Dear Parents,
As the lyrics in John Lennon’ song goes; ‘So this is Christmas and what have you done, another year over, a new one just begun’, well we are nearly there. But what have we achieved this year at Wattle Park Primary School together as a community?

- Finished the building of a two storey teaching and learning centre
- Completed the Stephanie Alexander Kitchen (special thanks to Ashley and Con)
- Furnished the upstairs of the two storey teaching and learning building
- Built a new school website (thank you Megan and Jordy Kaufman)
- Installed air-conditioners for the lower level of the teaching and learning space
- Installed a new telephone system throughout the school
- Wrote and passed a new Homework Policy through School Council
- Purchased over $15000 worth of new Literacy resources
- Purchased iPads and notebooks throughout the school as well as storage units
- Installed awnings for the North side of the two storey teaching and learning building
- Installed a security system and cameras
- Applied protective anti-graffiti coatings to all new buildings
- Introduced LOTE; Mandarin across the school (thank you Mrs Peszynski)
- Introduced the Stephanie Alexander Kitchen Classes to years 3 and 4

DIARY DATES

DECEMBER
Fri 21st  End of school year 1.30pm departure
Free dress day

JANUARY
Wed 30th  First Day of School Grades 1-6
Thurs 31st  First Day of School Foundation

FEBRUARY
Thurs 21st Feb District Swimming Carnival
Thurs 28th Division Swimming

MARCH
4-15 Bike Ed Grades 5-6 First hour of each day
Wed 6th Curriculum Day
Thur 7th Classical Indian to Bollywood
Fri 8th Regional Swimming
Fri 15th Movie Night
Fri 22nd Summer Sport Round Robin Gr 5/6
Thurs 28th

UNIFORM SHOP OPEN:
MONDAYS AFTER THE AFTERNOON
ASSEMBLY & THURSDAYS 8.30-9.30am
But most importantly supported and encouraged our students/children to productively and purposefully value learning.

The Graduation of our Year 6 students on Monday night was a gala celebration that included a shared meal, formal presentation and concluded with a student disco. It is a very special night for the students as it is their rite of passage as they move on to varied secondary colleges.

It is always a night of mixed emotion for me; for it makes me feel my age as I’m not familiar with the music the DJ (Dallas) plays anymore (so I don’t know whether the songs include any unacceptable language!) but also a real sense of loss. I watch these very special people who have been in our care for so long, now confident and primed to embark on the next stage of their journey. As a school community it is an affirmation that we have successfully completed our mission but it’s still hard to let go!

For the first time this year we awarded a citizenship award to a female and male student, in honour of our previous principal Mr Nick Farley. It was wonderful to have Nick join us for the ceremony and present the awards to Samantha W 6T and Zac P 6N.

All of our students performed as professionals on what certainly looked like a stage from ‘Her Majesty’s’. Many thanks to Harrison and Frank from Artemis Productions who donated their expertise, time and equipment to make the night visually spectacular.

Thank you to a number of Year 1 parents who brought to our attention that there was no LOTE feedback on the reports. Due to the current industrial campaign by teachers no written comments were included on the student reports this semester. No progression points for LOTE are included in the VELS documentation by DEECD as this is reported against by comment only.

Last Wednesday at the School Council Meeting the Finance Committee presented the 2013 Parent Payments and Voluntary Contributions. They were accepted unanimously by all school council members. The school levy for 2013 is set at $730.00 including essential items and excursion levy. This is a 2.0% increase due to the anticipated increase in utilities cost for electricity and water. At the commencement of the school year a letter will be sent home to all families outlining the structure of payments and voluntary contributions for 2013.

Staffing arrangements for 2013 have been finalised. A full list of class and specialist teachers is presented below. A new addition to the teaching staff for 2013 is Ms Narelle Albert, we are delighted to have Narelle on board teaching a year 2 class and Ms Pia Chadwick who will be joining us as the new Art teacher for a year while Ms Paula Frost takes twelve months leave.

I’d like to take this opportunity to thank Paula for her expertise and passion for the visual arts and how she transfers this love to our students. The initiative of the school art show in the past two years is testament to her dedication to our school.

