Principal’s Comment

So far our first five weeks have been extremely busy. Student learning is in full swing with Unit 1 work being assessed as I write. I have already seen some amazing work being produced thanks to the great first teaching that is happening in the classrooms.

Earlier this week I alerted the parent community to a suspicious vehicle that had been reported in our schools vicinity. Following the report to police, we have received information that the vehicle described was in fact a relative of one of our students.

On behalf of our community and the police, I would like to thank the parents who reported the vehicle. Your vigilance has kept our children safe. Even though it was confirmed to be someone with a legitimate reason to be around our school, it has highlighted the importance of everyone looking out for each other in this day and age.

What did disappoint me were the posts that some people made on Facebook. Before you make comment or post anything on social media, please think about the effect you may have on others. Remember that what goes on social media is forever. We speak to our children about appropriateness of communication, now we need to model the correct behaviours for them.

PARENTS AND CITIZENS ASSOCIATION
The Annual General Meeting of the Happy Valley SS P&C has now been officially called. This will take place on Monday 14 March in the Meeting Room opposite the Office. The meeting starts at 6:30pm and parking is available in the Staff Car Park. Children are welcome if you have no babysitting options.

THRASS PARENT EVENING
Thank you very much to the parents who joined our THRASS mentor Pete in the Hall for the THRASS parent evening. It was awesome to have so many parents return for the presentation.
PARENT INFORMATION SESSIONS
Thank you to all of the Parents who attended our Parent Information evenings. It was great to catch up with old faces and meet some of our new parents. We look forward to a productive year working with you for the continual growth of your children.

SOCIAL SKILLS AND SCHOOL RULES
This week’s Social Skill is “Start to shine, be on time!”

SCHOOL LEADER’S INDUCTION PARADE
Our elected Student Leader’s will have their badges presented to them at a special parade on Friday 19 February at 8:30am. Our special guest will be the Honourable Mayor of Mount Isa, Mr Tony McGrady. We look forward to seeing our School Leaders wearing their badges with pride.

VOLUNTARY CONTRIBUTIONS
I would like to thank the parents who have already paid the Voluntary Contribution for 2014. The cost of $30 per student, covers other costs such as ingredients for cooking, special art requirements and other incidentals. This can be paid at any time to Belinda or Sam at the office, and will be receipted.

PLAYGROUND USE BEFORE SCHOOL
For those families new to our school and for others that may need a reminder, we do not encourage children to be at school before 8am. Students are then expected to follow the ‘Sit on it’ social skill outside their classrooms. This includes Prep students playing on the playgrounds. There are no teachers rostered on duties at these times and children are not permitted on any play equipment, even if you are supervising them. Please help us with these safety issues.

CAR PARKING
Please be aware that the 23rd Avenue pick up zone is a 2 minute zone. Please show consideration to all other users of this facility and make a swift pick up. QPS are patrolling school zones at present. We are currently beginning talks about changing this area to a carpark. If you have any input, please contact myself or Mrs Walsh in the office.

A reminder also that the Brilliant Street Car Park is NOT a parent drop off area. This area is a designated staff car park but also serves as a delivery area and Taxi Drop Off zone. It would be appreciated that parents do not use this car park and also, people do not use the car park as a short cut to classrooms. This is a high traffic area at the beginning and end of school. As well, a number of parents think it is not against the law to park on the footpath next to the yellow lines sprayed as ‘No Standing’ zones. This is incorrect and police have assured me that they will book people illegally parked. It is not safe to park opposite our school and have your children cross the road to you. This is where I receive most of my reports. Please think of the safety of your children and others and use correct car park and entry gates. The police have been notified of several dangerous acts already and will be increasing patrols to ensure safety of our students and that traffic flows smoothly through this zone.

