11 December 2014

Preps’ Big Night Out
Aurora enjoying the Preps’ special evening

Canteen is now closed for the year

Primary Christmas GT, Mon 15 Dec
9.30am in Gym. Parents Welcome
Hospitality and Language Learning

As a language teacher, my mission is this: I want to see students grow into people who treat other languages and cultures with curiosity, confidence and respect. As a Christian, my mission is to empower my students to love God and their neighbours, and to make disciples of all nations. So, as I begin my journey at MECS, I’m working hard to marry these mission goals to ensure that language learning will cultivate these principles within the minds and hearts of my students.

As Christians, we can begin to fulfil our duty to love our neighbours, and to make disciples of all nations by immersing ourselves in other cultures and relating to others in their own language. “Foreign language education prepares student for two related callings: to be a blessing as strangers in a foreign land, and to be hospitable to strangers in their homeland.” (The Gift of the Stranger by David Smith, p. 63)

Authentic Learning

The biggest galvaniser for me in becoming passionate about Indonesian was being embraced into the community in Indonesia while I studied there. I learnt about them, and had insight into the way they saw the world. But although this was wonderful, it wasn’t the only thing that drove me to continue in my study. It was when I constantly found my vocab to be inadequate for articulating myself, communication break-downs happened, and I wanted to learn the language so I could understand the people. Now, part of my job as a language teacher is not to simply make language learning about remembering words for a test, rather allowing students to grapple with what it means to communicate by understanding and being understood. I want to equip them with tools for authentic communication through real-life applications for the language they learn, but also by not shielding my students from the frustration of not being able to express what they want to say. This is important to build empathy for those they might meet in their lifetime who speak English as an additional language. It will also provide valuable and genuine opportunity for my students to be guided towards developing strategies for handling such crises in Indonesian, and a willingness to continue communicating beyond the breakdown, because the goal is relationships, and people. Not about correct spelling and perfect grammar.

Common misconceptions about language learning

I am aware that since language learning is new to MECS at a Primary level, many of you may have questions, queries and perhaps even some concerns about this addition to the curriculum. Here are a couple of the more common misconceptions about language learning that might help give you something to think about:

- Make discoveries about the relationships between words and meaning;
- Understand how languages (including our first language) works;
- Understand that different cultures have different ways of looking at the world.

Studies suggest that those who are multi-lingual are more perceptive to their surroundings and better at focussing in on important information. They tend to score better at standardised tests, are better at remembering lists or sequences, and are generally more self-aware.

A Contemporary Learning Space for Indonesian

We’re excited to be preparing the class room that had been dubbed the Primary art room as our Indonesian language room. We have worked hard to design the classroom as a flexible space that cultivates active and deep learning. We will be catering for different learning styles with soft furnishings, a standing work bench, cluster-designed tables and large floor space for interactive games and activities.

Technology has much to offer language learners, and we hope to take advantage of the different applications, language programs and Indonesian-specific material.

We are sure the students will be blown away by what we have in store for them in this Contemporary Learning Space. No doubt you will hear about it when school gets going again in 2015.

Rachel
Indonesian Teacher

‘People have a limited capacity in language, and time spent on another language is time taken away from another’. This isn’t true because knowing one language helps you understand another. That is, through learning a second (or third!) language you gain insight into how languages function, including knowledge about the structure of words, the structure of sentences, the sound patterns possible in a language and how the structural features of a language can be manipulated. These skills are transferable and are enhanced by learning another language.

‘The curriculum is too crowded to allow time for a second language’. This is a statement about priorities. Languages have been declared as a Key Learning Area by the Australian Government, and this is not simply for strengthening economic ties with other nations. Developing a child’s potential to the fullest involves language learning because it helps us:

- Understand how languages (including our first language) works;
- Understand that different cultures have different ways of looking at the world.
Be Safe over Christmas

We have received various reminders from the CFA and Yarra Ranges Council about our families being safe over the Christmas period. We want to see everyone in our MECS community back safe and well next year, so please drive safely and be bushfire prepared. In the new year we will send out further information about our bushfire readiness so we can all be safe whether we are at school or at home. For more information on bushfire readiness see the CFA website - www.cfa.vic.gov.au

Primary Christmas GT

We’re looking forward to seeing many of you at the Primary GT next Monday morning at 9.30am in the gym. It will be a lovely way to be reminded about the coming of Jesus and also to celebrate what has been a great year in the Primary school. See you there!

Orientation Day

On Tuesday, all new students who will be joining us next year came along to MECS for the day. It was great to sense the excitement and anticipation that comes with new classes and new faces. The day was filled with all sorts of introductions, a taste of things to come and a chance to meet new friends. Even parents had the opportunity to meet each other over tea and coffee! We pray that the transition for all our students from one year to the next is a calm and positive one, but particularly for new students who will be coming to join our MECS community.