The teaching arrangements for 2013 are:

**Prep** Mrs Julie Gledhill, Mr Drew Baxter, Ms Tracy Mc Phee-Lam  
**Year 1** Mrs Amanda Chetcuti, Mrs Moira Spierings and Mrs Kathy Skantzos  
**Year 2** Mrs Amanda Dwyer, Mrs Vicki Phillips, Ms Narelle Albert  
**Year 3** Mr John Davey, Mrs Katie Hardy, Ms Natasha Larocque  
**Year 4** Ms Robyn Gilmour, Ms Helen Sterling  
**Year 5** Mrs Julie Nield, Mrs Samantha Teng  
**Year 6** Mrs Anna Saaksjarvi, Mrs Cynthia Tuck
Specialists:
Art  Pia Chadwick/Annmaria Antonino
Physical Education  Mrs Melinda Downes/Ms Sarah Clusker
Music  Mrs Lorelle Caulfield-Lloyd
Library  Mrs Kim Wheatley
Library Technician:  Ros Cordner
LOTE Mandarin  Mrs Ainslie Peszynski/Ms Sarah Clusker
Reading Recovery  Mrs Rhonda Lush
SSO Support:  Vicki Keith, Susan Wright, Debbie Alderson-Roes, Michelle Harris, Siobhan O’Reilly,
Alexandra Watson, Brodie Taylor
ICT Technician:  Mr Ashley Flentjar
Gardening Staff  Mrs Julie Jensz and Mr Gavin Cass
Kitchen Chef  Mrs Nadia Gallo

And of course our highly valued office staff, Mrs Robyn Hunter, Mrs Joy Roberts and Mrs Vicki Keith.

There seems to be some confusion about the commencement dates for school next year. The starting day for students in Years 1-6 inclusive is Wednesday the 30th January and Foundation students join us on Thursday the 31st January.

The DEECD website states that the year commences on Tuesday the 29th January, however that has been passed by our School Council as a Curriculum Day. Teachers will be present on that day but students are not required to attend school until the Wednesday or for Foundation students Thursday.

Our first whole School Assembly will take place on Monday being the 4th February, at 3.00p.m. in the Gymnasium.

A number of families will conclude their association with Wattle Park Primary School as their child graduates this year. They include:  The Bird, Cathie, De Cruz, Dehring, Donaldson, Elsmere, Gledhill, Sotak, Heise, Humphries, Juratowitch, MacLean-Swann, Martin, McCamley, Purnell, Shu, Stedman, Verso, Whittingham and last but certainly not least the Wridgway Family. Our best wishes and sincere thanks go to the families for their support and assistance over the years.

To students who are leaving Wattle Park PS for a range of reasons, before the completion of Year 6, I wish you well at your new schools. I hope you and your families will look upon your time at Wattle Park with happy memories.

As the year draws to a close I would like to take this opportunity to acknowledge the outstanding efforts of all members of our community. To the talented and dedicated staff, exceptional administration team and efficient support staff, thank you.

Special thanks to all the parents for their extraordinary support and encouragement. Particular mention must be made of the School Council and Sub Committee members, PFA, Parent Helpers, who devote many voluntary hours to ensure Wattle Park continues to be the outstanding school it is.

On a personal note a special thank you to Megan Ganter for her outstanding leadership over the last three terms. It is great to have Megan on board as part of the Leadership Team and I value her support enormously.

Thank you to all members of the Wattle Park Primary School community for your support throughout 2012 and for your many good wishes and words of appreciation.

Have a peaceful, safe and Merry Christmas and a relaxing holiday period. Best wishes to all for a prosperous 2013.

Regards,

Gayle
Education Maintenance Allowance

The Education Maintenance Allowance (EMA) helps to cover the costs related to your child’s schooling. The EMA provides families on a low income with financial assistance to support their child’s education up to the age of 10.

The Government is restructuring the Education Maintenance Allowance (EMA) for 2013 to better provide education support to families on a low income. Payments made direct to parents will be increased for eligible recipients at all year levels, with an additional increase for parents with students in Years Prep and 7 to support transition costs.

For more information, see: Education Maintenance Allowance in 2013

Education Maintenance Allowance in 2012

The allowance is paid in two instalments throughout the year; the first instalment from March onwards and the second instalment from August onwards. Half of the payment is paid to the school and half to the parent or guardian.

EMA applications needed to be submitted to your child’s school by 3 August 2012 for the second instalment.

If you submitted an application form for the first instalment, and your child has not changed schools since then, you do not need to complete another application form for the second instalment payment.

Parents have the option to have their EMA instalments paid by Electronic Funds Transfer (EFT) directly into your bank account. You can select this option when filling in your application form.

The EFT payment option has been introduced to offer you a faster and more convenient option for receiving your EMA payment. Choosing the EFT option means that you will receive your payment approximately two weeks sooner than if you choose the cheque payment option.

More information

- Eligibility – find out if your family is eligible to receive the EMA
- Payment Amounts – information on how, when and how much you will be paid and the EFT payment option
- Frequently Asked Questions

Education Maintenance Allowance in 2013

The EMA is being restructured to increase the focus on direct support to parents. Prep and Year 7 students will also receive a higher EMA payment.
The EMA is being restructured to increase the focus on direct support to parents. Prep and Year 7 students will also receive a higher EMA payment.

