Positive Boys at Oasis

J' Den, Toben & Bryce enjoying the challenges of a day at Oasis
Reflection of a Masterpiece

What do you see when you look in the mirror? Our eyes are often drawn to perceived flaws or things we would like to change. But, what if I told you that in your reflection is a masterpiece?

During workbreak at the beginning of this term, the Middle School staff met together to discuss our goals, hopes, and dreams for the Middle School at MECS. It was a valuable time of team-building and discussion, as it confirmed the shared aspirations of the Middle School teaching staff, and reminded us of our mutual passion for teaching students at this age and stage of development. We covered a range of material during our conversation, investigated writings on engaging Middle School students in the classroom, and discussed what “Faithful learning, faithful living” looks like in the Middle School context.

A particularly rich segment of our time together was spent discussing Ephesians 2:10, a verse that, I believe, God placed on my heart early this year. I’d love to share with you some of the Middle School team’s insights from this discussion.

Ephesians 2:10 [NIV]
“For we are God’s handiwork, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do.”

Ephesians 2:10 speaks into two incredibly important aspects of the person: identity and purpose. The verse starts by affirming the person— you, me, us—as having been created by God. However, it doesn’t stop there. Not only has God created us, but we are His handiwork, His workmanship; we are works of art. We are not slapdash or afterthoughts or merely adequate, we are masterpieces into which God has lavishly invested time, care, love and effort.

In reading Ephesians 2:10, we noticed that our value and identity do not come from our purpose, i.e. doing good works. We are God’s handiwork before we do good works. Good works flow out of our identity. This is an important distinction to make. Faithful learning, faithful living, and walking in the plans God has prepared for us, are the outworking of the revelation of who we are in Christ.

This insight in particular, impacted the Middle School team, especially in regards to our students. We are God’s handiwork. Present tense. Here and now. Students do not become God’s handiwork when they get their Learner’s Permit, or when they perform well in an assessment task, or when they begin an apprenticeship. They are not ‘handiworks in waiting’. Our status as God’s workmanship cannot be earned. It is freely bestowed upon each of us. We are God’s workmanship, and for this reason, possess great value in the here and now.

If we can just grasp this notion, that each of us is God’s handiwork, that God takes immense pride in what He has created and the gifts instilled in us, it totally changes the way we see ourselves and others.

Each one of us is a work of art who bears the likeness of our Creator.

Each one of us has inherent value and worth because God has placed it within us.

Each one of us is worthy of encouragement and respect.

The Middle School team is passionate about seeing our students take to heart this truth. They are God’s workmanship; they are works of art; they were created on purpose and for a purpose; their worth is not dependent upon utility or bestowed upon them when they reach adulthood; they have value in the here and now. Our prayer is that this verse will impact the lives of our students and become a day-to-day reality for each of them.

Bradley
Middle School Coordinator

JP Book Launch

Last Thursday the Frilled-neck Lizards had a Book Launch.

We shared our books and had some prayer. We shared some information about Literacy in Frilled-neck Lizards and we had a great time.

It was FANTASTIC! We got to share our books with all the visitors and some of the school staff. The room looked different. We had a semi-circle of tables, the chairs were set up like assembly (in rows), and we had christmas lights, flowers and a tablecloth.

Mrs Daniela is a great teacher and she thinks that all her Frilled-neck Lizards are AWESOME! It was lovely to see Narelle, Karissa, Heather and Di come for a visit too! Thank you to all the mums, dads, and special friends who came and made it a wonderful time.

Written by Indi, Sophie with Daniela
NAPLAN

The National Assessment Program – Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN) tests for Years 3, 5, 7 and 9 students are coming up shortly. They will be held on Tuesday May 10, Wednesday May 11 and Thursday May 12. Every child in Australia in these year levels is required to sit this assessment to show their development in literacy and numeracy.

The assessment measures student achievement in mathematics, reading, writing and language conventions. The results add value to our school assessments and provide a ‘snap shot’ of learning. NAPLAN is only one form of assessment and together with our regular assessment procedures aim to help inform you about the progress of your child. If you have any queries or concerns about these tests please speak to your child’s teacher in the Primary School, or Brad Turner, in the Middle School.

Visiting Politicians

Last Friday, Tony Smith, our local federal member and Speaker of the House of Representatives, visited our school. We were able to spend some time speaking with him about upcoming election issues as well as ongoing support for Ranges TEC. He visited Kaye’s JP class who did a fabulous job in making him feel welcome, praying for him and presenting him with a card that they had made. These opportunities are important to make sure our politicians understand the value of Christian education and support us with not only appropriate funding, but with legislation that protects our right to teach from a Christian worldview. We look forward to James Merlino, our local state member and also Deputy Premier and Minister for Education in Victoria, visiting on Friday May 27.

