Principal’s Report

Parents may have seen the story in the Mordialloc Chelsea Leader newspaper about the issues we are having with leaking roofs and worn out window frames. Unfortunately, the reporter misquoted us with regard to asbestos. We have been safely removing asbestos from around the school during the holidays, and have this year spent over $100,000 to do so.

We have refurbished and built new sections of the school with locally raised funds and our issue is that because we have looked after the school we are not considered in the government’s funding for basic items such as a new roof and new windows and frames. We will keep trying to get our fair share of the education dollar so that our students have the best possible facilities.

At our College Assembly last Friday, numerous girls received awards in a range of activities. Language enthusiasts, public speaking, AMEB practical examinations, mathematics, beep tests, flag bearers, cheerleaders, Year 9 CASA awardees and the National History Challenge winners all received their awards. It is really important that students take the opportunities offered to them to excel in all these areas, and I congratulate all awardees.

This week exams begin for students in Years 9 to 11. They should be using their time in preparing for these exams, revising and testing themselves so they can attain the best outcomes.

All students and parents are urged to set aside Tuesday 25th November for our Presentation Evening, when all the academic awards are presented. The band has been rehearsing and the music on this evening will be of a very high standard.
College Matters

Presentation Evening 2014

This year Presentation Evening is being held on Tuesday 25th November at Robert Blackwood Hall, Monash University, commencing at 8pm sharp. Presentation Evening is an opportunity to recognise and celebrate the achievements of our students in a wide range of areas, including academic achievement, leadership, community service, music, drama and sport. There are also prizes for outstanding achievement in each Unit 3/4 study. At the conclusion of the evening we farewell our graduating class of 2014 and wish them well in their future endeavours.

This year’s guest speaker is Anna Seddon, a former student who is currently studying a Juris Doctor course at the University of Melbourne. She is currently working in an Immigration Law firm. Alongside studying, Anna has actively volunteered in a number of roles, including Young UN Women Melbourne. This year she co-founded a feminist organisation for young women called Women’s Melbourne Network, aiming to build the capability of young women and provide a platform for their voices.

All parents are invited. You can book your complimentary tickets at: http://tinyurl.com/kr8etea

Bell Times

Please note the day after Presentation Evening (Wednesday 26th November) has a late start. The following bell times will apply, including a House assembly for our new senior leaders to introduce themselves:

Wednesday 26th November (Students may enter the building at 9.00am)
Period 1 - 9.30am – 10.25am (55 minutes)
Recess - 10.25 – 11.00am (25 minutes)
House Assemblies: 11.00am – 11.20am (20 minutes)
  Kenny - VCE centre
  Melba - Lecture theatre
  Mackellar - Gym
  Jackson - JLC
Period 2 - 11.25 am – 12.20pm (55 minutes)
Period 3 - 12.25pm – 1.20pm (55 minutes)
Lunchtime - 1.20pm – 2.15pm (55 minutes)
Period 4 - 2.20pm – 3.15pm (55 minutes)

Arrangements for week commencing 17th November – Exam Feedback Week

Year 7 and 8 classes will run as timetabled.
On Friday 21st November Year 8 students will have an alternative program = 2015 Year 9 Orientation Day AND Medieval Day
Year 9, 10 and 11 students attend their designated Orientation Day as well as Thursday and Friday for Exam Feedback:
• Monday 17th November = 2015 Year 11 Orientation Day
• Tuesday 18th November = 2015 Year 12 Orientation Day
• Wednesday 19th November = 2015 Year 10 Orientation Day
• Thursday 20th and Friday 21st Timetabled classes for Exam Feedback

Ms Carol Duggan
Assistant Principal

School Council Report

You will have read in recent newsletters School Council is anxious to attract more funding from government. As our roof and guttering are in urgent need of repair and with a state election looming, we felt it timely that our campaign should begin. Council has written to candidates in the seats of Sandringham and Mordialloc asking for their support, particularly noting that MGSC has received no funding since 2005, not even during the “National Schools Building Revolution.”

ALP candidates Christine Zigouras (Sandringham) and Tim Richardson (Mordialloc) were quick to respond to our letter. They toured our school and were extremely understanding of our situation. They expressed their intention to support our plea for funding if elected.

Independent candidate, Clarke Martin (Sandringham), was also quick to respond and a school tour is to be organised with him. In his email Mr Martin stated, “ if I am elected I am committed to fixing these problems. I look forward to lobbying hard for Mentone Girls’ Secondary College.”
At the time of writing we have had no response from the sitting member of parliament for Sandringham, Murray Thompson or Louise Wreford, the member for Mordialloc.

