



Principal:
Ken Smith

Deputy Principal:
Michelle Smith

School Counsellor:
Tim Seidel

Council Chairperson:
Alison Turner

WEEK 3, TERM 1
Friday, 17th February
2017

The next assembly will be on
Friday, 24th February, 2017, at
10:15am and will be hosted by
Ms Seyfang's Year 6/7 class.



Download our app
from the App store
or Google Play

Dedicated Phone Numbers

Kitchen Garden Volunteers: 0408 637 850
POSHC Enquiries: 0413 482 521
Student Absences: 0412 089 811

WHAT'S INCLUDED?

- 2017 School Fees
- Canteen Volunteers
- Governing Council AGM
- Ignite Testing
- Library News 2017
- Pimpala Skoolbag App
- Pupil Free Day
- SAPSASA Cross Country Trials
- School Photos
- Send Spare Clothes
- Student Permission Form 2017
- Volunteer Workshops
- Wirreanda SS Open Night
- **Back Page:** Stephanie Alexander Kitchen Garden Program – Mrs Yates Class
- **Inserts:** Composite Classes

DIARY DATES

22 Feb	Governing Council AGM
25 Feb	Ignite Testing – Aberfoyle Park HS
10 Mar	Pupil Free Day
15 Mar	School Photos
13 April	Last day to pay school fees

dl.1059.info@schools.sa.edu.au

Pimpala Press

* RESPONSIBILITY * RESPECT * COMMUNICATION *
* EXCELLENCE * FRIENDSHIP *

GOVERNING COUNCIL ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Wednesday, 22nd February, 2017
7:00pm

Dear Parents and Carers,

It has been a busy couple of weeks with the work going on around the school to repair the bitumen, RAN Training for volunteers and Acquaintance Night. While it has not been ideal to have access to many areas of the school restricted with all the fences, it has been some necessary short term pain for long term gain and I'd like to thank all members of our community for their patience and understanding during this period. At the time of writing, we are hoping that the fences will come down very soon as the playground markings have been painted and had time to dry.

Thank you also to all staff who stayed behind and to the parents and carers who came to meet their children's teachers on a very hot Wednesday afternoon at Acquaintance Night. It was also a great opportunity for me to come around and personally meet many parents and carers.

While I was speaking to parents and carers during Acquaintance Night a number of them asked questions about composite classes. During my time as a Principal and teacher it has been quite common for these questions to arise and I understand why they do. There has been quite a lot of research into composite classes and their effect on student outcomes. Included in this newsletter is an article that appeared in the Sydney Morning Herald a couple of years ago that discusses the pros and cons of composite classes which concludes that with quality teaching that includes effective differentiation of student learning and appropriate scaffolding of student learning tasks to meet individual student needs, that class structure has no effect on learning outcomes. If you are interested in more information about this, please take the time to read the article.

An important requirement of our Work, Health and Safety (WHS) responsibility is to conduct emergency drills during school time so our students and staff are aware of these procedures should an emergency situation arise. These drills will be conducted at various times during the school year and we will inform you through the Skoolbag App that an emergency drill has taken place that day.

I hope you all have a great weekend and we will see you at school next week.

Ken Smith
PRINCIPAL



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and Child Development

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GOVERNING COUNCIL AGM

Would you like to have your say? Do you have ideas and or suggestions you would like to share? Would you like to be involved in your child's education? Do you have 2 Monday nights free per term? Are you prepared to participate in some fundraising events and activities? If so, please come along to the Governing Council Annual General Meeting on **Wednesday, 22nd February, 2017 at 7pm in the Library.** Everyone is welcome to attend the meeting.

Please let Leadership or Front Office staff know if you would like to nominate for a position on Governing Council. If you are unable to come along on the night but would still like to be a member, please let the Front Office know.

The email address for all correspondence is dl.1059.info@schools.sa.edu.au



LIBRARY NEWS 2017

Welcome back to the 2017 school year and a special welcome to all the new families to Pimpala Primary School. Our library is open from 8:30am until 3:30pm and we encourage families to come in and visit before and after school.

Your friendly library staff this year are Deb Hampton, the Teacher Librarian and Karen Campbell and Helen Clark, Library Support SSOs. Deb will be in the Library on Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursdays and is looking forward to supporting your children with the skills of research and the love of books and reading.