Parent Partnership

Last week we had two important parent events. One was the next in our series of Parent Seminars. These seminars are designed to introduce our new parents to Christian education in more detail. In this session, we looked at ‘What makes MECS tick?’ and identified some of the key aspects of parent partnership, governance and the way our Transformational Education book brings focus and direction to all our teaching and learning activities.

The other was a Board Information Evening. A group of invited parents had the opportunity to hear about the importance of a vibrant Association and the present need for additional Board members and Sub-Committee members to serve the school. Michelle, the CEO of Christian Education National was our guest speaker. It was a great evening and we are thankful for the positive response of a number of parents. We hope this evening will be an annual event as we look for new ways to encourage our Association members to step up into important governance roles within the school.

We are thankful to God for the many ways in which we are able to partner with parents in the vision and mission of MECS. As always, if you are looking for ways to be further involved in the life of the school community, please speak to Nicole Nyhouse, our Community Relations Officer, who will point you in the right direction.

Recent Editorials

Can I commend to you the last two MECS Matters editorials written by Emma, our Senior School Coordinator, last week and Brad, our Middle School Coordinator, this week? These leaders are doing a fabulous job as they lead different sections of the secondary school. It is good to hear about the new initiatives and priorities of these sections as they seek to lead their students in what it means to live faithfully and learn faithfully. Leadership at this level involves lots of conversations with staff, students and parents as they seek to navigate the challenges and opportunities that our young people confront every day. Sometimes it can be tricky stuff! I encourage you to pray for them, and indeed all our staff, as we seek to serve in this place each day.
MECS Notes

Term date changes for 2017

Recently we published the term dates for 2017, however we have had to make a few changes. The updated and final dates for 2017 are as follows:

Term 1: January 30 - March 31
(no change)

Term 2: Wednesday April 19 - June 30
(was previously going to finish on June 23)

Term 3: July 24 - Sept 22
(was previously going to begin on July 17)

Term 4: Oct 16-Dec 13
(no change)

Introductions...

This article on Sharon continues Brit’s interview series to help us get to know some of the teachers at MECS.

Introducing Sharon

This lady is the three L’s: loud, luxurious and lovable. Her love of stationery, usually matching, cannot go unnoticed. This drama lover will stand out in a crowd.

What is your favourite book or book series?

My favourite book series is anything by Jodi Picoult and I love to read books about people’s stories and life experiences. I love books about people’s faith and experience with God.

How long does it take for you to get dressed in the mornings?

Well that is a very personal question :) I take about five or ten minutes. I usually chuck on whatever is on the floor, unless I have to iron it. No, seriously, I would like to say that I carefully plan out the night before what I shall wear in the mornings to make it all flow smoothly. I’m usually ready in 20 minutes.

Who are you most envious of, real or fictional, and why?

My fellow teacher Sue because she is awesome!

I’m not really envious of anybody to be honest. I’m actually really happy with what I have, my life and what I get to do each and every day. There is no one I’m actually envious of, at all.

If you were a cake what type of cake would you be?

I would probably be a Black Forest cake. Black forest cake just came to mind. I don’t know why. Because it’s rich, beautiful and has layers. Not that I’m rich though.

What is the oldest thing you’ve had in your fridge?

Probably a three week old chicken curry. I wasn’t really sure what it was because it was covered in fur.

By Brit, Year 9

Friends of MECS

We appreciate our volunteers so much and rely on your help a number of times throughout the year. Right now we are coming up to a busy time in the life of the school, and are in need of some help with upcoming events. Helping out is a great way to meet other parents and contribute to community at MECS - no experience necessary! We would love you to please consider helping out at one of the following events.

Mother’s Day Stall - Friday May 6

We are looking for some volunteers to help run the stall between 8.50am and 1.30pm.

Open Day - Saturday May 7, 10am - 1pm

We are looking forward to a fun day of showcasing our school, and need some volunteers to help out in various ways - manning the jumping castle, serving morning tea, helping Pete and Steve on the sausage sizzle and face painting.

Cook Off Day - Monday May 9, 9am - 1pm

We’re after some willing helpers to prepare and cook, package and freeze meals to fill our Community Freezer. Even an hour or two is a great help!

If you can help at any of these events, even for a few hours, please let me know through the office or via email. Thank you.

