



NEWSLETTER

Tuesday 15th October 2013

IMPORTANT DATES

Tuesday 15th October
Active After School commences

Wednesday 16th October
School Council Meeting 6pm
P & C Meeting 7 pm

Tuesday 22nd to Thursday 24th October
Years 4 - 6 Canberra Excursion

Tuesday 29th October
Gerogery Sports Day
K -6

Monday 4th to Friday 15th November
School Swimming Scheme

Thursday 14th November
Kinder Orientation Day
9.30 - 11.30

Wednesday 27th November
School Council 6 pm
P & C 7 pm

Thursday 5th December
Kinder Orientation Teddy Bears Picnic
12.30 - 1.30

Thursday 12th December
Presentation Evening 7 pm

Monday 16th December
Year 6 Farewell (Yrs 5 & 6)

Tuesday 17th December
Whole School Disco

Wednesday 18th December
Last Day of Term
Mufti Day

FROM THE PRINCIPAL

Canberra Excursion

The Year 4/5/6 students and our friends from Gerogery PS leave for their Canberra excursion next Tuesday (22nd - 24th October). While in Canberra we will visit the Australian War Memorial, the National Film and Sound Archive, Parliament House, the National Portrait Gallery, the Questacon, the National Gallery, Black Mountain Tower, the National Museum and the Australian Institute of Sport.

Sporting News

Good luck to Natalie, who is competing at the NSW PSSA State Athletics Carnival this week. We are all very proud of your achievement.

Thanks to the six students who represented our school at the Super 8s Cricket Day last Friday. Ellie, Natalie, Zach, Jacinta, Bethany and Dylan combined with students from Mullengandra and Gerogery schools for this fun day of healthy competition. Thanks also to the parents who transported the kids to Culcairn.



New Students

Welcome to the Devlin family who started at Table Top PS this week. Dakota, Robert and Destiny will join the 4/5/6 class and Paris joins

the 2/3 class. We wish you many years of happy learning at our school.

Exciting Visual Arts Projects

We will be continuing the mosaic beautification theme throughout the school during the term and into next year. Our next project will involve Year 6 students making mosaic stepping stones. We are also planning to make mosaic sculptures for the entrance of the school. We are going to construct the sculptures from recycled terracotta pots. If you have any terracotta pots that you would like to donate for this fun project could you please bring them into school.

NAPLAN

Results of the 2013 NAPLAN have been released to schools and individual student reports have been sent home to parents today. NAPLAN is a series of government test which assess aspects of literacy including reading, spelling, punctuation and grammar and writing, as well as numeracy. Privacy restrictions prevent me from making any public comment on our school's performance due to the small cohorts in Years 3 and 5 in which individual students may be identified.

Visiting Performers

Last week students enjoyed a couple of fabulous free concerts performed by students of the Sydney Conservatorium of Music. On Wednesday we had a Jazz Trio, while on Thursday a Brass Quintet performed. The musicians were all very impressed with the quality of questions our students asked and by their excellent behaviour. Our next free concert will be by the ACT Junior High School Band on Friday 25th October.

Be Sun Safe

Wear a Hat! Table Top Public School is a Sun Safe School, where we actively encourage sun safe practices amongst students, staff and visitors. Students are required to wear their broad brimmed school hat while in the playground before school, at recess, lunch and after school. Children without their appropriate school hat will be asked to play in the shade of

the COLA or alternatively, sit on the seats. It is a good idea to pack sunscreen in your child's bag so they can reapply during the day.

School Council/P&C Meeting

The next meeting of our parent groups will be held on Wednesday 16th October

Andrew McEachern

HOW2Learn

Success

Success breeds success and failure breeds failure. But what does this mean? If children's small successes pass without comment, over time they can begin to believe they are 'not good at anything'.

Replace the concept of failure with feedback. Help your child to see mistakes as part of the process of learning. Make sure that they also experience success. When they are doing something well, comment on it.

Tips for developing success in your child

- Comment positively on everyday successes using a success vocabulary: 'Well done for ...', 'You did that well', 'Thank you for ...'.
- Encourage your child to notice when they improve on their personal best.
- Look on any failure as an opportunity to find out what went wrong and work out what to do better next time, eg: It didn't work for us this time, did it? Let's try it another way shall we?

SCHOOL SWIMMING SCHEME

The students of Table Top PS will again be involved in this valuable program in 2012.

The program will run for two weeks commencing Monday 4th November till Friday 15th November at Gould Swim Centre. Please return the

attached consent form and payment to school by Friday 1st November.

GEROGERY SPORTS DAY



The Gerogery Sports day will be held on Tuesday 29th October at Gerogery Public School commencing at 10:00 am.

Permission notes for the Gerogery Sports Day need to be returned by **Thursday 24th October** so that transport can be arranged for the students who need it.

