As reported last Tuesday, our kitchen was broken into and several items including four range hoods and a mixer were stolen. The police have attended and made several suggestions on security measures.

At our School Council Annual General Meeting, the following office bearers were elected:

- School Council President—Kari Males
- Deputy President—Ann Honeychurch
- Secretary—Janine DiBella

The executive is John Mackintosh, Kari Males & Ann Honeychurch.

School Council approved the new concreting outside the art room, library, the deck to the classrooms and the music room. This area is currently an eyesore and these works will give it a real lift, it will be completed during the upcoming school holidays.

The renovation of the hallway outside the office is still meandering along. I had the companies tending for the works visit last week. I am less confident that these works can be completed during the holidays.

We have purchased and installed four new computers for the junior classroom.

Our first Bunnings Sunbury BBQ for the year is this Sunday 23rd March. These BBQ’s are one of our main fundraisers for the year. If you can turn a sausage, pass a sausage in bread to a customer or give correct change then you’re qualified to help. We have two shifts (9.00—12.30 & 12.30—4.00)

I need one more person for the morning shift. See John if you can help.

Similar to the end of term one last year, we would like to have a themed day/superhero dress up and sausage sizzle on the last day of term Friday 4th April. We will be also be conducting a walk-a-thon on this day. We ask that students are sponsored for the number of laps they complete of the walking track in 45 minutes. Alternatively a donation is acceptable. The walk will begin at approximately midday, it would be great if parents could attend and walk with us. After the walk we will be having an end of term sausage sizzle and draw the Easter Raffle. Dismissal is at 2.00pm but parents who attend are free take their children home after the sausage sizzle.

Please complete the sponsorship form and return to school. The form is also on our website. Money will be collected early next term.

All schools in Victoria now need to meet standards set by the Victorian Registration & Qualifications Authority. Although schools have been encouraged to implement the requirements over the past couple of years, we now have to complete all sections by the 30th April. We meet most standards but need provide evidence.

We need to create a vision statement. A vision statement identifies what a school would like to achieve or accomplish.

I would appreciate some thoughts from parents about what we believe should be in our statement. The statement is owned by the whole school community. What are we trying to achieve at our school? What is important?

I found this example on the internet. I would like to use it as a conversation starter, not what the principal or teachers think.

Our vision is to provide a happy, caring and stimulating environment where children will recognise and achieve their fullest potential, so they can make their best contribution to society.

I look forward to your input. I have one stipulation that it be fairly brief and to the point. In my research I have seen some vision statements that try to include everything possible and are ridiculously long.

We need to capture the most important things.
The Education and Training Reform Act 2006 provides for the provision of free instruction in the standard curriculum program, and empowers school councils to charge for goods and services used in the course of instruction and to raise funds.

Free instruction includes learning and teaching, instructional supports, materials and resources, administration and facilities associated with the provision of the standard curriculum program. The standard curriculum program includes core learning and teaching activities associated with the Australian Victorian Essential Learning Standards (AusVELS).

In summary, school councils can request payments from parents for student materials and services charges, and for voluntary financial contributions.

These payments fall into three categories:

1. **Essential education items** which parents and guardians are **required** to provide or pay the school to provide for their child (e.g. stationery, text books etc.)

2. **Optional extras** which are offered on a user-pays basis and which parents and guardians may **choose** whether their child accesses or participates in (e.g. Netbook program, SAKG program, extra curricular programs or activities)

3. **Voluntary financial contributions** which parents and guardians may be **invited** to donate to the school (e.g. grounds maintenance, beautification).

Parents who have difficulty paying for essential items may have access to a range of support options including the **Education Maintenance Allowance (EMA)**.

School Council has set the fee structure for 2014.

1. **Educational**—Education items Parents are **required** to pay this fee—$100 per student

2. Optional extras—only parents of year 3-6 students need to pay $120 for 2014 for the netbook program. There is a $10 levy for the SAKG program for all students.

3. Voluntary—Parents are invited to pay a small levy to help with the improvement and upkeep of the school grounds—$30—No change

**Netbooks**

Parents of year 3-6 students participating in the netbook program are required to pay $240 for the lease of their netbook over two years. The school will make a $268 contribution for the lease of each machine. Parents are asked to make a payment of $120 for 2014 and a further $120 in 2015. lump sum or $60 in term one and a further $60 in term two.

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**Thank You**

Thank you to Glenn Langdon and Darren Salmon for their attendance at the working bee last Tuesday. The western entrance to the school is much tidier as is the rubbish pile at the rear of the school. Glenn also cut down and pruned some trees.

**Childrens Hospital Appeal**

Find attached to the newsletter an envelope for the Good Friday Appeal for the Children’s Hospital. Could this please be returned before the end of term.

**Student Achievement Awards**

**Year P– 2**

Grace McLaughlin – For constantly trying her best in all aspects of her learning.

**Year 3- 6**

Zoe O’Brien — For always challenging herself and making good choices and decisions.

**New attendance Policy**

On the first of March new attendance guidelines came into force. In essence it is now mandatory that the principal makes sure that all absences are explained and approved. The principal can if there are five unexplained absences in a year, refer the matter to the School Attendance Officer. It could then escalate to a $70 infringement notice!

Now let’s take a deep breath……………

I have absolutely no intention of contacting the School Attendance Officer unless there were exceptional circumstances. In my eight years as principal at this school, I can only think of two instances where if the School Attendance Officer had of been available I would have reported the parents. These were extreme cases where students missed school several times a week or on occasions entire weeks at a time.

These parents made it sport to avoid me and their responsibility to get their child to school. When I finally caught up with them they said they had the right to decide if they sent their child to school and there was nothing I could do about it. Both families left the school without notice although I did get a phone call from another school asking if we had trouble with a new student's attendance. New school, same family, same behaviour.

Attached to the newsletter is information about the new guidelines and an absence note proforma. The easiest way for us to abide by these guidelines is for parents to make sure they send a note when their child is absent. If we don’t receive a note, we will send a polite letter home asking for an explanation. If we work together