Thinking first

Following article written by Peter Adams, Deputy Head of Junior School - Pastoral, Keilor Campus

One week into the school year and you would not even know it. The commencement of the new school year has been seamless due to the confidence and assurance demonstrated across students from all year levels. Smiling, happy students put a spring into everyone’s step. Some responses from Prep parents were sought last week after only three half days at school:

• “He is very excited about school, it has been a very smooth transition and he really enjoys it. He can’t wait to start school full-time.”
• “Absolutely fantastic! Mine has been so excited every morning to put his uniform on and do his own buttons up and it’s just thrilling to see him when I pick him up every day and ask him how his day was and he says ‘I had a great day!’”
• “Her transition has been exceptional. The teacher is beautiful, very warm, and she loves it. She comes to school every day with a smile. It has been very rewarding.”
• “My experience with the drop-off and the relationship with the school, teachers and parents has been fabulous.”
• “She is coming home happy and tired and no tears, which has been good. She loves getting up, getting dressed into her uniform and getting her lunchbox ready.”
• “Very positive, my daughter is doing very well and she is very happy. Transition has been excellent; my daughter is very familiar with the school and the amazing teachers.”

Parents also sought opportunities to make connections with other new parents within the community. Throughout the year there are many College events that parents can attend. These are advertised in Whispers weekly.

Every year the College introduces a new theme, which supports our year in all aspects of the curriculum. When the theme was announced on the first official staff day by our College Principal it was extremely well received. This year’s College theme is Thinking first and, like all themes before it, it is open to individual interpretation and will prove to be a powerful vehicle for teaching the concepts that surround it. Young children can be impulsive, inquisitive and imaginative. They will explore play, learning opportunities and physical challenges without too much time spent thinking about consequences, positive or negative. The challenge has always been to teach young students how to build and sustain positive relationships, use experiences as a means to find solutions to problems and use proven strategies to help them to stop, think and then do. Overnewton College prides itself on building relationships with all stakeholders and the strength of our community has been the partnerships that are started, developed and intensified over time. Thinking first is a fantastic theme and it complements the well-being statement in our Values Education curriculum document:
"Wellbeing and effective learning are intrinsically linked. At Overnewton students are encouraged to develop tools that enable them to be 'life-long learners' able to engage with all manner of situations, stresses and conflicts securely, confidently, intelligently, creatively and reflectively. All members of the community are encouraged to grow spiritually and to honour the Christian/Anglican foundations, which ground our College values."

We want our students to think of others first and to help wherever possible, as long as they consider their safety and act in a responsible and caring manner. We expect our students to build their capacity to care deeply about other individuals and put their needs equal to or above their own. Developing students' social skills through explicit teaching and restorative circles is a major focus at the beginning of the school year and it continues throughout the year and for their life in Junior School. The aim is to build their emotional intelligence and character strengths so that they will demonstrate understanding, empathy, compassion and care in their interactions with all members of the College.

A range of students (and even one teacher) gave the following responses when asked about what the College theme meant to them:

**Prep**

“It means you think first and ideas come to your brain first.” *Callista*

“Think before you do something naughty.” *Aidan*

“Stop, think then choose.” *Isaiah*

“To think of the first thing first and then think some more.” *Lolita*

**Year 1**

“Think before you do something or say something.” *Kobe*

“If you think first you know what to do.” *Owen*

“I think you should always think first to make sure it is a good idea.” *Isabella*

“I think that if someone asks you a question you have to stop, think and see if it's right.” *Sophia*

**Year 2**

“Putting other people first.”

“Think hard and understand.”

“I think we need to think first before we do anything.”