The Meaning of Christmas

Over the past few weeks, students in the Primary School have been looking at the meaning behind Christmas and what this season is actually all about. There have been some classes who have been looking at Christmas in the Western World as well as what Christmas is like for children in developing countries. In one activity the students were asked to come up with their wish list for Christmas. They were then asked to come up with a wish list if they were a child from a developing country and what that would look like. While this was confronting for students, the message wasn’t aimed at making them feel guilty for having so much, but more an activity to make them aware of how blessed we are and what that can mean for us this Christmas. We talked about the fact that often Christmas can be a time of gift giving, and how we can use the blessings that we have to bless those who aren’t as fortunate. SPC and a couple of other classes have decided that the normal $5 that is given towards class Kris Kringle will be collected together and given towards either TEAR Australia or Jinja Christian School in Uganda. If you would like to donate towards this initiative, it would be greatly appreciated. Simply give the money to your child’s classroom teacher and they can forward it on.

Working Bee

Our Working Bee on Saturday was a great one to end our working bees for the year. We started the day with a hearty breakfast of bacon, eggs and coffee; there was a bit of rain, but it turned into a beautiful day.

Along with the usual jobs of cleaning the buses and pruning, we built a sleeper wall, cleaned the Prep toys and shifted picnic tables. But our main job was emptying the Middle School art room - including pulling out shelves and benches, and relocating Primary Music from the portable into the art room. Everyone worked like Trojans; we even managed to move the old piano without putting it out of tune! We then got to work with Carolyn (Primary Music teacher), and had the music room set up ready to teach lessons first thing on Monday. We pulled shelves and benches out of the old music room, and washed and cleaned the ceiling ready to paint. We even pulled out the library front bench ready for new benches to be put in.

It was a great day - we achieved so much! Thanks to everyone for your commitment and hard work that make working bees fun and rewarding, as well as making our school look so good.

Pete and Steve

Maintenance

New Music Room

Primary Staffing for 2015

As we have a couple of new teachers coming into the Primary school next year, we thought it would be good to give everyone a clear overview of who is doing what!

Assistant Principal, Primary – Di E
Assistant Primary Coordinator – Mel D
Prep – Jan O and Rebekah C
JP – Kaye S and Ange S; Susannah T; Daniela R and Angela H
MP – Justine B, Ali C and Derek W
SP – Michelle K, Ben C and Mel D
Specialists – Carolyn B (Music), Helen M (Music), Rachel J (Indonesian), Jason B (Sport/PE), Olivia D (SP Numeracy)
Marrie D (Library), Shirley G, Richelle H, Susan T and Genevive S (Ed Support).
We will introduce you to our team of Learning Assistants early next year.
MECS Notes

Congratulations Jordan

Jordan, one of our Year 8 students, has been involved in Archery for 2 years. He participates in activities for two separate clubs: Yerring District Archery & Lilydale Bowmens Club.

During the course of this year, Jordan participated in four junior (13-18yo) competitions: Canberra Shoot (40m, 30m and 20m distance shooting at an Olympics target), Indoor 18m Shoot (shooting at stationary targets), Outdoor ABA Targets (simulated hunting style shooting) and 3D Target Shooting (shooting at 3D objects from unknown distances). Jordan uses a compound bow for his competition, which has a draw weight of 45 pounds.

Last weekend, prizes were awarded for each of these competitions. Jordan received some excellent results for his skills:

Canberra Shoot – 2nd Place
Indoor 18m Shoot – 1st Place
Outdoor ABA Targets – 2nd Place
3D Target Shooting – 2nd Place

This is a great accomplishment and we commend him for his results. Well done Jordan!

Karissa
Secondary Education Support Coordinator

Friends of MECS

Stationery

A HUGE thank you to everyone who helped with stationery. This wouldn’t happen without the help from all the volunteers. It’s always a blessing to know that there are people willing to help serve in the school community. Thanks again.

Evelyn

Middle School Second Hand Book Sale

Attention all Middle School Parents & Students

Second-hand books are offered for sale each year on the two stationery pick-up days. This year we will be selling the Year 7, 8 & 9 Pearson Mathematics book and the English book from Year 9.

If you would like your child's text books (as detailed on the list below) to be sold through the school, here's what you need to do:

1. Please write your child’s name clearly on the inside front cover (this allows us to refund the monies to the correct people).
2. For Year 7, 8 & 9 Maths and Year 9 English please leave in specially marked boxes on the morning of Friday 12 December. These boxes will be located in the classroom.
3. Alternatively books may be handed in at the Main Office in a clearly marked bag.

