8 March 2018

Celebrating 45 Years of Christian Education

Tribal Swimming Carnival - Years 7 - 11
An enthusiastic competitor swimming backstroke for Mani Tribe. Story pages 6 & 7
Editorial
8 March 2018

Narelle
MECS Principal

Over the last twelve months, we have referred to our Child Safety Policy in this newsletter a number of times. Our policy was developed in 2016 in response to Ministerial Order 870, which required all schools in Victoria to implement seven minimum standards to make sure children entrusted to our care are kept safe.

As image-bearers of God, we want every student to flourish in all aspects of their life and for all children to feel loved and respected.

This is a Child Safe School

We are presently preparing documentation for our VRQA Review. The Victorian Registration and Qualifications Authority (VRQA) is the statutory body that regulates schools in Victoria and has the responsibility for ensuring that schools meet the prescribed minimum standards and other requirements for school registration. A key focus for this review is the way we have implemented an effective child safety policy and culture within our school. This focus is evidence of how seriously educational authorities are taking these initiatives.

As this policy relates to all employees, volunteers and contractors, we have been bringing this policy to the attention of all our primary parents at recent information briefings again this year. This provides an opportunity for parents who wish to be volunteers throughout the year to ‘sign off’ on their understanding and commitment to uphold our Child Safety Code of Conduct. We appreciate the positive response of our primary parents to this process so far. Parents of secondary parents who wish to volunteer on camps and excursions will have to sign-off on this policy as part of the risk assessment processes for each experience.

Whilst our policy includes details about such topics as how our policy is implemented, what responsibilities are held by different members of the community, the impact on the recruitment of school staff and how we would respond to disclosures of abuses; at the centre of our policy is the Child Safety Code of Conduct.

This Code of Conduct outlines a range of positive behaviours and unacceptable behaviours.

Positive behaviours include such things as:
- Listening and responding to the views and concerns of children.
- Ensuring that as far as practicable adults are not alone with children.
- Reporting any allegations of child abuse or any child safety concerns to the school leadership team.
- Complying with all mandatory reporting obligations.

Negative behaviours include:
- Disregarding any suspected or disclosed child abuse.
- Exhibiting behaviours with children which may be construed as unnecessarily physical.
- Putting children at risk of abuse through isolation.
- Using inappropriate language in the presence of children or engaging in open discussions of a mature or adult nature in the presence of children.

For the full Child Safety Code of Conduct, please see our website or come and collect a copy of our Focus on Child Safety booklet in the main office.

MECS is committed to making sure that all our students are safe. We completely reject any action or behaviour that results in the abuse of a child who is part of our community. As image-bearers of God, we want every student to flourish in all aspects of their life and for all children to feel loved and respected.

Our appointed Child Safety Officers are our Assistant Principals and Kindergarten Director. Please speak to Di, Karissa or Wendy if you have any concerns in this area. As we work in partnership together, this responsibility and commitment needs to be owned by all of us.

Thanks for joining us, and supporting us in this important task.

As image-bearers of God, we want every student to flourish in all aspects of their life and for all children to feel loved and respected.
Focus on...
NICE

This year we have about fifteen teachers at MECS who are undertaking post-graduate studies with the National Institute of Christian Education (NICE). Their subjects include Worldview Assumptions in Education, Ways of Learning, Understanding Innovation in Schools, and Appraisal of Professional Learning. They attend lectures and workshops, write reports and essays, and work through action/research assignments. These studies help our teachers learn more about Christ-centred, Biblically-informed teaching and learning. As it states on the NICE website (www.nice.edu.au), "The National Institute is committed to helping people to think, act, and teach in ways that take serious the public truth of the Christian gospel and its implications for all of life."