“Thinking first before we do our work, Thinking first before we say things, Thinking first when we are playing with our friends and Thinking first before we do things.” *Mrs Wake (Year 2 teacher)*

**Year 3**

“I think it’s about thinking quick and thinking straight away.” *Jaydelin*

“I think it means whatever comes to your head and whatever pops into your head.” *Zoe*

“I think it means think before you act or do something, so think a bit more before you act.” *Finn*

**Year 4**

“Think before you do. Think, is this the right thing, will I get into trouble, will the other person like it?” *Joel*
“Think before you act because if you are going to say something to someone that is not nice it may affect them.” 

_**Jasmine**_

“I think it means to think before you do something to see if you can make a better choice.” _**Jack**_

“You should care for other people and think before you say something.” _**Claudia**_

After hearing those responses it is clear that our students have a solid base and understanding of the theme.

This year we have introduced a new initiative for the Junior School section of Whispers. In addition to the feature article, each week an extra piece from a Home Group or specialist area from each Campus will be added to showcase student achievements and successes. Parents are encouraged to read these to gain insight into the busy places that the Junior Schools are.

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**Preps, Keilor Campus Junior School**

*Following article written by Josie Russo, Prep R Teacher, Junior School, Keilor Campus*

On Wednesday, Prep R was buzzing with excitement as the students and their parents and extended family members descended upon the classroom to commence their schooling journey. There were no tears (from the children at least), just happy, smiling faces. Students were given an opportunity to interact with each other as they were engaged in a variety of activities. Although Lego and the Veterinary Clinic proved to be popular choices, the most exciting part of the day was exploring the playground and having an opportunity to meet some of the Prep students in the other classes.

Students completed a special activity where they were able to cut and paste their name in order and decorate a template of themselves in their school uniform. The special day came to an end and all went their separate ways with big smiles on their faces.

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**Cross Curricular Learning in Year 2O – Nikki Orr**

*Following article written by Nikki Orr, Year 2O Home Group Teacher, Junior School, Keilor Campus*

Term 1 began with the Year 2 students unpacking the central idea to their new Cross Curricular Unit of "Inquiry - Many factors shape identities". The students learnt that:

- **factors** refer to reasons
- **shape** refers to making/forming us into who we are
- **identities** refer to how I see myself/others
Many factors shape who we are and some of those factors are our physical characteristics. Through artwork the students built their own physical identity. They used adjectives to describe their appearance. Adjectives can tell about the colour, size, shape, number and the texture of the noun. We know that good writers use a lot of adjectives to make their characters come to life!

Students learnt that no one person looks exactly the same as another. We are all unique.

Learning through inquiry broadens an inquisitive mind into the world in which we live today.

**2O Class Work Photos**

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**Coming Events - Junior School, Keilor Campus**

*Summer Uniform and College Hats*

**Friday 13th February**

Chapel, Prep to Year 2, 1.40pm-2.15pm  
Year 3 and 4, 2.45-3.20pm, Assembly Hall, Rev Kim Hosting

**Monday 16th February**

Prep regular hours commence, 8.50am-3.20pm  
Prep Picnic, 5.30pm-7pm, Year 1 playground

**Friday 20th February**

Chapel, Prep to Year 2, 1.40pm-2.15pm  
Year 3 and 4, 2.45-3.20pm, Assembly Hall, 4P Hosting  
Zooper Dooper Day

**Monday 23rd February**

Assembly, 2.30pm, Assembly Hall

**Wednesday 25th February**

Year 3 Indigenous Communities Incursion

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**Coming Events - Junior School, Taylors Lakes Campus**
Wednesday 25th February
Year 3 Incursion

Thursday 26th February
Prep BBQ, 5.30-7.00pm
Assembly, 3M Class Presentation

Friday 27th February
House Synergy Day

Monday 9th March
Labour Day

Thursday 12th March
Assembly, 2A Class Presentation

Friday 13th March
Outdoor Family Movie Night

Tuesday 17th March
Parent/Teacher interviews

Thursday 19th March
Parent/Teacher interviews

Wednesday 25th March
Celebration of Learning Morning

Thursday 26th March
Assembly, 4I Class Presentation