2 White Scientists
WEEK 2 & 3
TERM 1 AWARDS

STUDENTS OF THE WEEK

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Prep Blue</th>
<th>Prep White</th>
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<tr>
<td>Koby L Abigail C</td>
<td>Charlize M Sophia T</td>
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<td>Noel S Tyler J</td>
<td>Kaylem R Charlie M</td>
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<td>3 Blue Jacob R</td>
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<td>3 Gold</td>
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<td>1 Blue Jack A</td>
<td>1 Gold Lily J</td>
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<td>Naomi W</td>
<td>Coby L</td>
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<td>4 Blue</td>
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<td>Jake M</td>
<td>Scarlett Z Isabelle W</td>
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<td>2 Blue Emma O</td>
<td>2 White Lailah M</td>
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<td>2 Gold Caelen R</td>
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<td>Meghan E</td>
<td>Finn M</td>
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<td>6 White Jade N</td>
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Congratulations
3B – 99%
1B – 99%
On having the best attendance in week 2 & 3 at Happy Valley State School

ATTENDANCE TROPHY

SOCIAL SKILL
Start to Shine
Be on Time

UNIFORM SHOP OPENING TIMES

Tuesdays: 8.30am – 9:00am
Fridays: 8.30am – 9.00am

NB Can do orders & payments (credit card) over phone for collection at office.

Orders can also be placed at the Tuckshop between 8.30am – 1.30pm (Mon/Wed/Thurs) for collection at a later date.

Larger sizes available (up to XXL)

EFTPOS NOW AVAILABLE IN UNIFORM SHOP

REVERSIBLE SPORTS HOUSE HATS AVAILABLE

ANYONE WITH SECOND HAND UNIFORMS AT HOME IS ENCOURAGED TO DONATE THEM TO THE SCHOOL. DROP THEM INTO THE FRONT OFFICE.

EFTPOS NOW AVAILABLE IN UNIFORM SHOP

www.facebook.com/HappyValleySS

Apply now to be a 2016 Census Area Supervisor! The Australia Bureau of Statistics is seeking motivated and community minded project managers to work on the 2016 Census and make a difference in your community.

Area Supervisors are:
• Non-office-based positions requiring travel
• Casual temporary positions, with flexible working hours.

As an Area Supervisor, you will:
• Recruit, manage and train a small team of temporary Census field staff
• Implement and manage the Census delivery and collection processes and procedures
• Undertake a range of administrative tasks, including the receipt, handling and storage of a range of Census materials
• Earn $35.76 per hour (inclusive of 25% loading).

As an Area Supervisor, you must:
• Know your local community
• Hold a current driver’s licence
• Be comfortable using computer, tablet and mobile devices
• Comply with ABS work health and safety policies
• Hold Australian Citizenship or have the legal right to work in Australia.

Job sessions from diverse backgrounds, including non-English speaking backgrounds and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, are encouraged to apply.

More information is available from the ABS website. Apply online at abs.gov.au/careers
Over the past week our teaching staff have been working alongside myself to plan for our remaining units of English and Mathematics for the term. Clarity in what we are teaching and what will be assessed has been our focus. When this planning is enacted in our classrooms all our students are able to discuss what they are learning, how they will successfully demonstrate their learning in their assessment task and how their learning is progressing in relation to the success criteria. I encourage you to ask your child about their learning so you can share in their exciting journey.

**IMPACT Booster Projects**

This term some Year 5 students are accessing the Just Write and Solve It programs through Brisbane School of Distance Education where students from around Queensland collaborate to boost their knowledge, skills and confidence.

Each week, Just Write students investigate a text type including the audience, purpose, text structure and relevant vocabulary through a web conference. They generate ideas, produce and publish text digitally. In Solve It, students investigate a strand of Mathematics such as Number and Algebra, Statistics and Probability, and Measurement and Geometry; demonstrating their learning on ThinkBoards during a web conference. They use the see, plan, do, and check strategy to solve challenging numeracy problems and share their thinking.

The Year 5s are thoroughly enjoying the opportunity to engage with this form of learning and extend their knowledge and understanding. The teachers from Brisbane School of Distance Education have complemented our students for the evidence of learning they have demonstrated thus far and we look forward to reporting on the success of these students when the program ends mid-Term 2.

