NEWSLETTER
No. 16 – 4th June, 2015

If you have information or ads for the newsletter, need to contact the school or want an email forwarded on to a teacher, please email it to northcote.ps@edumail.vic.gov.au

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<th>Important School Diary Dates for 2015</th>
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Please note: There is no School, Assembly or Pupil of the Week on Monday as it is a Public Holiday.

A reminder also that School Banking needs to be sent to school on Tuesday 9th June. Thanks from Tracey & Sue

IMPORTANT INFORMATION – Camps, Sports & Excursions Fund (CSEF)
If you hold a valid means-tested concession card or are a temporary foster parent you may be eligible to receive CSEF. See page 4 for more information. The CSEF is similar to the old Education Maintenance Allowance (EMA). Application forms are available from the school office. Please make sure you bring your concession/health care card with you.
SchoolMate App from DET

The Department of Education and Training has released an App which is designed to help parents better understand the curriculum we use to teach your children every day.

The App, called SchoolMate, is available for free download now in the App Store for iPhones and iPads and in Google Play for Android phones and tablets.

SchoolMate gives you a general overview of the Victorian curriculum in each subject at each year level and:

- Provides you with an overview of what your children are learning in each subject at each year level according to the Victorian curriculum (AusVELS)
- Provides you with tips regarding activities and things you can do at home to help your kids in each subject and year level
- Suggests apps, books, events and activities related to each subject area and year level.

Our school, like all other government schools in Victoria, uses AusVELS as the basis for the learning programs we run at school every day.

Our teachers adapt the curriculum to meet the needs of our students and community, for example, designing learning programs around what your children are interested in, or around days or celebrations that are important to our community.

SchoolMate is designed to give you an overview of what children are expected to learn in Victorian government schools across every subject from Prep to Year 10.

I encourage you to download SchoolMate and to please talk with your teacher or myself if you are interested to find out more about how our school teaches the curriculum.

Winter Health – Beating the Bugs

In Australia, our influenza ‘flu’ season typically runs from May to October, usually peaking in August.

It is just not possible to stop all bugs from spreading at school, however, a lot of illnesses can be prevented and controlled simply by practicing good hygiene.

- Handy hygiene tips for you and your family
- Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue when coughing or sneezing
- Throw used tissues in plastic-lined rubbish bins
- Wash your hands with soap and water, preferably warm water if available
- Reduce the spread of germs by avoiding touching your eyes, nose and mouth

Further information on influenza is available at the Better Health Channel, see: Better Health Channel Flu Influenza

What can you do to prevent the spread of infectious diseases?

The three main ways of preventing the spread of infection are:

1. Remind your child of effective hygiene methods.
2. Keep your child home when they are unwell. Your doctor will let you know if your child has an ‘excludable’ condition. You will need to advise the school as soon as possible and keep your child home for the length of time that your doctor advises.
3. Ensure your child’s immunisations are up to date.

Do you know when you should keep your child home from school?

The Department of Health and Human Services outline the minimum period of exclusion from school for various infectious diseases. To find out more about the minimum period of exclusion for infectious diseases, see: School Exclusion Table.

Warm Regards, Kerrie
On Friday 19th June, Student Reports will be sent home with students to all parents. The Report details student learning progress and achievement against AusVELS – the Victorian Essential Learning Standards that incorporate the Australian Curriculum.

On Wednesday 24th June, parents and students will be meeting with their Home Group teacher to discuss each student’s learning progress, future learning and any concerns. On this day, students attend school ONLY for their conference. There are no regular classes on the day as all home group teachers and specialists are involved in conferences which run from 11.00 a.m. – 7.00 p.m.

An alternative program will operate from 9.00 a.m. – 3.30 p.m. for parents who are unable to make care arrangements. Unfortunately, only students who are registered for the alternative program can attend, as we need to make staffing arrangements in advance. For example, your 3WC is scheduled for 12.00 p.m., and you have had your child at home until then. You bring your child to school for your 12.00 p.m. conference and they leave with you – your child cannot stay on at school after that as we would only have the number of teachers available to cater for the number of children booked in for the alternative program. If your child is attending the alternative program from 9.00 a.m. - 3.30 p.m. they may stay at school after their conference.

2015 Conference
There are two parts to the conference, a student-led part and a Three-Way discussion part. You will be able to book a timeslot online to meet with the Home Group teacher for their conference. You will also be able to book a time to meet with specialist teachers if you wish. There are limited timeslots to meet with specialists so once their day is fully booked no other bookings can be made for that day. If you wish to meet with a specialist teacher on another day, please email that teacher to arrange a mutually convenient time.