We will have some books for sale on January 29 or in the first week of school next year.

Books are priced according to their condition (approximately half of their new price). Any books that came with a CD included in the back, need to have the CD with the book otherwise the price will be reduced. Friends of MECS retain 15% of the sale price.

If your books are sold there will be two options for payment.

The first option is our preferred option. Sale price is deducted from your school fees in the New Year.

Alternatively, if you would rather a cash payment, please ring me on the number below to let me know. If I don’t hear from you then any proceeds of sales will automatically be credited to your school fees.

Please be advised we will no longer be sending cheque payments, and books that are not sold are held over to be sold the following year.

Cash payment will be available early in Term 1 (dates to be announced).

If you have any questions, please don’t hesitate to contact me.

Evelyn
Stationery Coordinator

Books accepted for Sale

Macquarie School Dictionary
Guidelines for Referencing and Bibliographies
NIV Bibles (as sold by school)
Pearson Mathematics Yr 7, Yr 8, Yr 9
Move into English 3 (Yr 9)
Jacaranda Atlas (from Yr 7 & Yr 8)

JP Art

by Abigail

by Cora-Belle
Congratulations Ben

We would like to congratulate Ben (VCE 2007) on not only winning the 2014 Certificate II in Cabinet Making (Furniture) award but also the 2014 Andrew Kossenas Apprentice of the Year Award. The Andrew Kossenas award is given to the apprentice who has achieved excellence and therefore is the best apprentice across Australia from the following areas of skill: Kitchens/Bathrooms, Cabinet Furniture Making, Flooring, Picture Framing and Upholstery.

Ben was presented this award at the Australian Furniture Association end of year function by Mr Ted McAuliffe (former President) who acknowledged the importance of the award in identifying young Australians with a passion for the furnishing industry and its representation of the bright future of Australian Furniture Manufacturing.

Ben was awarded this prestigious prize based on his demonstrated understanding of the furniture industry and on his impressive portfolio, particularly the design and construction of his cabinet piece (pictured below).

The cabinet is an *Ikebana* cabinet which in Japanese means 'flower arrangement'. Ben has named this cabinet “Awakening of a Dream”. If it does not get used as an Ikebana Cabinet it can be used as a *Kodo* Cabinet which means “Way of Incense”. The cabinet is heading to the Bungendore Wood Works Gallery in NSW (http://bungendorewoodworks.com.au/) in January. It will be positioned in the front foyer and will retail for about $72,000.

The cabinet, which has a hidden chamber built into it, has taken Ben over 2 years to build. It is a beautiful, beautiful piece of work. I have many more photographs showing its intricate detail if readers are interested. Ben is also featured in the current issue of the Australian Wood Review http://www.woodreview.com.au/news/wood-review-85

细羽朋友们

孩子们非常渴望见证他们的小鸡是怎样生长的。起初它们是小小的绒毛嫩芽，正巧妙地藏在我们的手掌心。然后它们长大了，以至于它们成为了我们水槽上的小鸟，一边喝水一边玩耍。

孩子们识别出这个不断循环的过程。

Preps have learned about the life cycle of plants by planting bean seeds and daffodil bulbs, and have looked at bee, butterfly and frog life cycles.

我们还庆祝了由上帝通过他的子女耶稣带来的新生。这是探索这些事情的一个合适的时间，特别是在圣诞期间。

Jan
Prep Coordinator/Teacher

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预科生们了解了植物生命的周期，通过种植豆子和水仙球根，并观察了蜜蜂、蝴蝶和青蛙的生命周期。

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Jan
Prep Coordinator/Teacher
Preps had a very exciting time on Friday at their Big Night Out.

The children arrived at school at 1.30pm ready for lots of fun. We boarded a bus and went to the Montrose Adventure playground, where thankfully the threatening rain held off and the children had a wonderful time swinging, climbing, running and spinning on all the fabulous equipment. They had an icy pole to cool down, then got back to playing again until it was time to head back to school to look at the Frog Bog.

Unfortunately the bog was empty, but as the children sat silently we could hear many different birds in the surrounding bushland. We then headed down the hill for a delicious afternoon tea, followed by games on the oval. We had sack races, egg and spoon races, played Scarecrow Tiggy and Octopus and had heaps of fun. There was lots of laughter going under the parachute with balls bouncing wildly on top of it! We even made it into a tent and sat inside!

Following all this fun we had some quiet play time in the PUMP room - constructing and making, and playing skittles. Finally, with the sound of rumbling tummies and the delicious smell of sausages on the BBQ wafting, we packed up and sat at the tables in the big staffroom for dinner.

