Dear Parents / Guardians,

Welcome back to an exciting 2014! This newsletter offers an overview of what is planned in both of our 5/6 flexible learning spaces this year. Building on the huge successes of 2012 & 2013, our new teaching team is bursting to continue promoting Flemington Primary as a leader in data driven, individualised education.

In addition to a major focus on literacy & numeracy skills in 2014, we are again looking forward to engaging all students through our Challenge Based Learning (CBL) program. Our philosophy of promoting 21st Century Learning skills will be centred around the 4Cs; Critical Thinking, Collaboration, Creativity & Communication. Importantly, this year, we aim to significantly increase the level of parental communication and involvement inside the classroom. This means that if you’re available during school hours, even for only 30mins at a time to listen to students reading, then we’d love to hear from you!

As always, please don’t hesitate to contact your child’s teacher to schedule a chat anytime, we would like to strongly emphasise the importance of keeping the lines of communication open between home and school.

The Year 5/6 teachers for 2014 are:

David Meyer – 5/6M - meyer.david.l@edumail.vic.gov.au
James Thomas – 5T – thomas.james.j@edumail.vic.gov.au
Lauren Aull – 5A – aull.lauren.l@edumail.vic.gov.au
Mark Catterson – 6C – catterson.mark.m@edumail.vic.gov.au
Kimberley Phair – 6P – phair.kimberley.k@edumail.vic.gov.au

Upcoming dates for the calendar are:

- Friday 7th Feb - 4th April - 5/6 Swimming Program
- Tuesday 11th February - Safer Internet Day
- Wednesdays 12th Feb - 19th Mar - 3-6 Yoga Program
- Tuesday 18th & Wednesday 19th February - March Meet the Teacher
- Friday 28th February - Interschool swimming carnival
- Monday 10th March - Labour Day Public Holiday
- Friday 21st March, Interschool cross-country
- Friday 28th March - Year 7 (Grade 6, 2013) Return to School Day
- Thursday 3rd April - House Sports Day
- **Friday 4th April - End of term 1**
- Term 2, 22nd April - Curriculum Day (no students to attend)
- Interschool Sports in Terms 2 and 4.

So far, we have spent the first week getting to know our classmates and establishing class & school expectations for learning success. Already, we have been impressed with our students’ demonstration of our school values: respect, responsibility, care & compassion and honesty. They
have shown strong engagement with our Habits of the Mind program and are ready to embark upon a busy year ahead.

**Student leadership Positions**
Last year, Grade 5s were invited to stand for 6 student school leadership positions and 4 house captain roles for 2014. All applicants prepared and presented speeches on why they would be suitable for a position in a formal election run by the Australian Electoral Commission. The entire 4/5 mini-school and school staff voted after the candidate’s presentations and these students are now the executives to the S.R.C. The school leaders for 2014 are:

**School Captains:**
Jack Sampson and Lily Zavattiero

**School Leaders:**
Luca Andreana
Maia Amor
Angelina Lam
Daniel Tran

During this process 4 school house leaders were also elected. The house captains are:

**Delhi (Red)** – Amy Filipovic
**Cashmere (Blue)** – Miranda Gurtler

**Mangalore (Green)** – Lochie Steinmeyer
**Mooltan (Yellow)** – Claudia Carlton-Allen

**Personalised Learning**
To support and individualise our students’ learning, we timetable regular conferences with your children and develop a series of personal learning goals in reading, writing and maths. Students will be afforded class time to work towards these goals, and are also expected to spend **one night a week** where they work towards them and collect evidence to present during student-teacher conferences.

Our 1:1 iPad program is gradually taking effect, with a strong emphasis on becoming a safe and responsible Internet user. The vast majority of students has taken proud possession of their iPads and are ready to roll. **On Monday 10th February**, we are welcoming several guests to observe some of our exemplary work using digital and online technologies safely. All students have received their **apps lists** and we will commence work with them soon, so if you haven’t already, please assist your child by ensuring that these have been downloaded as soon as possible.

We are also reminded that **Facebook** and many social networking sites are restricted to those aged **13 years +** and are not permitted at school, we ask that you support us in monitoring this.

All students have diaries to assist in the development of organisational skills. Students are expected to write in upcoming events, due dates for homework tasks and their reading logs.