We, at MECS, strongly believe in authentic Christian education and go to great lengths to assist teachers as they juggle their day-to-day teaching role with their studies through NICE. During three of the four Workbreaks throughout the year, we have an entire day (an ‘Intensive’) assigned to NICE studies. Three of our MECS staff (Narelle Sketcher, Tim Payze, and Jacqui Stok) are qualified to deliver these NICE subjects, and this ensures that our teachers have someone they know close by who can support them in their studies. Postgraduate studies can be pricey so MECS also financially supports NICE study. We contribute 60% of the fee of each unit, as well as provide 2-4 paid study days. As an added bonus, teachers are given a continuing yearly NICE allowance in their salary after the completion of 2, 4, and 8 units. While teachers are only expected to complete two units, many of our teachers go on to complete their Graduate Diploma of Teaching (4 units) or their Masters of Education (8 units). This is further evidence of an outstanding culture of professional learning amongst MECS staff!

Jacqui
Teaching and Learning Coordinator

Kwong Lee Dow Young Award

At the Senior School assembly on Monday it was our pleasure to present to Hope in Year 11 a certificate accepting her into the Kwong Lee Dow Young Scholars Program with Melbourne University. This program, which we have had students accepted into for a number of years now, is designed for students who achieve high level academic performance, have leadership potential and demonstrate evidence of active citizenship and community involvement. Students in the program have access to a range of opportunities and resources at Melbourne University (including greater likelihood of acceptance into tertiary courses) and networking and support from other high achieving students in the program. Congratulations Hope!

Emma
Senior School Coordinator
Meet the Board
Bretlyn - Board Chair

Tell us about your family: My wife, Toni and my children have been at MECS for 11 years. We have 3 children at school in Years 8, 10 and 11. Our home in Mooroolbark also includes our adult son. Our family pet, Darla has been with us 9 years and named after the character called Darla in the movie ‘Little Rascals’.

Why did you join the Association? Our children had been in the school for a few years and my wife had been involved at school and camps. The more we learnt about the school’s ethos, leadership and goals, the more we liked. We wanted to continue our journey with the school as someone that is not a consumer but a contributor. There have been families that started the school and got it this far. We felt that it was important to do our part to be the next link in the chain to continue the parent partnership so that the school can continue for our children and the generations to come.

What do you like most about being a board member? Being a board member meant that I could contribute a little of what I had learnt to the board but it also provided me an opportunity as a working father to have an understanding of the school. I love how knowing more about the school helps me have more interesting conversations with my children about school.

What is your music of choice? I am pretty boring because I enjoy most music. There are a few classical tunes that can be left in the drawer. Often the best radio station is the one with any music and not idle chatter or ads.

What is your occupation or profession? I am an accountant. I love numbers and solving problems so this is something I have enjoyed. I was not sure that I was going to like it at first because I was worried that I would have an office in the basement with a calculator and without people contact. As I learnt more about the profession, I found out that management accounting is the place for me – numbers and people.

What skill would you like to master? Having a clean and tidy garage. This still evades me.

What would be your ideal way to spend a weekend? The ideal weekend is spending it with family and/or friends. It is a time to relax, discuss and have food at any location.

What’s the craziest thing you have done? The craziest thing I have ever done is breaking my leg when leaving the doctor’s office.

Middle Primary Community BBQ

Every year it just gets better and better! Aside from the wind, and the threat of rain, the Middle Primary BBQ was a wonderful evening. We had so many of our student’s families came together for a delicious meal to celebrate, and learn more about what makes Middle Primary at MECS. We were able to put the Year 6 leaders to work on the BBQ (with a little help from Miss Rowse, Mrs Campbell and Mrs Russ). They did a terrific job of showing their middle primary peers how to be responsible and mature role models. Thank you to Mrs Sketcher for joining us while being so hospitable, and Mrs Gillie, Mrs Waston and Mr Owen for helping make the evening run so smoothly.

