



# The Oak Leaf

Willett Avenue Oak Park 3046

† 9306 9182 e [nolan.william.b@edumail.vic.gov.au](mailto:nolan.william.b@edumail.vic.gov.au) [www.oakparkps.vic.edu.au](http://www.oakparkps.vic.edu.au)

Issue 13

May 16<sup>th</sup> 2018

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

## CALENDAR OF EVENTS

<b>May 18<sup>th</sup></b>	Walk to School Day
<b>May 21<sup>st</sup></b>	School Photos
<b>May 22 – 25</b>	Book Fair
<b>May 22<sup>nd</sup> &amp; 24<sup>th</sup></b>	School Tours
<b>May 26<sup>th</sup></b>	Comedy Night

## Uniform Award



This week's  
**Uniform Wearers of the Week Award**  
goes to  
**OMAR JAMMAL**

Congratulations Omar for setting such a terrific example to the rest of the school!

Don't forget School Photo Day is next **Monday 21<sup>st</sup> May**. Students will need to bring their photo orders to school **ON THIS DAY**. Family order forms are available from the Office but are **ONLY** able to be ordered online prior to Monday. Orders cannot be put in at the Office and all correspondence regarding photos must be made via MSP Photography Ph: 9466 7331. Late orders will be subject to a \$20 fee.

## Principal's Column

I remember reading an article once about the Solomon Islanders (I think it was the Solomon Islanders). It is said, that when a tree in the jungle is too big to cut down with an axe, a team of locals will take it in turns to yell at the tree. Each morning, it becomes someone's job to go up to the big tree and yell at it. This continues for 30 days after which, the islanders believe, the tree dies.

As sensible, sophisticated, city people we would probably find this a bit funny, a bit silly perhaps or maybe just pretty naïve.

But then, how many times have you known one of us modern, sophisticated people to yell at their car, the television, an umpire or the lawnmower? You must admit, that's pretty silly too.

And what about yelling at each other or yelling at kids?

Maybe something happens inside the tree when it is yelled at and something really does die inside it. I don't know. But I reckon I've known kids who have had something die inside of them as a result of being constantly yelled at.

## Save The Date:

School Disco 15<sup>th</sup> June. Further information in coming weeks



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## Education Week

During **Education Week**, hundreds of government schools and kindergartens will open their doors to local parents and the broader community through information nights, open days, student displays, performances and other special events that showcase their programs and achievements.

The theme for Education Week this year is **'Celebrating the Arts'**.

Here are some of the activities on offer at Oak Park:

<b>Monday</b>	School Photos
<b>Tuesday</b>	Book Fair
	School Tour (please book)
	5/6 Life Skills Program
	5/6 Incursion: Captains and Convicts
<b>Wednesday</b>	Book Fair
	Open Morning 9.30 – 10.30am
	Arts Assembly 9.00am
<b>Thursday</b>	Book Fair
	School Tour (please book)
	District Cross Country
<b>Friday</b>	Book Fair
	Open Morning 9.30 – 10.30am

## Mother's Day Stalls



Last week the school was abuzz with excitement as children deliberated on the best present to buy for their Mums.

This special annual event gives children the opportunity to browse, reflect on their mothers' likes and dislikes, and finally to make a decision, is made possible by our Parents and Friends Association.

I would like to acknowledge the PFA's hard work and creativity with the provision of so many beautiful gifts for the children to choose from.

Well done PFA members and volunteers!

## Children's Laureate

In February, award-winning children's author Morris Gleitzman was named the new Australian Children's Laureate for 2018–19. As laureate, he will join his predecessors, Leigh Hobbs, Jackie French, Alison Lester and Boori Monty Pryor in promoting the importance of reading.

When accepting the position as Children's Laureate, Morris spoke how the need for stories is more important now than ever; how he will advocate for the transformative power of reading — and how library professionals are a fundamental part of this process.



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Speaking just a couple of days after his appointment, he was excited about how he would use his role to promote reading for young people. 'I want to make available to as many young Australians as possible a wide range of rich and nourishing reading experiences, with all the support, encouragement, inspiration, resources and permissions that help that happen.'

Morris will take his campaign to parents, decision makers, and people outside the education sphere — those 'who may have either forgotten how important good stories were to them in their childhood, or maybe those who had the misfortune to not have the opportunity to discover everything good stories had to offer'. This means that his campaign will be targeted at adults as much as children; it is, after all, largely adults who are at the centre of children's lives and help make reading available to them.