ALL CHILDREN REQUIRING TRANSPORT SHOULD CATCH THE BUS TO SCHOOL AS USUAL AND THEN THEY WILL BE TRANSPORTED BY PARENTS FROM SCHOOL. THE CHILDREN WILL BE RETURNED TO SCHOOL IN THE AFTERNOON FOR THE BUS.

Parents who have offered to transport children will be notified on the Friday if they are required and will pick the children up from school from 9 am and return them to school in the afternoon for the bus.

VOLUNTARY CONTRIBUTIONS

Contributions for 2013 are \$40 per child. This fee covers the cost of textbooks and other consumables for each child. If paying by cheque, please make payable to Table Top Public School.

MATHLETICS CONTRIBUTION

Parents are asked to contribute \$10 per child to help cover the annual user fee for Mathletics in our school. This is a fantastic price, as the usual fee is \$99 per child. Thanks to the P&C who have already committed funds to support Mathletics for our children.

P & C FUNDRAISING CONTRIBUTION

The fund raising voluntary contribution for 2013 is \$50 per family. This can be paid in full

or by instalments over the next three terms as follows:

Term 1	\$20
Term 2	\$20
Term 3	\$10.

Cheques should be made payable to TTPS P & C

GARDEN COMPETITION

Table Top Public School would like to try and win a school garden valued at \$20,000. See the attached details of how we could achieve this with your help.

SCHOOL ASSEMBLY

Congratulations to the following award winners from last Friday's School Assembly:

K/1 AWARDS

Emmy ~ for fantastic reading to class
Audrey ~ for great learning in guided writing
Mia ~ for fantastic spelling

2-3 AWARDS

Matilda ~ for outstanding effort in spelling
Elizabeth ~ for consistent effort in Maths home learning

4-6 AWARDS

Leila-Rose ~ for a consistent effort
Mickaela ~ for always being prepared
Kelsey ~ for great teamwork

STUDENTS OF THE WEEK





Let's talk about literacy

The importance of reading to children – on a daily basis, from birth and beyond – has never been more imperative, writes Karen Fontaine

Since 2002, the University of Melbourne's Centre for Community Child Health has run a Let's Read program in partnership with The Smith Family. Its aim? To make reading to young children "an integral part of early childhood development," the Centre's director, Professor Frank Oberklaid, told me in an interview 11 years ago.

"In the same way that we immunise children against the possibility of getting infectious diseases, we are arguing that reading to young children in the first few years of life is the best way of immunising them against poor literacy later on," he said.

More than a decade down the track, the report card for the children the Let's Read program is trying to reach isn't exactly glowing – and that isn't my appraisal, it's that of Peter Garrett. Before he resigned as the federal Minister for School Education, Early Childhood and Youth, Garrett penned a newspaper article headlined 'We cannot be proud of our literacy levels'.

"Australia's overall literacy results have not been improving, and we are well behind many other countries in literacy tests," Garrett wrote in *The Daily Telegraph* in April 2013. "Reading is the core skill that every student needs to succeed in school and in life. But too many Australian kids are not getting the basics they need to progress through their schooling confidently, and to get a job when they leave school."



Garrett offered as examples the fact that around 75,000 students who sat NAPLAN tests in Years 3, 5, 7 and 9 in 2012 didn't meet national minimum standards. In Year 4 reading, one in four students are not meeting international benchmarks. In the most recent tests conducted in 2010, Australia performed worst out of all English-speaking countries; our score was lower than that of 21 other nations. This result is made worse when you consider that literacy is defined by the United Nations as a basic human right.

In response, Garrett unveiled a series of reforms, one of which was that hundreds of thousands of children would be assessed in their first year of school to find out whether they are at risk of falling behind and require extra help. In addition there would be a three-year 'reading blitz' for 1.1 million students from kindergarten to Year 3.

But the \$64 million question is this: will these reforms actually improve Australian children's literacy levels?

One expert, Annemarie Laurence, a clinical educator in speech pathology with the Speech Pathology in Schools (SPinS) program run by the University of Newcastle, fears not.

Identifying 'at-risk' children at the age of five is "two years too late", warns Ms Laurence, who works every day with children struggling with literacy.

In *The Sydney Morning Herald*, Ms Laurence painted a wretched picture of the plight of the children with whom she works. "In the years before they started school, an outing for these children was being pushed around in a stroller at the local Westfield [shopping centre]. They have an iPad. They rarely have a book read to them. Their language is not stimulated regularly by conversation and questioning. They may have a speech delay so perhaps both familiar and unfamiliar people might have difficulties understanding what they are saying. They arrive on the mat on the first day of kindergarten with a mild receptive language delay



(comprehension) and a severe expressive language delay (expression). If you think I sound a bit doom and gloom, my own research shows that in the schools I work in, about 40 per cent of the kindergarten children will present this way.”

