The Thallon SS way is to be at school every day, always do your best, live and learn together, be safe, responsible, respectful and an active learner!
PRINCIPAL’S NOTE

Welcome to a new school year!

I’d like to once again extend a warm welcome back to Thallon State School, to all students, parents and families. This year, we have been lucky enough to welcome 8 wonderful new Prep students, and an awesome Year 1 student, to our school! We’re very excited to work with you and your families over the coming years.

I am very excited to be back here in Thallon for the 2017 school year, and am very much looking forward to leading our vibrant students, staff and school through this year, as we strive to improve our students learning outcomes.

Principal’s Award

Congratulations to Chloe J for being awarded with the Principal’s Award for week 1. Chloe is a highly focussed learner, who leads by example in the classroom.

Explicit Improvement Agenda, 2017

Thallon State School’s Explicit Improvement Agenda for 2017, is the Teaching of Reading. To drive improvement in our students’ reading outcomes, we are focussing on the following strategies:

- Developing an expert teaching team through targeted Professional Development and Coaching.
- Continuing to refine and implement our whole-school approach to the Explicit Teaching of Reading and Reading Comprehension strategies.
- Upskilling our Teacher-Aides to achieve the best outcomes from our reading rotations, and to provide support to the students who need it most.
- Developing and implementing a Reading Intervention program to support learners who are at risk of not achieving National Minimum Standard or Regional Benchmarks.
- Investigating and implementing ways to better communicate reading data and results to parents and families.

Please remember the important role you play at home in supporting your child’s reading development - it is essential that parents are engaging their children in various texts at home, talking about what the child has read, and very importantly, ensuring children are reading for enjoyment, daily.

Attendance

At Thallon SS, we share a common belief that all students can learn and be successful. For this to be a reality, it is essential that students attend school, every day. Our whole-school attendance target for 2017 is 95%.

Same Day Student Absence Notifications

The safety and wellbeing of students are the highest priorities for our school and the Department of Education and Training. From the beginning of this year, all state schools are required to notify parents on the same day a student is absent from school without explanation. At Thallon SS, we will be using up to 20 minutes of dedicated Teacher-Aide time daily, to make phone calls or send SMS messages to parents who’s children are absent without explanation.

This Teacher-Aide time is extremely valuable in the classroom, so please help us to minimise the time one of our Teacher-Aides has to spend out of the classroom by doing the following:

Please notify the school of a child’s absence as soon as possible on the day of the absence, prior to 9.00am, by sending an SMS to 0428 348 958.

Well done to our 100% attenders in week 1!

Brittany Brodie
Jayden Ruby
Chaise Jack J
Hazel Abigail
Lola Marshall

Brock Lyla Noah Jack P
Cooper Kate
George Beau Mikaela Daniel C
Sophie Georgie
Lucy Chloe J Mason Mac
Meg Claire
Skyla John F Daniel G Clay Chloe L
Shayla Clancy

Acting Principal: Mr Ryan Trama

Remember, the Thallon SS way is to be at school every day, always do your best, live and learn together, be safe, responsible, respectful, and an active learner!
**3-4 News**

It has been a pleasure to welcome our industrious Year 2 students from last year, up into the Year 3/4 class for the new school year. I have been very impressed by the work ethic, positive attitudes and leadership skills that our new Year 3 students, and Year 4 students, have demonstrated throughout the first two weeks.

In English this term, we are investigating narrative structure, and the language features used by Author’s to engage their audience. We are currently reading Roald Dahl’s ‘The Twits’ as part of our English unit. This is a very engaging narrative, and students love the interesting and humorous noun groups that the author uses to describe the characters in the story. At the conclusion of the unit, students will be writing a new chapter that could be included in ‘The Twits’.

In Maths, we are exploring Number and Place Value, with students demonstrating their knowledge of three and four-digit numbers, as they count forwards and backwards, represent, compare and order these numbers.