## Comedy Night

**Our Comedy Night is ALWAYS a fun night.  
HURRY UP AND CALL INTO THE OFFICE TO GET  
YOUR TICKETS**

**OAK PARK PRIMARY SCHOOL  
COMEDY NIGHT  
SATURDAY 26th MAY  
OAK PARK PRIMARY SCHOOL  
WILLETT AVE, OAK PARK**



**KATIE BURCH**  
YOU!

**JEFF GREEN**  
UK COMEDY LEGEND

**EVAN HOCKING**  
HEATH'S BROTHER

**7PM FOR A 7.30PM START**

**TICKETS \$25 PRE PAID**

**OR \$30 ON THE NIGHT**

**BYO Alcohol, soft drinks and nibbles**

**Tickets can be purchased from**

**Oak Park Primary School Office**

**for more details contact**

**Craig Yorston on 0411 252 088**



Don't forget the **Oak Park PS Book Fair** is on next week, that is

Tues May 22<sup>nd</sup> – Fri May 25<sup>th</sup>.

Please come along and check out the books and other things for sale!



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## Mother's Day Afternoon Tea

On Thursday the 10<sup>th</sup> of May, the Foundation students hosted a Mother's Day Afternoon Tea for their beloved mums. As the students have been exploring their own family history and culture this term, they decided to create an 'Australian' afternoon tea which consisted of vegemite sandwiches, lamingtons, Anzac biscuits and choc chip cookies. Thank you to all the parents and grandparents who attended, it was a great afternoon!



## Mothers Day Stall

*From Student News - Amelia Miller and Yasemin Yilmaz*

Last week the lovely parents from the PFA tended to the Mother's Day stall. Kids came in classes,

picking perfect presents for their fabulous mums. Some of the things for sale were: a happiness kit (a donation to the stall), sweet smelling candles that came in a variety of shapes, pretty pens, cards and wine glasses for all of those lucky mums. We searched the crowds of students buying beautiful gifts to find some opinions on the Mother's Day stall:

"Colourful, the mums are so lucky."

"It was good, it was better than last year."

"The bestest!"



## Walk to School

### Getting to school the Active Way

The 5/6 team have been working hard to create this survey for our fellow students to answer. We would really appreciate if your children and you could take a few minutes of your time to answer these questions.



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Just scan the qr code with your child's iPad (they should have the app on their iPad.)

Thanks for your time.

Kind regards, 5/6LD.



**WALK TO SCHOOL DAY IS FRIDAY 18<sup>TH</sup> MAY**



Hi we are the newsletter group from 5/6LD, we are here to tell you the reason why you should walk to school.

The reason why you should walk to school is to help you get fit, and it reduces stress to make you feel more relaxed. You can also have fun with friends and make new ones while keeping in shape. Regular physical activities will improve balance and develop skills. Walking can also make the air less polluted so walking is a great way to get fit and keep the world in it's best shape.

Did you know that cars create gas that pollutes the air? But walking is not the only thing you could do.



You could also ride a bike, scooter or take a train if necessary.

All of these are great for the environment and for you to keep fit.



*By:  
Declan Boyde, Lachlan Chila, Jordan Papazoglou,  
William Calafiore and Patrick Hamilton.*



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## Premiers Reading Challenge



The Victorian Premiers' Reading Challenge is now open and Oak Park Primary School is excited to be participating.

The Challenge is open to all Victorian children from birth to Year 10 in recognition of the importance of reading for literacy development. It is not a competition; but a personal challenge for children to read a set number of books by 7 September 2018.

Children from Prep to Year 2 are encouraged to read or 'experience' 30 books with their parents and teachers. Children from Year 3 to Year 10 are challenged to read 15 books.

All children who meet the Challenge will receive a certificate of achievement signed by the Victorian Premier and can choose to have their name included on the online Honour Roll. If you would like your child's name to appear on the Honour Roll, please sign the attached form and return it to your school.

To read the Premier's letter to parents, view the booklists and for more information about the Victorian Premiers' Reading Challenge, visit: [www.education.vic.gov.au/prc](http://www.education.vic.gov.au/prc)

If you choose to participate in the Reading Challenge, please return the forms to Denise Anderson (Grade 4).

## Walking School Bus

### Want to join the Oak Park Primary School Walking School Bus?

A Walking School Bus is a school bus powered not by an engine but by legs! It is a safe, healthy and convenient way for children to travel to and from school. It's a fun way for children to get exercise and walk to school safely, great for the environment, and eases traffic around school!

Oak Park Primary School Walking School Buses are open to families to join the fitness & fun!

#### From the East

The Station Street Walking School Bus provides a safe and fun way to get to school for families living on the eastern side of Pascoe Vale Road.



The Station Street Walking School Bus currently runs on Tuesday and Friday mornings.

