Dear Parents,

Children’s Term 1 Learning Focus

This Term at St. Thomas More’s, our learning focuses around the concept of COMMUNITY. It is based on the statement that effective communities offer a sense of belonging when they are made up of people who work together respectfully, sharing rights and responsibilities.

This statement is taught through the lens that Christian communities are committed to treating all people with respect, to welcoming and including people and to serving the community.

Each level has a different aspect of community deepening the understandings as the children mature.

In Year Prep…

Me & My School

I am special and even though I know I am responsible for looking after myself I know that there are other people who can help me as well.

In Year 1 / 2…

Elements of Community

If I have a good understanding of the elements of my community and how they work together, I can get the most out of living in it.

In Year 3 / 4…

Communities—Indigenous Inspirations

Through learning about the values and beliefs of different cultures within our community we can develop and show respect towards everyone.

In Year 5 / 6…

Responsibility of Community

To enable us to be effective democratic citizens we need to understand the values and principles of democracy that guide the communities in which we live.

STM Playgroup

Thank you to the four Mums who responded regarding the playgroup. There will be a first meeting at 9am next Monday 7th March in the gym foyer to further discuss how it will operate.

All families with pre-school children are invited to attend. If you know of any families outside the school who may be interested, please let them know.

Early Arrivals

There are still a number of children who are at school very early in the morning. Children are not supervised at this time. All classrooms will be open at 8.45am, occasionally earlier, for the children to unpack and get ready for their day.

Condolences

Please remember the Faulkner family in your prayers on the passing of Cate’s grandmother.

A very big thank you to Peter Whyte, Andrew Taylor and all the parents who attended last weekend’s working bee.

A job very well done!

Have a wonderful week ahead.

Mrs. Pat McConvill

Principal

PHOTO Day - 8th March

Photo day is next Tuesday 8th March. All children will be required in full summer uniform.

Bring a happy smile.
**Deputy Principal Report**

**Working Bee: Well done and THANK YOU**

A big thank you to the following families who attended the working bee on Saturday. Led by Andrew Taylor we completed some terrific jobs and projects for our school. So thanks to Justin Herbert, Jason Vandermeer, Kevin MacFarlane, Rob and Patsy Tranter, Shaun O’Halloran, Alasdair and Niamh Hislop, Andrew Taylor, Michael Gwizdek, Mick Cooper, Teresa Martino, Allison and James Reynolds, Bernie Clutterbuck, Andrew Hosking, Geoff Fox, Adrian Aldag, Kim and Guy Seeley, Fiona Parkyn, Peter Hollins and Hamish Anderson.

**Disabled Carparking**

Please note that we have 2 families who need to utilise the Disabled carpark outside the gym. They need to access this area before and after school. As the parking bay is designed for one car we need the parking space in front of it to be left free. We are planning to extend the parking bay or create another one in front of the existing. Please pass this information to anyone dropping and picking up your children.

**Student Wellbeing**

The Wellbeing Team meet regularly to discuss students who may require extra assistance with social and emotional learning. Some students need help with making friends or joining in games. Some students are anxious about their learning. Some students lack confidence in a range of situations. The classroom teachers do an amazing job nurturing and assisting students to be the best they can be. The school also employs Learning Support Officers who are sometimes assigned to certain students or assist with different groups and programs in the classrooms. An extra support for students will be the organising of small groups of students to come out of the classroom and work on different areas of social and emotional learning. Lys Crowe and Peter Whyte will lead these groups.

**SRC List 2016**

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<th>PREP D</th>
<th>Evie Wilson Luke McKernan</th>
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**Reflective Listening**

Give emotional support through reflective listening

- **Children need at least one person in their life that truly understands how they are feeling.** Giving emotional support starts with effective listening where we truly hear and understand how a situation is, how they are feeling and how it is impacting on them. Often we are quick to step in and offer solutions to help comfort but what they really need is to know that you understand. Research shows that even just helping children to label an emotion is enough to lessen the stress response and decrease anxiety.

