Dear Senior Primary Parents,

Welcome to 2014! We hope you’ve had a relaxing and positive holiday time with your children. The year promises to be a fantastic one in Senior Primary and we are very excited about the many plans we have made. Following is some general information about Senior Primary that may be helpful for you to know.

The teaching team for SP this year is: Ben Clark (SPC), Michelle Ketelaar (SPK) and Melissa Dykstra (SPD). Janine Lee will continue as our Music teacher, Jason Brown joins us as PE teacher and Kathy Vale will take SPD Numeracy. We also continue to have the assistance of Steph Cummings (SPD), Kate Weekes (SPK) and Sarah Piesse (SPC) as our ‘L.A.s’ (Learning Assistants). Steph, Kate and Sarah will be working in the classrooms during Literacy and Numeracy sessions to assist the teachers.

Core Studies Units for 2014

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Important Dates

- **SWIMMING** program will be every Friday afternoon for 5 weeks beginning Week 2 (Friday Feb 14 – Friday March 14) at Kilsyth pool. Your child will need to bring bathers (no bikinis for girls please) and a towel. If your child needs to have a shower after swimming for medical reasons please write your teacher a note or speak to them personally.

  *We are in need of a female parent helper for the swimming program, to supervise the change rooms and assist on the bus to and from the pools.* You will be needed for each Friday from 1:20pm to the end of the school day. You will need to have a current Working with Children check. Please fill out the form at the end of this letter and return to your child’s teacher.

- **Camp 1 (Year 6)**  Wednesday May 14 - May 16
- **Camp 2 (Year 5)**  Wednesday May 21 - May 23
- **Graduation (Year 6)**  Friday Dec 12

Other dates for future events will be sent home during the year at appropriate times.

Things to Remember

**PE** is Monday for SPD and SPC, Wednesday for SPK. Please ensure that the students come dressed in the MECS PE uniform (green MECS polo, black shorts/track suit pants and appropriate footwear and hat). This uniform is compulsory.
Sport activities will take place on Friday afternoon. It is compulsory for students to come dressed in their tribal T-shirts for this activity.

Homework will be set weekly – numeracy homework will be given out on Friday and is to be returned the following Friday. Literacy homework will be given out Wednesday and is to be returned the following Wednesday. Unless a note is received explaining why homework is incomplete or not handed in, consequences will apply. Students will have one ‘grace’ per term, after this they will be required to complete a lunch time detention. Both completing and handing in homework are important organisational skills that will help to prepare your child for secondary school and improve their current personal organisation and accountability. Please note that the emphasis is on the process of setting time aside to work on homework and then returning it. If your child is unable to complete their homework after working on it for more than twenty minutes a night (combined Maths and Literacy) please see your class teacher so that we can modify their tasks. (Most Year 6s will have their load increase somewhat in Term 4). Likewise, if the tasks are causing a high level of stress for your child, please talk to us. Homework should not be something that adds undue stress to your child or to your family life, but a process primarily of learning about time management, organisation and accountability as well as reinforcing the learning covered at school.

Art sometimes gets messy! Please send along a labelled 'smock' to be worn to protect clothing when necessary. An old shirt may be used for this purpose.

Please make sure you ring the school's attendance register if your child is going to be away from school, and follow up the next day with a note (including date of and reason for absence).

Please send along a box of tissues with your child for a shared class supply – we go through many of these each year, particularly in winter.

Some Other Things...

Your child's extra stationery will be kept at school and supplied when your child uses up/loses items. Please note that your child is expected to keep their books in good condition - books that are graffitied on or defaced will be asked to be replaced at their expense.

Hats are compulsory for recess/lunch, PE and excursions during all of Term 1 and 4. Please ensure your child has an appropriate hat (broad brimmed all around).

In compliance with our sun-smart policy, children who do not have a hat will be required to sit in a specific covered area and will not be allowed into the playground.

Please enforce the MECS dress code. Having to follow this up takes time that teachers could be using in other ways and having the students abide by the dress code helps teach them respect for rules and procedures (even though they may not agree with them!). We appreciate your support in this. If you are unaware of our dress code, please see your class teacher or read a copy of it on the MECS website. Our biggest issue in this area is girls’ shorts. Their shorts must come down to at least mid thigh. Please help us by not allowing your daughter to wear shorts shorter than this.

iPods, phones, DS consoles and other electronic items are not to be used during school hours. If your child travels by public transport and needs to take a phone or other electronic item to school these must be handed in to the office at the beginning of the day. The item can be picked up at the end of the day. Failure to comply with this procedure will mean the item is confiscated – firstly overnight and then for a longer period of time.

Please make sure your child has a healthy, balanced lunch each day. We know that many of you feel that your child can pack their own lunch (and they may very well be able to do so), but we would really appreciate you discussing with them appropriate lunch choices and monitoring what's going in to their lunchbox. Senior Primary students MUST have a lunch box and we have told them that they must eat
something substantial at lunchtime (we found that quite a few of them would eat all their lunch at recess time).

Students will be encouraged to have a **water bottle** on their desk and are strongly encouraged to bring fruit (unprocessed – container of dried fruit or nuts OK) for ‘fruit break’ to be eaten sometime around 10am. This snack time helps boost their fruit intake and is a valuable source of energy during the long morning session.

If you have any questions or concerns about your child or about what's happening in our classes, please feel relaxed and welcome to come and discuss them with us. We greatly value the opportunity to work in partnership with you.

We look forward to a fantastic year!

Kind regards,

*Ben Clark, Mel Dykstra, Michelle Ketelaar*
Senior Primary Teachers

Senior Primary Swimming Program
Parent Helper Slip

Please return by Monday February 10 2014

I am able to help out throughout the Senior Primary Swimming Program and I have a current Working with Children check, which I have registered with the school office.

Parent Name: ........................................................................................................................................

Best Contact Phone number: ............................................................................................................

Signed: .................................................................................................. Date: ........................................