If you live near the route – or can drop your kids off at a spot along the way – and are thinking about joining talk to Walking School Bus Drivers Lisa Kalimeris (email [lisakalimeris@gmail.com](mailto:lisakalimeris@gmail.com)) or Bron Barwick (email [nursebron@yahoo.com](mailto:nursebron@yahoo.com)).

#### From the North West

The New Road Walking School Bus provides a walking route to school for parents and students living to the north and west of Oak Park Primary.



The New Road Walking School Bus runs on Tuesday & Thursday mornings at 8:30am.

If you live on the route, currently walk to school via New Road or can meet us at the corner of The Avenue and New Road at 8:30am, please talk to Walking School Bus Driver Stacey Lowry (email [stacey\\_lowry@actionis.com.au](mailto:stacey_lowry@actionis.com.au) or ph. 0403 598 299) about getting involved!

#### Interested?

If you or your children would like to be a part of these Walking School Bus routes, or if you want a route in your area please contact Walking School Bus drivers Lisa Kalimeris, Bron Barwick, or Stacey Lowry.

WALKING SCHOOL BUS 'Expression of Interest' form located at the back of the newsletter



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## Book Fair

### 'PAWS FOR BOOKS'

#### Less than one week to go!

Catalogues for the Book Fair were sent home last week.

Please remember this is only a small sample of the wonderful books on offer.

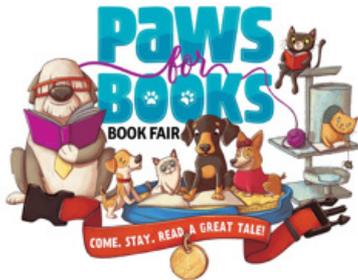
All competition entries must be returned by Friday 18<sup>th</sup> May – don't miss out on your chance to win a \$10 voucher for the Fair.

The timetable for classes to attend the fair is displayed on the Library window and included in this newsletter.

You are welcome to attend your child's session.

#### Hope to see you at the fair!

If you have any questions please contact Michelle in the Library.



### BOOK FAIR TIMETABLE

BOOK FAIR TIMETABLE			
<b>Wednesday 23<sup>rd</sup> May</b>			
9:10am	5/6P	Kirsty	
9:40am	5/6LD	Amy / Stephanie	
10:10am	5/6G	Lacey – Rae	
10:40am			
NOVELTIES ON SALE			
12:10pm	FH	Kira	
12:40pm	FS	Kathy	
1:10pm	1H	Tania	
1:40pm			
RECESS			
2:30pm	FP	Marina	
3:00pm	5/6C	Livio	
NOVELTIES ON SALE			
<b>Thursday 24<sup>th</sup> May</b>			
9:10am	1M	Alex	
9:40am	2D	Kate	
10:10am	1/2C	Jane	
10:40am	2M	Martha	
NOVELTIES ON SALE			
12:10pm	3E	Hayley	
12:40	3P	Julia	
1:10pm	4JW	Meagan/Brenda	
1:40pm	4A	Denise	
RECESS			
2:30pm	3/4B	Carol	
3:00pm			
NOVELTIES ON SALE			
<b>Friday 25<sup>th</sup> May</b>			
<b>9:00 – 10:30am</b>		<b>Parent Preview</b>	

Are you looking for a special way to honour your child's time at Oak Park PS?

A great idea would be to purchase a book from the 'Paws for Books' book fair and donate it to the school Library. It is a great way to enhance our Library collection as well as leaving a lasting gift to the school. When a book is donated to the Library, a special book plate with your family name will be placed in the front cover. Your child will be given the option to be the first person to borrow the book. Thank you in advance for your thoughtful donations.



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## Year 6-7 Transition

### **OAK PARK PRIMARY SCHOOL TRANSITION TIMELINE Year 7-2019**

**8 August:** Oak Park Primary School will notify parents/carers in writing, with placement offers.

**11 December:** Secondary Schools host an Orientation Day for Year 6 students.

## Japanese News

How is your Japanese Day outfit planning going? Thank you to those parents and students who have submitted their money for the Japanese incursion. Toshi and Noriko are both fabulous performers who will definitely put on an amazing show for us!

This week the sushi order forms will go out to students. Please note that due to such a large order the suppliers have requested the orders to be finalised by **Friday the 1st of June**- the due date for sushi orders.

