

MEPS MAIL

Create the Future

23rd June, 2021

Key Dates

TERM 2

Friday 25/06/2021

- End of Term 2 2021

TERM 3

Monday 12/07/2021

- Staff Development Day
No classes

Tuesday 13/07/2021

- First school day of Term 3

Monday 26/07/2021

- Education week

Thursday 05/08/2021

- Year 1 Dental

Friday 06/08/2021

- Zone Athletics Carnival

Tuesday 10/08/2021

- Year 2 Sydney Symphony

Wednesday 11/08/2021

- Year 1 Longneck Lagoon

Monday 16/08/2021

- National Science Week

Monday 23/08/2021

- Book week

Thursday 02/09/2021

- School Photos

Friday 17/09/2021

- End of Term 3

TERM 4

Tuesday 23/11/2021

- Yr 6 High School orientation

Thursday 25/11/2021

- Presentation Day

Wednesday 31/11/2021

- Year 6 Farewell Dinner

Thursday 16/12/2021

- End of school year

Principal's report

Dear Parents and Caregivers,



The school term comes to an end on Friday and resumes again on **Tuesday 13 July 2021** for all students. School vacations are a time for students to relax and spend time together pursuing personal interests with family and friends. One of the lessons learnt during the Covid19 period and learning from home is that students cannot be concentrating online and or in lessons all day. Students need regular breaks and 'downtime' to refresh themselves. In education terms, we call it cognitive overload – that is, the brain is overloaded with knowledge and cannot process anymore. Therefore, I trust that the vacation period is a rewarding time for everyone.

Last Friday morning, I was surprised to see a story in the Sydney Morning Herald newspaper about the NSW Government asking schools to consider staggering their school hours in 2022 from the traditional 9am to 3pm as a process to "modernise" the school day. The story mentioned our school as an example that has already made the change. However the story did not mention that we made the school hour change in 2013 after 4 community consultation meetings and an overwhelming survey response that indicated a support for changes. This year, we are in our ninth year of the change and the Department has always monitored our school results. The purpose of the change included:

- Capturing peak learning time in the morning for students before a fatigue factor sets in during the afternoon sessions;
- Additional daylight hours for students and parents during the cooler months;
- Enhanced balance between homework and other activities such as external sports team training without the rush of after the usual school operating hours;
- Access to medical, dental and other services without impacting on school learning times when students often leave early during the day;
- Organisation of school activities in the afternoon during daylight hours;
- Increased availability of afternoon family time;
- Avoidance of much of the heat of the day in summer.
- Many parents in our school community have personal school experiences of starting school early in other countries; and
- Many students live in extended families or single income homes.

In some ways, we were pioneers back in 2013, but the change was always about student engagement and maximising the learning opportunities for our students. In other words, we put students first in our decision making. I do remember that back in 2012/ 2013, there were a number of critics and objectors to our change, but they were mainly from outside our school community. Likewise, when the story came out in the newspapers last week, again, I heard a lot of critics in the media but not from our school community. In many ways, together, we've made the school hours work for the benefit of our students.

Over the years, I have been impressed with way our students engage in their lessons each day and the progress made in the core areas of literacy and numeracy. In fact, the Australian Curriculum and Reporting Authority (ACARA), who set NAPLAN, have formally congratulated and acknowledged our school on a number of occasions after identifying our school as having demonstrated substantially above average gain in reading and/or numeracy achievement, as measured by NAPLAN.

However, we are always striving for constant improvement as a school. Next term will be another extremely busy period for our students. Year 1 students across the state will undertake a compulsory Phonics Check In Assessment and some of our students will trial the school readiness assessment in preparation of changing over to NAPLAN online in 2022. We will also be celebrating Public Education Week from Monday 26 July 2021 with a number of events to mark the occasion.

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Principal's report (continued)

I would like to remind parents that we have students with allergies, anaphylaxis and various dietary requirements that make it difficult for birthdays to be celebrated at school with shared food. Please don't bring up cakes or shared food to celebrate special occasions. Consider having birthday celebrations outside of school. Our staff conducts risk assessments whenever food is used at an event or in a class lesson.

