

MILDURA SPECIALIST SCHOOL

Newsletter No : 17

DATE: 5 November, 2020

We value being: **RESPECTFUL** **SAFE** & **RESPONSIBLE**

Child Safe: Mildura Specialist School is committed to safety and wellbeing of all children and young people and has a zero tolerance for child abuse.



Striving for Independence

DATES TO REMEMBER

17 December—Last Day of School for students.

18 December—Pupil Free Day



TERM 4
SUNSMART

Principal's Report

World Teachers' Day: Last Friday we celebrated World Teachers' Day with students from each class giving thanks to their teachers in a video compiled by Team Leaders. It was wonderful to see the confident speakers and to reflect on the thoughtful messages. Thank you to the parents and carers who emailed messages to staff. These are pictured below on the staffroom window and were very well received and indicative of the partnerships involved to improve student outcomes. The administration team provided a special card, coffee bag and chocolate for teachers in appreciation of their work. Alle's is pictured below right.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank the teachers for all their work at this busy time of the year. Teachers had a productive day on Monday writing and moderating report comments.

Education Support staff worked in groups across the school to learn more about:

- Meeting physiotherapy and sensory needs,
- Communicating with Augmentative and Alternative Communication devices
- Mindfulness
- Creating an Art piece
- Anaphylaxis
- School policies
- Procedures at the Pool
- Library and resource procedures



P.O. Box 63CP Mildura 3501
Principal: Penny Hale
Assistant Principal: David Wright
Email: mildura.ss@education.vic.gov.au
Web Address: www.mildss.vic.edu.au
(P) 50213311 (F) 50213314



Sharyn, Greg and Stan have been working on beautifying our garden beds. The plan is to neaten and brighten our entrance and throughout the school. We have sourced lots of cuttings and these will be planted when they are ready. If you have any cuttings such as succulents or geraniums you would like to share, please send in with your son/daughter for our shade house. We are so fortunate to have such a wonderful facility.



Congratulations to our Award winners this week. Keep up the great work! Thank you to Bob for creating the Participatory Awards for students with work featured in our recent Art Exhibition.

School Council meets again this Monday evening, 9 November, 2020.

Survey

Please see the important information within this newsletter about a survey for parents to complete regarding special education. This is an opportunity for the parents and carers in Victoria to have a voice in the research and to promote special education. The link to the survey can be found in the Survey information on page 7.

Kind Regards

Penny Hale
Principal

Please note: The Department (which includes our school) does not have accident insurance. Items of personal property that are lost, stolen or damaged at school are not the responsibility of Mildura Specialist School or the Department. Staff and students are reminded not to bring items of value to school.

NEWS AROUND THE SCHOOL

VCAL STUDENTS ON EXCURSION TO VIEW PUBLIC ART IN MILDURA

Last Thursday morning VCAL students boarded two school buses and went on tour of Public Art sites around Mildura. There were eight locations they visited from ArtRageUs on Magnolia Avenue, along the Riverfront and on to murals in town. This was in preparation for the community mural that these students are planning and designing as a Graffiti Wall which will be installed at school on the outdoor stage. Viewing the works at close range and seeing how artists have created these large paintings has given added motivation to our students to get their mural underway. Watch this space for future progress and developments on their efforts!



Principal Awards

Room 3 - Nate: for understanding he can talk to others if he is feeling worried.

Room 5 - Kerra-Lee: for using a variety of AAC devices to communicate her message in the classroom.

Room 10 - Jyden: for learning to eat with a fork as part of his eating program.

Room 24 - Tyana: for drinking all of her water bottle.

Room 24 - Graham: for completing his school work with minimal prompts and problem solving when required.

SWPBS Awards

Room 3 - Nate: for speaking respectfully on the phone to invite Mrs Hale to our science session.

Room 5 - Lacie: for following the COVID-19 social distancing rules by keeping personal space.