**Therefore, no late orders will be accepted.**

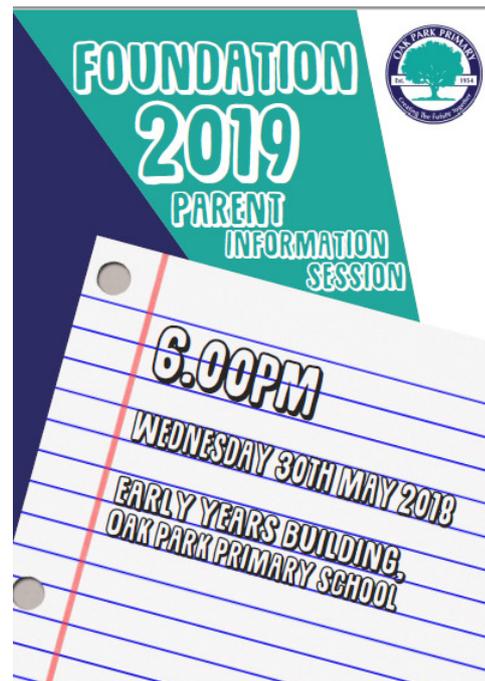
If for some reason your child is not attending Japanese Day, could I please ask that you let me know via email, which you can find on the school website.

If you have any further questions please feel free to contact me.

*Melissa Ly*

*Japanese Language Teacher*

## 2019 Foundation News



If you are contemplating enrolling your child at Oak Park Primary School in 2019, please call into the office to pick up and complete an Enrolment form.

We have been advised of a confirmed case of whooping cough within the Grade 3 area. Please note following signs and symptoms.....

.Whooping cough often starts like a cold with a runny nose, sneezing and tiredness over several days, and then the characteristic coughing bouts develop. These bouts can be very severe and frightening, and may end with a crowing noise (the 'whoop') as air is drawn back into the chest. Coughing episodes are frequently followed by gagging or vomiting. During coughing attacks, a child's breathing can be obstructed and they may become blue or stop breathing. The bouts of coughing may continue for many weeks even after appropriate treatment. Babies under six months of age, vaccinated children, adolescents and adults may not display the typical whoop.

If you believe your child may be showing these signs or symptoms, please see a Doctor immediately



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If you believe your child may be showing these signs or symptoms, please see a Doctor immediately

## School Photo Information



### Dear Parents and Students,

Photo day is fast approaching! School photo order envelopes have been handed out to every student. It is important to follow the order instructions on your personalised envelopes.

### Ordering:

Payment Options include Cash or Online

#### TO ORDER WITH CASH

- On your envelope please select which package you would like to purchase & enclose CORRECT MONEY in your child's envelope
- Please include correct money as there is NO CHANGE AVAILABLE on or after photo day

#### TO ORDER ONLINE

- Using your child's SHOOTKEY logon to [www.msp.com.au](http://www.msp.com.au) and click ORDER ONLINE. Following the on screen prompts you may select your chosen package and make payment
- You will receive an email once the order is complete. Please record your child's Reference Number on their envelope
- The online ordering system closes at midnight of photo day

### Packages available:



### Sibling Photos:

#### FAMILY PHOTO SLIPS ARE ATTACHED TO YOUR ELDEST CHILD'S PHOTO ENVELOPE

- Please leave the slip attached to your envelope and follow listed instructions
- Pay Online using the family SHOOTKEY
- Please note Family Photo's are taken LANDSCAPE
- Spare Family Slips are available at the school office if you did not receive one

**\*\*PLEASE NOTE FAMILY ORDERS MUST BE MADE ONLINE\*\***

**FAMILY ORDERS MUST BE MADE ONLINE BEFORE 11.59PM THE NIGHT BEFORE PHOTO DAY.**

### Tips on Ordering:

- Every student must present their own envelope to the Photographer on photo day regardless of payment method
- Don't seal envelopes inside each other
- Please contact us if you have any further questions





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## Community News

### Supercare Pharmacies are open 24 hours a day

Coburg Pharmacy 4 Less  
1 Louisa Street, Coburg  
Phone: 9386 6655

Pharmacist available 24/7

Registered nurse onsite daily 6pm-10pm for:

- > mild temperatures and allergies
- > rashes, cuts, burns and bites
- > health screening and immunisations
- > other minor injuries and illnesses.

Nursing service is free – no appointment or Medicare card needed.

[www.betterhealth.vic.gov.au/supercarepharmacies](http://www.betterhealth.vic.gov.au/supercarepharmacies)

In the case of an emergency, visit your nearest hospital emergency department or phone triple zero (000) for an ambulance.