It has been fantastic to see so many students coming to the library to borrow and we would like to remind all Junior Primary parents that library bags are required. Library bags help to protect our books so that they can be borrowed again and again. Of course, we all know that accidents sometimes happen, so if your library book has been lost or damaged in some way, please come to see us so that we can arrange a replacement as soon as possible for others to enjoy.

While you are in the library, look out for our requests box and let us know what books you would like to have in the library. This year we have a new book display which will feature recently purchased books. Many of these books have been bought based on student requests received last year.

The library was opened on Acquaintance Night and we were pleased with the number of visitors we had. It was great to be able to take photos of families reading and these will form part of our display in the near future.



IGNITE TESTING

Aberfoyle Park High School invites you to apply for a place in their Ignite program for students in Year 8 in 2018. Your opportunity to sit the Ignite test for 2018 entry will be **Saturday 25 February 2017.**

You can register online by visiting "Ignite" on the website - www.aphs.sa.edu.au or contact **Aberfoyle Park High School directly on 8270 4455** or email info@aphs.sa.edu.au

STUDENT PERMISSION FORM 2017

Thank you for returning the Student Permission Forms so promptly this year. For those of you who have not already done so, can you please complete the form and return it to the school as soon as possible, but no later than **Monday, 20th February, 2017.** This form enables your child to participate in school activities including library borrowing, local excursions and having photos taken.

The Student Permission Forms must be completed each year. The permission form now has a section on the reverse side regarding images. Please ensure you complete this section too.

Can you also please complete the **Information Technology – Cyber Safety Policy** (for YEAR 4 students only). The Cyber Safety Policy is divided into three parts with the first part providing general information, the second part relevant for Reception to Year 3 students and the third part for Years 4 – 7. The parent approvals are also signed by the students as a contract of use and are valid for the years the students are in the relevant age range. Consequently, only those students going from Year 3 in 2016 to Year 4 in 2017 need to complete this form and agreement of use.

Please return this form (by Year 4 students only) by **Monday, 20th February, 2017** so students can access our IT facilities.



2017 SCHOOL FEES

Thank you to those of you who have paid school fees already. If you are eligible for School Card we would appreciate it if you could return School Card forms as soon as possible. If you are having financial difficulties paying your school fees, please do not hesitate to contact Pam Pearce at the Front Office.

Payments can be made via the following methods...

Online (Credit Card)

Visit www.pimpalaps.sa.edu.au or the Skoolbag App to pay online.

In person

The Finance Window is open in the Courtyard each morning from 8:30am - 9:15am.

School fees must be paid in full by no later than Friday, 13th April 2017 (unless paying by instalments)

Payment by Instalment

School fees can be paid by instalments. Please fill in a Direct Debit Request Form which is available on the website or app and return it to the Finance Office by Friday 17th March. Please note invoices must be finalised by the end of Term 2 (Friday, 8th July) unless alternate arrangements are made with the school.



CANTEEN VOLUNTEERS

We need your help in the canteen. If you are available between 10:30am and 1:00pm on Monday, Wednesday or Fridays please see Trish in the canteen or let the Front Office know. All help is greatly appreciated.

SCHOOL PHOTOS

School photos have been scheduled to be taken on **Wednesday 15th March, 2017** by "The School Photographer".

Payment envelopes have been sent home this week. Student names are printed on each envelope so where possible, please make sure you use the envelopes provided.

Every student is photographed whether they are purchasing a photo or not. To streamline the process please bring the envelope along on photo day, even if it is empty.

Sibling envelopes are available from the Front Office. Please do not put your sibling envelope inside of the individual student envelope or vice versa.

School photos are conducted by a private company so you are paying them directly. Please make sure you put correct money in the envelope, or pay by credit card, and bring the envelope on photo day.

PIMPALA SKOOLBAG APP

Please make sure you have downloaded the Pimpala Skoolbag App to your phone or tablet

We use the App in many ways including to send home notices, reminders of important dates, upcoming events and closing dates. It contains useful information including newsletters, notices that are sent home, class newsletters etc. Users can subscribe to free "push notifications" which will alert you each time a new item is uploaded to the app, or you can customise these notifications so you only receive messages relevant to your child's class or year level.

