Echunga Primary School
Together we will strive for academic, social, emotional and personal achievement, working within a positive culture that promotes the pursuit of excellence and the understanding of others

Week 10, Term 3, 29th September, 2016

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REMEMINDER
Tomorrow, Friday 30th September, school finishes at 2.20pm.
Please also note that OSHC closes at 5.30pm.

FROM THE PRINCIPAL

BUSHFIRE SEASON
Believe it or not, even with all this rain, we look towards term 4 and begin to prepare for the bushfire season. Soon we will be updating our SMS emergency contact system. In the event of a Catastrophic Day being declared in the Mt Lofty Region (and consequently the mandatory site closure) we will advise you via the SMS system. It is vitally important therefore that we have all mobile phone numbers. If you don’t think that you have given us one please do so as soon as possible. If your phone number has changed, please also advise us ASAP.

If a day is deemed to be Catastrophic, the school and all services (including OSHC and Preschool) will be closed. This action is mandated and we have no choice. We will only be able to give you notice of the closure late afternoon of the day before as we have to wait for the Fire Danger Rating to be announced by the Bureau of Meteorology. If a Catastrophic Day is declared, you will be contacted via SMS and asked to give a short reply to ensure that all families have got the message. If there is no reply, we will ring. When possible, there will be prior warning of the possibility of this happening via a note home the day before, however this will depend on the timing of information that the school receives. During the bushfire season please be vigilant in monitoring the media so that you are aware of any possibilities. You are also advised to have a Bushfire Action Plan if you don’t have one already.

The Bushfire Refuge for our school is the Alluvial Hall and will be used if a bushfire approaches.

HOLIDAYS
We look forward to seeing everyone back next term and hope that all of you get at least some break over the school holidays.

View the newsletter on our website at www.echungaps.sa.edu.au
Here is the latest article from Kirrilee Smout tackling the question around violent imaginary play.

A parent asked me recently about her 8 year old boy’s tendency to create imaginary and very violent war games with his younger brother. Here are some of my thoughts.

1. It’s common and not usually a sign of mental health problems

For many generations, children have played imaginary violent games. They make guns out of sticks, imagine shooting, blowing up, capturing and attacking the “bad guys”. Imaginary limbs get chopped off, imaginary bombs are set and there is often much yelling in pain and loud deaths. This violent fantasy also is expressed in story writing – for some children every story, joke and example involves some horrible death.

Most of the time, children who play and write in this way are happy and enjoying their violent play and stories. If children seem happy and have no other symptoms that worry us - but just play violent games happily - normally this means they are NOT traumatised, mentally ill or on the road to becoming violent criminals.

Instead violent play and imagery is an instinctive form of play which probably has its origins in our need as a species to win wars and tribal battles. This kind of violent play peaks between the ages of 4 and 10. Not all kids will do it of course, but a lot of them will. And yes, there is a gender imbalance – boys are more likely to do this than girls on average.

This means trying to “ban” the violent play altogether is often not particularly successful. We’ve all heard the kids who make guns out of clothes pegs when their toy gun is taken away.

2. There are some potential benefits of violent imaginary play

As well as it being fun, good for physical fitness and creativity - with just a small amount of occasional adult input, kids can actually learn a lot about co-operation from violent play. The occasional comment, direction or question from an adult can sometimes get little brains thinking in a variety of creative and problem solving ways. For example, some options for conversation include:

*What is the most fun bit about this game? What do you like about it?*
*Why is the “baddie” doing that? What made him/her want to do that I wonder?*
*What if all the bombs, guns and swords are in a locked cupboard – what could you do to defeat him/her now?*
*Swap roles – what role do you like playing the most – why is that?*
*What if X and Y had to work together to fight the monsters/survive the natural disaster/save the city – how could they do that?*

This is not something we need to or should do every time kids play – but occasionally inserting these questions or suggestions into kids’ play can help them thinking about co-operative play and problem solving.
3. We can keep helping kids to expand their play activities

If children are exclusively playing or writing about violent themes, then they often benefit from a small amount of intervention from adults to help expand their play repertoire. Helping children increase their range of interests and play activities is actually useful for lots of children.

For example, as adults we can:

Develop a list of games and activities (written or in pictures) that they can look at to choose from. Occasionally sit with them and help them start a new game or activity to help them see the fun (and benefit) of the new game. Help them develop further interest in topics they’ve showed mild interest.

