‘Get to know you’ meetings:
Our school this week conducted ‘Get to know you’ meetings for parents with children in years 1 – 6. This provided an opportunity for you to meet on a 1:1 basis with your child’s teacher to discuss and share any information that might support the teacher in better personalising the teaching and learning program for your child. It also gave us all the opportunity to have a brief chat and ‘get to know’ each other a little more.

School Council Elections:
This week, I will call for nominations for both the Parent and DET categories for School Council. School Councillors whose terms expire at this election are as follows:
- Ian McKinlay (DET rep)
- Samantha Brown (DET rep)
- John Pianta (DET rep)
- Marita Warner (Parent rep)
- Loula Tarenidis (Parent rep)
- Marina Younger (Parent rep)

At Donvale PS we are fortunate in having a very proactive School Council who works supportively with the school’s leadership to provide the best possible education outcomes for our students. School Councils play a key role in all schools and the role of School Councillor can be a very rewarding experience. It’s a great way to get involved and have a real say in what your school is doing for its students. If you are considering standing for election, you can either nominate yourself or be nominated by someone who is eligible for the same category as you wish to stand for. More information about the School Council and the roles and responsibilities that it involves, are available at the office.

KidsMatter Wellbeing Day & Welcome Evening:
A reminder that we have our Kids Matter Well-being Day and Welcome evening coming up on Wednesday 25th February. During this day, all our students will be involved in activities that promote physical and emotional well-being.
families are invited to visit the classrooms from **2.30 – 3.30pm** to share in the fun the children have had throughout the day. Families are then invited to come back to the school from **5.30 – 7.30pm** where we will join together for a big WELCOME to our school and the new school year. You are encouraged to bring along a picnic rug, some nibbles / snacks and drink to help enjoy the evening and relax with us all. Our wonderful Parents Association will be cooking a yummy sausage sizzle so if you are short on time, there is no need to go hungry. We are also looking forward to being entertained by our very own teacher / staff band, The Right Staff, during the evening. Please add this day to your diary. We hope to see you there.

I found this recent article, by Colleen Ricci from the Age newspaper, very interesting reading. I thought I would share it with you.

**Keyboard classes take over from handwriting lessons in Finland's schools**

**What is happening?**

Finland’s Savon Sanomat newspaper recently reported that cursive handwriting - “joined-up” writing - would not be compulsorily taught in Finnish schools from 2016, and that it would be replaced by lessons in keyboard typing. Finland’s National Board of Education spokeswoman Minna Harmanen acknowledged the major cultural shift the change represents but said fluent typing skills have become more relevant to modern life and are an "important national competence" every child should learn.

Finland is one of the first countries to officially make cursive handwriting lessons optional in schools.

**Why is it happening?**

Advertiment

Finland’s decision acknowledges that the world has changed, that the rise of technology has transformed the way we work and communicate. Handwritten documents, letters, cards and traditional "snail mail" post have given way to typed documents, email and text messages made using computers, tablets or phones. A British survey of 2000 people conducted in 2012 found that one third of respondents claimed to have not written anything "properly" by hand in the previous six months.

The growing dominance of technology has coincided with a general decline in the amount of time formerly devoted to the teaching of handwriting in schools, including those in Australia.

**Is it happening anywhere else?**

While Finland has officially taken the plunge in phasing out cursive handwriting on a national scale, the United States - where the subject is still being debated - has made similar moves. The nation’s Common Core State Standards (curriculum guidelines adopted by the majority of American states), no longer require children to learn cursive handwriting, but they are expected to be proficient in keyboard skills by the end of grade 4. The guidelines call for the teaching of "legible writing" - specifically printing - but only in the early primary years.

Keyboard skills have also become highly valued in the US, because there is an increased dependence on online testing for the evaluation of student performance, and students are generally required to submit typed, rather than handwritten work.

**Will Australia follow Finland's lead?**

Cursive handwriting continues to be taught in Australian schools, although the font styles vary from state to state. In Victoria, teachers are expected to follow the conventions of "Victorian Modern Cursive". However, the time spent on cursive writing instruction has reportedly dropped from an average of 45 minutes a day in the 1960s to five minutes a day.

The Australian Curriculum defines "handwriting" as: "The production of legible, correctly-formed letters by hand or with the assistance of writing tools, for example, pencil grip or assistive technology". According to its guidelines, writing - by hand or with the use of word processors and other software - should be taught from foundation level to year 7. Many argue that the rise of digital technology has given the keyboard equal status with handwriting, and that there should be less emphasis on handwriting as a consequence. Others say that handwriting should be valued more highly, particularly given that handwritten exams remain the primary tool for student assessment.