To customise the notifications you receive, open the app, and then click the 'More...' button at the bottom right of the screen. A number of buttons will appear on the screen – click the 'Setup' button, then 'turn on' any classes or year levels for which you wish to receive notifications.

We strongly recommend that every family in the school with a smart phone or tablet device downloads this app. You will always know what is happening and when, and you will never miss a notice in the bottom of your child's school bag again.

To download the App, go to the App store for Apple products, or Google Play for Android products.

You can access the App through the website www.pimpalaps.sa.edu.au and there are also detailed Instructions on how to download the App to your device.

Please ask at the Front Office if you require any further assistance.

SEND SPARE CLOTHES

So far this year we have had a quite a few little accidents. We would strongly encourage all junior primary parents in particular, to send spare clothes to be kept in your child's bag, for use at school if required.

PUPIL FREE DAY

The Department for Education and Child Development approves 4 Pupil Free Days and 1 School Closure Day per year. Governing Council is consulted and approves the days. Governing Council has approved a Pupil Free Day on **Friday, 10th March, 2017** the Friday before the Adelaide Cup Day long weekend, to enable staff to review the Site Improvement Plan.

POSHC will be available. Please contact Hazel Godfrey at Hazel.Godfrey850@schools.sa.edu.au or phone 0413 482 521 for bookings.

VOLUNTEER WORKSHOPS

DECD are now offering an on-line option for RAN-EC training for volunteers. Please refer to the DECD website or speak to Barb in the Front Office for more information.

Alternatively, the SA Association of School Parent's Clubs Incorporated co-ordinates this training at other sites and they can be contacted on 1800 724 640 or email info@saaspc.org.au.

SAPSASA CROSS COUNTRY TRIALS

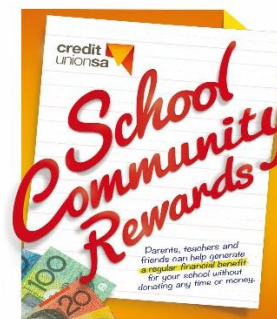
Students who are aged 10-13 years old and born in 2004-2007 are able to attend trials for the SAPSASA District Cross Country Day later this term.

The first practice session will be held on Tuesday, 21st February in school grounds at 8:15am and will be supervised by Mr Sboro. The training sessions will be held every Tuesday morning at this time.

WIRREANDA SS OPEN NIGHT

Wirreanda Secondary School will be holding an Open Night on Thursday 23 March, 2017 from 4pm – 7pm. For more information, please contact Sue Bogumil at the school on 8329 7200

COMMUNITY NOTICEBOARD



You pocket real savings

With School Community Rewards, Credit Union SA has created an incredibly easy way to help improve the future of your family and your children's school.

With School Community Rewards you stand to benefit from banking with Credit Union SA just as much as your school. Take the experience of Matt and Sarah, whose son attends Rayfield Primary School.

Matt and Sarah switched their home loan to Credit Union SA from a Big Four bank in 2015.

"Our loan rate is lower, the terms are more flexible, and the service has been wonderful. We can now save hundreds each year!"

Call your School Community Representative
Northern Dimitri Carapetis 045 201 376
Southern Mark Kohler 0428 787 230
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All members of the school community must consider their own circumstances and decide their own advice before joining School Community Rewards. The school bears no responsibility for any advice or product provided by Credit Union SA, Ltd. This information is general in nature and doesn't take into account your own personal circumstances. It is important for you to consider the terms and conditions before accepting any of our products or services to help you decide whether they are suitable for you. Conditions and fees apply to all credit products. Products are issued by Credit Union SA, Ltd except for insurance where the Credit Union acts as an agent for Allianz Australia Insurance Ltd A'UL 237700 SC170139

COMPOSITE CLASSES

Many parents dislike composite classes but the evidence does not support their anxiety.

Negative perceptions about composite grades persist, despite research showing students can thrive in multi-age classrooms. By Colleen Ricci (SMH - April 20, 2015)

What is happening?

Composite classrooms, in which children from two or more year levels are combined within one grade, have become common in many schools around the world. Often referred to in a variety of ways, including "multi-age", "multi-grade", "split-grade", "mixed-grade", "combined" or "non-graded" classrooms, they define classes in which students of varying ages, abilities, or interests might be grouped together.

