Dear Parents

Student Placement 2015
Teachers will begin the complicated and time-consuming task of working out grades for 2015 shortly. Our aim is to produce the best possible combinations of students to encourage maximum learning and teaching in each classroom.

This is the process that teachers will follow:

- Students will be asked to list 4 students they would like to be with in 2015. From this list we guarantee each student 1 friend.
- Teachers then compile grades that have an even spread of abilities, personalities and take into account which students work well together and which don't.
- These lists are then read by the previous grade level coordinator to see that that we have placed students correctly.

Lists are then finally checked by Nicole, Ariana and myself.

This process will take most of the next month with students finding out their new grades and teachers on transition day Tuesday 9 December. Our staff spend many hours working out the best possible grade combinations and are very focussed on producing the best student combinations.

If you have any concerns about the placement of your child they need to be placed in writing with an appointment made to discuss them with Ariana, Nicole or myself. These need to be based on educational or emotional grounds and brought to our attention no later than Monday 24 November.

Emails or letters without an appointment will not be considered.

Requests for particular teachers because you would prefer them will not be entertained.

Staffing
Cate Elshaug is currently on leave and has been granted further leave for the entire 2015 school year. I will be advertising for a new Assistant Principal to join Nicole and myself and hope to make an appointment by the end of November. This is an exciting opportunity for the school and we will go through an extensive search and selection process to find the right person for Elwood Primary.

We have just completed the selection process to find a music teacher for 2015. The panel decided to make no appointment and readvertise the position. We hope to be able to inform you of the successful candidate by the end of November.

Grade 6 Production
There were two performances of the Grade 6 Production; ‘Crikey it’s a good yarn’ last week. It was nothing short of spectacular with all students putting on a fantastic performance showcasing their talent and the performing arts at Elwood PS. I was extremely proud of our students as their parents would have been as well.
Our Grade 6 teachers Louisa, Tim and Sarah did an amazing job writing and directing the show which would have been the envy of many primary schools. I would like to thank our Grade 6 teachers for their commitment to allowing our students to shine and giving them such a memorable experience.

**Student Writing**
As you would have read in the last newsletter we are having a huge focus on timed writing in every class in the school. This is having an immediate impact on the length of written pieces by our students as well as their editing skills. This is the forerunner to a whole school focus on The VCOP- Big Write program we are implementing next year. One of our two curriculum days at the start of the school year in 2015 will be spent on VCOP.

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**Family Statements**
Family statements were sent home last week to families who have outstanding school charges. As we have already paid the schools suppliers/excursion venues etc your payment would be appreciated as soon as possible. If you are experiencing any difficulties with payment, please contact me via the school office.

Rob Csoti … Principal

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**Literacy and Spelling at EPS**
Over the next upcoming newsletters, we will delve into our agreed approaches and strategies across the school, Prep – 6 in Literacy with a focus on spelling. Over the past three years, the Literacy Team and all staff have worked on developing our key spelling principles based on research, working with literacy and spelling experts such as David Hornsby and focusing on best practice. The below principles are based on research from Diane Snowball, Faye Bolton and Christine Topfer.

Attached to this newsletter is our documented 6 Spelling Principles in more detail and particularly outlining how we translate this into our classroom practice.

**Principle One**
Spelling is learnt as we use it

**Principle Two**
Learning to spell is part of the developmental process of learning to write

**Principle Three**
Errors can be viewed as diagnostic and development signposts

**Principle Four**
Exploring words and vocabulary are part of learning to spell

**Principle Five**
Independence and self-evaluation are essential in spelling development

**Principle Six**
Effective spellers use a number of different strategies interactively in order to spell correctly

Please read through our attached brochure on the Spelling Principles. In our next newsletter we will look at the Oxford Word Spelling List and where this fits with our spelling program and how you can help at home.

**You Can Do It!**
Respecting the Opinion of others

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**Why learn this skill?**
If people feel that you respect what they say, they will enjoy being with you and talking to you. They will feel safe around you because they know you respect their feelings and their opinions. They will share with you and form better friendships because they know you will not put them down or laugh at them.

All of us have the right to express ideas and opinions and often our ideas are different from other people. We all see the world differently and often that is a great thing.

If you respect everyone’s right to offer an opinion, you will get along better with people and learn so much more. You may not agree with them, but you can respect them.