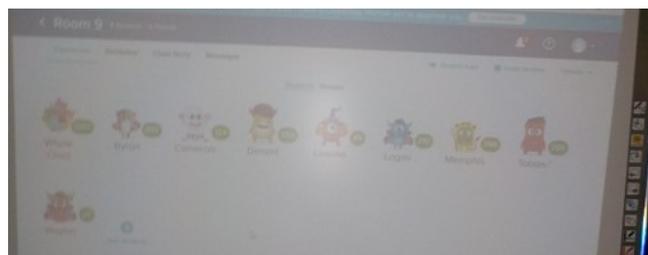
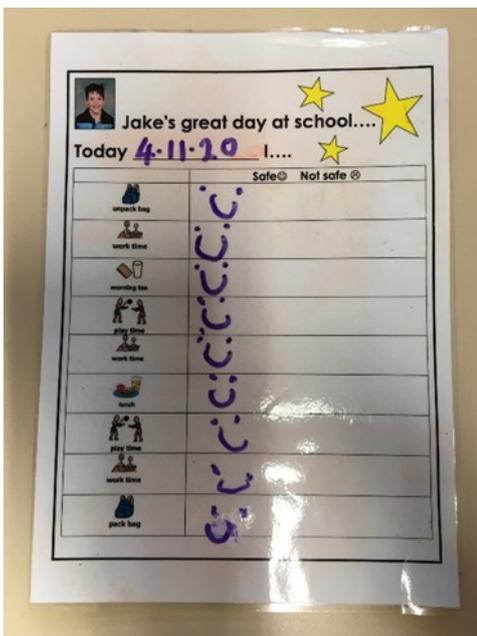
Room 10 - Oscar: for following instructions and participating during bike riding.

Room 24 - Devrim: for following instructions and participating.

SWPBS

Sharing some of the classroom reward systems that are in place across the Upper Primary Section - Each classroom has its own system, designed to engage students and support positive behavior. Classroom Dojo, used by Vicki in Room 9 is an online system where students engage with avatars on touchscreen, to add Dojo points.

Great work to all the students who are collecting points, stickers, stars and smiley faces. It was great to be able to go into classrooms and see these charts up where students can see them. Warren Guild



Early Years' News

Hello and welcome to Week 5.

Students in the Early Years' section have been busy completing activities relating to our term's focus 'Outdoor Play'. You may have seen some beautifully decorated garden signs displayed in the garden.

Students have also embraced the Halloween feeling by competing in decorating cupcakes organised by the Student Representative Council.

Happy learning from Room 1.



Nate showing off his Halloween cupcake

Ezekiel looking at the Halloween decorations set up by Room 3 and 4



Primary Years' News

Last week, the classrooms in Upper Primary celebrated Halloween. Some rooms have been learning about different celebrations around the world, and it was exciting that Halloween was our theme for last week. Students had the opportunity to dress up, and there was a cupcake decorating activity that everyone really enjoyed. Last week was also World Teachers' Day. Thank you very much to the parents and carers who expressed their support to staff, it was very much appreciated!

Pictured below are Room 7 students displaying their 'Bright Futures' sunglasses to help celebrate the day.



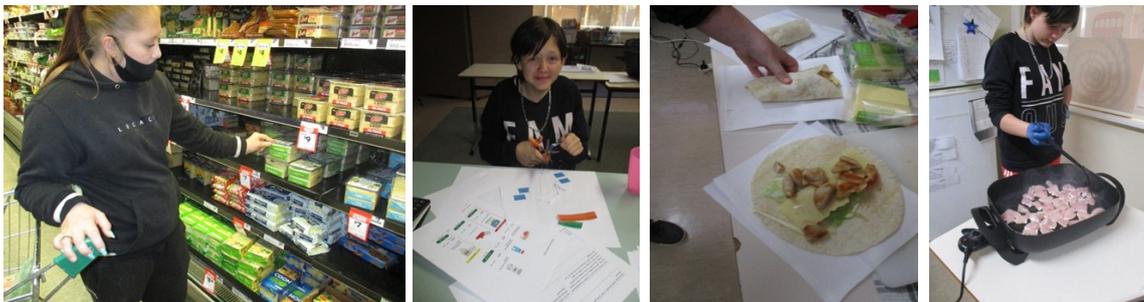
Secondary Personal Applied Learning News