1. Student-led Conference – 10 minutes
When you know your conference time, allow ten minutes before this to look at and discuss your child’s portfolio and work samples with your child. This is when your child will talk about their individual growth and achievements that they are proud of. Teachers will provide some question prompts for you to use but will not be present for this part of the conference.

2. 3-Way Conference – 15 minutes
This will occur after you have shared with your child their learning progress and achievements. You may wish to bring your child’s portfolio and/or work samples to the 3WC to discuss further with your child’s home group teacher. This is where you and the teacher can discuss in detail all aspects of your child’s progress, clarify information in the report card, and raise any other concerns. It is of great benefit for the child to be a part of the conversation, as it encourages them to develop and accept personal responsibility for their learning, and they can also talk about themselves and their needs as a learner. You can request that your child not be present for this part of the conference if you wish to talk just with the teacher alone. Please let your child’s teacher know, preferably in advance by email, and it would be really helpful to alert the teacher to issues or concerns you may wish to discuss together.

I will be sending out the log on information and the alternative program booking information next week. If you have any questions please contact me bennie.ross.a@edumail.vic.gov.au or by phone 9481 0009.

Ross, Acting Assistant Principal
Camps, Sports & Excursions Fund (CSEF)

Every Victorian child should have access to the world of learning opportunities that exist beyond the classroom. The Camps, Sports and Excursions Fund will ensure that no student will miss out on the opportunity to join their classmates for important, educational and fun activities.

School camps provide children with inspiring experiences in the great outdoors, excursions encourage a deeper understanding of how the world works and sports teach teamwork, discipline and leadership. All are part of a healthy curriculum.

CSEF will be provided by the Victorian Government to assist eligible families to cover the costs of school trips, camps and sporting activities.

If you hold a valid means-tested concession card or are a temporary foster parent, you may be eligible for CSEF. The allowance will be paid to the school to use towards expenses relating to camps, excursions, or sporting activities for the benefit of your child.

The annual CSEF amount per student will be:

- $125 for primary school students
- $225 for secondary school students.

How to Apply
Contact the school office to obtain a CSEF application form or download from www.education.vic.gov.au/csef

Closing Date
You should lodge a CSEF application form at the school by 26 June 2015.

For more information about the CSEF visit www.education.vic.gov.au/csef
**Education Sub-Committee News**
The Education Sub-Committee will meet on Tuesday 9th June at 7.00 p.m. in the school staffroom. All parents are welcome. Please contact Scott Meaklim (Scott.Meaklim@gmail.com) if you plan to join us.

**Badges Gone Missing!**
We know how much you all love being a classroom helper, but can you please make sure you return your badge to the office when you sign out? I agree that they are a great colour and lovely to wear around but if you return it at the end of your session, we will promise to always give you another one next time. Cheers, Jo 😊

**Junior School Council**
Congratulations to all our Junior School Council representatives for 2015:

**Preps:** Tatjana G, Rafael P-C, Hudson DB, Bridget S, Fleure D and Reuben T


**3/4s:** Olivia A, George T, Tas K, Kiara J, Isobel U, Christian McK, Besinda C and Jonathon P

**5/6s:** Beda E, Noah M, Bailey F, Stephanie M, Jai H, Xara B, Harry T, Amira Z

I’m looking forward to working with you in representing your classmates and experiencing the opportunities of being leaders in our school community.

Tracy
(1/2 Teacher)

PLEASE make some time to pick up some pretty cool looking hoodies, some beautiful cardigans and jackets, and some sporting club jerseys. They are mostly located in the baskets in the Hall entrance. Otherwise, each room has an allocated lost property area.
How To Avoid A Cold This Winter - Georgie Botto, Healthlogix Reporter

‘Where’s your jumper? You’ll catch a cold out there!’
This message is often quoted by well-intending mothers, however researchers believe that low temperatures are not directly to blame for the increase in colds each winter.

Indeed, it seems wet weather may be the real culprit, according to Dr Ronald McCoy, spokesperson for the Royal Australian College of General Practitioners.

“A cold virus is spread by droplets, which are more common during the wet. And of course, during winter, it is often more wet,” he said.

These droplets are usually passed from person to person through airborne transmission, such as sneezing and coughing, and can travel up to a metre – so keep your distance!

But I only get colds when it’s cold!
Indeed, chilly weather is partially to blame, but not in the way you may think.

When it’s cold, we shift our behaviour, and this, according to Dr Sorana Segal-Maurer from the Division of Infectious Disease at New York Hospital Queens, is the reason for increased colds in winter.

“When the weather turns cold, we all run indoors, where air is recycled and we’re often in close quarters with other people and viruses. We all sneeze on top of each other,” she told CNN.