**Regards, Mr Trama**

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**P-2 Catch up**

Welcome back to school. I hope that you all had a wonderful break!

We have had a great start to school this year. Our Preps are doing a terrific job settling into the school routine. They are remembering to have their desks ready for the day as soon as they get to school and they confidently follow the lunchtime procedures. The progress they have made in less than two weeks is amazing. Our Year 1 and 2 students have grown taller and are ready for more learning.

I would also like to welcome Mrs Allie Hill to our classroom. Mrs Allie will be working on Thursday and Fridays in the Prep - Year 2 class.

Please make sure that your child has a water bottle at school. This bottle is taken into class and the children are able to drink from it during lesson times. It is preferred that children have a water bottle in class as it limits the amount of time travelling to and from the bubblers outside.

All children have commenced their homework. A huge thanks for assisting with getting this completed. It is great to see that a majority of children have returned their homework each day. This allows easy swapping of readers and checking of sight words.

Please give us a call or drop in if you have any questions or issues regarding homework.

Thursday will be Library day for our class. Please make sure that your child has a library bag in their backpack so they are able to borrow a book.

Our school has a ‘No hat, No play’ policy. We have had a few children leave their hats at home or on the bus. Could you please pack a spare broad brim hat in one of the pockets of your child’s backpacks so they are still able to play if their hat is left behind. Sharing hats is discouraged at school.

We are looking forward to a terrific term.

**Regards, Mrs Libby**

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**5-6 News**

Welcome back to a new year at school and I hope you had a great holiday. The year has begun in English with the study of fantasy narratives. We are looking at quests, the building of tension in a story as the plot develops, and how characters are introduced and their traits gradually revealed. We will be studying History in Semester One and Geography in Semester Two. Firstly, in History we have looked at the reasons Australia was colonised by the British, the effects their settlement had on Indigenous peoples, as well as the difficulties faced by the convicts and soldiers. Soon, we will take a closer look at the penal colony set up at Port Arthur. This term in Science, students will be learning about life cycles, endangered species, the impacts humans have on the environment, and how to conduct fair tests whilst studying the growth of plants.

Students have elected their house leaders and student council representatives, badges will be ordered, and a special induction ceremony held to mark their achievements, at a date to be advised. A GRIP student leadership day will be held in Moree some time in May. Year Six students will be invited to attend. The Year Six jerseys have also been ordered and should be here before the end of term.

**Regards, Mrs Fulwood**

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**Dear Parents,**

My name is Allie Hill (Jones) and I am very excited to announce that I will be teaching every Thursday and Friday within the P-2 classroom. Previously, I worked at St Patricks School in St George as a Year 2 teacher. I thoroughly enjoyed my time at St Pats, however as I live on a property with my husband 60kms from St George, it was only fitting I relocated to the wonderful Thallon State School! I can’t wait to meet each and every one of you, and I know we are going to have a fantastic year of learning!

**Regards, Mrs Allie**
Hello Parents/Carers

This year I am working at Thallon State School as a Support Teacher for students and teachers, as well as HPE.

Most of you will already know me as your visiting Health and Physical Education teacher, but I have also had experience as a Learning Support and Special Education teacher prior to being a HPE teacher.

I look forward to supporting your school community in my new role.

Kelly Webster

Important Dates - 2017

February

Friday 3rd       Balonne Swim Trials
Wednesday15th   Balonne Rugby League Trials
Monday 27th     Balonne Touch Trials
TBA             P & C AGM

March

Friday 10th     Thallon Trivia Night
TBA             Swimming Lessons

Instrumental Music - Wednesdays

Week 1: 25th January
Week 3: 8th February
Week 5: 22nd February
Week 7: 8th March
Week 9: 22nd March

Starting 2017 with Parade and then straight into working and learning.
Four parenting priorities for 2017

By Michael Grose

Like the earth's crust the parenting landscape is constantly shifting always bringing new challenges for parents. Not only are children and young people constantly growing and developing but societal trends evolve and change at such rapid rates that it's hard to keep up. It's also hard to differentiate between the significant and the frivolous when it comes to trends and changes.