While the traditional one-roomed schoolhouse of old was necessarily a "non-graded" classroom, these days it is more common to place children of the same age together in "straight" grades. Despite research that favours no particular grade structure as superior, composite grades remain a source of controversy.

Why is it happening?

Composite classes are a practical response to the problem of uneven grade enrolments; for example, when there are too many students to form one "straight" grade but not enough to form two. Combining students in this way is often an expedient administrative solution that not only allows schools to ensure more consistent class sizes, but enables them to address gender balance issues within each class; more easily match teachers to student need; maximise school and teacher funding and resources; and cope with declining enrolments. Multi-age classrooms are particularly common in small and rural schools where overall student numbers are relatively low.

Some schools, however, regard composite classrooms as optimal for student learning and incorporate them as an educational choice, rather than a purely administrative one.

Where is it happening?

In the United States, legal caps on class sizes are a reality in the majority of states, with financial penalties for non-compliant schools. Consequently, composite classrooms are often formed to ensure this legal requirement is fulfilled. Class size is also a legal issue in Canada, where "split grades" allow schools to juggle teacher resources and manage their limited funding more effectively. However, in some private Montessori schools, for example, composite classrooms, where children might be grouped according to their strengths and interests, are preferred.

As commonly occurs elsewhere, schools in England, Ireland and Scotland adopt composite classes in response to fluctuating student enrolments. Head teachers (principals) manage these affairs based on available staff, resources and classroom space. In many developing countries, composite classrooms are more likely to be a permanent organisational structure due to limited resources.

How common are composite classrooms in Australia?

While multi-grade classrooms are a practical necessity in rural and remote areas, they have become a common feature in many urban Australian schools, usually in response to variable grade-level enrolments. In Victoria, almost half of all state primary students are taught in composite grades, often combining year levels such as grades 5 and 6: reportedly, the most popular combination. Some schools, such as Roberts McCubbin Primary School in Box Hill South, have a solely composite organisational structure and others use a mix of composite student groupings in various curriculum areas, for example, the arts, or languages.

Some argue that the Australian Curriculum, with its emphasis on single-year subject matter, standards and assessment, favours a move away from composite grades. While some schools have returned to straight grades as a consequence, others say grade structure is immaterial and argue that schools should be providing a "differentiated" curriculum anyway: one that caters to all children as individuals, according to their needs.

What are the positives about composite grades?

Research, which has been predominantly conducted in primary schools, suggests there is no discernible difference between composite and straight grade classrooms in terms of academic performance. However, benefits relating to student independence, responsibility and study habits have been highlighted. For example, younger children within a composite grade generally aspire to emulate older children in their work, and older children enjoy leadership and mentoring opportunities that lift their self-esteem. Some say composite classrooms are more flexible; allow children to work at their own pace; offer a wider range of friendship opportunities; and encourage more co-operation and tolerance.

Proponents of composite classrooms adhere to the theory that children should be taught "by stages, not ages", pointing out that in life, age stratification does not exist. Many acknowledge, however, that composite grades suit some students more than others and that positive outcomes are more dependent upon quality teaching than anything else.

What do critics say?

Despite favourable research regarding student cognitive and social growth in composite classrooms, and the findings that no particular structure favours academic performance, negative perceptions persist, particularly among parents. Many fear their children will be unable to keep pace with work; will have fewer friendships; that younger children will be overlooked or that older children will not be sufficiently challenged; that children with learning difficulties will suffer more anxiety; that the curriculum for each year level will be inadequately covered; or that bullying will be an issue. Some say straight grades foster a deeper sense of identity and belonging for students and are easier to manage for teachers.

According to experts, however, education is about more than academic achievement and age is not necessarily an accurate predictor of a child's development. Others point out that wide-ranging student abilities exist in children of the same age, and not just in composite grades. Some say that cynicism about multi-age classrooms exists because schools tend to incorporate them for administrative convenience, rather than out of philosophical commitment; instilling the view that they are "second rate".

In conclusion

Many argue that problems relating to composite classrooms arise when teachers, students and parents are not prepared for a composite situation, and that these fears can be easily alleviated with openness and good communication. For the most part, however, the quality of teaching, combined with student interest and engagement, are considered more important than class structure, whatever form it may take.