**REMinDeR**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fri 23&lt;sup&gt;rd&lt;/sup&gt; May</td>
<td>Movie night – Indiana Jones and the Kingdom of the Crystal Skull</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tues 27&lt;sup&gt;th&lt;/sup&gt; May</td>
<td>Parent Association meeting after assembly in the school yard</td>
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<tr>
<td>Fri 30&lt;sup&gt;th&lt;/sup&gt; May</td>
<td>Grade 5/6 Victorian Tourism Expo, 11.30am to 12.30pm</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mon 2&lt;sup&gt;nd&lt;/sup&gt; June</td>
<td>Music program mid-year concert, GP room, 6.10pm</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tues 3&lt;sup&gt;rd&lt;/sup&gt; June</td>
<td>Music program mid-year concert, GP room, 6.10pm</td>
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<tr>
<td>Wed 4&lt;sup&gt;th&lt;/sup&gt; June</td>
<td>Coco’s lunch music performance</td>
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<tr>
<td>5&lt;sup&gt;th&lt;/sup&gt; &amp; 6&lt;sup&gt;th&lt;/sup&gt; June</td>
<td>3/4 Swimming</td>
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<tr>
<td>Fri 6&lt;sup&gt;th&lt;/sup&gt; June</td>
<td>Wear green and disco for World Environment Day</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mon 9&lt;sup&gt;th&lt;/sup&gt; June</td>
<td>Queen’s Birthday – no school</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tues 10&lt;sup&gt;th&lt;/sup&gt; June</td>
<td>Curriculum Day – no classes but Curriculum Day Care will be available (bookings required – call Aasta 9481 6091)</td>
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<tr>
<td>12&lt;sup&gt;th&lt;/sup&gt; &amp; 13&lt;sup&gt;th&lt;/sup&gt; June</td>
<td>3/4 Swimming</td>
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<tr>
<td>Wed 18&lt;sup&gt;th&lt;/sup&gt; June</td>
<td>Parent teacher interviews from 1.00pm. School finishes at 12.30pm – OSH Care available (bookings required – call Aasta 9481 6091)</td>
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<tr>
<td>19&lt;sup&gt;th&lt;/sup&gt; &amp; 20&lt;sup&gt;th&lt;/sup&gt; June</td>
<td>3/4 Swimming</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thurs 26&lt;sup&gt;th&lt;/sup&gt; June</td>
<td>3/4 Swimming</td>
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<tr>
<td>Fri 27&lt;sup&gt;th&lt;/sup&gt; June</td>
<td>End of Term 2, 2.30pm finish</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mon 14&lt;sup&gt;th&lt;/sup&gt; July</td>
<td>Start of Term 3</td>
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**THANK YOU**

To everyone at Merri Creek a very heartfelt thank you for all the messages and best wishes on my retirement. I had a wonderful time working at Merri Creek and I treasure the memories of teaching such talented and creative children. To all the parents who befriended me, thanks for your support, donations and in some cases specialised artistic knowledge that improved the quality of the art program. I am having a very busy but enjoyable ‘retirement’ and I have taken up many new activities. Thanks once again and a special hello to all the children.

Lisa Grant

**PARENT ASSOCIATION**

The next meeting of the Parent Association will be held after assembly on Tuesday 27<sup>th</sup> May in the school yard. All welcome. You might like to BYO coffee.

The Merri Creek Parent Association needs willing parents to volunteer as parent representatives - one parent for each class. The role will not be too challenging; just to organise a get together for the class parents. It could be as simple as a morning tea in the classroom. Some grades are also in great need of more help for Maths Task Centre. A parent rep would be invaluable in organising a parent roster for this task. The aim would be to share the load of parent helpers amongst as many parents as possible throughout the year, rather than leaving the task to too few who can commit to a weekly time. The class representative will be supported in their role by the Parent Association. If you think you could be the parent for your child’s grade please contact Emma on 9481 8976 or 0437 007 897.

**INDIANA JONES MOVIE TICKETS**

There are still some tickets available – please see the office tomorrow morning (Friday 23<sup>rd</sup> May). Tickets cost $14 for adults, $10 for children. The movie is screening Friday 23<sup>rd</sup> May at 6.30pm at Westgarth Cinema. (NB This movie is rated M.)

**COMPUTERS FOR SALE**

The school has a number of sets of computers and monitors for sale at $75.00 per set. If you wish to make a purchase please pay at the office and we will notify you when your computer and monitor are ready to be collected, as we must check them to ensure you receive a working set. If we have more interest than computers we will satisfy orders on a first in first served basis.