**What you can try:**
* If you don’t agree with what someone has said, try to think about anything they have said that you DO agree with
* Speak in a calm and courteous voice
* Say the part you do agree with before saying what you disagree with
* If you can’t think of anything to agree with, at least let them know you have been listening by saying something like, “I realise Sam wants to play basketball but I don’t think it’s fair that…….”
What you should avoid:
* Don’t just focus on what you disagree with
* Don’t get angry or sarcastic
* Don’t start your sentence with, “No…”
* Don’t call people names or put them down
* Don’t just knock ideas, come up with alternative plans.

YOU CAN DO IT!

Manners Matters
Listening
Listening is a very important social skill to develop as it allows us to access learning, recalling information, shows we care about others, models good conversational skills and allows us to interact in social situations.

Part of being interested is showing interest in what others have to say. You show interest and courtesy mainly by Listening and Asking good questions

Listening Do’s and Don’t’s

*DO look at the person who is talking
*DO stand or sit still when you’re listening
*DO pay attention and think about what is being said.
*DO show that you have been listening by asking a good question based on what the person has said.

*DON’T look at the ground or other things around you
*DON’T fidget
*DON’T let your mind wander
*DON’T just concentrate on what you want to say next
*DON’T ask questions that change the topic

Good listening shows others that you are thoughtful and considerate.

All part of being an Elwood Kid.

MANNERS MATTER AT ELWOOD PRIMARY SCHOOL!

Our Global Calendar
Each newsletter will inform you of global events and is a way to celebrate significant cultural and environmental events. This section of the newsletter is a terrific springboard for conversations at home! So, what’s on in the coming weeks?

9th -15th November: National Psychology Week
National Psychology Week is an Australian Psychology Society initiative that aims to increase public awareness of how psychology can help people and communities lead healthier, happier and more meaningful lives.

9th -15th November: Spinal Injury Awareness Week
Spinal Injury Awareness Week is a national campaign staged annually to raise awareness and promote the prevention of spinal cord injuries in Australia. Approximately 12,000 Australians are currently living with a spinal cord injury. Each year an additional 350-400 new cases are reported; that's more than one every day. Spinal cord injuries most commonly occur amongst young people aged 15-24 years old. (80% male, 20% female) The most common causes of spinal cord injury are traumatic accidents such as car crashes, road accidents, water-related incidents and falls.

9th -15th November: National Adoption Awareness Week
NAAW creates opportunities for open dialogue with all Australians, particularly those who have been touched by adoption. Although adoption has been practiced in almost every country and culture throughout history, in Australia, adoption has too often been misunderstood, and at times, stigmatised and marginalised.

10th -16th November: National Recycling Week
National Recycling Week aims to improve the positive environmental outcomes of recycling by increasing community awareness, increasing collection rates and reducing contamination. Local councils, businesses and community groups are encouraged to join in throughout the week.

11th November: Remembrance Day
Remembrance Day (11 November) marks the anniversary of the Armistice which ended the First World War (1914-18). Each year Australians observe one minute silence at 11 am on 11 November, in memory of those who died or suffered in all wars and armed conflicts.

13th November: World Kindness Day
The purpose of World Kindness Day is to look beyond ourselves, beyond the boundaries of our country, beyond our culture, our race, our religion; and realise we are citizens of the world. As world citizens we have a commonality, and must realise that if progress is to be made in human relations and endeavours, if we are to achieve the goal of peaceful coexistence, we must focus on what we have in common.

14th November: World Diabetes Day
The World Diabetes Day campaign is an event used to increase understanding of diabetes, and to raise funds for research.

16th November: International Day for Tolerance
The International Day of Tolerance promotes respect, dialogue, cooperation and tolerance of all cultures.
Enjoy your upcoming weeks and whatever you are celebrating.

Nicole Richards  … Assistant Principal

Art Safari Thank You
On the night of Thursday 23 October  Elwood Primary hosted a very successful art show . The atmosphere in the JLC was amazing as kids proudly showed off their art pieces to their family and friends. The Art Show was a reminder of all the spectacular things EPS kids have created this year. I feel very lucky to teach at a school that has such a wonderful and supportive community of parents and staff. Thank you to everyone whose efforts made this year’s Art Show a night to remember. All art pieces have been handed back to the classroom teachers. If students would like their Art Safari completion entries back please come to the art room and pick them up. To view pictures of the Art show, please visit www.ourartadventures.blogspot.com

Leyna Dosch

Attachments :
What’s Happening during Week 5 & 6 at EPS
EPS Our Spelling Principles
What’s happening during weeks 5 & 6 at Elwood Primary School?