What can make a real difference to our campaign is standing together as an entire school community to make our voice heard. Over coming weeks parents will receive an email with a pre-determined message and also with room for personal comments. We will be asking you to forward it on to our local MPs.

Thank you in advance for your support and we look forward to working hard together to attract more funding for our wonderful school.

Elizabeth Bradley
School Council President

eLearning – 1:1 mConnect Program in 2015

Year 9 Netbook Program in 2015
Details of the 1:1 mConnect Program have been sent home to all parents of Year 8 students in preparation for next year. This information can also be found on the College website. Could parents please make sure that they are familiar with the program details.

The online purchase portal for the MGSC set devices is currently open. Orders placed before 19th November will be delivered to the College and set up for students before the end of this term. Orders placed after 19th November (until early January) will be delivered to the College at the start of Term 1.

JB Education was selected as our preferred supplier following applications from a range of educational 1:1 providers. The MGSC recommended device (Lenovo 11e Yoga) is an education specific netbook designed for student use; being portable, strong and having battery life that lasts the full school day. The College ICT Helpdesk provides full support for the College selected devices.

There is also a MacBook option to support students who currently own a MacBook or who prefer this platform for Visual Communication and Media courses. MacBooks are not available through the purchase portal and the College is unable to provide ICT Helpdesk support for the MacBook option.

It is important that all students participate in this program. If parents are experiencing difficulties with this, please contact Mr Jonathan Hall or the College Administration.

Years 10-12 Netbook Program in 2015
• Students in Year 10 next year should all have a parent purchased device which will continue to be used. New Year 10 students in 2015 should join the program described above.
• Students in Year 11 next year currently have a Government funded netbook which is now two years old and should continue to function very well.
• Students in Year 12 next year currently have a Government funded netbook which is now three years old and is approaching end of life. Further information will be sent to parents of Year 12 students regarding this.

Year 7-8 iPad Program in 2015
The current Year 7 students will retain their iPads for Year 8 next year. Students commencing Year 7 next year will join the iPad program.

Further details about the 1:1 mConnect Program can be found on our website at www.mgsc.vic.edu.au/elearning. If you have specific questions, please contact Mr Jonathan Hall, Director of eLearning at hall.jonathan.m@edumail.vic.gov.au

Mr Jonathan Hall
Director of eLearning

Senior School News
Exams
Year 12 exams are approaching completion with just eight to go. Students have been well organised and have approached the tasks maturely. We are proud of them and look forward to their hard work being reflected in their final grades.

Unit 2 exams are also nearing completion and results will be available in most cases at the end of next week on exam feedback days.
2015 Year 11 and 12 Orientation Days Next Week

The program for next week has been issued to Year 10 and 11 students. Next year’s Year 11 students are required at school for Orientation Day on Monday 17th and our 2015 Year 12 students are all required on Tuesday 18th. Booklists and timetables for Headstart will be distributed on Orientation Day. There have been some minor changes in timetable blocks and some students may now find we have been able to make requested changes. In order to accommodate requests and new students, we reserve the right to make changes to any student’s blockings up until she is in the class with her on-going permanent teacher. Requests to change classes, can only be made on curriculum grounds and not because a student (or her parent) would prefer to be put in with different students or teachers. We are prepared to look at subject change requests up to the end of the first complete week of school next year.

On both Orientation Days students will be dismissed by the end of lunchtime. Students are required for exam feedback on Thursday and Friday next week, prior to the commencement of Headstart.

Presentation Night

Many of our Year 12 parents will be planning to attend on 25th November to witness their daughter’s graduation. Please book early online to be sure of seats to the Presentation Evening. Graduating students are reminded they must be in full summer uniform, including the blazer (no hoodie). Year 12 students must be seated in the auditorium by 7pm ready for a rehearsal.

Senior School Team

Middle School News

Exams begin for all Middle School students this week with Year 10s commencing on Wednesday and Year 9s on Thursday.

Middle School girls will also be involved in Orientation activities next week with the Year 9 group transitioning into Year 10 on Wednesday 19th and the Year 10 group having their Orientation day on Monday 17th.

Congratulations to all Middle School students for presenting a speech to their class for the official Public Speaking Competition. A student from each class then spoke to the whole cohort which is invaluable practice for the VCE orals. The overall winners are being recognised in the English report in this newsletter, accompanied by a photo of these recipients of the prizes.

Year 9 recipients of the CASA 2014 award were presented their certificates and badges at the College assembly last Friday.

On Thursday and Friday of next week all the Middle School students will receive feedback on their exams from their classroom teacher for the relevant subject. Please ensure that your daughter attends.