Students have been enjoying stories and activities based on the Book Week theme Curious Creatures, Creative Minds and Halloween. They decorated rooms, entered a school based colouring in competition, dressed up as witches, zombies and other spooky characters and discussed the origins of activities such as trick or treat and jack 'o lantern pumpkins. Recycling has been continuing regularly as students do their part to encourage ecological awareness and responsibility. Cooking in some rooms included spaghetti bolognese and fried rice this fortnight. Students and staff in Room 25 successfully completed the 10,000 Steps Challenge which they undertook throughout October.



SECONDARY—VCAL News

Students in the Darling Room have been learning the processes involved with planning for and creating healthy meals. First, the students created a shopping list and made predictions about how much the healthy meal might cost. Students then went shopping and made choices regarding the cheapest prices and best deals for each item. Students then compared their predictions of costs with the final cost. After this, students reconstructed the written recipe procedure, by sequencing the steps into the correct order. Lastly, students created their healthy meals and learned about safe food handling and cooking techniques. The pictures above show the process of making a chicken and salad wrap.



This is Skye decorating the school Library for Halloween. She loves spiders and all things creepy.



Important National Survey of Parent Voice Special Schools Australia

Introduction.

Dear Parents and Carers,

In Australia, each state and territory have their own special schools. Each of these parts of Australia also have their own special education principal association that advocate on your behalf to each state and territory government to ensure our students and schools have the resources they need and appropriate support.

The attached national survey is being conducted by the Australian Special Education Principals Association (ASEPA).

Why do a survey?

Over the last few years there has been a push for more inclusive practices in Australian education systems. Some inclusive advocacy groups see special schools in a very negative light. The current Disability Royal Commission is hearing from groups and individuals who wish to see all students within mainstream classrooms. I believe that our students, your child, deserve the highest level of support and that the personalised education that we provide, along with smaller classes directly benefit to meet students with complex need. This survey is designed to have your voice heard, along with parents of students from across Australia who have chosen our specialist schools.

The research.

This survey is explained in detail on the next pages (a lot of detail actually) and is approved by the NSW Department of Education Research Committee. The Research is being conducted by Professor Tania Aspland from ACU.

Your voice.

This survey is the first of its type designed for you, our parents of students in special schools, and will provide valuable evidence to defend and support our work, and to have your voice heard against those who do not understand.

Please take the time to do the quick 10 minute survey on the link provided: https://acu.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_0pGAoekNmVR7VB3

If you have any questions or concerns, please contact me.

National Survey of Parents of Students Accessing Special Schools

Dear parent/guardian/carer,

You are invited to participate in the research project jointly conducted by the Australian Special Education Principal's Association (ASEPA) and the Australian Catholic University (ACU). The study is commissioned by the ASEPA, the peak body for school leaders of specialist schools across Australia. This project is being conducted by Professor Tania Aspland, Dean, Education Policy and Strategy at North Sydney, ACU. She provides high-level advice on teacher education, governance and policy.

The research project investigates the differential perspectives of families of students with disabilities (SWD) and their children in Australian specialist schools and to highlight measures by which such voices might be more included. The study is integral to elucidating meaningful engagement between families and educational providers in determining appropriate educational experiences for students with disabilities.

Participation in this study is completely voluntary. You are not under any obligation to participate. If you agree to participate, you can withdraw (abstain from completing the survey) from the study at any time without adverse consequences. Please note, however, that return of the non-identifiable survey is consent to participate and that responses cannot be withdrawn once complete as they are not identifiable. Moreover, you cannot withdraw your participation after the data has been coded as individual responses will not be able to be identified and thus will not be able to be removed from the dataset.

Complete details of the study are provided in the attachment entitled '**Information Letter (Participants)**'. Please make sure you read the document before proceeding to take the survey. If you have any questions about the research study, please contact Professor Tania Aspland at Tania.Aspland@acu.edu.au.