**Minimum Computer Specs (some models may vary):**

- **Processor:** Pentium 4 3.0 Ghz
- **Memory:** 512 MB
- **Hard Disk:** 40GB
- **DVD Drive**
- **Integrated Sound / Network Card / Video Card**

**Software:**
- Windows XP Professional (Service Pack 2)
- AVG Antivirus

**Please Note:**

The machine is no longer covered under warranty. The school will not support any software or hardware failure after purchase.

**CURRICULUM DAY**

Our next Curriculum Day is Tuesday 10<sup>th</sup> June, the day after the Queen’s birthday holiday. Teachers will learn from Dr Craig Hassed, a lecturer in medicine at Monash University. The theme is: Towards an holistic approach to personal health and wellbeing. Out of School hours care is taking bookings for a curriculum Day Care program – phone Aasta, 9481 6091.
Grade 5/6 Victorian Tourism Expo
Friday 30th May
Now from
11.30am to 12.30pm
The Grade 5/6 students have been working in pairs to study the different regions of Victoria. The culmination of their work will be a huge exposition in the G.P. Room next Friday 30th May. The morning will consist of time inspecting the students’ attempts to inform and persuade people to visit their chosen region of Victoria. There will also be a short presentation of certificates.
Trevor, Sarah and Sophie

WEAR GREEN FOR WORLD ENVIRONMENT DAY
Merri Creek Junior School Council in association with the Green Team are excited about celebrating World Environment Day with a wear green day and lunchtime disco on Friday 6th June. Please note that due to conflicting school events the date has been set for the day after the official World Environment Day. Students are encouraged to wear green and to bring a gold coin donation for the disco. Money raised on the day will be donated to Ceres Environment Park for a Merri Creek Management project. A poster competition will also be run in classrooms.

RECONCILIATION RACE AROUND TOWN
On Wednesday 21st May a team of three grade six students from Merri Creek PS; Kyle, Elia and Jaime along with Assistant Principal Jo, went on a Reconciliation Race around Town. It was organised by a year eleven student from Northcote High. Northcote High sent two teams and Northland Secondary School sent a team too. We started at Northcote High and travelled by tram to the Aborigines Advancement League, we then caught a train to 3KND (Kool ‘n’ deadly) radio station in Preston. We then headed to Parliament Gardens by train, the Museum (we walked there) followed by a trip to the Koorie Heritage Trust Cultural Centre in King St, then back to Federation Square to the indigenous restaurant Tjunabi. The idea was to visit a number of sites important to the indigenous community and learn more about them. We learnt about when and why the Aborigines Advancement League was set up and what it does. One, of many, very important roles it plays is assisting with funerals for indigenous people. Many indigenous elders and youth were not having proper funerals so the league raises funds and provides support for families in need. We learnt heaps about Sir Douglas and Lady Gladys Nicholls and the wonderful role they played in vigorously fighting for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders’ rights. We also learnt about other aboriginal families and the roles they played in the fight for equality for aborigines. When we were at the Aborigines Advancement League we saw a newspaper article about Elia’s grandmother and at the museum we saw photographs of Kyle’s dad and uncle who used to play football for Fitzroy Stars Football Club. We had a lovely lunch at Tjunabi of chicken salad and Jo had kangaroo. Although it was a rather exhausting day we had a wonderful time, we learnt lots and met some really nice people. To top it off, because we answered lots of the questions correctly we each won a free ticket to the movies. We would like to thank the team lead by student Ceinan Muir and welfare co-ordinator Deborah Pyke from Northcote High for inviting us to share the experience and we look forward to doing other work with them.
INVESTIGATIONS IN THE DEVELOPMENTAL CURRICULUM
For part of every day the children in the Prep/One classes are involved in investigations in the Developmental Curriculum. This time is carefully planned to meet the developmental needs of the children, and informs part of the explicit teaching program. If you would like to read more about this approach please have a look at Kathy Walker’s website by googling Kathy Walker or going to her website www.kathywalkeredcon.com.au. The website is very informative and here is a photo of staff at Merri Creek working with Kathy Walker.

THE GRADE FIVES VISIT TO NORTHCOTE HIGH SCHOOL
On Tuesday 29th April the entire Grade Fives of this school went to visit Northcote High School. The visit was a lot better than last year because most of Northcote High School went to their athletics carnival. So there were a lot of empty classrooms and teachers that had nothing to do so they decided to give us lessons! Instead of just getting a tour we got to have two lessons. Half of the grade fives went to do science then food tech, the other half had woodwork then food tech. After that the school gave us a box of juice and a muesli bar. Some of the boys blew the empty boxes up and jumped on them to make a loud bang! By Isabella Dietze 5/6 T

3/4 SWIMMING
Just a reminder to the children from grades 3/4 Jonathan, 3/4 Gaye and 3/4 Josie - the Swimming Program is starting next month. The dates are Thursday 5th and Friday 6th June, Thursday 12th and Friday 13th June, Thursday 19th and Friday 20th June and ending with Thursday 26th June 2008. It will take place at Collingwood Leisure Centre, Turnbull Street, Collingwood. (The students will have seven 45-minute lessons over four consecutive weeks.)

