Bullying
From time to time parents contact the school regarding an issue that their child may have had with another student either in the classroom, or in the playground. Children encounter many different situations, and whilst some of the behaviours they encounter might be unpleasant or distressing, they are not bullying.

The word “Bullying” is often used incorrectly, particularly in the media which gives children the wrong understanding of what actually constitutes bullying. We don’t want students to feel like victims, but empower them to deal with a range of interactions they will encounter as they grow and develop.

What is Bullying?
‘Bullying is when someone repeatedly uses their power to hurt or scare others. It can be done by an individual or by a group. It can be carried out physically, emotionally or verbally. People bully because they feel bad about themselves or to gain popularity and sometimes even for pleasure.’

Many experts in the field of ‘bullying’ are beginning to describe it as normative and inevitable and that power relationships are likely to occur in any human group.

What is not bullying?
- **Mutual conflict** - which involves a disagreement, but not an imbalance of power. For example, Children having a disagreement about a game or rules of a game.
- **Single-episode** of nastiness or physical aggression – For example – Name calling, being rude to another.
- **Social rejection or dislike** is not bullying unless it involves deliberate and repeated attempts to cause distress, exclude or create dislike by others. For example – A student choosing to play with someone else and tells another child to “go away”.

**DATES TO REMEMBER**

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<th>Wednesday</th>
<th>27th May</th>
<th>National Simultaneous Storytime</th>
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<td>Friday</td>
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Whilst this may be factual it doesn’t always mean that it is acceptable. This school treats bullying seriously and the number one factor in addressing bullying is recognising it. Teachers cannot be directly involved in every exchange between every child every day – nor would I want them to.

Despite the fact that we have a number of staff on yard duty when children are outside at play, we can never claim to see every student interaction. When recognised, this school will take action to address bullying, and to assist us to recognise bullying it is important to let the school know.

If your child has an issue with bullying please inform the school. Many successful strategies to address bullying can be put in place but we need to know. We also need to work out whether an incident is indeed bullying (serious) or a disagreement (less serious), we do not seek involvement in every disagreement between children.

Language Development and Phonological Awareness
Phonological awareness is one of the key components of literacy instruction. It helps children apply oral language skills to reading and spelling.

In simple terms a child being able to speak clearly with an understanding of sentence structure is the most powerful predictor of reading and spelling success in later years. In other words children need to learn to speak appropriately before they can read, write and spell appropriately.

One of the major challenges for teachers; particularly in grades Prep to two, but not only those year levels, is assisting children to clearly pronounce words and form sentences. If a child says, “I can jump good” then when writing obviously they will write, “I can jump good.” The listener will understand the essence of what the child was meaning but the reader will not be as forgiving.

Similarly when children mispronounce words such as “arks” for “ask” spelling becomes a challenge. Research indicates that more and more children are being exposed to television and DVD’s from an early age and they are spending less time in conversation. Children need conversation, plenty of it, particularly in their developing years 0-5 so that when they enter school they are well prepared for literacy development.

My message for parents of babies—talk, talk and talk some more to your young child as this is the best stepping stone to literacy development at school.

My message to all parents of school age children, take the time to have conversations with your children.

Names On Clothing
The growing pile of unclaimed clothing near the office reminds me
of the volume of un-named items of clothing. A simple way to avoid the cost of having to replace lost clothing is to write your child’s name on every item which may be removed at school; jumper and hat.

**Personal Goods Brought To School**

From time to time children bring personal goods to school, this may range from simple sporting equipment to various electronic games/MP3/Ipods and even mobile phones.

The Department of Education does not have any insurance policy to cover the loss or damage of any personal goods and does not accept any responsibility for such goods.

Please think carefully before allowing your child to bring any personal items to school.

**Musical Update**

The grades are learning their songs and the cast members are learning their lines. Every child will be on the stage at least twice singing and performing for the audience.

Just a reminder- there will be two performances of our whole school musical.

Students with surnames from A to K will perform on Tuesday 13th October. Students with surnames from L to Z will perform on Thursday 15th October. We will be performing at The Drum Theatre Dandenong. Children have been given suggestions as to what they could wear on the night. Keep looking in our school newsletters for more details throughout the year. **Len Mizzi**

**May Is The Month For Education And Reading.**

**National Simultaneous Storytime.**

This annual activity aims to encourage children to read and enjoy books. Parents and friends are invited to attend the activities with their child.

**Where:** In your child’s classroom  
**When:** Wednesday 27th May  
**Time:** 9.00-11.00

Students need to bring their favourite picture story book. Hope to see you enjoying the activities with your child. **Fotina Mangonis**