Welcome back to the start of the 2015 school year. I hope you all had a lovely break. We had an excellent start to the school year with the children settling into their new classes very well. The Prep children were delightful and settled in very smoothly. This can be attributed to the excellent work the parents did previously to prepare their children for school along with the work of the Kinder teachers and Prep teachers as part of the Kinder to School transition program.

If your child has any medical conditions which we need to be aware of please inform the office as soon as practical.

All Principals have been advised to inform parents that the Education Department does not provide personal accident insurance for students. Parents and guardians are responsible for paying the cost of medical treatment for injured students, including transport costs. Reasonably low cost accident policies are available from commercial insurers.

On special occasions children will share celebratory cakes in their classrooms. If your child has a low tolerance for certain food or any allergies please inform your child’s class teacher so they can make alternate arrangements for your child.

We have children in the school who have severe allergies to peanuts. We ask all parents to refrain from sending peanut butter, Nutella or any peanut products to school please.

If you wish to assist the class teachers in the classroom and on camps and excursions it has now become mandatory for all volunteers to have a Working With Children Check. Log on to www.workingwithchildren.vic.gov.au after completing the online form. Then make an appointment at Australia Post. Take the application summary and receipt that you printed at the end of the online application and passport-size photo of yourself. Also take documents that prove your identity.

We have a number of vacancies for School Council this year. Please see the attached information which outlines the process. If you would like more information regarding School Council please do not hesitate in contacting me.

The newsletter is distributed once a fortnight via email and is on our web site. Please ensure you have given Pam your email address if you would like to receive it electronically. If you would prefer to receive a hard copy you may collect one from the office.

The app. Tiqbiz will once again be used by our school to communicate information with families in an easily accessible manner via your phone/tablet. Now we have commenced a new year, you will need to make new Tiqbiz selections for your child's grade. To do this;
- Go into the tiqbiz app and click the menu button in the top left
- Click “find & tick”
- Type in our name, and click when it appears
- Tap to select the grades you require. It is also worth adding ‘whole school’
- Once you have completed the changes return to the main menu and select ‘inbox’ where your selections should appear
- The app. is available for both Apple and Android users.

Our school swimming sports will be held on Wednesday the 11th of February. We would appreciate parents assistance on this day. If you are available to assist please contact Rhia Love at School.

Our school fete is being held on Sunday the 8th of March, Each class will be responsible for running a stall on this day. The teachers and School Council will be seeking your assistance to ensure once again a successful outcome. This is our major fundraiser for the year. You may have noticed our new sunshade over the Junior playground. This was purchased from last years fete’s profit, as was the new junior playground from previous years fetes. More information regarding the fete will be distributed shortly.

Sue Becker
Principal
Classroom Information Sessions
All parents are welcome to attend the Information sessions below:
Monday February 9 - Year 3/4 Information session in Room 2 at 3.45pm.
Tuesday February 10 - Year 5/6 Information session in Senior Building at 3.45pm.
Tuesday February 17 - Prep Information session in Prep classroom at 3.45pm.
Wednesday February 18 - Year 1/2 Information session in Room 22 at 3.45pm.

School Photo Day
School Photo day is next Thursday February 12.
On Photo day, please send your child to school with:
1. Completed envelope (even if not placing an order or ordering online)
   NB: Family envelopes can be picked up from office before photo day.
2. Best school clothes.
3. Their best smile.

Active After School
The Active Government funding has ceased for Active After School Program. The Federal Government is working on a new initiative which may start mid year.

Announcements and Messages
A reminder to parents that we no longer make afternoon announcements. Please ensure your child/ren know what to do at the end of the day. If you feel a reminder is needed please write it in your children diary.

Term Planner & Canteen menu
The Term planner & Canteen menu were sent out with the eldest student this week. If you haven’t received a one please call into the office.

An important cybersafety message
Our school has registered to take part in eSmart, a guiding framework for schools to manage cybersafety and wellbeing.

eSmart will help teachers, students and the whole school community embrace the benefits of technology and reduce our exposure to cyberspace risks such as cyberbullying, identity theft, online sexual predation and accessing or sending inappropriate images and content.

Funded by the Victorian Government, eSmart is an initiative of The Alannah and Madeline Foundation, a national charity committed to protecting children from violence.

Welcome to Camp Australia After School Care
Our operation hours are -3.30pm-6.00pm
After school care contact number- 0424 483 477.

Safer Internet Day (SID) is organised by Insafe in February of each year to promote safer and more responsible use of online technology and mobile phones, especially among children and young people across the world.

Safer Internet Day 2015 will be celebrated on Tuesday 10 February 2015, with the strapline, once again, of “Let’s create a better internet together” following the success of last year's campaign.

Our work towards achieving eSmart status will involve the whole school community—for example, we’ll be integrating cybersafety into our wellbeing policies, establishing clear procedures to deal with incidents, and delivering curriculum around the smart, safe and responsible use of technology.

We’ll regularly update you on our progress through this newsletter. More information is also available at www.esmart.org.au
Cowes Primary School  
School Council Elections 2015 Information for Parents

What is a school council and what does it do?

All government schools in Victoria have a school council. They are legally constituted bodies that are given powers to set the key directions of a school within state-wide guidelines. In doing this, a school council is able to directly influence the quality of education that the school provides for its students.

Who is on the school council?

For most school councils, there are three possible categories of membership:

A mandated elected Parent category-more than one third of the total members must be from this Category. Department of Education and Early Childhood Development (DEECD) employees can be Parent members at their child’s school as long as they are not employed at the school.