The survey begins with your informed consent by noting:

"I have read (or, where appropriate, have had read to me) and understood the information provided in the '**Information Letter (Participants)**'. Any questions I have asked have been answered to my satisfaction. I agree to participate in the survey entitled 'Parent Satisfaction in Specialist Schools in Australia', realising that I can withdraw my consent at any time (without adverse consequences). I agree that research data collected for the study may be published or may be provided to other researchers in a form that does not identify me in any way. In view of the above, I consent to take part in the survey – Yes/No".

If you would like to participate in this research and consent, **please complete the 10-minute survey, the link of which, is available at https://acu.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_0pGAoekNmVR7VB3**

Yours sincerely

Penny Hale

PARTICIPANT INFORMATION LETTER

PROJECT TITLE: Parent Satisfaction in Specialist Schools in Australia

APPLICATION NUMBER: 2019-144E

PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR: Professor Tania Aspland

Dear Participant,

You are invited to participate in the research project jointly conducted by the Australian Special Education Principal's Association (ASEPA) and the Australian Catholic University (ACU). Details of the research project are described below.

What is the project about?

The research project investigates the differential perspectives of families of students with disabilities (SWD) and their children in Australian specialist schools and to highlight measures by which such voices might be more included.

Who is undertaking the project?

This project is being conducted by Professor Tania Aspland, Dean, Education Policy and Strategy at North Sydney, ACU. She provides high-level advice on teacher education, governance and policy. Tania is President of the Australian Council of Deans of Education and sits on a number of boards for the Australian government. She also works closely with directors and leaders of school education in government, Catholic and the independent sectors. Tania's research focuses on educational policy, leadership and reform, higher education curriculum and teacher education. She has been employed in the university sector since 1980 and has developed a focus on the following areas of scholarship:

teacher education policy and reform, both within Australia and internationally;

teacher formation and professional growth;

organisational change in school education and higher education contexts;

developing a critical frame of supervision and leadership in education and higher education for social justice; and

reforms to the conceptualising of curriculum in higher education.

The study is commissioned by the Australian Special Education Principals Association (ASEPA), the peak body for school leaders of specialist schools across Australia. ASEPA, advocating for leaders and the school communities with which they work, is dedicated to providing quality outcomes for students. Ongoing debate regarding the role of specialist schools makes it essential that ASEPA present a credible and authentic contribution to this conversation.

Are there any risks associated with participating in this project?

The research team anticipate that the only discomfort will be the time that it takes for the respondents to complete the questionnaires. However, in the unlikely event that while answering the questions respondents should experience any discomfort, they are strongly urged to contact the research team for advice or the school counsellor if necessary.

What does participation involve?

You are invited to participate in an online survey which seeks to gather families/carers' perspectives on consultation and engagement with teachers at their child's school. The survey is a slightly adapted version of the 'Special Education Parent Satisfaction Survey' designed by the Northeastern Catholic District Board (NCDSB) in Canada and an exemplar is available at <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/CGSVPS3>. The current online survey will be hosted at ACU's Qualtrics platform which is completely safe and secure in terms of data storage, management, access, and retrieval. The 17-item survey has four demographic questions (Q 1-5) that elicit background information about your child. Questions 6-14 elicits quantifiable Likert-type information to do with parent/carers' perspectives (satisfaction/dissatisfaction) of special education schools that their child is enrolled in. The last three questions (Q15-17) are open-ended ones that elicits parent/carers' perspectives of how such specialist services can be improved.

Please note that Qualtrics servers are not located in Australia, but in California, which means that survey data is not subject to Australian privacy legislation. ACU's Research Consultant, IT Strategy and Planning has confirmed, however, that this is not a concern/compromise at all given the multi-layered protection features Qualtrics takes into account for each survey gathered, stored, and retrieved.

In view of the above, you are earnestly requested to complete the 10-minute survey, the link of which, is available at the end of this document.

How much time will the project take?

We anticipate that the online survey will take approximately 10 minutes of your time, to be completed at your convenience.