**Level 1 (Prep)**

**Literacy:** This fortnight we will be continuing to practise our amazing handwriting by looking at letters that are formed with similar starting points (c, a, d, o, g and q as well as u, v, w, and y). When reading, we will be working on sequencing the main ideas in stories. We will look at how to help ourselves decode unknown words by stretching out words and listening to the sounds and letters that we see and hear. We will be writing all about our excursion to CERES, such as reflecting on our experiences and our continued learning about the environment. We will also be discussing opinion writing and will have a focus on proofreading our work and using full stops correctly.

**Maths:** Over the fortnight we will be continuing our focus on addition as well as subtraction. We will be revising the idea that subtraction is the same as taking away and will be using tens frames, number lines and drawings to model subtraction. We will also be writing subtraction number sentences to match stories that we write.

**Investigations:** For the next fortnight we will be focusing on all things related to mini-beasts, plants and the environment! We will talk and discover a lot about animal habitats, life cycles, and how animals survive.

**Other:** We had a fantastic excursion to CERES...the parents, teachers and Preps had a wonderful time learning about bees, the history of Merri Creek, netting for aquatic life in the dam and we even got to make our own recycled paper!

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**Level 2 (Year 1 & 2)**

**Literacy:**
This fortnight we will be learning about how and when to use apostrophes in our writing, we will also be exploring and using a variety of verbs. We will be identifying letter patterns related to our whole class spelling foci and working through the writing process on our personalised pieces. Our handwriting letters are: d, h, t, i, b, k, f. During reading we will be continuing to infer the feelings and motives of characters using evidence from the book. We will be critiquing and talking about our opinions of the texts we read.

**Maths:**
Our maths focus is division. We will be recognising and representing division as grouping into equal sets and solving simple real life problems using a range of strategies.

**Investigations:**
Our language focus is showing respect for the opinions of others by responding appropriately. Our physical focus is showing that we are listening with our whole body and our emotional focus is having the conversations around believing in our own ability and being proud of what we can do!

**Environment: Sustainability**
What is a food chain? The Grade 2 students will be visiting the Kitchen Garden spaces as part of their transition into Grade 3.
Level 3 (Year 3 & 4)

**Literacy:** Students are continuing to practise their summarising and synthesising skills when reading to help them have a deeper comprehension of the text. During writing sessions students are writing their own information reports; focusing on the use of appropriate language and paragraphing through the use of subheadings. Spelling remains a high priority in Grade 3 and students participate in regular spelling investigations focusing on meaning, visual patterns or sound patterns.

**Maths:** Students are becoming familiar with the mathematical language that is used to describe 3D shapes. During maths lessons students are practising connecting descriptions to the corresponding shapes. The recall of times table facts continues to be a priority and students are practising this skill on a regular basis in class.

**Inquiry:** This week students enjoyed participating in a hands-on science workshop entitled ‘Chemistry Chaos’. During other inquiry sessions students have been investigating the properties of materials and reasoning why certain materials are chosen for specific functions.

**Literacy:** During reading sessions students are focusing on asking questions before, during and after they have finished reading to help develop their comprehension skills. Students are practising writing explanations and procedures, ensuring they make appropriate language choices for both.

**Maths:** Students are enthusiastically exploring the properties of 3D shapes and using mathematical language to describe them. They are also identifying, comparing and classifying angles. As the end of year 4 approaches students are working hard to consolidate their rapid recall of all times table facts up to 10x10; a national expectation for the end of Grade 4.

**Inquiry:** This week students enjoyed participating in a hands-on science workshop focusing on ‘Exploring Forces’. After camp next week students will be conducting five simple science investigations focusing on a variety of forces such as friction and air resistance.

**Other:** We are all very excited about camp next week. If you or your child have any questions please don’t hesitate to contact your child’s teacher or Ellie (ellie.dodd@eaumail.vic.gov.au)

Level 4 (Year 5 & 6)

**Literacy:** In Reading sessions grade 5 classes are finishing their study of the comprehension strategy of visualising and will be moving on to analysing fiction and non-fiction texts. Grade 6 classes are continuing to analyse texts looking at the similarities and differences in texts on similar topics, themes or plots. During Writing sessions grade 5 classes are continuing to learn about and practise writing a variety of different forms of poetry working towards publishing at least one poem. Grade 6 classes are learning about the structure of information reports in depth, breaking down each section and having a go at drafting their own carefully structured information report.