**English**

Students participate in a variety of independent, small group and whole class reading activities, Guided Reading sessions, comprehension tasks, word analysis, research activities, shared reading and book reviews. Students will use technological tools such as iPads and laptops to enhance their learning. They are encouraged to read a wide variety of materials including novels, magazines, research material, newspaper articles and texts. Our term one writing foci will include information reports and persuasive texts.
Challenge Based Learning (CBL)

Our Civics & Citizenship unit ‘How can we build the world’s best learning community?’ may sound ambitious, however it will provide opportunities for all students to reflect on themselves as learners and engage with our communities. Throughout the CBL process, students will develop their critical thinking skills through the Habits of the Mind, Bloom’s Taxonomy of Thinking, Multiple Intelligences and problem solving strategies.

Consequent term units will be:
Term 2: Science (Sustainability) - What is a biodiversity?
Term 3: Communication - How do you help a community recover from a natural disaster?
Term 4: History (Decision making and Democracy) - Who's got the power?

Numeracy

This year our maths program will incorporate whole class instruction, fluid small groupings, specific skill based workshops, and individual goal directed learning sessions. Students will use an extensive range of mathematical tools including, but not limited to, hands-on concrete materials, Mathletics program materials and iPad applications in order to meet their learning needs. Students will be required to complete weekly mathematics homework tasks which reinforce topics and concepts be covered. Strong focus will be placed upon extending students' cognitive development and self extension through open ended problems, applying problem solving strategies, posing and investigating their own conjectures, modelling thought processes & justifying responses using mathematical reasoning.

In response to our data collected in 2013, our whole school is prioritising the learning of basic number skills and automatic recall of number facts this year. We will dedicate each Monday for the entire year towards our fluency and understandings of these areas.

Other topics for the term are:
- Probability and statistics: Presenting data and drawing conclusions.
- Measurement, conversion of units and real life problems.
- Using common fractions in the real world.

Homework

The Homework Policy at Flemington PS follows the guidelines set by DEECD (see link below).

We expect:
- A minimum of 30 minutes nightly reading. This may be a combination of independent reading or shared reading with parents/older siblings across a range of fiction and non-fiction texts.
- A minimum of 5 Mathletics tasks, which will be assigned and monitored by classroom teachers. These tasks will reinforce concepts currently being taught.
- Weekly teacher assigned spelling tasks, beginning with the Oxford 1000 frequently used wordlist.
- New in 2014: as part of their 30mins reading each night, students will regularly be required to read and respond short assigned texts at home which will then be used for class learning tasks.
- Occasionally, students will be required to work on their CBL projects as necessary.

It would greatly assist your child if you worked with them to develop a regular homework routine in a quiet area for working. As a general rule of thumb there should be no ‘screen time’ on iPads or
other devices in the hour before bedtime. This is in the interests of a good night’s sleep and to aide in your child’s learning and development.

**5/6 Swimming Program**
This term the 5/6 students are involved in the 9-week swimming program at Travancore. As this comprises part of our school curriculum we expect all students to attend. The timetable for the swimming program is as follows:

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**5/6 Specialist Subjects**
Term 1 introduces a new language at Flemington Primary School. In accordance with your vote last year, we are pleased to welcome Shaun Wang who will be teaching Mandarin as our LOTE in 2014 and beyond. We are again privileged to have 3 additional specialist programs this year including Art, Science, and P.E. The sport program will involve the students having a P.E. lesson each week with a specialist, as well as an instructional swimming program. Students have already been invited to try out for the Interschool Swimming Carnival, which will be held on Friday 28th February. Training sessions have already commenced and will continue at Travancore each Friday.

**Other Notes:**
- As we have children in our school with life threatening allergies to eggs and nuts, please ensure your child does not bring any eggs, nuts or nut products (such as Peanut Butter or Nutella) in their daily lunch. Sharing of food is discouraged.
- Children are required to wear a hat (wide-brimmed) during playtimes and when participating in any outdoor activities during Term 1. Our SunSmart policy specifies that children without a hat must remain in a specific allocated shaded area whenever they are outdoors. No hat, no play!
- Please remember to check daily for any notes that your child brings home.

Please don’t hesitate to contact your child’s teacher if you have any queries or concerns. We look forward to working together with you in 2014!

The 5/6 team.