Nicole
Community Relations

Friends of MECS

All our families are welcome to join us for our Open Day Sat May 7 10am to 1pm

Hayley has become a familiar and welcoming face to our students that attend the After School Care program. Hayley loves interacting with our students and makes sure there are lots of fun activities for them to engage in. The nice warm afternoons have seen them taking advantage of the oval and other play spaces and enjoying the sunshine. The healthy afternoon teas are a hit and some of the students love to help Hayley in the preparation of the food.

If you would like to know more about the After School Care program please contact the office for more information.

Nicole
Community Relations

MECS Notes

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Nicole
Community Relations
Engagement Surprise

Earlier this year Michelle (SPG teacher) got engaged. Last week her class organised a wonderful surprise for her: a gift of some camping chairs, presented by students and parents with some speeches and cards. Thanks to the parents who helped organise this.

Congratulations to you Miss K and Dan. We wish you a wonderful engagement and an exciting time planning your wedding!

Nicole
Community Relations

FOCUS on... Early Literacy

There is a saying that "reading and writing floats on a sea of talking". That is very true.

You may have heard of CAFÉ in our Primary classrooms. These letters stand for:

Comprehension
Accuracy
Fluency
Expanding Vocabulary

These are the four key areas children need to develop in order to become good readers.

Teaching phonics thoroughly takes care of much of the accuracy component, but not all of it. Children still use clues from pictures and their own prior knowledge to interpret the text through meaning. They also call on their familiarity with the structure of sentences and the patterns of words to anticipate what’s coming next.

The other three components are ‘caught’ by young children through oral language!

A child cannot comprehend what they are reading if they have not, at some time, heard the words they come across in a meaningful context.

They need to hear new words through conversation or books, poems and letters etc. being read to them, and someone taking the time to answer their questions when needed.

Fluency comes as the child rehearses what they are reading, drawing on the way it sounded when they heard it. ‘Once upon a time’ for a fairy tale, ‘Step one’ for a procedure, ‘Dear Frank’ for a letter and so on.

Being intentional about developing a young child’s oral language can include:

• Discussing both every day and special events. (A trip to the fruit and vegie market was so interesting seen through the eyes of a 2 year old as I introduced my grandson to all the colours of the different peppers and names of the spiky, soft, big and tiny fruits in front of us.)
• Using words to encourage your child and give them an unshakable sense of value. Confidence and resilience is the most necessary ingredient for a flourishing learner.
• Reading bed time stories - linking reading to something comforting and fun.
• Speaking with and listening to whole sentences. Busy families can fall into the trap of asking yes or no questions, frequently doesn’t respond when called or spoken to, or cannot follow instructions as you would expect for their age, it is important to have their hearing or auditory processing checked.
• Trips to the local library. Your child may benefit from some sessions of speech therapy.

These issues can be raised with your child’s teacher and the visiting school nurse may also be able do some initial evaluation.

So why do we spend so much time in Kindergarten playing, and in Foundation – on Investigations, Choosing Time and ‘Wonderful Wednesday’? The children are having ‘swimming lessons’ in an ocean of words.

You need words to think your thoughts, to be able to write them down and to read them when you see them.

So have fun talking! And in the wise words of Dr Seuss:

“You are never too old, Too wacky or wild, To open a book, And to read to a child!”

Jan
Foundation Coordinator/Teacher
Positive Boys

On Friday the Year 6 boys went to Oasis for a Positive Boys day. It was great fun. My highlight of the day was the crate stacking. We were on a harness and had crates stacked underneath us. We had to try and see how many crates we could climb up and stack. It was really hard to balance the crates and try not to fall off.

All the boys had a great day, and it was fun with no girls in the way.

Dylan

Friday was Positive Boys day at Camp Oasis. It was a fun day. We did a lot of activities that required team work such as the initiatives course, ropes course, flying fox and archery. We also did crate stacking which was heaps of fun. My highlight for the day was the ropes course which looked super easy but was actually quite hard. Luckily we had spotters to catch us if we fell.

J'den
Primary GT - ANZAC Day

On the Monday before ANZAC day, Middle Primary Blue class led an inspiring and moving tribute to ANZAC day at the Primary GT.

The GT included poetry, art and dramatic presentations on the meaning and historical significance of Anzac day. Although the students are only in Years 3 and 4 they were able to portray a depth of understanding around the sacrifice and the sadness of war beyond their years. The students were able to enter into the life of Anzacs and their families through their creative responses and they shared this beautifully with the rest of the Primary. A minute silence was held and the last post was played. The students finished off the GT with a musical item reminding us of the greatest sacrifice of all - Jesus’ death on the cross for us. Thank you so much MP Blue and Ali.

We hope you enjoy some of their work, printed here.