The reports will be available to parents online after Headstart is completed. The school website will keep you apprised of this matter.

Senior School Team

Junior School News

Grade 6 Music Information evenings & Parent/Student Information evening

The Music department, including our wonderful 7F and 7B girls spent two evenings not only playing for our incoming Year 7 girls but giving those girls the opportunity to try as many instruments as possible and talking to them about our Music program.

At the Parent/Student Information Evening, our Year 7 leaders also did a fantastic job running activities for the Grade 6 girls and answering any questions they had about MGSC, while parents heard about the iPad program from Jonathan Hall, met our Student Wellbeing Coordinator, Leona Thompson and were able to ask questions of the Junior School team.

Camp Gnurad

Year 8 girls listened to a presentation from Year 10 girls about their experiences at Camp Gnurad in the Western District last year. Year 8 girls were then invited to apply for the four places allocated to our school in 2015. If successful, the girls will attend Camp Gnurad for most of Term 1 2015 and take part in many exciting activities as well as develop their leadership skills and make lifelong friends with people from other schools.

Junior School Team
English Exams

English examinations will be held in Years 7-11 over the next fortnight. The exams involve extended tasks and require the students to respond to given stimulus material, largely text-based (i.e. novel or media article), requiring the application of skills developed over the semester. Students should be studying their notes and following their teacher’s guidance.

Examination techniques are an important part of learning and academic success, and so girls in Years 7 and 8 will find the exams are a learning experience designed to demystify the process and to teach strategies to perform at each student’s best. Students will be focusing in key ideas in their notes, developing study summaries and mental models, question analysis skills, time management and feedback reflections. Good luck comes from good preparation.

MGSC Public Speaking Competition 2014

Throughout October, all MGSC participated in our annual MGSC Public Speaking Competition. The competition is based upon Plain English Speaking Association principles and criteria, and requires a public speech of community importance without props. The eight class champions of each year level presented to their year level in the lecture theatre, displaying excellence in techniques structure and content. Our four year level winners, pictured below, each receive a $50 book shop voucher and have their names inscribed on our perpetual trophy. Congratulations to all girls for your excellent achievements.

Year level public speaking winners:
Year 7 – Erin O’Neill
Year 8 – Layla McVitty
Year 9 – Rachel Butler
Year 10 – Kathryn Beasley

Ms Nola Rees
Director of Teaching and Learning – English and Literacy

Sport

State Athletics Carnival

On Friday 17th September MGSC had eight students compete at the Victoria State Championships. Kisarna Berntsen competed in javelin (6th) and 1500m (7th), Taylah Nelson competed in discus (2nd) and under 14x100m relay (2nd), Grace Gordon competed in the 800m (4th), Marley Berntsen competed in the 1500m (2nd), Sarsha Berntsen competed in long jump (2nd) and Under 14x100m relay (2nd), Lucy Dixon competed in triple jump (4th), and Immi Thomson and Emilie Templin competed in the Under 14x100m relay (2nd). Overall six girls came home with silver medals which is a fantastic achievement at the State level and shows the quality of athletes we have at Mentone Girls’ SC.

Mr Anthony Bruhn
Carnivals Coordinator and Assistant Sport Coordinator

Cheerleading

On Sunday 2nd November, the MGSC Cheerleading team competed at the National Scholastic Cheer and Dance Championships in Sydney. The girls competed against some of the best school teams in Australia. Congratulations to the girls who placed 2nd in their section. They have had a very successful competition season this year, taking home three 1st and one 2nd in their first year together as a team. Well Done Panthers!

Miss Courtney Anderson
Maths @ MGSC

Congratulations

Best wishes to the students who received Maths awards at our College assembly on 7th November. These related to UNSW/ICAS, Maths Challenge Education Perfect competitions run earlier in the year – recipients have been listed in prior newsletters.

Two other special Maths Awards were presented as follows:

- Nagasuma Sreedhar (11F) received the Santos-Brown Award for highest performing Advanced General Maths student
- Malinee Burge (10B) received the Hughes-McLeod Award for excellence of effort in Foundation Maths

Well done to all students involved.

Less than 25 school days until the end of the year, so do your best and remember...

“Maths makes a real difference”

Maths Domain Team

Languages

Japan Study Tour 2015

The Languages Domain has begun preparations for the Japan study tour in 2015, departing in the evening of 10th September and returning to Melbourne on Friday 7th November. Details will be announced early next year. Start saving now!