- **So how do you do reflective listening?** When your child talks to you about something, truly listen to what they are saying without jumping in with advice, comments, solutions and judgements. Keep your own perception around the issue separate and just hear what they are saying and listen out for the emotion they are expressing. Keeping your own emotions in check is also important, as this is about the child and their feelings. Reflect back what they have said but summarising the content and the emotion e.g. ‘so you had a really tough day today and you felt really hurt by your friends.’ Children will soon let you know if this summary is in the ball park of how they felt and what happened. Don’t worry about getting it all right, it’s the intent that counts. Children know when parents are really listening and trying to understand their situation.

- Once you reflect back how they felt and what happened, then they will most likely share more of what they feel and what happened. This can be a real challenge for parents, as it’s so easy to fall into the trap of problem solving for children to ease their pain however to ease emotional suffering, children need to first express their feelings in the arms of someone who cares. Once all feelings are expressed, then it’s time to help children solve the problem (if there is something to be solved) and this can be done by encouraging them to develop effective problem solving skills to build their resilience.

**Help to problem solve instead of giving too much reassurance:**

- Once you have listened using reflective listening, you can help them to problem solve for the next step. This helps children to learn a lifelong skill coping strategy for anxiety or worrying.

- **Ask them ‘what could you do?’ ‘How do you think you could...?’ ‘I wonder what would happen if you?’**

- **Help your child to make a plan of what they could do to solve a problem.**

- If there is nothing they can specifically do to solve a problem (such as just generally worrying) then using a coping strategy such as finding something fun to do or calming exercise.

- Give lots of positive praise for trying to solve a problem and give them a chance to try out solutions.

**PARISH CAR BOOT SALE**

The Parish Car Boot Sale, scheduled for Saturday 5th March, HAS BEEN CANCELLED. (due to lack of response)

**WOULD YOU LIKE TO ADVERTISE YOUR BUSINESS**

**IN ‘SEASONS’ (the Parish Newsletter?)**

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<tr>
<th>In color</th>
<th>Business card size</th>
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<td>200 copies are printed each week. It’s distributed to all School families by email, and is available on the Parish website for 6 months. Please contact the Parish Office 9787 7777 for further details.</td>
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The PA meets on the first Tuesday of every month, the next meeting will be on Tuesday 3rd May 2016. Everyone is welcome. Meetings begin at 7.30pm in the staffroom. Contact leonieroyall@yahoo.com.au for more information.

**AGM**

The PA exists for two main reasons.

1. **To provide Social activities**
   The PA arranges events for families to socialise and develop friendships, due to this we have a wonderful school community we are very proud of.

2. **To provide Fundraising to support your children’s education.**
   This is to support our school’s facilities and services and improve our children’s education. The fundraising is all for our kids to improve their learning environment.

We cannot do it without the support and help from our wonderful school families. We do ask you think about how you can help.

Should taking on a “role” be too much, we are always searching for volunteers for events. Please chat to us anytime about how you may be able to help. It is very important we fill the remaining PA roles quickly, if you are interested please contact me asap. (Treasurer, Assistant Treasurer and Working Bee Coordinator) Please remember we are all doing this for our kids.

The PA was proud to donate a cheque for $50,000 to the school which was a wonderful result of all our fundraising efforts in 2015. Thank you to the STM families for your help in achieving this result.

A big thank you to the PA Committee for all your hard work. A special thank you to our wonderful executive committee, Christina, Fran and Teresa. You have done an amazing job. I really appreciate your support and hard work. Thank you to our outgoing committee members for your contribution and giving up your precious time to help make our school so special.

**Please find below the full list of the 2016 Parents Association Committee:**

- **Vice Principal** - Peter Whyte
- **President** - Leonie Zammit
- **Vice President** - Christina Day
- **Secretary** - Chantal Jenkins
- **Assistant Secretary** - Monique Boatwright
- **Treasurer** - TBA
- **Assistant Treasurer** - TBA
- **Working Bee Co-Ordinator** - TBA
- **Parent Rep Co-Ordinator** - Ange Grima
- **Canteen Co-ordinator** - Susie Power Reeves
- **Uniform Shop Co-ordinator** - Bianca Goonan
- **Car Parking Co-ordinator** - Daniel Ferlin
- **Parish Education Board (PEB) Reps** - Josie Palancian, Emma Michie, Teresa Taranto
- **Working Bee Catering Co-ordinator** - Alison Reynolds
- **Treasurer Counters** - Kelly Davis, Nada Cevizovic, Cath Denvir, Antoinette Dungey
- **Crockery Co-ordinator** - Kerrin Smith
- **General Committee** - Niamh Hislop, Amanda Cooke, Jackie Arter, Sally Richmond, Andrew Postregna, Helen McFarlaine

