We are pleased to announce that we have been accepted into the Stephanie Alexander Kitchen Garden Program. The program will involve students, teachers and parent volunteers growing, cultivating, preparing, cooking and of course eating food from our vegetable garden. We will be only the second school in the Macedon Ranges to be accepted into the program.

There are some projects which will need to be completed before the program can begin. The storage shed next to the vegetable garden will need to be converted into a kitchen/dining area. We are looking at the purchase of a shipping container for storage of the furniture/mower and other materials presently in the shed. We will need to acquire a stove/oven, refrigerator and cupboards as well as tables/chairs. We will also need to install windows and water. We hope some of these can be donated or picked up cheaply on eBay or Gumtree.

We also need to do some renovation of the vegetable garden. We need to weed the beds, repair the watering system and top up with soil.

We propose a working bee on Friday 1st March straight after school. We also need to remove a number of elm suckers which have sprouted up over summer. We may also have the opportunity to start removing unwanted materials from the shed. We are also looking into purchasing some type of material to spread between the garden beds to prevent weeds growing.

All of the work needs to be completed by mid year when staff will complete training in the program. Below is a brief description of the program.

The aim of the Stephanie Alexander Kitchen Garden Foundation is to introduce pleasurable food education into as many Australian primary schools as possible.

Our Program emphasises the flavours as well as the health benefits of fresh, seasonal food. Dishes cooked reflect the vegetables, herbs and fruits grown, season-by-season, by the children in their organic gardens.

Our Kitchen Specialist instructors emphasise balance and moderation, and endorse the concept of preparing fruit-based desserts ‘sometimes’ only. The Program is designed to be fully integrated into the primary school curriculum as it offers infinite possibilities to reinforce literacy, numeracy, science, cultural studies and all aspects of environmental sustainability.

In addition, the Program delivers observable social benefits to all students, including those with special needs.

**Student Achievement Awards**

**Year Prep—2**
Deegan Collins— For having a go at learning tasks set for him.

**Year 3-6**
Tana Males — Continuing to improve her writing skills.

**Student, Parent, Teacher Interviews**

Many parents have yet to schedule parent, student, teacher interviews.

These meetings will be held on Thursday 21st February and Monday 25th February after school. We hope to catch up with any issues from the December reports as well as discussing student Individual Learning Plans for 2013. Please contact your child’s teacher to make an appointment. You can make an appointment for another time if you are unavailable on the nominated days.
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 Victorian Essential Learning Standards (VELS).

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, 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 2013.

1. Educational—Education items Parents are *required* to pay this fee—$90 per student

2. Optional extras—only parents of yr 3-6 students need to pay $120 for 2013 for the netbook program.

3. Voluntary—Parents are *invited* to pay a small levy to help with the improvement and up keep of the school grounds—$30

**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 2013 and a further $120 in 2014.

*Given we have just spent $15,000 on the new deck, it would really be appreciated if all parent payments could be paid as soon as possible.*

The *Family Night* is tomorrow night Wednesday 20th February @ 6.30 pm. We hope that every family can attend.

The school will supply sausages for everyone, you are free to bring your own meat if you choose. We ask that each family bring a salad or desert to share.

**Education Maintenance Allowance**

The EMA (Education Maintenance Allowance) provides financial assistance to families on a low income to help with the cost of essential educational items such as textbooks, stationery, uniforms and excursions.

EMA is a means-tested payment - parents must hold a Centrelink/Veterans Affairs concession card to be eligible.

For more information or an application form see John. Applications must be completed and returned to school by Tuesday 26th February for processing before the closing date Thursday the 28th February.

**Five cent Funraiser**

Do you find that 5c pieces are now pretty much redundant and seem to gather in your pockets, purse or dropped in the car console. *We have the solution.*

Donate your unloved and unwanted 5c pieces to the school and we will make them into a very long snake. There will be a prize for the nearest guess. John has kicked it off with $6.75 worth!
Sunfest 2013

The Sunbury Community Festival is Sunbury’s largest community event. 2013 will be SunFest’s 37th year.

SunFest is held on the third weekend of March each year and is a free to enter – two day festival full of fun and entertainment for all ages.

The next SunFest will be held on Saturday 16th March and Sunday 17th March 2013. SunFest is well supported by local traders, businesses, residents, the community and visitors from all around Melbourne and Country Victoria.

With thousands of people attending SunFest each year, we will again offer great attractions on our main stage and dance floor with local talent, and national acts, Battle of the School Choirs, award winning entertainers, and children’s entertainment.

For the last 37 years we have been running our ever popular Grand Street Parade. Again this year we have Sunbury Idol and Sunbury’s Got Talent and our ever popular Reardon Amusement Rides and Carnival Games, Roving Entertainers, Magicians, the SunFest Motor Show, Walk and Run for FUN and much, much more.

For more information please visit their website www.sunfest.org.au

We wish our choir to perform at the Sunfest Festival on Saturday 16th March between 10.00 am - 12.00 noon for the “Battle of the School’s Choir” Competition.

At the moment we only have 10 responses. Could parents please notify Janine asap as to whether their child(ren) will be attending. We need at least another five or six for this to be viable.

If we don’t get some positive responses disappointingly, we will have to cancel our performance.

Easter Raffle

We are once again conducting our annual Easter raffle and would like to parents to help by donating Easter eggs. We would like all donations by Friday the 22nd of March so Easter baskets can be made during the last week which would be fabulous.

Raffle tickets will go out later in the term and parents assistance in creating the Easter baskets would be greatly appreciated.

There is a basket in the office where donations can be left.

The raffle will be drawn on the last day of term.

Curriculum Day

We will be attending a Maths professional development day on Friday March 8th with Cath Pearn as the presenter. This is a pupil free day.

The day will be broken into a number of topics including – the characteristics of an effective Mathematics teacher, the structure of math lessons, the role of questioning and the choice and use of rich mathematics tasks.

Letterbox

The letterbox for money, notes etc. which has been in the office has been relocated to the classrooms. This will make it easier for students/parents to put things in the letterbox and not hand them to teachers who sometimes misplace things. As the office is unattended most of the day, this is a more secure location.

Footy Day

Our Footy Day was enjoyed by all students when players from the Essendon Football Club visited today for a football clinic. The students especially liked the skills and drills and asking the players questions.