After yummy sausages, salad and ice-cream sundays, it was time for Preps to wash and dry their own dishes, then head downstairs to change into pyjamas. The children brought their teddies and torches into the PUMP room and we watched the torch lights flicker on the ceiling. We sang some bear songs with our teddies and settled in for a couple of bed time stories.

Special thanks to Peter, Steve, Cheryl, Joya, and our Year 6 helpers - Olivia, Jodie, Lily, Josh, Kasey, TJ and Daniel, who all did such a fabulous job; and also to Di who surprised us and was a great help serving dinner to our very hungry Preps!

We hope the children slept well after a very busy and bubbly Big Night Out!

Jan
Prep Coordinator/Teacher
Prep Big Night Out

Lachlan

Finn

Jett

Mia Macreadie

Aurora & Zarah

Boaz

James & Sophie

Keira

Kasey - Year 6 Helper

Alannah
Art Sales and Lessons
Are you looking for a special present for someone? Or something for the home? MECS parent Gabby Willmott’s original, handmade artworks and prints are for sale on Etsy and on request via Facebook, email or phone. Prices start at $20.

To view or buy Gabby’s work, go to: (Etsy) https://www.etsy.com/au/shop/gabbywillmottsart, (Facebook) www.facebook.com/artistgabbywillmott (email) artist@gabbywillmott.com or phone 0410 544 162.

Also, check out www.facebook.com/artistgabbywillmott during the holiday season to find out about Gabby Willmott’s upcoming group and private art lessons specialising in:
- exposure to a diverse range of mediums
- learning new skills and techniques
- self expression
- art as contemplation and relaxation
Suitable for any age or ability. Prices start at $20 per hour (group class). Concessions available. Contact Gabby on 0410 544 162.

Cheap Quality Bike Servicing
For the past nine months I have been servicing bikes after going through comprehensive training. During a service your bike will be fully inspected, repaired and cleaned. The cost for an adult geared bike service is $40, the cost for kid’s and non-geared bikes is only $20. If you think your bike is due for a service please contact Jake Vandenberg on 0413 561 398, jakescycleworx@gmail.com or www.facebook.com/jakescycleworx

Hope in the Hills BALL – March 21
Do you remember the MECS 40th Ball? Well a similar event is being hosted by the Tecoma CRC church community on Saturday March 21 in the Upwey Community Hall. Tickets are $40 and 6 dance lessons beforehand are available for $20. It’s a fundraising event for SWIM work in the Solomons. For all those MECS dancers, come along to another dance celebration. Please visit www.hopeinthehills.org.au/ball

Martin Hanscamp

Loft Bed For Sale
Solid timber loft bed with corner desk and detachable book shelf underneath. Perfect for making a small bedroom larger! $300. Call Glenn on 0419 318 218.

Free dryer
Pick up from The Basin. Contact Amanda, astelee@mecs.vic.edu.au

Chicken Minders Needed
We need 2-3 families willing to look after our Primary School chickens for a week or so during the school holidays. It would mean popping into school every couple of days to make sure they had enough food and water. The food will be provided for them and any eggs collected can be kept by the family. Please contact Derek Warren if you can help. (dwarren@mecs.vic.edu.au). Thanks.

Derek Warren
MP Teacher

Calendar

2014 Term 4 Week 9: 8 Dec - 14 Dec
Mon 8 - Fri 12 December
Year 12 Orientation Week 2
Fri 12 December
Year 6 Graduation

Mon 15 December
PS Christmas GT, 9.30am in Gym, led by Preps
Morning Tea for Primary School Volunteers and Helpers 11am in Staff Room
AASC Basketball Catch Up Session 3.30

Tues 16 December
MP Art Display 2pm

Wed 17 December
Reports Issued
K4 Kinder Break-up Activities 11am

Thur 18 December
End Term 4

2014/2015 Holidays: 19 Dec - 1 Feb

Thur 29 Jan
Stationery & School Wear sales
Thur 29 - 30 Jan
Year 12 Camp

2015 Term 1 Week 1: 2 Feb - 8 Feb
Mon 2 February
Term 1 Begins
Welcome Back Morning Tea Staffroom 9am

Wed 11 Feb
Prep Information Evening 7.30pm

Fri 13 Feb
Parents Morning Tea 9am (Before Assembly)
Whole School Assembly 10am

Please note the Canteen is now closed for this year

Morning Tea for Primary School Volunteers and Helpers
Mon 15 Dec, 11am

Please note the Canteen is now closed for this year

Newsletter deadline is 11am Tuesday on published week.
Email articles (images attached as jpg) to the Newsletter Office

Notices sent home this week and on Website
• Year 4 Kids with Courage Letter
• MP Art Display Invitation