We cannot be complacent about Covid19. Each day students are regularly washing their hands and our classrooms are cleaned. It is important that students with flu like symptom do not attend school. Last weekend, Merrylands Stockland Mall was put on the NSW Health casual contact list. **Anyone in the mall between 1-3pm on Monday 14 June should monitor for symptoms and if they occur, get tested and self isolate until a negative result. Anyone in Big W (on the 14 June 1:50-2:45pm) or Oporto (on the 14 June 2:40-2:45pm) are casual contacts and must get tested** and self isolate until you receive a negative result. It is important that we all follow the NSW Health advice to keep everyone safe.

Ms Gonzalez and Ms Kalank have taken leave at the end of last week. This week, we farewell Miss Le, Ms Papadopoulos, Mrs Forster and Mrs Terry from our school and wish to thank them for their service to NSW Public Education.

Finally, I would like to wish all our students and family a safe vacation.

John Goh (Principal)



ICAS Assessments – 2021

Year 3-6 students at Merrylands East have the opportunity to take part in the 2021 International Competitions and Assessments for Schools (ICAS).

All assessment will be conducted during August at school under the supervision of teachers and the Principal. The cost for each test is \$17.05. Closing dates vary for each assessment. Digital Technologies closes on 25th July, English closes on 1st August, Science closes on 8th August and Mathematics closes on 15th August.

If you would like your child to participate, all registrations must be completed and paid online.

The parent page link is:

<https://shop.icasassessments.com/pages/pps>.



This link is case sensitive so be sure to use all lower case letters.

Our school access code is: **IYZ286**

Thank you Club Merrylands

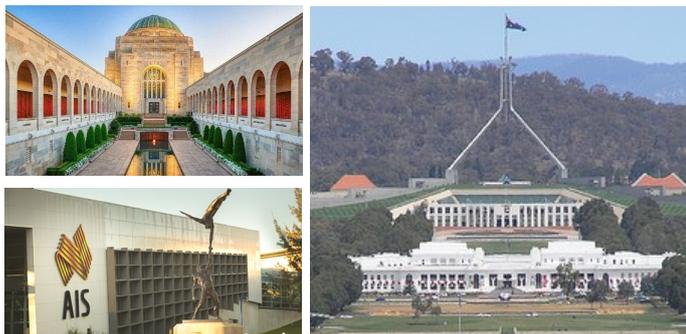
Merrylands East would like to thank Club Merrylands for its ongoing support of our school. Most recently the club funded our outdoor classroom which is designed to improve our students well being and to support the idea that students can learn anywhere, anytime and with anyone.

Club Merrylands also supports our Year 6 Farewell every year by providing the function room and soft drinks.



2022 Stage 3 Canberra

It's time to start saving for the 2022 Stage 3 Canberra Excursion. The cost is about \$300 and all students in Stage 3 (years 5 and 6) in 2022 have the opportunity to be part of this fabulous excursion. Notes will go home in Term 1, 2022. Activities include Parliament House, War Memorial, Museum of Democracy, Australian Institute of Sport and a lot more!



NSW Health—Covid testing

****ALERT**** - for the Merrylands area

The Department of Education requires any child with a sore throat, runny nose or any other flu like symptoms, to get a covid test. Following the latest covid-19 cases in Sydney, and the recent exposure in Merrylands, it is even more important to follow NSW Health guidelines and get tested and stay home until a negative test result is received.

If your child's test is negative, but they are still feeling unwell, please keep them home until they have recovered.



K-2 Fun Day

Yesterday, all students in Kindergarten, Year 1 and Year 2 took part in the K-2 Fun Day. They participated in a range of sporting activities that were designed to improve their fundamental movement skills in a fun and enjoyable way. The carnival was run by the teachers and held on the school playground. The students in 5/6 Unity also assisted on the day.



Meet the Teacher

Miss Al-Naji
1 Imagination

What do you love about being a teacher?