**THRASS Professional Learning and Parent Night**

Last week teachers and teacher-aides engaged in a weekend of professional learning around THRASS to support our explicit and hands-on approach to phonics and spelling instruction. Modelled lessons and lesson observations were conducted by the THRASS facilitator Pete to transfer our new knowledge to the classroom.

More than 50 people attended the parent night held which outlined the importance of your child learning the THRASSCHART, so that they are able to use the phonic information to decode (read) and encode (spell) words. Further highlighted was your role as a parent and carer in talking about the meaning of words rather than focussing on ‘rote’ learning the word’s spelling for weekly testing. Having this knowledge will allow your child to develop skills in reading, spelling, writing and reading comprehension enabling them to reach their full potential in literacy learning. If you attended the information night please look out for a short survey we would appreciate you completing and returning to the office by the end of next week.

**PARENTS & CITIZENS News**

*Our AGM will be held on Monday 14th March at 6.30pm in the Meeting Room.*

*All are welcome & encouraged to attend.*

*Outgoing President Chris Pocock, Vice President Tracey Pearce, Secretary Ashleigh De Pasquale, Treasurer Sam Bell & Fundraising Coordinator Corinne Jackson thank everyone for their continued support over the last 12 months.*

*On that note we would like to wish Chris & his family happy travels as they set off on their Australian Journey & Sam all the best in her new position as the P & C Administrator.*

*ALL POSITIONS ARE NOW DECLARED OPEN and we look forward to announcing our new Committee very soon.*
Helping kids be brave

Anxious kids, like worriers and sensitive types, benefit from a parenting style that is empathetic but at the same time empowers them to tackle their fears.

Currently around 11% of children have problems coping with anxiety. Around 3% experience some form of depression.

As reported on the Kidspot website, Macquarie University psychology lecturer Dr Carolyn Schniering has stated that anxiety problems are the most common emotional disorders that children experience.

It’s important to understand that anxiety is not something to be afraid of. As Dr Schniering says, “It’s a normal emotion and an important part of how we engage with the world.”

Experiencing some anxiety is a normal part of social situations or some specific situations such as around water is quite normal and, in some regards, healthy. It’s not healthy when anxiety stops kids doing things they want or are able to do or interferes excessively with their school or pre-school experiences.

Genetics plays a part

Macquarie University research shows that children who display high levels of anxiety from a young age, and who have a parent who is excessively anxious or depressed, are seven to 11 times more likely to develop long-term anxiety.

This finding supports my experience that anxious parents beget anxious kids. But it’s not that simple. Some children are simply more prone to experiencing excessive anxiety than others. These kids are typically classified as worriers, shy types and more sensitive souls who wear their hearts on their sleeves. (I’ve parented one of these types and I learned first-hand that some situations they experienced needed to be handled with some parental care and attention!)

I want to stress that these children are not necessarily going to experience debilitating anxiety. However, they do benefit from a parenting style that is sympathetic while empowering them to tackle their fears.

It’s worth noting that if you yourself are overly anxious or experiencing depression, then self-care needs to be your first priority before you can assist your kids.

When should I worry?

Dr Schniering says, “As a rule of thumb, parents should be more concerned if the fears or worries they experience become excessive and their child is unable to deal with every day life.”

I would also add that when children become overwhelmed by their fears it may be time to seek professional help. A first port of call may be a General Practitioner or your child’s school. (Our research shows that parents are more likely to seek help from their child’s school than their GP; however, my experience has been that local doctors often have a good handle on these issues as well as knowledge of local providers.)

HELPFUL PARENTING PRACTICES

Before looking at helpful practices, let’s quickly list some practices that are unhelpful for parenting anxious kids:

Fixing kids’ problems.

Jumping in too soon only increases anxiety and doesn’t enable kids to build their capabilities.

Allowing avoidance.

Letting kids escape new or fearful situations validates their fears.