What are the benefits of the research project?

The benefit of this research project is to underline respondent perspectives on the issues, concerns and successes inherent in the process of collaboration and engagement that they have experienced in terms of their child's enrolment at specialist schools. Theoretical propositions obtained from the open-ended survey items, together with the closed-ended survey data will be reported in such a manner that it will be instructive to policy writers, teachers and leaders of schools and early learning centres who are actively engaged with students with disabilities.

Can I withdraw from the study?

Participation in this study is completely voluntary. You are not under any obligation to participate. If you agree to participate, you can withdraw (abstain from completing the survey) from the study at any time without adverse consequences. Please note, however, that return of the non-identifiable survey is consent to participate and that responses cannot be withdrawn once complete as they are not identifiable.

Will anyone else know the results of the project?

The analysis of the data will be made available in the form of a report to the consultancy body i.e. ASEPA. Results that are published will be reported in aggregated group form, without identifying the names of individuals. The participating schools may receive a report with aggregated results. In the future, ASEPA may extend the consultation with the team to generate publications, which too, with its underlying data represented in aggregated format, nullifies the risk of respondent identification or tracing in any manner whatsoever.

The electronic survey data will be saved in an encrypted password protected file located on the ACU work PC of the Senior Research Assistant/s working on the project. Should we have any physical data (for e.g. Principal Consent Forms), it will be securely stored in a locked cabinet at the office of the Senior Research Assistant/s working on the project. In all possibilities, the Principal Information Letter and Consent Forms will be electronic as well and handled in the same manner as the survey data i.e. saved in an encrypted password protected file located on the ACU work PC of the Senior Research Assistant/s working on the project. The electronic survey data will be accessible only to the university researchers in this study. In accordance with ACU policy and the NSW Government State Records Authority, data will be stored securely for a minimum of 5 years and after this date, the Principal consent forms (physical and/or digital, as applicable) and all digital files (survey data) deleted.

Will I be able to find out the results of the project?

The analysis of the data will be made available in the form of a report to the consultancy body i.e. ASEPA. The report will also be provided to the approving Departments (government and non-government education authorities) in each state/jurisdiction where the survey will be administered. Results that are published will be reported in aggregated group form, without identifying the names of individuals. The participating schools will also receive a report with aggregated results. In the future, ASEPA may extend the consultation with the team to generate publications and policy advice, which too, with its underlying data represented in aggregated format, nullifies the risk of respondent identification or tracing in any manner whatsoever.

Who do I contact if I have questions about the project?

If you have any questions about the research study, please contact Professor Tania Aspland at Tania.Aspland@acu.edu.au.

What if I have a complaint or any concerns?

The study has been reviewed by the Human Research Ethics Committee at Australian Catholic University (review number 2019-144E). If you have any complaints or concerns about the conduct of the project, you may write to the Manager of the Human Research Ethics and Integrity Committee care of the Office of the Deputy Vice Chancellor (Research).

Manager, Ethics and Integrity
c/o Office of the Deputy Vice Chancellor (Research)
Australian Catholic University
North Sydney Campus
PO Box 968
NORTH SYDNEY, NSW 2059
Ph.: 02 9739 2519
Fax: 02 9739 2870
Email: resethics.manager@acu.edu.au

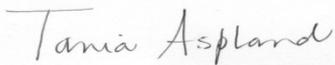
Any complaint or concern will be treated in confidence and fully investigated. You will be informed of the outcome.

I want to participate! How do I sign up?