MP team

Josiah Joseph
Lily Lachlan & Zachary
Ambrie Gabe
Eli Abigail
Year 9 Basketball

With excitement in our steps and anticipation in our veins we got ready for the day ahead. We tied our shoes and warmed up, then walked onto the court for our first game against Edinburgh. They were late though, so we were switched to playing Heritage in an 18 minute match instead of the usual 24. We still won it though! We played the next few games with great sportsmanship, playing as a team and as hard as we could. Out of the 4 games, we won 3 but so did Edinburgh and Bayside. In the end Bayside and Edinburgh were in the final by just a few percentage points. If only we had had the extra 6 mins against Heritage! Overall it was fun day and everyone played really well. Thanks to the teachers and stadium who made it a well organised tournament.

Caleb

After an adventurous bus trip rocking to some tunes that I listened to when I was in high school, we came together for our first game against Mountain District Christian School which we managed to win very well (30-17). The next game was a different story - we came up against Bayside who have a team full of basketballers, and although we went down 6-38 I must commend the girls for showing great teamwork, determination and a great attitude.

After a brief 'lunch' break we came up against Heritage for our last group game. Heritage weren't really interested by this stage after suffering two losses. We managed to pass the ball well and share the scoring around, coming away with a 59-6 win.

The finals pipped us against Bayside again and I am pleased to say that the girls again showed great resilience and teamwork, outscoering Bayside for the first 10 minutes of the second half!! We did end up losing 8-27 but the team showed cooperation, thankfulness and adventurousness throughout the day - they should be congratulated for a wonderful team effort. Well done, girls!

Tim
MS Teacher

Year 12 Literature Excursion

‘If music be the food of love, play on’ - so begins William Shakespeare’s play Twelfth Night. Year 12 Literature are studying the comedy this semester, and took up the opportunity to see the Australian Shakespeare Company perform the production at the Royal Botanic Gardens. The central plot lines of the 400 year old story – romantic and familial love, and making judgments based on appearance – continue to ring true, and it seems that base humour is entertaining regardless of era. Viewing a performance of the play will aid students in engaging with the print text, and the perfect weather and abundance of shared snacks also meant the excursion was an enjoyable relationship building experience.

Jodi
VCE Literature teacher

MECS Notes

Parent Teacher Meetings and Parent Teacher Online (PTO)

The Parent Teacher Meetings are being conducted for Secondary students on Thursday 15 and Tuesday 20 March and for Primary, Tuesday 20 and Monday 26 March.

For parents who have a current email address on our database, you will have received an email with your user name (parent surname) and a unique password. If you have not received this email, please contact the office for it to be sent again.

If you do not have an email address, a letter was mailed to you. You will be able to contact our admin staff (main office or Senior School office) who will be able to book these online for you.

The PTO booking system is now open and you can access the PTO site by following the Parent Teacher Interview links on the school’s website www.mecs.vic.edu.au under ‘Updates’ or ‘Quick Links’ towards the bottom of the page.

Corrie
Admin Support

Nurture Magazine Coming Soon

Nurture magazine is published by Christian Education National – the association of Christian schools that MECS belongs to. It contains excellent articles about parenting, education and more! MECS covers the cost of a subscription for each parent. The magazine is published 4 times a year and will be sent home to you with the newsletter.

Basketball Skills Sessions at MECS

For the remainder of this term there will be basketball skills development sessions available from 3:30-4:30pm on Fridays in March for primary school students wanting to see what basketball would be like as a sport. It is free and child safe, it is done in a fun and friendly way with the opportunity to join a team.

For your child to attend they will need to fill out a form that will be available at the office at the start of next week. Any questions please Glenn

Glenn
Ranges TEC Teacher & MECS Parent

Excursions

March 8 2018
Tuesday 27 February saw students from Years 7-11 have their first Tribal Carnival of the year; the Swimming Carnival, at Lilydale Outdoor Pool. This was the first event where both staff and students had the opportunity to show allegiance to their new tribes and compete for the prestige of being crowned the 2018 Tribal Swimming Carnival champions. The new tribes are Mani (white), Kaja (red), Jarra (yellow), and Wirri (blue), taken from the Aboriginal words for cloud, outback, flame, and water.