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PROUDLY RUN BY LOCAL POLICE AND VOLUNTEERS AND SUPPORTED BY

**Blue Light**

**PRESTON (DAREBIN) ONESIE BLUE LIGHT DISCO**

**25<sup>th</sup> MAY | 6.30-9PM**  
**\$7 ENTRY | AGES 8 TO 14**

**PRESTON TOWN HALL 274 GOWER ST. PRESTON**  
CONTACT JO PARISSIS 0418 144 446

PORTLAND BLUE LIGHT DISCO  
PLEASE ASK YOUR PARENTS TO LIKE THE PAGE IF YOU ARE UNDER 13

CONDITIONS OF ENTRY AT [WWW.BLUELIGHT.ORG.AU/CONDITIONS\\_OF\\_ENTRY/](http://WWW.BLUELIGHT.ORG.AU/CONDITIONS_OF_ENTRY/)

## SCHOOL HOLIDAY PROGRAM BROCHURE

Program Dates: 2 – 13 July 2018  
Booking Dates: 21 May – 1 June 2018

- Encouraging and safe environment
- Qualified and caring staff
- Inclusive program
- All venues Child Care Subsidy (CCS) funded

All venues open 8 – 6 pm

**Coburg North Primary School**  
Corner O'Hea and Bishop Streets, Coburg 3058  
(enter via Bishop Street)  
0408 594 136

**Brunswick East Primary School**  
195A Stewart Street  
Brunswick East 3057  
0406 561 026

**Brunswick South West Primary School**  
5A South Daly Street, Brunswick West 3055  
(enter via Jordan Street)  
0447 128 337

**Pascoe Vale South Primary School**  
enter via Parkstone Ave  
Pascoe Vale South 3044  
0406 317 816

To book online visit [moreland.vic.gov.au/shp](http://moreland.vic.gov.au/shp) or call Moreland School Holiday Program at 9240 1111.

## MORELAND'S CHILDREN

### School readiness

How do you know when your child is ready for kindergarten or school and why is it important?

We invite you to explore and discuss the question of your child's school readiness with a panel of professionals:

Betty Mihelakos – Speech Pathologist  
Di Bassler – Occupational Therapist  
Rachael McBrien – Kindergarten Director  
Maria Rizzo – School Transition Coordinator

The extensively experienced panel will provide information, valuable insight and support strategies for parents who are wanting to learn more about when is the right time to start pre-school and school.

This session will be of most benefit to parents of children 3 years and under.

Information about Moreland's Kindergarten Central Enrolment service will also be available on the night.

Moreland Language Link  
 0411 920 1910 0411 920 1910  
 0411 920 1911 0411 920 1911  
 0411 920 1912 0411 920 1911  
 0411 920 1913 0411 920 1911  
 0411 920 1914 All other languages  
 Telung 0411 920 1915 0411 920 1915

Date: Tuesday 22 May 2018  
Time: 7 – 9 pm  
Venue: Moreland Civic Centre  
Concert Hall  
90 Bell Street, Coburg  
(Enter via Urquhart St)  
Melways Ref: 17112

Cost: FREE

Bookings: Bookings are essential as places are limited.

To make a booking visit:  
[moreland.vic.gov.au/community-care/children-and-families/parent-information/](http://moreland.vic.gov.au/community-care/children-and-families/parent-information/)  
or phone 9240 1111.

Bookings close Monday 21 May 2018.

018/148175 2018/MAY/2/050860



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## WOW AWARDS

Class	Name	Awarded for
FH	Leyla Vurgun	For taking on board, and applying teacher feedback to improve writing. Well done, you're a star!
FS	Alyssa Bolte	For listening to your teachers feedback during writing, which has really helped you sounding out.
FP	Vinudi Ranasinghe	For showing great improvement in both reading and writing! Keep up the good work!
1M	Kadir Aydin	For always listening when on the floor and for being a fantastic role model to others
1H	Agasthya Nellore	For having a positive attitude to your learning and to always being helpful and kind in the classroom
1/2C	Ihsan Kucukali	For striving to improve his work and being resilient. Well done Ihsan!
2M	Blake Sabotkoski Madeleine Reither	For working hard to show your best in class, focussing well and showing active listening For working hard in class, even if you find the work tricky. How resilient
2D	Alessio Murone-Barr Lilly Chronis	For being ready for learning and for actively participating in class discussions. Keep up the good work For staying focussed and working hard to complete your work on time. Keep up the great effort
3E	Luke Dyer	For continuing to work really hard and for making excellent choices. You are an awesome role model for your peers
3P	Ruby Jory	For being an encouraging leader in your CBL group and a positive role model in class
3/4B	Elif Yilmaz 19 <sup>th</sup> May Alyssa Koeleman	
4A	Abbey Goodwin	For demonstrating respectful behaviour towards teachers and her learning
4JW	Artemis Rezai Mirghaed Mahit Khatri	For always working extra hard to achieve and improve on her learning For always being organised and ready to learn