INTERNET SITES
The students in Grade 3/4 Gaye have been scanning the internet for websites you could use at home with your children. (We always recommend that parents should supervise their children whilst using the internet.) Here are a few of their recommendations.

- www.multiplication.com/interactive_games.htm
  This website is good for all ages to learn your times tables. We recommend it for children the most though.
  Devin and Taidgh

- www.funbrain.com
  Funbrain includes reading and maths games that children will enjoy. There are 25 educational maths games to play on the site. We would recommend Night Swimmers to practise addition and subtraction.
  Sasha & Meaghan

CAN YOU HELP?
In Sick Bay we need clothing, particularly pants, in smaller sizes. If you can donate any please leave them at the office. Many thanks.

COCO’S LUNCH PERFORMANCE - 4th June
Coco’s Lunch, an A capella group, comprising five innovative female musicians, will entertain the students with exciting singing and percussion on Wednesday 4th June 2008. The group is internationally recognised for its creative compositions, wonderful harmonies and energetic rhythms and last performed for our students about 6 years ago. Recently, Sue Johnson (parent at our school and one of the members of Coco’s Lunch) has composed eight new lullabies in collaboration with Melbourne author and illustrator, Elizabeth Honey, for her new picture story book I’m Still Awake, Still. There will be two performances to which parents and kinder siblings are invited:
- 10.00am for the Prep/one, two and 2/3 classes
- 11.30am for the 3/4 and 5/6 classes
This will be a wonderful experience for the students who will not only be able to watch and listen but also
participate in making music. Please send the $10.00 payment to your child’s class teacher in the envelope provided last week. Coco’s Lunch would like the students to view their videos on the internet before the performances; however, the school’s computers will not allow access to youtube, so here is the web address:
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TIXcjlWjqyw
For Rat Trap Snap
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1mdVir-CuVo
For Hitch ‘Em Up
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Nr-TS3SFaU
For Little Miss Muffet

SCHOOL SELF EVALUATION

Teachers have been analysing and discussing our school data for the 2005 - 2007 period and our teaching practices as part of our school self evaluation process. This work leads us to decide our school priorities in the areas of Student Learning, Student Engagement and Wellbeing and Student Transitions for the future four years. School Council and Education Committee have also discussed this data. This is a summary of the data only which forms part of the self evaluation document which is read by an external reviewer:

Student Engagement and Wellbeing

In the 2007 Attitudes to School Survey completed by Year 5 and 6 students, student safety, and student distress scored above the 75th percentile in the fourth quartile, while student morale, teacher effectiveness, teacher empathy and connectedness to peers all scored highly in the third quartile.

There has been considerable improvement against the state mean in school connectedness, student motivation and learning confidence since 2005.

The seventy five students surveyed showed an increase in school connectedness from 2006 to 2007 with Year 5 students feeling a little more connected to the school (above the state mean) than the Year 6 students and boys more connected than girls.

From 2006-2007 there was a pleasing improvement in student perceptions of teacher effectiveness, teacher empathy and student safety.

The school means for 2007 were at or above the state mean for all variables with student morale, student distress and student safety ranging from the 75th – 90th percentiles.

Parent opinion of the following eleven variables improved significantly from 2006-2007 - school improvement, approachability, teacher morale, parent input, behaviour management, transitions, extra curricula, student safety, classroom behaviour, student connectedness and social skills. While parent opinion of reporting improved slightly, it was still below the state mean.

In 2005 absences across Prep-Year 6 were an average of 14.1 days per student for the year, above the state benchmark. Only Prep and Year 2 had absence rates below the state mean in 2005.

In 2006 average absent days per Full Time Equivalent student across the school was 12.1, below the state mean of 13.2.

In 2007 it had increased to 13.6 absent days per student in Prep-Year 6, above the previous year’s state mean of 13.2. There was a decrease in absences in Year 6 but an increase in absences in Prep, Year 1, 2 and 5.

Research shows links between students’ learning progress and rates of lateness and absenteeism. Year 5 student motivation and morale was higher in 2006 than in 2007 with absences below the state mean in 2006 and increased to just at the state mean in 2007. In 2007 the Year 6 students’ motivation and morale improved significantly and there was an improvement in their attendance rates.

Student learning

The school’s writing charter priority goals were successfully achieved, with writing means above the state mean at all year levels and approximating the School Family Occupation density (SFO) at all year levels except 2 and 5. Spelling in Year 3 AIM has improved well over the three years, being above the state and like school group means but in Year 5 AIM spelling the mean has fallen below the state and LSG in 2007.

