From the Principal

Term 4
Welcome back to school for the final time in 2013. I hope everyone had a relaxing two weeks and is ready to get down to some serious learning in our last 11 weeks. Our year 12 students only have just over 3 weeks before their exams begin. You get out what you put in therefore I implore our VCE students to knuckle down and do your very best.

Safe Partyng
As it nears the end of schooling for our year 12’s and party season starts I thought it appropriate to attach the DrinkWise Australia pamphlet to support parents in making good decisions when it comes to their kids and alcohol. Underage drinking plays a significant role in sexual behaviour - unwanted, unintended and unprotected, is associated with academic failure, illicit drug use and tobacco use and mental health issues. These are only a few of the effects underage drinking can have on your children. Please read the practical guide for parents and start to make plans about how you are going to delay drinking in your teen. As the guide says KIDS AND ALCOHOL DON’T MIX!

Congratulations
A belated congratulations to Mr Russell and Mr McLeod on their premiership at the start of the holidays, Mr Russell says he is now retired but we will see, the lure of 3 in a row maybe too strong to keep him on the sidelines.

FUNDRAISING
THIS FRIDAY NIGHT IS THE BACK TO FRONT DRAW FOR THE KINDER AND SCHOOL. PLEASE SUPPORT THIS EVENT BY PURCHASING AS MANY TICKETS AS POSSIBLE AND PROVIDING A PLATE TO SHARE. ALL MONEY RAISED GOES DIRECTLY BACK TO THE STUDENTS THROUGH THE FAMILY ACCOUNTS FOR SCHOOL STUDENTS AND INTO THE KINDER ACCOUNT.

Head lice
We have had two reported cases of head lice in our students to start term 4. Please be vigilant and do home checks so as our school stays head lice free.

Attendance
Unfortunately this year we have many students with below 90% attendance. I cannot stress the importance of students being at school - holidays should be taken in the term breaks. We understand that people get sick and have days off for this reason but many of our students have had upwards of 15 days away for the year without an explanation (parent choice) this is unacceptable. If you have 15 days off per school year this equates to 195 days over your school life which is just under 1 full year off missing learning opportunities. The only way to improve performance is by participation. Please keep in mind it is important that children develop habits of regular attendance at an early age. School attendance helps children develop social skills, such as friendship building, teamwork, communication skills and healthy self-esteem. Poor patterns of attendance place students at risk of not achieving their educational, social and psychological potential and are disadvantaged in the quality of choices they are able to make in later life situations. Students who regularly miss school are at risk of missing out on learning the basic building blocks of each subject and may experience long term difficulties with their learning. Students with less than 90% attendance on the 13<sup>th</sup> of December 2013 will not be included in the activity days at the end of the year and will miss out on opportunities to attend other extra-curricular events.
### Dates to Remember

#### October
- Responsible Pet Day: 8th October
- Back to Front draw: 11th October
- VCE Exams Start: 31st October

#### November
- Pupil Free Day: 4th November
- Melbourne Cup Day Holiday: 5th November
- Ceilidh: 11th November
- 9/10 Exams: 11th-15th November
- Secondary Surf Camp: 18th Nov – 22nd Nov
- Work Experience 10/11: 25th-29th November
- P-2 Sleepover: 28th November

#### December
- Ballet Excursion: 4th December
- Flying Start: 9th–13th December
- Activity Day: 16th December
- Awards Night: 17th December

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**Red Cliffs Lawn Tennis Club**

**Summer Junior Lawn Tennis**

Red Cliffs Junior Tennis will commence this Saturday 12th October at 9am. All children are welcome to play in section format tennis or learn the skills of the game. Beginner coaching is available each Sat morning from 9-10am with John @$5 per child. All other inquiries to Lisa 50 257577 Mob. 0400 726024. Hope to see you there!!!

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**Milo in2cricket Coordinators:**

Aaron Walter  Ph 0408 315 746
Brad Martin  Ph 0418 336 432

In order to support the local schools and provide continuity for the players, the Sunrayka Cricket Association has aligned Merbein/South to the following schools:

- Merbein P-10 College
- Our Lady’s Primary School
- The Lake Primary School
- Werrimull P-12 School

Students from these schools and any others are welcome and encouraged to play cricket for the Merbein-South Cricket Club.