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<b>5/6C</b>		
<b>5/6G</b>		
<b>5/6LD</b>	Savannah Byrne	For always persisting with challenging tasks and working to your capacity
<b>5/6P</b>		
<b>Sustainability</b>		
<b>Japanese</b>	Cailey Finlayson 5/6C	For always setting a good example in class. Despite having issues with her assessment task, she managed to get on with her work and complete it with a short time frame. Keep being a great leader in the class Cailey
<b>Performing Arts</b>		

## School Contacts

Principal	Bryan Nolan	<a href="mailto:nolan.william.b@edumail.vic.gov.au">nolan.william.b@edumail.vic.gov.au</a>
Business Manager	Annette D'Elia	<a href="mailto:delia.annette.a@edumail.vic.gov.au">delia.annette.a@edumail.vic.gov.au</a>
Office Manager	Fran MacDonough	<a href="mailto:macdonough.frances.a@edumail.vic.gov.au">macdonough.frances.a@edumail.vic.gov.au</a>
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# The Oak Leaf

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## The Walking School Bus

### Joining the Bus – Expression of Interest

Yes, I'm interested in my child joining the Walking School Bus

When would your children use the Walking School Bus? Please write their name(s) in the table below:



	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Morning Bus					
After School Bus					

Yes, I'm interested in helping out on the Walking School Bus

Please indicate when you would be available by ticking the appropriate box below:

Driver/Conductor Roster	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Morning Bus					
After school Bus					

Name ..... Phone (Hm)..... (Wk)..... (Mob).....

Address .....

Email .....

TRIM:D08/156745



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## sTUDENT wELLBEING

### STUDENT WELLBEING

#### You Can Sit With Me

The Student Wellbeing Team have been busy with the You Can Sit With Me program starting this week. The Student Wellbeing Leaders teamed up and went to each class explaining the program and providing classes with wristbands. Each class was then given the opportunity to choose their first class representatives. Yellow wristbands were awarded to students who showed leadership through great kindness, empathy and inclusion. We are looking forward to seeing lots of yellow wristbands in the yard, providing opportunities for fun and new friendships for all students. If you are unsure about what the You Can Sit With Me program is, I encourage you to please ask your child. Further information can also be found in previous newsletters and on Compass.

#### NAPLAN

It is also that time of year where grade three and five students will be participating in NAPLAN. NAPLAN tests assess literacy and numeracy skills that are essential for every child to progress through school. Many students and parents become increasingly anxious at this time. It is important to recognise that NAPLAN is just one aspect of a school's assessment and reporting process. Students do not need to do extra study for the test and it will not affect their overall outcome. Teachers will ensure students are familiar with the types of questions in the tests and will provide appropriate support and guidance. As a parent you can help your child prepare for NAPLAN by reassuring them that the tests are just one part of their school program, and by reminding them on the day to have a growth mindset, to simply have a go and try their best.

Andrew Fuller, a clinical psychologist specialising in the wellbeing of children and families, has written a fantastic resource for preparing for tests and exams, which has a lot of practical strategies for parents to assist their child when test anxiety arises. I have provided the information below for your knowledge as it may be a good future resource.



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## Preparing for tests & exams

Andrew Fuller

If you have ever looked at a test or exam paper and thought, "I know that I know this but I can't remember anything", if you have stayed awake in the middle of the night worrying about a test the next day, if you have ever felt butterflies in your stomach or a headache whenever you think of an coming test, here are a few ideas for you.

### **Everybody gets stressed.**

Everyone gets stressed during tests and exams, even the people who say that they don't. Look around in a room where people are doing a test or exam. Even those people who are yawning, looking bored or stretching and looking as cool as cucumbers, are stressed.

That means everyone has to learn how to cope with these feelings. It is not just you!

Stress can block your memory, give you a queasy tummy, make you lie awake at night, give you a dry throat or a headache- these aren't nice feelings to have.

### **Get Stressed**

The first strategy to dealing with stress is to get stressed. Huh? Makes no sense? Let me explain.

Stress feels yucky but it is actually your body's way to getting ready to take on a challenge. Stress prepares you to perform at your best. Blood gets pumped to your arms and legs, your heart speeds up, and nonessential services like your digestion slow down- you are ready to take on the world. So stress might feel unpleasant but realising that it is your body's way of revving you up and helping you to perform at your best, will help you to keep these feelings in perspective.