Mr Alan Trigellis-Smith
Languages Domain Leader

STINKING THINKING- WHY GIRLS STRESS MORE

Justin Coulson PhD

It is generally well accepted that females experience greater levels of depression and anxiety than males. This is true, not only during adulthood, but also during adolescence. While there is a range of suggestions as to why, recent research offers an important new insight for parents and those who work with adolescents to consider: Girls experience greater levels of exposure to stressors and more challenging interpersonal events compared with boys.

Researchers at Temple University conducted a longitudinal study with data collected at three time points, each 7 months apart. Close to 400 adolescents responded to the study, provided data across the 14 month period, and the research indicated the following:

- Teens who experienced higher amounts of stress in their relationships (termed interpersonal dependent stress) were more likely to ruminate at follow up data collection time points.
- Teens who experienced higher amounts of stress in their relationships were also significantly more likely to exhibit a negative cognitive style – meaning they interpreted life events in negative ways.
- Those who exhibit these outcomes (rumination and negative cognitive style) place themselves at greater risk of depression than those who do not.
- Girls were exposed to significantly higher levels of interpersonal dependent stressors (relationship dramas) than boys.
- Girls showed significantly higher levels of rumination and negative cognitive style than boys.

The researcher’s analysis indicated that the girls’ heightened exposure to relationship difficulties prompted the rumination and the negative cognitive style – a term many call ‘stinking thinking’.

It is important to recognise that girls did not react differently to the stressors they faced compared to boys.

How can we stress-proof our girls?

There are dozens of strategies for bolstering our adolescent girls’ resilience, many with strong empirical support.

Utilising a positive psychology framework, I offer just three strategies that I suspect may make significant positive impact:

1. **Build strong relationships between parents and children**

There may be nothing more critical to staving off the depression plague and building resilience than strong relationships between parent and child. Children whose parents show they care, who listen, and who validate them will typically enjoy fewer depressive symptoms when compared with children who do not enjoy strong, positive relationships with parents. This may be particularly true for girls who have strong relationships with their fathers.

2. **Help them to grow up grateful**

Having a powerful sense of gratitude is a powerful protective factor for reducing depression risk among teens. Several studies have demonstrated that not only are happy people grateful, but grateful people are happy – which means less depression.

3. **Optimism**

Australian research with over 5000 Aussie kids clearly links optimism with the capacity to overcome depression faced by teens – and particularly girls. It appears that having a belief that things can and will get better, and that there are great things coming in the future, can reduce the risk of depression and boost our adolescent’s capacity to bounce back from stress and setback.

(Surprisingly, optimism doesn’t protect against stressful life events – they still hurt – but it does protect against depression.)

Our teens are vulnerable. They are facing unprecedented scrutiny from peers, parents, and teachers. The digital world creates more opportunities for relationship challenges than ever before. Girls, in particular, are vulnerable to negative cognitions and rumination in connection with these challenges.
NOTICE HOW YOU FEEL. IF YOU OR SOMEONE YOU KNOW ARE FEELING LOW OR STRESSED TAKE ACTION. ASK FOR HELP. DON’T GO IT ALONE. TALKING THINGS OVER CAN HELP.

WHEN YOU’RE FEELING LOW OR STRESSED IT CAN ALSO HELP TO LOOK AFTER YOURSELF. FEELINGS COME IN WAVES, LEARNING TO NOTICE AND LET THEM PASS USING BREATHING TECHNIQUES CAN HELP.

TO IMPROVE WELLBEING STAY CONNECTED. STAY INVOLVED WITH THINGS THAT ARE MEANINGFUL FOR YOU; FAMILY, FRIENDS, SCHOOL, SPORT AND OTHER ACTIVITIES.

STRATEGIES for STUDENTS

Follow these strategies to support your mental health and wellbeing:

1. **Exercise your mood**
   - Physical exercise is good for our mental health and for our brains. If you’re feeling down the last thing you might feel like doing is exercising but studies have suggested that any activity, from walking around the block to yoga or cycling, can contribute to improving the symptoms of depression and anxiety and can help you feel less stressed.

2. **Positive self talk**
   - The way that we talk to ourselves, that voice inside of our head, has a huge impact on our outlook, our motivation and dedication to ourselves and our lives. It might not feel like it, but with practice you can change your self talk. Practice self talk in any thought you think, or say to yourself that uplifts your social, mental, spiritual wellbeing and results in improvement. Positive self talk can be used for greater confidence, adopting a healthier lifestyle and reducing stress, and can be a very effective way to prepare yourself for a big test or exam.