A mandated elected DEECD employee category-members of this category may make up no more than one-third of the total membership of school council. The Principal of the school is automatically one of these members.

An optional Community member category—members are co-opted by a decision of the council because of their special skills, interests or experiences. DEECD employees are not eligible to be Community members.

Generally, the term of office for all members is two years. The term of office of half the members expires each year, creating vacancies for the annual school council elections.

Why is Parent membership so important?

Parents on school councils provide important viewpoints and have valuable skills that can help shape the direction of the school.

Those parents who become active on a school council find their involvement satisfying in itself and may also find that their children feel a greater sense of belonging.

How can you become involved?

The most obvious way is to vote in the elections, which are held in Term 1 each year. However, ballots are only held if more people nominate as candidates than there are positions vacant.

In view of this, you might seriously consider

" Standing for election as a member of the school council
", Encouraging another person to stand for election.

Do I need special experience to be on school council?

No. What you do need is an interest in your child’s school and the desire to work in partnership with others to help shape the school’s future.

What do you need to do to stand for election?

The principal will issue a Notice of Election and Call for Nominations following the commencement of Term 1 each year. All school council elections must be completed by the end of March.

If you decide to stand for election, you can arrange for someone to nominate you as a candidates or you can nominate yourself in the Parent category.

DEECD employees whose child is enrolled in a school in which they are not employed are eligible to nominate as parents for the school council at that school.

Once the nomination for is completed, return it to the principal within the time stated on the Notice of Election. You will receive a Nomination Form Receipt in the mail following the receipt of your completed nomination.

Generally, if there are more nominations received than there are vacancies on council, a ballot will be conducted during the two weeks after the call for nominations has closed.
Schedule 4: Notice of Election and Call for Nominations

An election is to be conducted for members of the School Council of Cowes Primary School.

Nomination forms may be obtained from the school and must be lodged by 4.00pm on 09/02/2015.

The ballot will close at 4.00pm on 03/03/2015.

Following the closing of nominations a list of the nominations received will be posted at the school. The terms of office, membership categories and number of positions in each membership category open for election are as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>MEMBERSHIP CATEGORY</th>
<th>TERM OF OFFICE</th>
<th>NUMBER OF POSITIONS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Parent member</td>
<td>From the day after the date of the declaration of the poll in 2014 to and inclusive of the date of the declaration of the poll in 2016</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DEECD employee member</td>
<td>From the day after the date of the declaration of the poll in 2014 to and inclusive of the date of the declaration of the poll in 2016</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

We also have two one year parent member casual vacancies to fill.

If the number of nominations is less than the number of vacancies, a notice to that effect and calling for further nominations will be posted in a prominent position at the school.

Suzanne Becker
Principal
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>EVENT</th>
<th>DATE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a) Notice of election and call for nominations</td>
<td>Monday, 9 February 2015</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b) Closing date for nominations</td>
<td>Monday, 16 February 2015</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c) Date by which the list of candidates and nominators will be posted</td>
<td>Wednesday, 18 February 2015</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d) Date by which ballot papers will be prepared and distributed</td>
<td>On or before Monday, 23 February 2015</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>e) Close of ballot</td>
<td>Tuesday, 3 March 2015</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>f) Vote count</td>
<td>Tuesday, 3 March 2015</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>g) Declaration of ballot</td>
<td>Tuesday, 3 March 2015</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>h) Special council meeting to co-opt Community members (the principal will preside)</td>
<td>Monday, 16 March 2015</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>i) First council meeting to elect office bearers (the principal will preside)</td>
<td>Monday, 16 March 2015</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
There is more than one way to keep your loved ones safe

Phillip Island Fire Brigade
Volunteers working together to protect our community
Interested?
email: pifire.vol@gmail.com
South Gippsland Carers
South Gippsland Carers is a group of carers and families of people with additional needs and frail aged. We are there for all carers who live in the South Gippsland region, and we provide support, social get-togethers, information sharing and regular meetings.

Meetings are held on the 4th Tuesday of the month during school Term
10am – 12 noon
Memorial Hall Meeting Room 2 Michael Place Leongatha (opposite the Post Office)
Next meeting: Feb 24th

For more information please contact Heather: 56 689 243, or Sheron 5662 3285

Details for the remainder of 2015:
24th March - Guest Speaker from Carers Vic speaking on Lowering the cost of your Electricity Bill, etc
26th April
28th May - Guest speaker Chris Charles from Consumer Affairs
23rd June
28th July - Guest speaker Kim Boulding, Social Worker from local hospital
25th August - MEETING IN COMMUNITY HOUSE, BRUCE ST. LEONGATHA this month ONLY!!! (Owing to our Daffodil Festival in Memorial Hall)
22nd September
27th October
24th November

Need help spelling, reading and writing?
English and Maths Tutoring
Primary and Secondary
Corina Suidgeest 0435 502 693
B.A. Vis Arts, Grad Dip Ed
corina.suidgeest@gmail.com
Teaching literacy using the Spalding method.
We can de-code the English language by learning phonograms (letters and groups of letters) and the sounds they can make.
Learn spelling and the rules of English systematically.
Help with essay writing and text analysis for Secondary students.

Call Kerry or Nathan on 1800 441 259 (Free call)
Mob: 0438 822 297 or Phone 03 5952 3615
Fax 03 5952 3643
Email: Info@phillipislandremovalist.com.au
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