Welcome to the Senior School.

We have some great learning programs planned and our students will enjoy a stimulating, challenging and productive year in 2013. Senior School students will be encouraged to challenge themselves and to become reflective learners in a relaxed, happy and cooperative learning environment. They will also be encouraged to value their individuality and be responsible for their own learning, while working co-operatively with others. There will be opportunities to develop and utilise leadership skills and take roles in representing our school, speaking publicly and participating in local community activities.

We look forward to a happy and productive year working with your children. If you have any queries or concerns, please don’t hesitate to see your child’s class teacher.

Nadine King
Senior Team Leader

VELS (Victorian Essential Learning Standards)

In the senior school years, students progress beyond the foundations and their literacy and numeracy become more developed. An expanded curriculum program provides the basis for in depth learning within all VELS domains. At Level 4, History, Geography and Economics are treated as separate dimensions.

Learning Programs

Students are immersed in reading and writing on a daily basis. This year we have begun using CAFÉ reading. Students take more responsibility for their own learning with support from the teacher. Teachers conference weekly with children and set goals to be achieved regularly. Research skills, such as reading for the main points and taking notes, are practised. Spelling is taught using phonic, visual, morphemic and etymological strategies. Students produce, in print and electronic forms, a variety of texts for different purposes using appropriate structures and features of language. They plan, rehearse and make oral presentations for different purposes.

In Maths, students use their understanding of place value to work with addition, subtraction, multiplication and division, both mentally and with written algorithms. They learn important common measures relating to money, length, mass, time, temperature, probability, area, volume and capacity and angles.

At this level, students seek deeper connections between their learning and the world around them and explore how learning might be applied in that world. Science and Humanities are explored in rich inquiry units of work. The sex education program for Grade 6 students is run in Term 4.

Information and communication technology is an integral part of our program. Macbooks and iPads are used by all Level 4 students. Relevant skills are taught and a responsible approach to Internet use is developed. Programs will be chosen to supplement and enrich learning areas. All students and parents must sign the iPad User
Agreement and the ICT Acceptable Use Agreement. Forms can be found on our website in the 1:1 iPad menu for download.

iPads
Term 1 sees the introduction of our one to one program at Eastwood Primary School. Students with iPads are asked to bring their tablets to class fully charged and with all appropriate apps (please see the apps list on the Eastwood website). As each new iPad arrives we have connected them to our school’s internet. The process of signing in students to the key applications we will use on a regular basis is taking some time. We thank them for their patience. Already in this term’s planning the staff have identified many ways in which students with iPads can make the most of this flexible learning tool. As a result most days students will be bringing home iPads that contain work samples from that day’s lessons. We encourage parents to engage their children in conversation around these work samples, keeping in mind that they will often be samples of work in progress. If you have any queries about this program please consult the Eastwood webpage or speak to your child’s classroom teacher.

Integrated Units of Work
Integrated Units allow the integration of the strands, domains and dimensions of the Victorian Essential Learning Standards. Included are the elements needed for students to meet their learning needs during the middle years of schooling. Units assist with the development of skills and knowledge in a meaningful context. Our topics this year are:
Term 1: Identity
Term 2: Sustainability
Term 3: Social Justice
Term 4: Creativity

Homework
Homework will consist of two parts:
Reading – we expect every student to read five times a week and record this in their reading log. This must be signed by parents.

Notices & Diaries
At this level, students are encouraged to be independent, self-disciplined thinking people responsible for their own actions. Students need to be responsible for remembering their equipment and materials for school such as homework, library books and diaries. Students are also expected to be responsible for notices and newsletters.

Camps and Excursions
Grade 5 and 6 Camp to Sovereign Hill will be held from Wednesday August 14th to Friday August 16th. Students will be staying at offsite and spending two full days immersed in a program designed to educate them around the topics of the Goldrush, immigration and the Eureka Stockade. A highlight will be the night show ‘Blood Under the Southern Cross’. The camp also gives students and teachers an opportunity to get to know each other in an informal environment.

Sport
In weekly sport sessions, students will train for, and take part in, a variety of team and individual activities, including cross country running and athletics. Interschool sport, for Grade Five and Six students, takes place during Terms One and Two.

Social Skills, PAThS
Building effective social relationships and relating well to others requires individuals to be empathetic, and to be able to deal effectively with their own emotions. It also requires them to be aware of the social conventions and responsibilities that underpin the formation of effective relationships.
Our PAThS program enables students to develop the skills and strategies needed to form effective relationships and resolve problems in a sensible, fair and effective manner.
Buddies

Grade 5 and 6 children will be working with Prep buddies this year. Buddies play a very important part in helping Preps to settle into their new school. The buddy program also gives all Grade 5 and 6 children the experience of mentoring a younger student.

Transition

This is an important year for the Year Sixes and their parents. During the year decisions will have to be made as to where students will attend secondary school in 2013. For some this will be a straightforward decision. For others it may not be so easy.

Further information will be sent home as it becomes available. Generally application forms are sent home late April and are to be returned to school a month later. Parents are then notified of their child’s placement early August.

If you are not sure as to where your child should attend school next year, you may find it beneficial to contact schools now for tours and information before the official tours start. This will give you more time to make your decision.

We have many ways to help your child transition. These include:
Walking to Ringwood Secondary College 2-3 times as a whole level to watch their productions and bands, local secondary schools visiting Eastwood and bringing Year 7 students to talk about transition in Term 1, and past students visiting in Term 4 for a forum are just a few.

Class Reps

This year the role of the class rep will be to liaise between parents and the class teacher, looking for volunteers to help with fundraising activities and assisting with our fete. If you are willing to commit some time to this valuable role, please contact your child’s classroom teacher.