3. **Use relaxation techniques to manage stress**
   - There are many different relaxation techniques you can use to overcome stress. When you feel like everything is getting too much, remember to breathe deeply. Breathe through your nose for 5 seconds in, 5 seconds out and you will find your body relaxes and releases. This can be very helpful to relax your nerves before an exam. Check out the web and app based program Smiling Mind for help with breathing and other relaxation techniques: smilingmind.com.au

4. **Eating**
   - Some studies suggest that what you eat affects your mood. A good balanced diet will make sure you have all the essential nutrients needed for your brain to function well, helping to keep you both physically and mentally healthy. You might have noticed that your mood can affect your appetite and food intake. Maintaining a healthy diet and regular food intake can be a way to look after yourself even when you don’t feel like it. It’s easy to get tired when you’re studying or a lot, but eating junk and drinking caffeine will actually make it harder to concentrate and more difficult to get good sleep.

5. **Connect with others**
   - We are social creatures, and our social relationships are really important in our general wellbeing. It is okay to take time out for yourself, but don’t stay shut in. Keep your social relations strong when you are feeling stressed out, overburdened or depressed, as your friends and family might really be able to help you through these times.

6. **Get some sleep**
   - A good night’s sleep is vital for our mental and emotional wellbeing. Sleep disruptions can increase negative thinking and heighten our stress levels. Try to maintain a regular sleep and wake schedule, use the bedroom for its core purposes and avoid using distracting devices such as a television or a computer when you are in bed.

7. **Seeking help**
   - A problem can sometimes be too hard to solve alone – or with friends and family – so it’s important to seek professional help. You can see your family doctor, psychiatrist, nurse, occupational therapist, psychologist, social worker or counsellor. At school you could also talk to a trusted teacher, the Student Wellbeing Coordinator or school counsellor who can provide advice or direct you to the right person if you need further help. Be honest to yourself about when you need support and don’t be afraid to find someone to talk to – it might feel scary at the start but it gets easier over time.

8. **Take time to study**
   - The exam period can be a particularly stressful time, but setting aside time to make sure you fit your study in can help reduce your stress and anxiety. To reduce exam pressure, think about doing things like plan to have a good balance between social life and study time; plan rewards for after exams; study actively and do past exam papers; and develop and stick to a study routine at home.

9. **Avoid alcohol & drugs**
   - Some people make the mistake of thinking that taking drugs can help them cope in tough times. Drugs, including alcohol, can contribute to, or trigger, mental health problems in people. Mental illnesses linked to drug use include anxiety, depression, paranoia, panic attacks, and psychosis. And if you’re drinking a lot or taking drugs when you’re trying to study, you’ll be more tired and less focused which could lead to an increase in stress when it comes to exam time.

If you are in need of help, visit headspace.org.au
Log on to eheadspace.org.au for online support and counselling.

**ABC of LOOKING AFTER YOURSELF**

ASK + BREATH + CONNECT

heads Entrance to Australia's school system is a challenge for all students and the process of gaining entry to university can be exciting but stressful. The Headspace National Youth Mental Health Foundation is a great resource for students looking to improve their mental health and wellbeing. Here are some strategies to follow:

- **Notice how you feel.** If you or someone you know are feeling low or stressed, take action. Ask for help. Don’t go it alone. Talking things over can help.
- **When you’re feeling low or stressed it can also help to look after yourself.** Feelings come in waves, learning to notice and let them pass using breathing techniques can help.
- **To improve wellbeing stay connected.** Stay involved with things that are meaningful for you; family, friends, school, sport and other activities.

**Strategies for students**

Follow these strategies to support your mental health and wellbeing:

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### Key Dates | November 2014

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<td>9OED Surfing excursion; Smiths Beach, Phillip Island Middle School Planning day</td>
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**Editorial Note:**
- Headstart Week 1

**Mentone Girls’ SC Newsletter**
Edition 18 | 13 November 2014
**KEY DATES | DECEMBER 2014**

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<td>Report verification, Early dismissal - 2.30pm</td>
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<td>Headstart Week 2</td>
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<td>NEWSLETTER #20</td>
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<td>LAST DAY 2015 Yr 8, 9 &amp; 10</td>
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<td></td>
<td>2015 YEAR 7 ORIENTATION DAY</td>
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<td>2014 Yr 7-11 Reports distributed at 3.15pm</td>
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<td></td>
<td>All star choir/Madrigal performances; Mackillop family services &amp; Abberfield Aged care facility</td>
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<td>College Council</td>
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<td>Headstart Week 3</td>
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<td>Staff PD Day (pupil free)</td>
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<td>Last day of Term 4 (staff planning day - pupil free)</td>
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<td>End of Year Holidays</td>
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<td>ENVIRONMENT WEEK</td>
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<td>Earth Week</td>
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<td>Gold Week</td>
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**MENTONE GIRLS' SC NEWSLETTER**
Edition 18 | 13 November 2014