I love teaching because I can make a positive impact and build strong relationships with my students, I can support and share my love for learning and growing, and I enjoy having fun and making memories. I also love teaching because I learn from my students as much as I **teach** them (if not more).



Favourites

What is your favourite:

- Book – *'James and the Giant Peach'* by Roald Dahl
- Book Character - *Peter Rabbit*
- Subject - *Maths*
- Hobby – *Bike riding*
- Movie – *Home*
- Movie Character - *Mike Wazowski*
- Sport – *Volleyball*
- Colour – *Green*
- Food – *Avocado and toast*
- Drink - *Orange Juice*
- Singer or group - *Grace VanderWaal*
- Childhood Toy – *BRATZ doll*

Meet the Teacher

Miss Carter
5 Fearless

What do you love about being a teacher?

I love being able to use my creativity in the classroom and I love that every day is so different. I enjoy helping people and I love how I can learn so much from my students. It's wonderful to see how inquisitive students are, especially when participating in science and science experiments. Students always manage to make me laugh!



Favourites

What is your favourite:

- Book – *'The Lost Thing'* by Shaun Tan
- Book Character - *Pippi Longstocking*
- Subject - *Drama*
- Hobby – *Art and craft with friends*
- Movie – *The Borrowers*
- Movie Character - *Willy Wonka (Charlie & the Chocolate Factory)*
- Sport – *Soccer*
- Colour – *Green*
- Food – *Mango*
- Drink - *Tea*
- Singer or group - *The Cat Empire*
- Childhood Toy – *a hand knitted elephant*

P & C News

The P&C are always ready to welcome new members. It's a great opportunity to meet other parents and be a part of a community that gives assistance and support to the school.

The next P&C meeting will be held on **Thursday 22nd July, 2021 at 12.15pm in the community room under the Year 6 verandah**. We will be discussing the upcoming Father's Day raffle and other fundraising ideas for the remainder of the year.



We look forward to seeing you there for a quick meeting while sharing a cup of tea and a chat before picking up the 'kids'. Preschoolers are welcome.

Kindergarten 2022

At the beginning of Term 3, MEPS will begin taking enrolments for 2022 Kindergarten students. If you have a child turning 5 before 31st July 2017 or you know someone with a child this age, an enrolment form can be collected from the school office or the enrolment process can be conducted online via our school website.

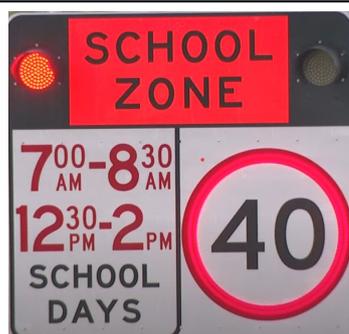
Documentation required for enrolment include:

1. Proof of address (electric/gas bill or lease agreement)
2. Proof of age and citizenship (birth certificate and passport or visa papers)
3. Immunisation History Statement from Medicare

Please call into the office or phone the school if you have any questions.



School Zones



Please be careful around school zones and remember that MEPS has different times to other schools.

Happy Holidays Stay Covid Safe

happy
holidays!

MEPS staff wish all our families a happy and restful winter holiday break. Please remember to stay Covid safe during this time.

School will resume on

Tuesday 13th July, 2021

See you in Term 3!

Uniform Shop

The Uniform Shop now has wide brimmed hats available. They can be ordered from the office for \$12.



All other items can also be ordered by submitting an order form with cash payment to the school office. Orders will be processed each Monday, Wednesday and Friday.

There are NO nylon jackets available for sale at the moment.

Did you know?

Creatures that live in the deep ocean have adapted to survive under difficult conditions such as; high pressure, no sunlight, little food, cold temperatures, and low oxygen. Many of these creatures are blind and have found other ways to navigate their environment. Some of the strangest animals live in the deep ocean and are given very strange names, like, Goblin Shark, Ghost Fish, Zombie Worm, Seadevil Anglerfish, Vampire Squid, Viper Fish and many more. The Barreleye Fish is one of the strangest because it has a fully transparent head.