### **Write Out Your Worries**

The second strategy to deal with the stress of an upcoming test or exam is to grab a piece of paper one or two days before the test and write down all your concerns about it. Write out an answer to the question, "What would happen if I fail this test?" Then write out an answer to the next question, "If I did fail what would happen then?" Read your written answers aloud to yourself.

Even if doing well on this test or exam is really, really important to you, knowing your fears will calm you. Knowing the answer to the question, "If I did fail, what would happen then?" helps you to make a backup plan.



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## **Chew Something.**

Ok you've done all of that and you still feel nervy. The third strategy is to eat or chew on something either before or during the test or exam. Check with your teacher that chewing something is allowed in test and exam rooms. If chewing is not allowed, at least chew something just before entering the test. Some jellybeans or fruit would be ideal.

Chewing gum is not a good idea.

Stress happens when we feel we are in a dangerous situation. It is an automatic process that we can't completely control. Eating or chewing on something sends a signal to your body that says, "Well, if I'm chewing something I can't be in total danger, so relax a bit."

## **Focus on now.**

Stress can spin your head. It can have you thinking all sorts of weird ideas. Stress can have you remembering that time you failed all those years ago or that time you were so embarrassed by something. Stress can also blow things out of all proportion and have you predicting bad things in your future.

The past is no longer with you and the future hasn't happened yet. Worrying has never changed anything in the past and predictions about the future are usually wrong.

Doing well on a test or exam means you need to focus on the question in front

of you now. Keep reminding yourself, "What do I need to do right now?"

## **Breathe Out - S L O W L Y**

When you feel stressed one of the fastest ways to calm down is to breathe out slowly. We all have a calm down system that is controlled by our breathing. If you breathe out and count silently to yourself, "one thousand, two thousand, three thousand", you will start to feel calmer.

## **Stand tall walk proud**

Your brain is incredibly intelligent. In fact, you possess at the top your neck, humanity's latest upgrade- the most intelligent brain in all of history. But! Your brain is also incredibly stupid. It believes what you tell it. This means if you stand-up and maintain a powerful posture your body sends a signal to your brain that tells it you are feeling in charge of things and it can reduce the stress hormones.

## **Remember the 5 Ps**

There is an old saying, "Perfect preparation predicts powerful performance". The best way to prepare for a test or exam is to: study the whole area you have learned; test yourself; sort the areas into those that you answered correctly and those you did not; re-study the areas you answered incorrectly; re-test yourself; re-study until you are getting close to 100% right; test yourself on the entire topic.

**Look after yourself** Breakfast- eat "brain food" the morning before a test or



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exam. Have a higher protein, lower carbohydrate mix at breakfast. That means less toast and more eggs.

Drink water- water lowers your levels of cortisol that causes stressful feelings. Avoid energy drinks as they rev you up and may interfere with your levels of concentration.

Sleep well- try to get a good night's sleep the night before a test or exam. If you are feeling really worried, set an alarm so you can wake up early and do some revision.

#### **Make yourself smarter**

The biggest obstacle you face in doing well at a test or exam is not your brain. You have plenty of intelligence. The big issue is your level of anxiety.

If you take the time to prepare for the test or exam and use the strategies suggested in this sheet, you will perform at your best.

#### **Keep Calm and Carry On**

You have many, many skills that will NOT be assessed by this test. Tests and exams are important, but they are not the big predictors of life success.

Do your best and prepare as well as you can but don't make the mistake of thinking that your score on a test is a measure of your intelligence or predicts your future.

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## Anxiety and Children

Fearful and anxious behaviour is common in children. It is normal for children to worry about tests and academics for example. As parents we often hear, "I don't want to go to school today", "I can't do that", "there is too much work", "maths is too hard". Most children learn to cope with a range of normal fears and worries. In fact, a certain amount of stress and challenge is good for all of us, it actually helps us to perform at our best. A few parents have asked me, how can I tell the difference between normal fear and anxiety? Below is some information from [kidsmatter.edu.au](http://kidsmatter.edu.au) in regards to anxiety in children.

### *How anxiety problems affect children*

Fear and anxiety is common in children. Most children learn to cope with a range of normal fears and worries. However, extra help may be needed when:

- children feel anxious more than other children of their age and level
- anxiety stops them participating in activities at school or socially
- anxiety interferes with their ability to do things that other children their age do easily
- the fears and worries seem out of proportion to the issues in their life.

When children become anxious more easily, more often and more intensely than other children, they may be diagnosed with an anxiety disorder. The most common anxiety disorders in children of primary school age are Phobias, Generalised Anxiety Disorder and Separation Anxiety. Research estimates that between approximately two and nine per cent of children and adolescents in Australia have anxiety disorders.

