Dear Parents,

Term 4 is living up to expectations with a busy start. The recent Performance Night was well-attended, with performances from some talented students right across the year levels. We would encourage families to stay and watch all of the performers to get an idea of the breadth and depth of the music program we have here at Sherbrooke. The VET Music program is offered at VCE, attracts an ATAR score and is something our students do very well at.

One of our brightest music students is Nat Klodinsky, Year 11, who recently received an award at the Mullum Cluster VET Awards for musical excellence. Her performance at the awards was exceptional, performing an original piece on keyboards and voice. Well done Nat.

Years 4-6 went on their annual Forest Classroom trip the other week. By all reports, it was a physically challenging week, with lots of hikes and games, as well as a focus on environmental education. It was a chance too for the students to experience a different learning environment for the week.

VCE exams have now started, and the general feedback is one of confidence. We wish all of our students good luck at this important time. Exams for Years 7-11 start in week 7, November 17.

There is still much to come before the end of the year. There is a final Working Bee scheduled for this coming Friday, November 14, please come and lend a hand if you can. School Council are also organising a social for all families on the afternoon/evening of Friday December 5, to celebrate the year gone and look ahead to 2015. The social will take place after school, with families encouraged to bring a plate to share. There will also be a BBQ available, so bring something to put on if you would like to.

We are also looking forward to Allambee Camp, which will go from Dec 9-12 (Dec 11-12 for our Prep-3s). Final payments for this are now due, but if you would like to go and haven’t yet signed up, please see Dot.

As we head towards the end of the year, planning is well underway for 2015. We are looking at a new reporting and parent communication package for next year, under which student progress is continuously updated throughout the year. A parent portal will allow families to access curriculum and student progress information in real time. To enable us to fully fund this essential learning and communication tool, School Council is considering a small increase in parent contributions for next year. There has been no increase for three years and we will remain one of the lowest-cost schools in the region.

Finally, a reminder about the Student Free Day on Friday November 21 as teachers finalise student reports.

Regards, Sue Holmes, Acting Principal
Working Bee

A final Working Bee for the year will be held this Friday, November 14, after school. We are aiming to finish off the jobs started the other week which will help to get the school Fire Ready for the coming summer and continue to tidy up around the grounds. Any help that you can give would be appreciated. We will finish the work with a BBQ for the workers. Thanks from the Grounds Committee.

Forest Classroom

Two weeks ago, the 4-6 class went to the Forest Classroom for a week. It is at the bottom of the Thousand Steps. We walked up the Thousand Steps three times that week, on Tuesday, Thursday and Friday, and went on quite a few walks, including Nature Trails. Nature was all around us, we saw lyrebirds, a wallaby and lots of trees and plants, including the oldest tree on Mount Dandenong, which is 300 years old. Another activity was nature art, where we gathered bits and pieces from nature and created an artwork out of them, it could be a 3D sculpture, or something 2D with rocks, flowers and leaves. In a Micro-Habitat activity, we chose a spot roughly 2 square metres off the track, filmed it, and talked about the things necessary for survival in the habitat – shelter, food and water. We tried to find fauna and take pictures of it. Lots and lots of insects.

We also did lots of inside activities because it rained for two days! We learnt about the Kokoda Trail and what difficulties the soldiers might have faced. We also made a popplet on the iPad, where you have a middle rectangle with the title, then you can make other rectangles and connect them on to make a full chart. We had to choose a bird and write down clues to what sort of bird it was. We did some mapping inside, then went outside to finish it off (when it had stopped raining). In conclusion, it was really fun and everyone enjoyed it. I hope Andrew will take us again next year. - Barnaby, Year 4.

Sustainability News

We are now well on our way to completing our core module for Sherbrooke Community School to become a Resource Smart 5-star sustainable school. This program aims to embed sustainability into everything the school does. If you are interested in joining the Sustainability Committee, which is supporting this work, please let DD know or call Rose from School Council on 0407 819 961.

Parent Contributions/Education Maintenance Allowance

All families should have received a recent mail-out from the office, including information about the forthcoming abolition of the Education Maintenance Allowance (EMA) by the state government. School Council understands that families often find the ongoing costs of education difficult to budget for and would like to say a big thank-you to the families who have managed to pay their parent contributions this year.

Next year, with the abolition of the EMA, we will be offering families the chance to pay through Centrepay, a voluntary direct bill-paying service offered to families receiving Centrelink payments. These can be used to pay both ongoing parent contributions as well as one-off costs such as excursions. Forms and brochures to set up this service will be available soon from the office. If you have not received information about this option and would like to know more, please see Dot.
Community Notices

Free asthma & anaphylaxis education for VCE Students

To encourage better asthma and anaphylaxis management and improved wellbeing for students, The Asthma Foundation of Victoria is providing free asthma & anaphylaxis awareness education to VCE students.

The education sessions discuss:

To book your student education session for 2014 or for more information please contact Rebecca Colcott on (03) 9326 7088 or rcolcott@asthma.org.au

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BECOME A TEACHER’S AIDE
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APPLY NOW & START FEBRUARY 2015
Let the Kids Join in the Fun

Sunday 23rd November 2014
Puffing Billy Railway Station Gembrook

Children aged 3 to 12 years get the chance to run with Thomas the Tank Engine and Puffing Billy

For more information and registration go to: www.kidsfunrunwiththomas.org.au

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Ridge Top Brigades Family Fun & Information Day

Sunday 23rd November 2014 from 10am to 3pm.
Olinda Hall

Everyone Welcome. Loads of FREE fun and information.