**The Merbein-South Cricket Club invites boys and girls between 5 and 8 years of age to ourCome and Try Day Sunday 20th October 2013 at Chaffey Park from 11.00am. Training will go for an approx. 1 hour with a BBQ lunch to follow.**

**THERE IS NO COST FOR THIS DAY**

Our club will be running 8 sessions for this season. A schedule for these sessions will be made available at the Come and Try Day outlined above. Cost for the season is $70 which includes the items below. Payment will be via our club or Cricket Australia websites.

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**Milo in2cricket**

**Chaffey Park**

**Merbein**
As part of the P.E programme this year pupils will be taking part in Scottish country dancing. This involves partner, set and group dances and is a great form of exercise. Most dances are energetic, involve repeating steps and are a good way to develop pupils’ social skills.

The activity will run to the end of week 5 in term 4. On Friday 8th November we will be holding a Ceilidh.

This is a kind of party/barn dance where all Werrimull pupils take part in the dances they have learnt in class. Normally people dress up for these occasions, however as we are hosting it during school times I would advise pupils to dress up but be comfortable.

I would like to extend the invitation to parents to come along and watch and also increase our numbers on the floor by joining in! Most dances are easy to learn and your children can always give you a quick tutorial at home. I will also be calling the dances to help people with the steps.

Miss Wilson.
Welcome back to the last Term of 2013, the year has just flown by! We had a few very busy weeks to end last Term and we are certainly not slowing down this Term!

This afternoon the four year old children will be joining the Prep to Grade Two group at Werrimull P-12 School for a session on Responsible Pet ownership and care. This is a free incursion that we were contacted about last Term, it has certainly been nice to have people seeking us out for these types of events.

As discussed at last night’s Committee Meeting we will be having a speech pathologist visit us next Tuesday to do some screening of the children in both the three and four year old group. For each child she will provide a brief report outlining any potential or current issues along with a list of resources that can be accessed if necessary. This screening is carried out by many kindergartens and allows any issues to be identified before they reach school which in turn allows the school to apply for funding and/or support where appropriate in advance of their Prep year. **If you have any questions or concerns please call me either at the Pre-School 5028 1293 or School 5028 1251 or email smith.caroline.l@edumail.vic.gov.au before next Tuesday.**

Don’t forget that next week there is no four year old kindergarten on Thursday October 17, it has been swapped to Monday October 14.

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**What’s Happening**

**Dates to Remember**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>8 October</td>
<td>First Day of Term Four</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Responsible Pet Visit at Werrimull P-12 School 1:30pm (four year old group)</td>
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<tr>
<td>14 October</td>
<td>Four Year Old Kinder Day (swapped from Thursday)</td>
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<tr>
<td>15 October</td>
<td>Visit from Speech Pathologist</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17 October</td>
<td>No Four Year Old Kinder Today (swapped to Monday)</td>
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</table>
IF YOU HAVE PARTICULAR CONCERNS REGARDING YOUR OWN DRINKING, ITS EFFECTS ON YOU OR YOUR FAMILY, CONSULT YOUR GENERAL PRACTITIONER OR ANOTHER HEALTH PROFESSIONAL.

KIDS AND ALCOHOL DON’T MIX.

GET THE FACTS
DrinkWise.org.au

A PRACTICAL GUIDE FOR PARENTS

DrinkWise.org.au

The National Health and Medical Research Council's 2009 guidelines for children and young people state that 'not drinking at all is the safest option. Parents and carers are advised that children under 15 years of age are at the greatest risk of harm from drinking and that for this age group, not drinking is especially important. For teenagers aged 15 to 17 years, the safest option is 'to delay the initiation of drinking as long as possible.'
Today's teenagers are drinking at a younger age and at increasingly risky levels. The average age at which teens start to drink alcohol has fallen from 19 to 15.5 years over the past 50 years\(^1\) and one in five 11 year olds has consumed alcohol without parental supervision\(^2\).