### *How anxiety affects children*

In addition to feeling highly anxious, children's thinking is usually affected. The threat or danger they are concerned about appears to them to be much greater than it actually is. Thinking about the situation that causes them to be anxious makes them more worried and tense.

Children with anxiety may develop their own strategies to try to manage situations that cause them distress. Often this involves trying to avoid the situation or having a parent or other adult deal with it for them. Avoiding a situation makes it more likely that the child will feel anxious and be unable to manage it the next time. This behaviour makes it more difficult for the child to cope with everyday stresses at home, at school and in social settings.

Anxiety can also result in physical difficulties such as sleeplessness, diarrhoea, stomach aches and headaches (sometimes referred to as somatic complaints). It can also involve irritability, difficulty concentrating and tiredness.



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*How do you notice anxiety in children?*

#### **At home**

- Fear and avoidance of a range of issues and situations.
- Headaches and stomach aches that seem to occur when the child has to do something that is unfamiliar or that they feel uneasy about.
- Sleep difficulties, including difficulty falling asleep, nightmares and trouble sleeping alone.
- Lots of worries and a strong need for reassurance

#### **At school**

- Wanting things to be perfect. For example, a child may be so dissatisfied with his/her own work that he/she will tear it up and redo it several times.
- Reluctance to ask for help. Sometimes anxiety creates an obstacle that prevents children asking for help from the teacher about a problem with learning.
- Children who ask too much for reassurance may also be overly anxious.
- Difficulty joining in. Children with high levels of anxiety may be afraid to join in class discussion, take part in sport or games or go to school camp.
- Requests to go to sick bay. Anxious children often complain of stomach aches and headaches.
- Fearful of test situations. Some children do not do as well as they can in test conditions because they are struggling with anxiety. They may also be too self-conscious to perform in front of the class.

*How do anxiety disorders develop?*

Humans are primed for survival to respond to situations where there are dangers or threats. Some people, including children, react more quickly or more intensely to such situations where there is danger or threat. The physical symptoms of anxiety (eg increased heart rate, faster breathing) are more easily triggered in children with anxious temperaments.

Having an anxious ('internalising') temperament often means that children react more to threats in the environment. This appears to be partly an inherited characteristic. Children with anxious temperaments are often cautious in their outlook and shy in relating to other people.

Sometimes stressful events trigger problems with anxiety. Children who experience more stressful events over their lifetime than others or who have gone through particularly traumatic events may experience increased anxiety.

Learning may also play a part in the development of an anxiety disorder. Some anxious children may learn that the world is a dangerous place. They may learn that it is easy to get hurt either physically or socially. They may fail to learn positive ways to cope and depend more and more on unhelpful ways of dealing with situations that cause them anxiety.

Sometimes families may contribute to children's natural cautiousness by being over-protective. This can unintentionally encourage children to avoid situations they feel anxious about.



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## *How to assist children with anxiety problems?*

Children with anxiety difficulties are often quiet and obedient. This can lead to their difficulties being overlooked. It is important to take note of children's worries so that their difficulties can be addressed sooner rather than later.

### General principles for assisting children with anxiety disorders:

- Increase children's helpful coping skills

Anxious feelings are fed by anxious thinking. It is important not to dismiss children's anxious feelings, but to help children see that the situations they are worried about may not be as bad as they think.

- Teach by example

Showing children how you cope positively with feeling anxious or stressed and remaining calm and positive when they are feeling anxious can help them to feel more confident.

- Avoid taking over

Children with anxiety are usually very happy for someone else to do things for them. However, if adults take over, it stops children from learning how to cope themselves.

- Encourage children to 'have a go'

Having a go helps to show children that they can cope. Praise or reward them for every step they manage to take.

I hope this information has been helpful for you and your children. It is important to remember that anxiety, worries and fears, are a normal part of childhood. It is normal for children to show signs of anxiety, worries and fears sometimes. In most cases, anxiety in children and fears in childhood come and go and don't last long. When a child is displaying worry it is important to acknowledge it and not to dismiss it but to also encourage the child to face their fear and 'have a go' and not avoid it. There is further information about this at the following sights:

<https://healthyfamilies.beyondblue.org.au>

<https://kidsmatter.edu.au>

<https://kidshelpline.com.au>

<https://raisingchildren.net.au>

If you have any concerns about your child that may be affecting their schooling, please feel free to contact myself, Natasha Niemann – Student Wellbeing Worker, on [Niemann.natasha.l@edumail.vic.gov.au](mailto:Niemann.natasha.l@edumail.vic.gov.au), (Mondays and Wednesdays) or seek assistance from your local general practitioner.