A “get over it” attitude.

There’s a difference between “You can do this!” and “For goodness sake, get over it!” The latter often comes from parent impatience and stress.

more on page 2
Okay, now for the helpful parenting practices for kids who are anxious. These include:

1. **Skilling towards bravery**
   Help kids face their fears by skilling them, e.g., Look around for a friendly face when you go to scouts. You need to put on your coaching hat to build skills and self-confidence, which defeats anxiety.

2. **Scaffolding towards bravery**
   Rather than avoidance allow kids to face their fears in stages, e.g., Let’s go to the party for an hour then I’ll pick you up. By breaking things down into smaller stages kids feel that they are more in control. Lack of control is behind a great deal of anxiousness in adults, as well as kids.

3. **Be empathetic, not sympathetic**
   There is a difference. Empathy shows you understand how they feel; sympathy can be maudlin, leading you to pay excessive attention to the fear as well as letting them off the hook. Kids need a supportive adult who says, not necessarily in these words, “I know how you feel but I also know you can do this.”

4. **Creating opportunities for independence**
   Competency is the enemy of anxiety. Building children’s self-help skills and their independence outside of the home has a snowball effect on how they feel about situations that they usually fear.

5. **Model bravery**
   Okay, you knew I was going to mention this. But if you want kids to be brave then you go first. Your calmness, patience and willingness to methodically work your way through new situations will have a calming effect on kids. (Good leadership is basically about staying calm in stressful situations.) Modelling also shows them how fears of new and unknown social situations, and even specific fears such as going to the dentist, can be handled positively.

It’s worth noting that most kids grow out of their anxiety given attentive brave parenting.

As a general parenting strategy I recommend that you take a strength-based approach (which is what I’m banging on about all the time) and focus on building children’s strengths and assets to help them overcome fears. At the same time recognise that some children may need extra assistance from time to time as a result of their anxiety.

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parentingideas.com.au
From the Guidance Officer – Charmaine Gubbins, at Happy Valley School on Tuesdays, Wednesdays and every second Thursday.

Have you ever had the following responses-

Parent – How was school today?
Child – Good.
Parent – What did you do today?
Child – Nothing.

Sometimes it can be difficult to start a conversation with our children. By changing from asking direct questions to more open questions, we may succeed in starting a conversation with our children. Talking about a good thing that happened in your day is a great activity to do at dinner time and if everyone, Parents and Children, contributes it helps to open communication with each other.

<table>
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| How was school today? How was your day? | • What was the best thing about school today?  
• Tell me one thing that you learned today?  
• What are you looking forward to this week?  
• What were 2 good things about your day? A bad thing about your day? Something interesting about your day? (have the 3 questions together)  
• What was one good thing that happened today?  
• Did you help anyone today? Did anyone help you? |

Along with changing the way in which we ask questions there are some other factors that can assist in starting a conversation with our children. These things can be useful in times where you know that something may ‘be up’ with your child but you don’t know what. There is a lot of information about how to get our children talking and the following link has some useful tips and advice.

http://www.ahaparenting.com/parenting-tools/communication/foolproof-strategies-talk

The following are a couple of suggestions from the link above:

- **Listen to Indirect Communication** that your child has with their siblings or friends in the car, while playing etc. They may talk to another child about what is bothering them, knowing that you can hear them but feeling more comfortable in you hearing it indirectly.
- **Build special time with your children into your routine** something that you may do together once a week / month eg. a mother – daughter lunch, craft or a game together. An activity in which communication is enhanced and can be started by using a question framed like those in the ‘try’ box above.
- **Stay available** even if your child does not want to talk. You could let your child know that you think something is bothering them and that you are there for them if they want to talk. Sometimes they may want to tell you about something at bed time, as it may be playing on their mind once the distractions of TV/technology, doing things with their family around them, are removed as they prepare to go to sleep.
- If your child does talk to you about something that is bothering them – **Listen, Don’t Jump in with Solutions and Advice**.