If you would like to participate in this research and consent, **please complete the 10-minute survey, the link of which, is available at https://acu.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_0pGAoekNmVR7VB3**

Yours sincerely,

RESEARCHER NAME/S AND SIGNATURE/S



Professor Tania Aspland

Dean, Education Policy and Strategy
Australian Catholic University
Level 14, 8-20 Napier Street (Tenison Woods House)
North Sydney, NSW, 2060 Australia
Tania.Aspland@acu.edu.au



Dr Fiona Forbes

Board Chair
Australian Special Education Principal's Association (ASEPA)
fforbes35@iinet.net.au



Dr Poulomee Datta

Senior Lecturer
Macquarie School of Education
29 Wally's Walk, Macquarie University NSW 2109
Poulomee.Datta@mq.edu.au



Dr Joy Talukdar

Research Executive Officer
Institute for Positive Psychology and Education
Australian Catholic University
Level 10, 33 Berry Street,
North Sydney, NSW, 2060 Australia
Joy.Talukdar@acu.edu.au

◀ ▶ November 2020

MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY
26	27	28	29	30	31	1
2 Pupil Free Day - No School	3 Melbourne Cup No School	4	5	6	7	8
9	10 Lunch orders due in.	11 Remembrance Day	12	13	14	15
16	17 Lunch orders due in.	18	19	20	21	22
.....SSG..... Student Support Group Meetings						
23	24 Lunch orders due in.	25	26	27	28	29
.....SSG..... Student Support Group Meetings						
30	1	2	3	4	5	6

◀ ▶ December 2020

MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY
30	1 Lunch orders due in.	2	3	4	5	6
.....SSG..... Student Support Group Meetings						
7	8 Lunch orders due in.	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17 Last Day of Term 4	18 Pupil Free Day - No School	19 Summer Holidays	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
Summer Holidays						
28	29	30	31	1	2	3
Summer Holidays						

SCHOOL REMINDERS Cont.....

EXCURSIONS

All excursions can be paid by instalments, either at the school office or online through the school account. See above for details for the school bank account.

Please ensure all relevant forms are signed and returned with payment before the due date.

CAMPS, SPORTS AND EXCURSION FUNDS (CSEF)

The Camps, Sports and Excursions Fund (CSEF) commenced in 2015.

Families holding a valid means-tested concession card (Centrelink Card/

Health Care Card) or temporary foster parents are eligible to apply for CSEF. \$125 per year is paid for eligible primary school students, and \$225 per year is paid for eligible secondary school students. A special consideration eligibility category also exists. Payments are made directly to the school.

CSEF applications forms are available at the front office.

MEDICAL

At Mildura Specialist School we have children who are at risk of an anaphylactic reaction to **nuts** in the school. Please be mindful of this when preparing your child's lunch or snacks.



HEADLICE

As a school community, we share the responsibility to control and manage head lice infections. Head lice have been around for many thousands of years and cannot be eradicated. Supporting each other to minimize their spread is vital.

It is important to check your child's head regularly with conditioner and comb even when you don't think your child has head lice.

MEDICATION

In the interests of safe practice, medication must be brought to the office in its original packaging by an adult and paper work completed to authorise school personnel to administer it.

Please note: Students are not to transport medication to school.

CANTEEN NEWS The canteen will operate each Friday; orders must be completed and returned to school no later than Tuesday morning of that week.

For your convenience an order form is attached with this newsletter.

Order forms are also available from the school office or can be downloaded and printed from the MSS website.

All lunch orders must be in on Tuesday mornings.



UNIFORMS

Our school uniforms are supplied by LASER SIGN & PRINT and are available from 3 Andriske Crt Mildura. Contact person is Darran Seaman, phone: 03 5021 1129 mob: 0429 437 858. For all other enquiries for uniforms please contact the school.

PARENT/GUARDIAN/CARER CONCERNS

If you have a concern with any aspect of your child's education, please contact the Office (5021 3311). They will:

1. Put you in touch with the appropriate person
2. Help organise a meeting with the appropriate person.

It is important that your concerns are addressed as quickly as possible.

IMPORTANT NOTICE

Parents/Carers please take note of Parent Pick Up times.

Early Years and Upper Primary Years: 2:40—2.50 PM

Secondary Years and VCAL. 2.50—3.00PM

This is to help ease congestion on Deakin Ave and for safety of cars and students.



PAYMENTS

School fees, camps, excursion and cooking costs etc. can be paid to our Bank Account details are

Commonwealth Bank

BSB: 063 557

Account No: 10080861

Please enter the name of student and activity you are paying for.

Thankyou