**What do keyboard supporters say?**

Some argue that handwriting has become outdated and that we should not be too precious about its decline. They say technological upheaval has been part of the writing’s history, from clay tablets to the inventions of paper and the printing press, and that this latest phase is simply part of this evolution. They say it is not how text is produced that is important, but its overall quality.

Others say handwriting is no longer valued highly in the job market, where fast typists are deemed to be more efficient workers; and that digital communication is easier, faster and can accomplish more with the simple addition of photos, gifs, or spreadsheets compared to handwritten documents. Also, bills can be paid and forms filled out online, even those requiring signatures. While the capacity to write is still considered important, they claim longhand printing is sufficient as well as being clearer and easier to read than cursive. They ask, why should schools keep teaching handwriting if typing is more useful?

**What do handwriting supporters say?**

Some fear that handwriting, both cursive and print, may be lost altogether, and that people may therefore lose the ability to read handwritten material, such as historical documents. Others lament the potential loss of personality and the “human touch” inherent in handwritten communication.

Although the ease, speed and versatility of technology are widely acknowledged, handwriting proponents say that how we learn to write does indeed matter. Neuroscientists and psychologists have stated the importance of handwriting in improving brain activation and stimulating the learning process. They argue that its loss may have detrimental effects on the ability of future
generations to read and write. Research also indicates that learning to write in cursive further improves students’ motor and visual skills, eye-to-hand co-ordination, spatial awareness, hand and finger dexterity, cognitive function and brain development. They say the physical act of handwriting also facilitates the retention of information and the flow of ideas.

**In conclusion**

Despite a general trend that favours keyboard skills over handwriting, research expounding the benefits of cursive has been persuasive for some. For example, France reintroduced cursive writing for early primary students a decade ago. Others say there should be room for both keyboard and handwriting instruction in school curriculums to ensure that all students are engaged and not disadvantaged.

Some claim there has been a revival in the graphic arts and calligraphy in response to the perceived overemphasis on digital technology and “soulless” keyboards. They argue that while email is valuable for quick answers and business communication, there will always be a place for distinctive, handwritten communication; noting that technology, despite its marvels, doesn’t always work.

Kind Regards

*Lena Clark*

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**February**

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<td><strong>‘Student well-being’ Day 5.30-7.30pm: ‘Welcome back’ BBQ</strong></td>
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Schedule 4: Notice of Election and Call for Nominations

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

Nomination forms may be obtained from the school and must be lodged by 4.00 pm on Thursday 19 February 2015.

The ballot will close at 4.00 pm on Friday 6 March 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:

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<th>MEMBERSHIP CATEGORY</th>
<th>TERM OF OFFICE</th>
<th>NUMBER OF POSITIONS</th>
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<td>Parent member</td>
<td>From the day after the date of the declaration of the poll in 2015 to and inclusive of the date of the declaration of the poll in 2017</td>
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<tr>
<td>Parent member</td>
<td>From the day after the date of the declaration of the poll in 2015 to and inclusive of the date of the declaration of the poll in 2016</td>
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<tr>
<td>DEECD employee member</td>
<td>From the day after the date of the declaration of the poll in 2015 to and inclusive of the date of the declaration of the poll in 2017</td>
<td>2</td>
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<tr>
<td>DEECD employee member</td>
<td>From the day after the date of the declaration of the poll in 2015 to and inclusive of the date of the declaration of the poll in 2016</td>
<td>1</td>
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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.

Lena Clark  
Principal
General
From The Office

Just a reminder to parents that School fees are due tomorrow, Friday 13th. Thank you to those families who have already paid. We will be sending reminder statements next week.

Also to Grade 1/2 families, Tiny Chef Excursion money is now due.

Samantha and Wendy

Can you help?

As a part of our upcoming Wellbeing Day I am looking for donations of the following items.

- Empty small plastic bottles 600ml or less
- Glitter of every and any colour
- Food dye
- Clear liquid glue (lots and lots!)

Thanks in anticipation...

Rebecca Signorini

DPS Skoolbag App

If you already have this app, please make sure you have updated the settings to include the new year levels for your children.

