and an immunisation certificate are pre-requisites for enrolling at a Victorian state school.

Be Sun Smart!

Australia has one of the highest incidences of skin cancer in the world. It is important that we protect ourselves against the harmful radiation caused by the sun’s rays.

As a Sun Smart School, Oak Park Primary School encourages everyone to wear hats when outside during the warmer months of Terms 1 & 4.

Students must wear a hat when outside during recess, lunchtime or when playing sport.

COMMUNITY NEWS

Saints Basketball Club

PLAYERS WANTED – UNDER 8’s
Oak Park Saints Basketball Club is looking for Under 8 players (boys or girls) born 2009 or 2010 for the summer season.

If your child is interested in playing or trialling training, please contact Cheryl Crotty on 0414 637 533 or email cheryl72@bigpond.com
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