Diane
Assistant Principal - Primary

MECS Notes

Term 2 Primary School GTs

Mondays 9am PUMP room on the following dates

Week 5, Monday 9 May
JP Wallabies (Viv)

Week 8, Monday 30 May
SP Green (Michelle)

Parents and friends welcome.

Congratulations Tom

It is with the greatest delight that we congratulate Tom (Class of ‘11) on gaining entry into Deakin University’s Bachelor of Medicine and Bachelor of Surgery degree program. This has been a long and tough road for Tom and he has shown great perseverance to achieve his goal of becoming a medical doctor. During his VCE year Tom sat for the Undergraduate Medicine and Health Sciences Test (UMAT) and was successful in gaining entry into Monash University’s Physiotherapy degree. He spent 2012 studying Physiotherapy but at this point, decided that he would like to become a medical doctor. So in 2013, he transferred to the Monash Biomedical Science degree and graduated last year with a high distinction average in all units studied. This gave Tom the confidence to undertake the Graduate Medical School Admissions Test (GMSAT) and on the basis of his results in this test he was offered a place in Deakin University’s Medical Degree program. So six years after leaving MECS he begins the first of another 4 years of study. Tom now joins Andrew Wilson (University of Melbourne Medical and Surgery degree program, also from the class of 2011) in studying Medicine. Well done Tom!

Dr Roger F
VCE Coordinator

The day my Dad left for Gallipoli

A poem by Kyan

The day my Dad left for Gallipoli,
He left me a tree to show me that he loved me.
We planted the tree the day he left to Gallipoli.
Every day of the week I went to check the letterbox.
After 9 months we got a letter saying he wasn’t coming back.
The day I got the letter
I cried
And cried...

by Bethany

by Trinity

by Maisie

by Cora-Belle

by Trinity
Calendar

2016 Term 2 Week 3: 25 Apr - 1 May

Fri 29 April
Years 7-12 Cross Country

Sat 30 April
Working Bee 8am-1pm, with Morning Tea

2016 Term 2 Week 4: 2 May - 8 May

Tues 3 - Thur 5 May
Year 5 Log Cabin Camp Creswick

Thur 5 May
Foundation Parent/Child Night 6.30pm

Fri 6 May
Mother’s Day Stall

Sat 7 May
MECS Open Day 10am-1pm

2016 Term 2 Week 5: 9 May - 15 May

Mon 9 May
Primary GT 9am PUMP room. JP Wallabies (Viv Theunissen)
Years 11 & 12 Soccer Day
Community Cook off 9am-1pm, Home Tech Room

Tues 10 - Thur 12 May
NAPLAN

Tues 10 - Fri 13 May
Year 8 Inspiring Girls Camp
Year 8 Man Camp

Wed 11 - Fri 13 May
Year 6 Log Cabin Camp Creswick

Thur 12 May
Junior Primary Connect Morning Tea
8.45am in the Main Staffroom
Year 12 Mentor Supper 7.30pm

Fri 13 May
Years 7-11 Interschool Cross Country
Year 12 History Revolutions Excursion

2016 Term 2 Week 6: 16 May - 22 May

Mon 16 - Fri 20 May
Year 9 Special Week

Tues 17 May
Foundation Connect Morning Tea 8.45am in the Main Staffroom
Year 9 Soccer Day

Wed 18 May
Music Recital 7pm Theatrette

Next Working Bee
This Sat 30 April,
8am-1pm
with Morning Tea

MECS COMMUNITY NOTICES
MECS does not endorse the products or services of any private advertiser. No responsibility is accepted by Mount Evelyn Christian School for the accuracy of information contained in advertisements or claims made by them.

Ranges TEC Open Campus
Saturday May 28, 1-4pm
1/9 Hightech Place Lilydale, 9738 7100

Bunk for Sale
Bunkers brand lo-line corner bunk unit, mahogany brown. Bought brand new in 2010. Some slight scuffing on lower bed head & one cracked slat but otherwise in good condition.
$300 o.n.o. Pickup in Kilsyth.
Contact Melanie on 0407 879 633.

Apple Man
The Apple Man is coming next on April 29 (tomorrow) and the following varieties will be available: Granny Smiths, Fujis, Royal Galas and Pink Ladies. Apples $10 a bag. Please put the correct money in an envelope with your order written on the front, and hand it into the office before 10.30am on Friday April 29.

Montrose Auskick
2016 registrations are still open. Register online at www.aflauskick.com.au or contact Montrose Auskick at montroseauskick@hotmail.com.
Come and see us on Saturday mornings at 9am at the Montrose Reserve Junior Oval (behind the clubrooms).

Calendar

Notices sent home this week and on Website

• Year 7 and 8 Bushwalking Group Notice
• JP Connect Morning Tea Invitation

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