Please download this app to your mobile devices if you haven't done so already. It's a great way to keep in touch with school events, and we will be adding notices, permission and payment functionality in time for next year. Snippets is also distributed this way. If you are running iOS 8, make sure you have updated the app since downloading it, in order to iron out a few bugs.

iPhone & iPad Users: 1. Go to the App Store. 2. Search for 'Donvale Primary School' (If using an iPad, change the dropdown list to 'iPhone Apps') 3. Download 4. Click 'OK' to receive Push Notifications 5. Click 'More' on the bottom right of the app, then 'Setup'

6. Select the Push Categories that apply to you - the Year Level(s) of your children.

Android Users: 1. Go to the 'Play Store'. 2. Search for 'Donvale Primary School'. 3. Install 4. Click 'Accept' for various permissions - no data will be modified on your device. 5. Open the app. 6. Click 'More' on the bottom right of the app, then 'Setup'

7. Select the Push Categories that apply to you - the Year Level(s) of your children.

SNIPPETS NEWSLETTER

From this year, our Snippets newsletter will no longer be available in hard copy format. Parents wishing to access our newsletter can do so via our website and / or have a link forwarded directly to their email address. If you would prefer this option, it would be appreciated if you could provide your email contact to Wendy Cheesman, our Office Manager, as soon as possible. It is also available on our Skoolbag App (see above to download the app). As a school that is focused on modelling sustainable practices as much as possible, I'm sure you would agree that this is a very positive move for our environment by our school.
What is KidsMatter?

As many of you may be aware, we are very enthusiastic about our inaugural DPS Wellbeing Day. This day will be about motivating and teaching students how to be physically and mentally fit, in order to be happy and healthy learners. This day is also going to be our KidsMatter Launch Day, which is a significant and exciting day for our school. For those that are new to our school, please read below to learn all about how KidsMatter is going to benefit your child and our school community.

KidsMatter is a mental health and wellbeing framework for primary schools and is proven to make a positive difference to the lives of Australian children. KidsMatter is works primarily to promote preventative measures in order to raise strong, healthy and mentally fit kids.

The KidsMatter framework is divided into the four component areas to make the task of working to improve student's mental health and wellbeing in schools more manageable.

The four components are:

- Positive school community
- Social and emotional learning for students
- Working with parents and carers
- Helping children with mental health difficulties.

Each component is unpacked into more specific target areas and goals to help schools with their planning.

For more information, please visit http://www.kidsmatter.edu.au/primary. The website has some wonderful videos with case studies from schools across Australia. It also has some very useful resources and links for parents.

At Donvale Primary we are currently working on the first component, ‘Building a Positive School Community.’ The staff have participated is four professional learning sessions, led by the KidsMatter action team. It has been wonderful to work together as a staff to brainstorm and implement strategies that will build on the wonderful sense of community we have at our school. The staff have participated is four professional learning sessions thus far, led by the KidsMatter action team

Some of these initiatives have included:

- DPS Wellbeing and KidsMatter Launch Day
- All teachers out in the school yard after school to connect with the community and make ourselves available to parents and students
- Wine and cheese welcome night after the Foundation information session for new Foundation parents.
- ‘Welcome Back’ BBQ for all DPS families at the completion of our Wellbeing Day
- ‘Getting to Know You’ interviews
- ‘Carols on the lawn’ at the end of the year
- Regular Snippets articles educating parents about raising physically and mentally fit children

Lashay Cartledge and Rebecca Signorini, on behalf of the KidsMatter Action team
Welcome back everyone, and a special welcome to all the new families at our school.

The form will be handed out to all the classes tomorrow. To be fair, as always we will not taking reservations from anyone.

Please send it back to the school with the payment ASAP if your child wants to participate in this program. Our resources are limited so once we have enough numbers we can’t take any more children, and DJC fills up very quickly.

Sessions start in term 2, in Term 1 we do all the preparations such as forms, receipts, writing the cookbook, etc.

Our 2015 menu plan:

Term 2: Entrees. "Mini kebab served with fresh garden salad and flat bread" (Learn to mix the mince meat with chopped veggies so it's a healthy version of kebab, then present on the plate with garnish and home made flat bread)

Term 3: Main course "Crispy wonton served on fried rice and savoury coleslaw" (Learn how to wrap won ton pastry, this is the hardest style of dumpling wrapping but with step by step instructions of course nothing is too hard for the little chefs to do)

Term 4: Dessert. "Pancake served with fruit salsa and ice cream" (Learn to make our own style pancake which is half pancake and half crepe. But most importantly learn the different style of folding the pancake on the platter) And our annual Christmas party at the end of the year.

Thank you to the many parents who have already offered their help in the program. We are going to maximise the use of our produce from the school vegetable garden.

The children have been amazed with the different shapes of zucchini from the Younger Family as well as the Smith Family who are our neighbours and had children at DPS 40 years ago.

If you need to know more about this program please contact Mrs Clark or Jacinta Erwin (Charlotte FGH, Allie 12W, Jaimee 34M) or Nat Tsui (Max FB, James 12S) or Cass Buckle (Joseph F1H, Alex 34M) or myself (Nash 56G).