We thank you all for being a part of the PA and wish you well. Thank you to all who attended the AGM.

**GRANDPARENTS DAY**

Thursday 17th March Grandparents day. We will have the gym open early on the day to accept any morning tea platters you can put together please, savoury items seems to be very popular at that time of day. Also, please keep in mind that we have many diabetic grandparents.

In order to provide a good variety, could parents in the respective grades please bring the following:

- **Preps** - sweet (biscuits, cakes and slices etc.)
- **1/2’s** - savoury (cheese and biscuits, savoury scrolls,sandwiches etc.)
- **3/4’s** - sweet
- **5/6’s** - savoury

We will require helpers after Mass to about 12:30pm. serving tea and coffee.

**DONs (Dads Only Nights) is Back with Barefoot Bowls.**

Date: Friday 18th March from 6.30pm
Mt Eliza Bowling Club  90-100 Canadian Bay Rd Mt Eliza
$10 including bowls and complimentary snack
Please pay your $10 at the office by 11th March.

**Easter Raffle Time!**

We would really appreciate your donations for our awesome Easter raffle. We need Easter eggs, Easter related toys, decorations, baskets to hold prizes in.

Please drop your donations off at the office by 21st March.

The raffle will be drawn at the assembly on the last day of Term 1, 24th March.

**1/2 Drinks - this Friday night.**

Apologies for the late notice, but we have had to change our venue for Friday night.

It will now be at:
Canadian Bay Hotel  “CBs Bar”
35 Ranelagh Drive Mount Eliza
7.30pm

Looking forward to catching up.

**STM DATES FOR THE DIARY**

- 4th March - Friday 1/2 Drinks at CB’s from 7.30pm
- 15th March - Tuesday Prep Dinner - Venue TBA
- 17th March - Grand Parents Day - Please bring a plate
- 18th March - Friday 3/4 & 5/6’s Morning at Gravity Zone
- 18th March - DONS (Dads Only Nights) Barefoot Bowls.
- 21st March - Last day for Easter Raffle Donations
- 24th March - Easter Raffle

Sincerely
Leonie Zammit
President
Parents Association
leonieroyall@yahoo.com.au
MORNINGTON RACECOURSE MARKET - CAR PARK DUTY

Please advise Daniel Ferlin on 0410 184 494 with your confirmed attendance via text (incl your name) ASAP.

Please find the car parking rosters for the coming markets here. Together, this small contribution of our time is raising approximately $14,000 annually for the continual improvement of our school and the programs provided to our children. If you are unavailable for your rostered month, please organise another family to take your place at least a week in advance of the market, and advise Daniel of the change ASAP.

** All Markets:**
• Arrive at 7:45am (all weather event); exception for Twilight market 1:45pm
• You will be told by the Market Leader when you can leave.
  This is typically around 12:30pm (6:30pm Twilight) but can alter depending on how busy the market is.
• Enter via the main gates of Racecourse on Racecourse Road, Mornington.
• Park in the designated area (Market Staff will be at the gate to assist you).
• Sign in with the Team Leader (for record keeping and Work Cover).

Team Leaders must collect a black folder from the school office the Friday prior to attending the market, and return it the following Monday.
• Receive your safety vest.
• Market staff will take you to your location in the car park where you will direct cars accordingly and finish at approximately noon. (On slower days Market Staff will advise if you can leave earlier).

Daniel Ferlin/Car Parking Coordinator
0410 184 494 / daniel_ferlin@hotmail.com

** Please Confirm Attendance ASAP^^ Re-rostered due to prior non-attendance