In these indoor environments, infected droplets can easily be transmitted between individuals.

Simple steps to avoid the sniffles
When you sneeze or cough, it is common courtesy to cover your mouth or nose with your hand. But where do all those germs go once they are on your hands?

Your computer mouse, the office door handle, your sandwich, the handrail on the train?

Infected droplets tend to settle on surfaces, so as soon as you touch a contaminated surface, and then happen to touch your face, a cold could be on its way, according to Dr McCoy.

“The single biggest thing you can do to prevent catching a cold virus is hand washing, particularly before eating and drinking,” he said, adding: “I would say 70 to 80 per cent of colds are caused by contamination by hands.”

The US Centres for Disease Control and Prevention provide similar advice to reduce the risk of getting a cold:

- Keep hands clean by washing them frequently with soap and water or using a hand sanitiser.
- Try not to touch your face with unwashed hands.
- Avoid people who are unwell.

Too late, I’m already sick …
Conversely, if you have a cold, you too can help to prevent the virus from spreading, with these steps from the Centres for Disease Control and Prevention:

- Stay at home if you are unwell.
- If you blow your nose, sneeze or cough into your hands, wash them immediately.
- Keep your distance from others while you’re sick.
- Step away from people before sneezing or coughing.
- Cough or sneeze into a tissue to contain germs.

Usually, colds resolve within seven to 10 days and do not require medical attention, according to Dr McCoy. However, he recommended visiting a doctor if any of the below symptoms are experienced:

- coughing up phlegm
- severe headaches
- dark green, brown or black mucus
- problems swallowing, eating or drinking for more than 24 hours
- pain in the ears and above the eyes
- cold symptoms for more than two weeks.

For personalised advice, consult your doctor.
Don’t be daft about Minecraft

Minecraft may be the best trend to hit boy world in years. Writer Jason Fox explains the attraction and outlines the benefits for kids.

Minecraft may be the best trend to hit boy world in years. Writer Jason Fox explains the attraction and outlines the benefits for kids. But parents are worried... And rightly so, too. You need to think of Minecraft as a game that requires some level of engagement, collaboration, and creativity. It has been the subject of international conventions. Some schools and universities have even incorporated Minecraft into their curriculum, where students learn about city planning, environmental issues, getting things done, and even how to plan for the future, as well as things like maths and problem solving.

The open sandbox nature of Minecraft makes it one of the most exciting games on the market... And it's not unusual for its team to include business investors who are interested in making Minecraft more appealing... While Minecraft is a game designed for children, it's important to remember that it is a game designed for children. It's important to be aware of the different factors that may affect a child's development and how they are engaging in Minecraft. So, when a parent bans Minecraft, it's important to consider why the child is engaging in Minecraft. The child may be using Minecraft as a way to express themselves or as a means of dealing with a particular issue. It's important to be aware of the different factors that may affect a child's development and how they are engaging in Minecraft.

CHECK OUT MINECRAFT:
- And this wonderful article from Penny Farquhar of Kitobo: http://parenting.kitobo.com.au/minecraft/
- And finally, check out the brilliant work of Dean Groves and MonsterMinecraft and their place for both kids and parents to play: http://masonhuts.playground.com
- Dr Jason Fox says, "You're not daft about Minecraft..."
Care and great fun every day

At After School Care we know there are lots of different ways to make kids smile. We also know that children have different interests and stay for different periods of time and that’s why we provide a wide range of fun and engaging activities every day in our program.

Our program consists of the following:

Outdoor playtime – sports, skills development, general play and inclusive games
Things to make and do – a range of arts and crafts, cooking, construction and indoor games
Creative time – for activities like drama, music and movement
Life skills – community involvement, role playing, communication and social skills development
Homework and quiet time – helping children to be able to relax with their family when they go home
Unique experiences – encouraging children to try new things, learn new skills and make new friends

It might seem unusual, but we really do take fun seriously and we believe that After School Care is a time for possibilities. While our activities are planned, we also ensure that there is flexibility in every session that is guided by the kids’ imagination.

To see some of the activities in action and to find out how easy it is for your child to join in, feel free to drop by and visit us in the After School Care room.

We look forward to seeing you soon!
The Camp Australia Team.
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Australian School of Performing Arts - Holiday Program in July! Brochures available outside the school office.

Hangar Cafe Restaurant Northland will be opening this Saturday 6th June and we would love to offer your staff and parents a buy one get one free coffee offer, all they need to do is present the attached voucher. We are located in the fresh food mall a couple doors down from Woolworths. Website coming soon, you can like us on Facebook - https://www.facebook.com/HangarCafeAustralia

We look forward to seeing you at Hangar Cafe Restaurant.