Most mornings I will be in the junior chef room (middle building, second last on the right, next to the Mandarin room), or you can speak to me in the yard. It's going to be another delicious year in the junior chef program.

We don't cook, we create food.

Liang Dimitroff
Basketball

Basketball times for games on Saturday 14 February.

Dynamites playing at 3.10pm at the DISC 2
Destroyers playing at 1.30pm at the DISC 2
Demons playing at 11.50am at the DISC 2
Daredevils playing at 12.40pm at the DISC 1
Dreamers have a BYE
Daisies playing at 9.20am at the DISC 2
Daffodils playing at 10.10am at the DISC 1
Diamonds playing at 10.10am at the DISC 2
Dolphins playing at 10.10am at Leads Street

Demons won 22 to 6, had an awesome start to the season. All the boys worked well together as a team contributing to the great result. Well done to Andrew on his first week of coaching!

Diamonds tried their hardest throughout game but unfortunately were defeated.

Dynamites won 29 to 12 and James did really well for his first game.

Daredevils played a fantastic first game winning 2-0, with Spencer P scoring for the team. This was the first ever B'ball game for all these players so it was a great effort!

Dolphins had a smashing first game of the season obliterating the opponents 33 - 0 with Amy L shooting her first game goal, all 4 of them!! :)

We are recruiting – especially BOYS who are born in either 2005 or 2006 to join our squad of U11’s. We currently have 10 boys playing in U11 and if we can recruit 4 – 6 more, we can split into two teams. Please contact Marita Warner or Cassandra Buckle for more information.

Birthday Wishes To

Jonathan H, Christopher F, Lucas M

Who are celebrating birthdays from 13th to 19th February
Program Update

Dear families,

This week we have been celebrating Random Acts of Kindness Week and Valentines Day. We have all been working on a “Kindness Mission” to complete 10 random acts of kindness within the week. All the staff are extremely proud of the children this week as they have demonstrated great acts of kindness and caring. Well done everybody!

Next week we will be doing a lot of fun activities to celebrate both Pancake Shrove Tuesday and Chinese New Year on Thursday. There will be lots of fun themed crafts, cooking and games!

Special welcome to our new OshClubbers, especially all our new Prep students. New parents and students: Please feel free to drop in at any stage to orientate yourself with the program and to meet the staff before your first day at OshClub.

Remember to bring your hats everyday as we follow “No hat, no play” policy in term 4.

Thanks,

Kate

Remember bookings can be made right until 12pm the night before, or you can book on the day by calling or leaving the text message but there will be an extra charge of $3.00 for bookings within 24 hours. If you’re ever stuck and would like your child to attend OSH After School Care you can call me or leave a message on 0402 362 443 and I will get back to you. For some reason if you need to cancel the child from attending the after school care session you can cancel online if it is before 24 hours or leave a text message on the program phone (0402362443/98422261) if it is on the day.

Please remember to update the contact details (Especially the phone numbers and address) on the enrolment form if there is any change. You can do so online.

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<td><strong>Chinese Zodiac Box Craft</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Gymnastic skills</strong></td>
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<td><strong>ABC Basketball</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Chinese Dragon Paper Plate Puppet</strong></td>
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OSHC program phone: 0402 362 443/9842 2261
Coordinator: Kate
Assistants: Caroline and Jennifer
OSHClub Head Office: 03 85649000

*All families must be enrolled to attend the program, remember this is Free!! Please create an account online at [www.oshclub.com.au](http://www.oshclub.com.au) all bookings and cancellations can also be managed via your online account. For on the day bookings please contact the Coordinator direct at the program.*
Parent’s Association

ICY POLE RECESS - FRIDAY
13 FEBRUARY
Sales from the canteen window at recess
$1.00 for an icy delight.

A balanced diet is chocolate in both hands....
Cadbury Chocolate Drive
Sell a box of 50 jumbo freddos for $1.00
or donate to help raise money for the school.
Forms have been sent this week.
Get ready for Freddo’s for breakie.
Ribbit!
Chocolates coming home 20th February

BBQ
Wednesday 25 February –
5.30pm – 7.30pm
PA will be providing BBQ sausages for $2.50. So don’t cook on Wellbeing Day, make it a night off, & enjoy a yummy sausage & a catch up with the DPS community.

Sushi Meal Deal Day
Wednesday 4 March 2015
Forms sent out soon.

PA MEETING

It’s going to be a fun Term but we need your help.
Great activities planned, get involved & help raise money for our kids.
Friday 20 March - 1.30pm in the Library
All welcome.
Help with one event, take on a committee role or just come to a meeting. Many hands make light work......