Although disadvantaged children are certainly at a higher risk of lower levels of literacy, even in higher socio-economic circles there exists a misapprehension that a child will succeed at school whether he is read to or not – just because both of his parents can string sentences together.

In a joint article in *Scientific American* magazine in 2002, a group of five US researchers – professors of psychology, linguistics and paediatrics – noted that “although many parents might think that innate intelligence will govern how well their kids learn to read no matter what type of instruction is given, the evidence suggests otherwise”.

Indeed, as Professor Oberklaid points out, the foundations for literacy are established long before children start school. “Young children who are exposed to words and language develop language but literacy is a learned skill ... and so by the time children get to school, when the brain is well on its way to being developed, children who are vulnerable find it very hard to catch up,” he told ABC TV’s News Breakfast program.

Professor Oberklaid went on to say that while reading books to children is important, creating a “language-rich environment” to establish strong literacy building blocks is also crucial. “The theme is ‘anytime, anywhere’,” he said. “It can be a walk in the park; it can be looking at street signs (and) introducing children to the idea that words have meaning.”

The underlying message could not be clearer: make reading to kids a habit as non-negotiable as the ritual of brushing teeth.

As Paul Jennings, author of *The Reading Bug ... and how you can help your child to catch it*, puts it: “Our happy ending is to know that no matter where they go, children lost in books will always find their way home”.

“The fire of literacy is created by the emotional sparks between a child, a book, and the person reading. It isn’t achieved by the book alone, nor by the child alone, nor by the adult who’s reading aloud – it’s the relationship winding between all three, bringing them together in easy harmony.”
Mem Fox, author of *Reading Magic: Why Reading Aloud to Our Children Will Change Their Lives Forever*.

Fox, a literacy consultant and the bestselling author of such classic children’s books as *Possum Magic* and *Time For Bed*, has spent much of the past 20 years urging parents to read aloud to their children – particularly in their first few years of life.

Her book for adults, *Reading Magic*, espouses the many benefits of doing so – such as developing children’s ability to concentrate at length, to solve problems logically, and to express themselves more easily and clearly.

These are Mem Fox’s 10 ‘Read Aloud Commandments’ for parents and caregivers:

1. Spend at least ten wildly happy minutes *every single day* reading aloud.
2. Read at least three stories a day: it may be the same story three times. Children need to hear a thousand stories before they can begin to learn to read.
3. Read aloud with animation. Listen to your own voice and don’t be dull, or flat, or boring. Hang loose and be loud, have fun and laugh a lot.
4. Read with joy and enjoyment: real enjoyment for yourself and great joy for the listeners.
5. Read the stories that the kids love, over and over and over again, and always read in the same ‘tune’ for each book: i.e. with the same intonations on each page, each time.
6. Let children hear lots of language by talking to them constantly about the pictures, or anything else connected to the book; or sing any old song that you can remember; or say nursery rhymes in a bouncy way; or be noisy together doing clapping games.
7. Look for rhyme, rhythm or repetition in books for young children, and make sure the books are really short.
8. Play games with the things that you and the child can see on the page, such as letting kids finish rhymes, and finding the letters that start the child’s name and yours, remembering that it’s never work, it’s always a fabulous game.
9. Never ever *teach* reading, or get tense around books.
10. Please read aloud every day, mums and dads, because you just love being with your child, not because it’s the right thing to do.

HELP US WIN A SCHOOL GARDEN

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*Only open to Aust. residents aged 18+. Starts Sun 26/5/12 and ends for purchases 3pm AEST on 7/10/12. Entries close 3pm AEST on 7/10/12 (on-line entries) and last mail received on 10/10/12 (post entries). Limit 1 entry per transaction. Prize is awarded to the entry. Prize is full purchase receipt (showing date/time/store of purchase) for verification. Draw: 26/2/2013, 10am AEST. Prize awarded to school nominated on each winner's entry form. Limit 1 draw prize per nominated school (incl. school located in SA). Phase 1: major prize of a school garden designed by Jason Hodges, plus materials, labour and full construction on 15/11/12 including attendance by Jason Hodges, valued at \$20,000. 14 x minor prizes of school garden design kits and materials, valued at \$6,000. Labels/entrants not included in the 14 minor prizes. Winners & their nominated school published in The Australian on 23/10/12. Promoter: Unilever Australia Limited (P52400 004 000 000) of 20 Cambridge St, Sydney NSW 2121. NSW Permit Number LTP5/1204003, ACT Permit Number TP12015021, VIC Permit Number 12/102, SA Permit Number T12018. For full Terms and Conditions visit www.omo.com.au/win