The following four priorities are both current and significant, deserving to be top of mind for parents as the 2017 school year begins.

1. Time to tackle technology

Want to travel along Parenting Easy Street? That's easy. Make tackling this parenting game-changer your priority. It's no point being all doom and gloom about technology because tablets, mobile phones and smartphones are here to stay. They connect us, educate us and entertain us like nothing has before.

But the jury is still out on the impact of digital devices on children and young people. Currently there are studies being conducted on the effects of technology on children's brains, as well as studies on gaming addiction, social media addiction, attention-related issues, obesity, decision-making, hand-eye coordination and sleep to name a few.

The technology genie maybe out of the bottle, but we need to bring some sanity into the area. Children and teenagers, (and yes technology, primary school and secondary school kids can be mentioned in the same sentence as first-time smartphone users become younger by the day) who use communication technology need constant parent vigilance and diligence, a flexible approach and the ability to say a loud and clear "NO you can't have/ use that now."

It takes a lot of parental backbone to swim against the current all-encompassing technology tide. You can't hold it back, but you can slow it down. You can suggest 'it sits on the metaphorical shelf for a while or at least while you eat dinner together. You can insist that social media isn't the only way to stay in touch with friends and show them that Dr. Google may be clever but he/she only knows so much and that accurate and current information can be found offline. When it comes to kids and technology, don't be an onlooker. Make this a year for getting in the game with kids, tech boots on and all.
Four parenting priorities for 2017

2. Promote physical and mental health
Finally, good mental health habits are too of mind in Australian schools. A focus on student wellbeing is now a well-established pathway to academic success for children and young people. But kids’ levels of physical activity need a boost. Recent research tells us that children’s physical activity peaks at around four years of age in Australia and gradually decreases every year from there. It makes a mockery of the image of Australian childhood spent in the great outdoors.

Remember the old ‘healthy body, healthy mind’ maxim that past generations so fondly spruked? Well, it’s true. Physical and mental health are inextricably linked.

So this year while we encourage our kids to practise mindfulness; get a good night’s sleep and ensure they relax and unwind, let’s also make sure kids get plenty of physical activity, preferably outdoors.

3. Put the spoon back in the drawer
I’ve hidden the controversial part in the middle of the article. Ready for it? I think that parents currently do too much for kids. We spoon feed them. We make life easy and don’t demand enough from them. Not all parents, but enough that we should be worried that our kids may grow up to become risk-averse, fearful adults who have difficulty making decisions lest they make a mistake. That is, if they ever do grow up? As reported in Fairfax Media recently, “In 1970’s only one in five under-30’s in Australia lived with their parents but now it’s one in two.” This high dependency of children and teenagers on adults is the exact opposite of what adults have done in the past, which is develop their children’s independence and achieve the most important parenting outcome of all – their own redundancy.

In 2017 remove the spoon, put it back in the drawer and make independence building a high priority in your family.

4. Put integrity top of the pedestal of character traits
Every parent wants their child to have the strength and fortitude to do the right thing and not follow the crowd. This is easier for young children because the pull of the group and the allure of the media doesn’t have such a strong hold as it so often does in adolescence. Strong-willed children and those who like to have their own way can also find doing the right thing less of struggle. But the development of integrity and related traits such as respect, honesty and fairness is an important part of a child’s moral compass that will help him/her make smart decisions when you’re not around. Generally, integrity is developed in childhood and put to the test in adolescence.

In 2017 put some focus on developing a sense of integrity in your kids – the rock star of character traits.

Visit our website for more ideas and information to help you raise confident and resilient young people.

Special note: I’m thrilled to announce that my latest book Spoonfed Generation: How to raise independent children is out. It’s available at parentingideas.com.au

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