The changes to the EMA starting in 2013 include:

EMA payments to parents increased from:
- $117.50 to $200 for parents of eligible Prep students
- $117.50 to $150 for parents of all other eligible primary school students
- $235 to $300 for parents of eligible Year 7 students
- $235 to $250 for parents of all other eligible secondary school students up to the age of 16.

School-based EMA payments will be discontinued ($117.50 per primary school student; $235.00 per secondary school student)

Changes to the EMA will be effective from the start of the 2013 school year.

The EMA is paid in two instalments annually (70% in March and 30% in August). The August 2012 payments will not be affected by the changes.

These changes apply to government and non-government schools.

Eligibility

The EMA provides financial assistance to families on a low income to help with the cost of essential educational items such as textbooks, stationery, uniforms and excursions.

EMA is a means-tested payment - parents must hold a Centrelink/Veterans Affairs concession card to be eligible.

More information

For more information about the changes to the EMA in 2013 please call 1800 060 970,
**Uniform Shop News..................**

There will be a new price list effective 1st January 2013, all uniform orders will be charged at the new prices as of then.

The uniform shop will be open on Wednesday, 30th, Thursday 31st, Friday 1st February from 8.30am till 9.30am.

Windcheaters and plain track pants will be phased out next year, no new stock will be ordered.

Thank you to everyone who has purchased uniforms over my last 11 years it has been a pleasure!

Wishing everyone a Merry Christmas. Enjoy the holidays and stay safe.

Michelle

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**News from the Art Room ........**

The students have been involved in a special community arts project, coordinated by the Box Hill Community Arts Centre.

Each student has decorated a scale to form the giant snake created to celebrate Chinese New Year 2013.

The attached poster will provide you with the display dates and venues.

I have really enjoyed teaching and working with the very creative and enthusiastic students of Wattle Park.

I have also appreciated the interest and support demonstrated by families and friends towards special events such as the Art Show and Concert.

I wish you all the best for the festive season and look forward to catch you on my return.

Paul Frost
Art Teacher
Grade 6's Big Day Out at Funfields
Wednesday, 19th December 2012
Chinese New Year Snake

Displayed at
Box Hill Community Arts Centre
January 11 - January 27
Centro Box Hill
Upper Level - North Precinct (opposite the food court)
January 30 - February 10

Participating Schools:
Whitehorse Primary School
Vermont Primary School
St Benedict's Primary School
Blackburn High School
Our Lady Of Sion College
St Johns Primary School
Forest Hill College
Aurora School
Mount Pleasant Road Primary School
Blackburn Lake Primary School
Mont Albert Primary School
Burwood East Primary School
St Philip's Primary School
St James Primary School Vermont
Koonung Secondary College
Wattle Park Primary School
Mitcham Primary School
BHCAC School Holiday Program

Chinese New Year Snake Scale Making Workshops
Monday 14 January – Saturday 19 January
11am – 3pm
Centro Box Hill
Upper Level - North Precinct (opposite the food court)
Box Hill Community Arts Centre
470 Station Street, Box Hill Phone: 9895 8888
e-mail: bhcac@whitehorse.vic.gov.au Web: www.bhcac.com.au
For the newsletter

MAVRAGANI GREEK LANGUAGE SCHOOL- INC.

FULL RECOGNITION from EDUC. DEPARTMENT Since 1976 - LEVELS - to VCE
MONDAY- 4.45 - 8.30 PM — ALL LEVELS
-WATTLEPARK PRIMARY SCHOOL
TUESDAY- 4.45 - 8.30 PM ONLY HIGH SCHOOL — VCE
SUSSEX H.P.SCHOOL

-WEDNESDAY- 4.45 - 8.30 PM PRIMARY and- HIGH
SUSSEX HP SCHOOL

Information- 98084917- 0427004033
Wattle Park Primary School

Movie Night

Friday 15th March 2013

Put the date in your calendar for next year.
School holiday children's tennis programs available at Wattle Park tennis courts this summer. Children's Tennis camp - January 7th - 9th, Time - 9 - 11.30 am. Camp covers all strokes and gameplay daily, in a nurturing and fun environment. Also private and semi private tennis lessons available. Junior racquets supplied free, if needed. Sessions conducted by head coach Val Cerqualia - Tennis Australia Professional. To enrol, or for more information, please phone Val on 0409581322 or email val@energytennis.com.au.

Also available NEW beginner classes after school at Wattle Park in 2013, book for term 1'.