**Maths:** Grade 5 classes are continuing to learn about volume, capacity and mass. We will explore the understanding that some units of measurement are better suited for some tasks than others, which will lead us to choosing appropriate units of measurement and work on using metric units to measure volume, capacity and mass. Grade 6 classes will be revising a range of strategies for solving multiplication and division problems. We will then begin to learn about patterns and algebra, looking at describing the rules used to create number sequences and developing our understanding of the order of operations.

**Inquiry:** Grade 5 and 6 classes are continuing to learn about geography. Following our local excursion with the Port Phillip Eco-Centre, we are beginning to learn about how humans have impacted the natural environment.

**Other:** The grade 5 and 6 teachers would like to extend a huge congratulations to the grade 6 students for their wonderful commitment to making last week’s production of ‘Crikey It’s A Good Yarn’ a massive success. We are very proud of them.
Principle Five—
Independence and self-evaluation are essential in spelling development
How we translate this into classroom practice:
- During teacher conferences we celebrate having ‘a go’ in drafting and correction made during editing.
- Celebrate self- recognition of misspelled words by circling or highlighting AND using strategies to self correct
- Kids will be able to identify words that don’t look right using visual patterns/strategies
- Students use editing checklist before teacher conference
- Use peer assessment
- Students choose their own words to learn to spell based on class investigation and personal writing

Principle Six—
Effective spellers use a number of different strategies interactively in order to spell correctly
How we translate this into classroom practice:
- Display posters of different strategies as a constant reminder
- Explicitly teach each strategy and demonstrate how it links to others
- Conduct class investigations into the strategies
- Use consistent language throughout the school when teaching spelling strategies

Further Professional Reading
- Gentry, R. & Wallace Gillet, J. “Teaching Kids to Spell” - 1993
- Snowball, D & Bolton, F. “Spelling K-8: Planning and Teaching,” 1999
- Topler, C. & Arendt, D. “Guiding Teaching for Effective Spelling,” 2010

Our Spelling Principles
Elwood Primary School
Literacy Team

Let’s Talk... Spelling

Teachers have an essential role in increasing students’ interest in words and in influencing their attitudes toward spelling. Students need to feel they are able to succeed in learning to spell.
Principle One
- Spelling is learnt as we use it
  How we translate this into classroom practice:
  - Word Walls
  - Weekly magic word
  - Class created dictionaries
  - Exquisite Word Walls
  - Phonetic literature (e.g., Room on a Broom)
  - Word/pattern/sound hunt and sort
  - Shared/Modelled writing “talk aloud”
  - Creating hints/tricks to learn words
  - Encourage kids to just write not worrying about spelling until editing stage
  - Have-a-go sheets: encourage kids to use their spoken vocab in their writing even if they’re not sure how to spell it correctly the first time.
  - Encourage experimentation and risk taking. Celebrate using strategies even if there are errors.

Principle Two
- Learning to spell is part of the developmental process of learning to write
  How we translate this into classroom practice:
  - Spelling is constantly monitored throughout the writing process to assess spelling stages and to assist progression towards next stage.
  - Teachers need to be aware of HOW to help students progress to the next spelling stage.
  - Children encouraged to see spelling as part of writing—why do we need to be able to spell?
  - Poor spelling can hold children back from writing—strategies need to be explicitly taught.

Principle Three
- Errors can be viewed as diagnostic and development signposts
  - Use SASt/SWSt to determine ‘spelling age’ and analyse errors made
  - Use First Steps Developmental Map to place students and see what they need
  - Use David Harris Diagnostic sheet
  - Ensure teaching is responsive to data collected.
  - Students editing/recognising their own errors.
  - Students keep record of errors in writing and add these to personal spelling list.

Principle Four
- Exploring words and vocabulary are part of learning to spell
  How we translate this into classroom practice:
  - Investigation areas are text rich and include relevant vocabulary.
  - Use spelling investigations—words collected by students so they have meaning—students decide role/patterns
  - Word collecting to increase vocabulary
  - Exploring words through reading: individual and small group conferences.
  - Understand what words are made up of: base words, prefixes, suffixes. 
  - Use new words identified in reading in written and oral language.
  - Use common words to build words banks based on sound, pattern or meaning.