As a doctor in the Accident and Emergency Department of the Royal North Shore Hospital in Sydney, I witness first hand the harm ‘drinking to get drunk’ causes to adolescent brains and bodies through alcohol-related injuries and violence.

New science is also telling us just how important it is for teenagers to delay the age at which they first drink alcohol.

We now know that alcohol can disrupt teenage brain development, potentially leading to learning, memory and psychological problems.

As a parent, the best thing you can do to help your teen become a happy, healthy adult is to encourage them to delay drinking alcohol for as long as possible.

I know it’s a challenge – Australian culture tends to glorify drinking, treating it as a ‘rite of passage’ for teenagers – but the science is clear: KIDS AND ALCOHOL DON’T MIX.

DrinkWise’s latest campaign aims to help you do everything you can to delay your teen’s drinking. This brochure gives you the scientific facts as well as practical strategies to delay your child’s first alcoholic drink.

For more information including issues-based advice related to your child’s age visit www.DrinkWise.org.au

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Dr. Andrew Rochford BMedic, MBBS (Hons)
Emergency Registrar
Royal North Shore Hospital, Sydney

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THE TEENAGE BRAIN AND ALCOHOL –
WHY THEY DON’T MIX

Professor Ian Hickie AM, MD, FRANZCP, PASA
Executive Director
The Brain and Mind Research Institute
University of Sydney

Once upon a time we thought that the teenage brain was the same as an adult brain; that it had already reached full development. But now the science is telling us something very different...

From the age of around 12 or 13 through to the early twenties the brain is in a state of intense development, moulding and hardwiring in readiness for the challenges of adulthood. Through a process called ‘frontalisation’ the brain is growing and forming all the critical parts it needs for learning, memory, planning, emotional stability and thinking.

The new science tells us that alcohol disrupts brain development during this critical phase of growth. Teenagers who drink alcohol risk their brains not reaching full capacity, which means they might never reach their full potential as an adult.

Therefore, the best advice is to avoid introducing alcohol to your teenager for as long as possible. New research shows that they should not drink until at least the age of 18. Even after that time it is best to minimise alcohol intake until the brain has finished developing around age 23 to 24 years.

Here’s why...

The brain on the left belongs to a kid who hasn’t started drinking; the brain on the right belongs to a kid who started drinking at age 15.

Source: Dr. Susan F. Tapert, University of California, San Diego

Spot the difference?

From Dr. Susan F. Tapert: “The picture on the left is of a 15 year old healthy non-drinking boy, while he was solving a memory task. The picture on the right is of a 15 year old boy who has been drinking five to six drinks, eight days out of every month for the previous year. Note that the heavy drinker showed less brain activation while doing the memory task. He also did not perform quite as well on the task as the non-drinker.”

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THE DELAY MESSAGE – WHY LATER IS BETTER FOR YOUR TEEN

The longer teenagers delay drinking alcohol, the best chance they give their brains to develop fully and to reach their full potential to succeed and be happy in life.

TOP FIVE REASONS WHY KIDS AND ALCOHOL DON’T MIX

1. From puberty the brain is developing, reaching its full capacity in the early to mid-twenties. Alcohol has the potential to disrupt this crucial window of development.

2. If the brain is not allowed to fully develop, due to alcohol use, this can lead to many problems such as learning difficulties, cognitive deficits, memory impairment and emotional problems like depression and anxiety.

3. Drinking alcohol too young, with its adverse effects on the developing brain, may mean your teen fails to reach his or her full potential, whether academically, creatively or on the sporting field.

4. Teenage drinking is just not bad for the brain; it’s dangerous too. Alcohol inhibits a teenager’s ability to consider the consequences of their actions, leading them to take stupid risks like getting in fights, drink driving, unwanted sex or serious accidents.

5. Drinking alcohol can become a negative distraction for teenagers not only from study, but sport, creative pursuits, family life and socialising with friends. These activities are important for building confidence and maturity during the teen years.

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\(^1\) Roche et al., 2007. \(^2\) Hayes et al., 2004.