Let’s play a game together
I’ve heard this is a really interesting book/topic – shall we look it up together?
I’d like you to play one board game before tea tonight, which one is your favourite?
I’ll start your drawing with you and then you and your brother can finish it and we’ll put it on the pin up board.
Let’s come up with some other story ideas where the character beats the baddies by using his amazing skills with talking and listening.
Go to your “Fun Ideas” list on the fridge and choose something to do from that

4. It’s not okay for kids to be frightened, hurt or repeatedly excluded in any kind of play

As adults we need to intervene in play when a child gets frightened, physically hurt or repeatedly excluded. It’s not okay for children to push, shove, kick or hit – regardless of whether this is in play or not (wrestling where neither party get hurt is an exception). If children are playing imaginary violent games, they should know the rules – if someone is hurt or frightened – they need to do the following:

1. Apologise,
2. Repair (check if they are okay and offer to help) and
3. Negotiate and make agreements together to make sure it doesn’t happen again (ie no sticks, no touching, STOP means stop etc).

If someone gets hurt again, the game stops.

5. They will grow out of it

Most of the time, by the time children are 12 or 13, the violent imaginary play and story writing has subsided to some degree. At that point, they may be playing violent computer games – but that’s the topic for another blog post!
Summary:

Most kids (especially boys) will play violent games and it doesn’t usually indicate mental health problems or a tendency towards violence in real life.
There are benefits to this kind of play.
Adults can also redirect play and expand play/writing subjects.
Adults need to help children avoid hurting, frightening or excluding each other.
Children generally grow out of violent play.

For more information go to www.calmkidcentral.com

NEW SCHOOL SHIRT

Many of you took part in a survey earlier this year in relation to a new school top.

The majority of the school community voted and the most votes went overwhelmingly to the navy and gold shirt. This is now available to buy from the Uniform Shop in Mount Barker.

The Echunga embroidered logo has also been altered slightly so that it is consistent across all clothing.

The Governing Council has endorsed this shirt and there will be a 'phase in' period until it will be the only school shirt to be worn from January 2018.

From Governing Council

PREMIER’S READING CHALLENGE

The Premier’s Reading Challenge for 2016 is now finished. There was a rush to the finish line with the following students completing the challenge just in time:

Archie, Poppie, Clint, Charlie H, Raya (Kingfisher); Samantha, Mia, Ollie, Ruby K (Ibis); Kita, Taylah, Rylan, Foster & May (Lorikeet).

Ibis was the first class to finish and will receive the Bookwork Cake in Term 4 at a special assembly for the Premier's Reading Challenge Awards.

Details of the assembly will be notified in Term 4.
FROM THE PASTORAL CARE WORKER

This term we have run Echunga’s got talent on Monday lunchtimes. It’s been a lot of fun seeing all the acts and the bravery students have shown getting up and performing in front of the school.

Special thanks go to Amelia (parent at school) and Marj (from Echunga Uniting Church) for being our friendly judges providing positive encouragement for each performance.

Our Grand Final will be held on Monday in Week 2 October 24th and parents/carers are welcome to come and watch.

The finalists are:
- Maddison, Katelyn, Imogen and Mia dancing to X’s and O’s
- Anna playing keyboard with May singing
- Taylah, Brianna, Alice and Ruby dancing and singing to Me Too
- Foster, Edward, Ricky, Liam and William doing a comedy hypnotist act
- Foster doing magic tricks
- Jemima singing Oceans
- Laela and Brianna dancing to Your Lips Are Moving
- Raya doing gymnastics
- Zoe and Savannah singing Roar

Thank you to everyone who entered and the scores were extremely close.

For those who got through I encourage them to practice in the holidays and we look forward to seeing them perform. A male group/performer and female group/performer will win a small prize and there will also be runners up. This is just meant to be a fun lunchtime activity encouraging students to showcase their unique talents.

Next term on Thursday mornings from 9-10am I will be running Parent Coffee N Chat where we will have discussions, learn card games to play with families, hear about some Pos Ed from Alex and have fun together. A program will come out next term but come along and have fun and meet other families.

Monday mornings from Week 2 to Week 7 from 9-10am (sessions start 9:15am) I will be running sessions for starting school for preschool families or anyone else who wants to join us. These sessions are from the Kids Matter curriculum and focus on the changes to families, problem solving and much more. General information, video and discussion based.

Enjoy your holidays and see you next term. I will be working on Mondays and Thursdays next term.

FREE SCHOOL JUMPERS

There are a number of blue school jumpers/jackets from size 8 to 12 in the office that no-one has claimed from Lost Property.

If you would like one for free, please see Merridee.

Lynn Bonython
COMMUNITY NEWS

Mount Pleasant Natural Resource Centre Inc

October 2016

School Holiday Workshops

Print it! Stamp it!