Reading means remain above the state at all year levels and enter the SFO density range at all year levels except year 4, 5 and 6. Student achievements in speaking and listening show a trend down in all year levels except 4 but school means are above the state mean at each year level.

Student achievements in Number are better than in Measurement, Chance and Data and remain above the state mean but with a reduced school mean from 2006 at Prep, Year 3, 5 and 6. Measurement, Chance and Data means at all year levels are above the state mean but only approximate the SFO percentile range at Year 3.

Student Transitions

Parent perceptions of the school’s transition programs is measured by the annual Parent Opinion Survey sent home to 42 randomly selected parents. The statements measured include:

- My child is well prepared for the next stage in their education.
- My child was supported well when they started back at school this year.
- Before the end of last year my child was well prepared for this year at school.
- My child has been supported in their transitions at school.

In 2007 there was a significant improvement in the parent rating of transitions (from 2006) with the school mean of 5.92 well above the state mean for primary schools of 5.76. The percentile rating improved from the first to the top of the third quartile.

I invite parents to respond to this information by Wednesday 28th May and either write to or speak to me about ideas you have for future improvements.
ART NEWS
Thank you for your generous donations of yoghurt and margarine containers and lids! They’re useful for small amounts of paint for printing. Thanks too for those parents who have given us boxes. Many of the 5/6 students have screen printed their own designs and we’re beginning work on two colour prints. Students in 3/4 are designing and printing their own stencils whilst the 2s and 3s created fantastic mono print insects. Hope that you’ve had a chance to stop and read the cartoons in the corridor. Keep an eye out for the 3D version … when our large stick figure sculptures go on display!

from Annie

PARENT TEACHER INTERVIEWS
Our first Parent-Teacher interviews are being held on Wednesday 18th June from 1.00pm. There will be no school for students from 12.30pm that day. Children will either go home at 12.30pm or, if booked into OSHC, go to the General Purpose room for Out of School Hours Care. If you require care for your child on 18th June, please book your child in by speaking to or phoning Aasta in the Out of School Hours Care program on 9481 6091.

Please note that there are no lunch orders on this day.

VICTORIAN STATE SCHOOLS SPECTACULAR 2008
Do you have the talent to sing or perform your specialty act in front of 8,500 people, centre stage at Vodafone Arena in September?
Do you want to shine in Victoria’s largest performance event?
Victorian government school students are invited to audition for the Victorian State Schools Spectacular 2008.
Open auditions for solo vocalists and specialty acts are being held Saturday 31st May.
Contact JOINING the CHORUS on (03) 9637 3906 to register and find out more.

Hello dear reader, your family is cordially invited to the launch of our new, fabulous, interactive Education About Sustainability in Yarra (EASY) Trailer on World Environment Day

Thursday 5th June, from 3.00pm - 5.00pm
at the Collingwood Children’s Farm, St Heliers Street, Abbotsford.

Not only can you celebrate World Environment Day, you can have fun with the new models and learn about the environment, see all the animals and help milk the cow at 4.00pm, and go on a pony ride or a tractor ride.

Entry to the Collingwood Children’s Farm is free for this event.

Please contact me if you would like any further information. Regards, Cheryl Cameron, City of Yarra
Tel: 9205 5264 Mob: 0413 688 423
Email: Cheryl.Cameron@yarracity.vic.gov.au
www.yarracity.vic.gov.au

PARENTS VICTORIA ONLINE CONFERENCE
When: May 26 – June 1, 2008
Where: Anywhere that has access to an internet-connected computer with browser
Time: 24 hours per day for 7 days
Sponsored by DEECD, Office for Government School Education, this free annual conference will provide parents with the opportunity to discuss various key parent issues. Topics for discussion will include:
1. The Ultranet – What do you know about it and how do you hope it will improve communication with your child’s school? Out of School Hours Care – Does it meet your family's needs?
2. Should canteens sell only healthy food? How does your canteen rate?
3. What do you think could be done to improve family/school partnerships? Do you have examples of good practice?
4. Does your school effectively engage your student? If yes, how? If not, why not?
5. Bullying - What is the best advice you would give to the parent of a child who is being bullied?
6. Binge drinking and drugs – What can be done to keep our children safe?

The online discussions are very easy to join in and guidelines about how to participate will be provided. The sessions will be hosted for several hours each day by either a guest host or a member of the Parents Victoria Executive.

An interactive whiteboard will be won by the Victorian Government school with the greatest participation on Day 3 – Wednesday 28th May. Another whiteboard will be won by the Parents Victoria member school with the greatest participation throughout the entire conference.
Parents wishing to be involved in the conference must register at http://www.cybertext.net.au/pv08.htm

Look for...
further conference and membership details on the PV website – www.parentsvictoria.asn.au