The day kicked off with the freestyle event where Mani became the early leaders due to the high volume of participants in the races and placing highly in many age groups. They were followed closely by Kaja, with both Jarra and Wirri trailing behind. We then moved onto the breastroke event with Wirri taking the event through sheer numbers. The backstroke event was up next which saw Kaja regain their lead due to the efforts of the 16+ girls who had three entrants all place in the 1st, 2nd, and 3rd, (well done girls!).

We took a moment to hold our ‘fashion on the field’ competition for the best dressed in each house with the winners being Skye from Mani for her handmade Heinz Mayonnaise costume, Kiara from Wirri for her blueberry costume, Louisa from Jarra for her yellow Wiggle costume, Jacinta with her red angel costume and Miss Olivia from Kaja winning the staff best dressed award for her handmade strawberry costume.

We then turned our attention to the team events with Kaja dominating the medley relays, Mani the freestyle relays, and all tribes competing strongly in our novelty events; the noodle relay and rope relay races. While the relays were running we introduced a walking lane for students to obtain bonus points for their tribe which saw over 100 laps walked in the effort to get those much needed extra points.

We finished the day with a staff vs students relay where students could create their own relay team in an effort to defeat the staff team consisting of Brad, Paul, Tim, Chris, Joel and Natalie. Alas, the students were unable to do so and the staff remain undefeated for another year.

With all the events finished and the final points tallied up Kaja emerged victorious and the red tribe holds the title of Tribal Swimming Carnival champions.

A huge thank you to all staff who contributed to the day and the students for getting into the spirit of the event; we look forward to our next Tribal Carnival in Term 2.

Chris & Steph
Secondary Sport Coordinators
If you went down to the Kinder today...

Our Teddy Bear picnic day was a celebration of all the children having attended Kinder together for a full week! Our Teddies had so much fun as we introduced ourselves and our Teddy to each other and made new friends! We read Teddy bear stories and sang Teddy bear songs.

Wendy
Kindergarten Director
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.

In home cook
Are you tired of cooking and planning meals each day? I’m here to help. I come to your kitchen and cook tasty, home style meals, desserts and snacks. With 15 years experience and a passion for food, you no longer need to worry about meal times. As I launch this new business, I’m looking for 4 MECS families to trial my packages half price. For more info contact Brooke on brookethecook05@gmail.com or 0422 972 924.

House to Share
One room available in large, tidy family home in Mooroolbark. Large room $185 p/w plus bond and utilities. Close to railway station, shopping complex, transport, bicycle track along Yarra and schools. Sharing with parent and 13 year old boy at MECS. Will require own fridge. Creative home with large lounge, dining, shed and gardens. Available now. Call David 0403 223 980.

Supporting Parents of Tricky Kids - Community Event
Do you have tricky kids or kids on the Autism spectrum? This event will provide expert advice from Cara Small, a child/family psychologist, and connect you with other parents. 22nd March 2018, 7-9pm at Boronia Community Church of Christ, 59 Boronia Road, Boronia. $5. No booking required but please RSVP via this event link: https://www.facebook.com/events/348024639035647/

Apples at Bargain Prices
The first visit of the Apple Man for the year will be tomorrow Friday 9 March. Bulk apples are available for bargain prices. Royal Gala, Pink Ladies, Granny Smith will be available. $10 a 5kg bag. Fuji Apples at $12 a bag. No pears available yet. Please put the correct money in an envelope with your order written on the front, and hand it into the office before 10.30am, Friday 9 March. Bags can be collected from the office anytime after 1.30pm.

SCYC Scorpions Basketball club
SCYC Scorpions Basketball club are now taking registrations for the Winter season. Come and play a great sport at a family friendly club. For all mini ball and under 9 players your first season is free. For all new registrations you will receive a 50% discount for your second season if you contact Glenn. Email Glenn at scycscorpions@gmail.com.