Tuesday 4 October 10:45 for 10:30am start - 12:30pm
Age: 4+ Cost: $12/child

This is a great and fun event for all ages. Join artist and printer Alison Blackbrook for an afternoon learning how to create cards, prints & stamps using rubber stamps and salt. Kids will be encouraged to think outside the box & experiment with ink. All materials are included. This is a fun way to keep kids busy making their own creative cards, wall art, gift cards & more.

Kokedama Gardens

Wednesday 5 October 10:45am for 11am start - 12:30pm
Age: 6+ Cost: $15/child

South Kikyo from Honest Earth will be hosting participants on a range of gardening adventures. Kokedama, also known as Japanese Moss Balls, are a fun way to engage kids in gardening. In this hands on workshop children will gain the art of making a kokedama, including how to care for it. As well as choosing your own plants, a variety of plants will be on hand to personalise your hanging garden. Each participant will take home their own kokedama.

Botanical delights

Wednesday 5 October 12:45 for 1pm start - 2:30pm
Age: 6+ Cost: $12/child

Join Sashki-Hideki from Honest Earth for a nature play adventure. Participants will create a nature wreath & learn the art of making & preserving flowers & foliage. A wreath around the common garden will result in a little piece to take home for more creative projects. Using dried plants & natural foliage, participants will transform the landscape by incorporating these elements. Learn to make botanical prints using the natural shapes and colours of foliage & flowers.

Wriggly Water Bug Sculpture

Thursday 6 October 9:45 for 10am start - 12:30pm
Age: 4+ Cost: $13/child

Using our rotating water bug sculptures as inspiration, we will be building our own water bug sculptures. Participants will use a range of skills, add use & imagination to bring bugs to life. Part of the process is to get young creative minds using a range of natural materials. Our completed water bug sculptures will be ready to take home with you at the end of the workshop.

Shake Rattle & Roll - Recreate music!

Tuesday 11 October 9:45 for 10am start - 12:30pm
Age: 7+ Cost: $12/child

Using an assortment of recycled materials participants will learn a range of skills, use & techniques to construct festive percussion instruments. Recreate some Christmas carols by learning how to safely use an instrument. Each participant will make their own percussion instrument giving it a new life and ensuring that no waste goes to landfill. It’s a great way to rethink paper waste. Children will gain the skills needed to make other useful recycled items. This technique can also be used to create the perfect garden sculpture & sit out. Participants will be encouraged to explore their creativity with different shapes & sizes.

Basketry - stitch those leaves & weeds!

Friday 14 October 9:45 for 10am start - 12:30pm
Age: 8+ Cost: $13/child

Create a beautiful stitched basket, vessel or container using a range of natural & recycled materials. Guided by textile artist Yemen Viera, this is an excellent introduction to basic basketry techniques & the results are stunning. Participants will weave their own vessel using natural materials. This technique can be used to create low cost garden sculptures & sit outs. Participants will be encouraged to explore their creativity with different weapon shapes & sizes.
Grasshopper Soccer

Australia’s #1 non-competitive soccer program for girls and boys aged 2 – 12.

Grasshopper Soccer hits the hills!

From Term 4, we’ll be running our programs at Crafter’s Primary School on Sunday mornings.

We also have classes running at Bellevue Heights, Brighton, Reynella East and Pasadena.

For more information visit our website, www.grasshoppersoccer.com.au

OR our facebook page, facebook.com/GrasshopperSoccerSouthernAdelaide

OR contact Daniel by phone 0433 422 347

or email daniel@grasshoppersoccer.com.au

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Spring Garden Party

Come along to our Spring Garden Party

In the gardens of Auchendarroch House

Date: Sunday 16th October
Time: 9:30am until 12:30pm
At Auchendarroch House and Wallis Tavern

235 Willowbank Rd, Mount Barker

Hosted by: Fairy Dee

For children aged 9-3 years old;
Includes: activities, games and morning tea

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Butterfly Walk

Join in a community walk to remember and acknowledge women and their families who have and are suffering through domestic violence.

Sunday 9th October, 2016

Meeting at 11:00am at 35a McLaren Street Mt Barker (MyPhysio carpark)

Walk to Keith Stephenson Park, Adelaide Road, Mt Barker

for a celebration event from 1:00pm -5:00pm

www.lovehopeandgratitude.org.au

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Kids Movie & Disco

Supervised Lock In at Mt Barker

Friday 30th September 6:30pm to 10:30pm

$17.50 per child (12 years and over, sorry no adults allowed)

Tickets available from Mt Barker Cinemas

Wallis Cinemas

www.walliscinemas.com.au