Dear Families,

A BIG WELCOME TO NEW STUDENTS AND FAMILIES.

A special welcome is extended to all new students and their families who have begun at Mount Barker South over the past few weeks. We trust your time at Mount Barker South Primary School will be rewarding, enjoyable and successful. We look forward to working in partnership with you to achieve many goals for your child.

SA Excellence in Public Education Awards

Nominate by 15 April 2016

Don’t miss your chance to recognise an outstanding teacher, education leader or school/preschool support staff member working in the South Australian public education system with a nomination.

Nominees will receive a certificate of appreciation and an invitation to apply for an award.

Up to 13 overall winners will receive funding to support valuable professional learning to benefit the winner and the children and young people that they work with. Nominate an inspirational educational professional today

Nominate online at www.decd.sa.gov.au/awards

Find us on Facebook, where you can follow the progress of the awards. Nominations close 5pm, Friday 15 April 2016.

For further information, contact the awards team on 08 8226 3079 or email DECD.Recognition@sa.gov.au.
Our school had a good attendance record of 90% last year. We need your help to improve on this record and to enhance learning opportunities for all children by achieving over 93%.

Lately concerns have been raised by staff that a number of children are arriving at school after 8:55am on a regular basis. We view this as a matter that can have quite serious effects on the education of those children, the other children in the class and the teacher concerned.

**Late child:** Children who often arrive late can be disadvantaged in a number of ways.

- They may feel embarrassed, awkward, uncertain or unhappy because they are being made to be different.
- They miss instructions, information and knowledge about what is happening and have to “catch up” somehow.
- Students miss out on “special programs” and SSO support that are conducted in the morning.
- They start off the day unsettled and on the wrong foot and often in a negative frame of mind.
- They often take a while to settle down and become positive about their learning.

**Other children:** Children arriving late have an unsettling effect on the rest of the class, which is attempting to settle into daily organization, routines and even lessons. Because late children do not arrive all at once, the interruptions go on until the last child is settled. Children arriving late often have things that need to be done prior to them joining the group and this causes more disruption. At other times the child must wait until the teacher is available and some important issues can be forgotten.

**The teacher:** The teacher is obliged to provide a range of instruction each day. Our day begins at 8:55am with organizational issues being dealt with before 9:00am. Teachers become increasingly frustrated when late children interrupt their planned routines, disrupt the beginning of the day, embarrass the child concerned or cause the teacher to stop teaching to deal with any issues involved.

This issue along with absenteeism and early withdraw from class is a priority with our school and DECD which recognizes the negative effects it has on children’s education.

**Attendance Counsellors** work with schools to check records, which include latecomers and non-attenders. Roll books are subject to regular audits and types of absences (satisfactory/unsatisfactory) are recorded and acted upon through home visits, phone calls or letters.

We are all human. We know that cars breakdown, crises occur, that children can be difficult to organize, dress, clean, have breakfast, and get to school. I personally have all the above every day with my seven year old daughter and am quite willing to listen to problems and offer suggestions if appropriate. We are also able to accept that children will be late on the odd occasion because of unforeseen circumstances, **but arriving late or not at all on a regular basis place the child/student at risk in their learning and social and emotional development.**

Please help us to support your child’s healthy development and to flourish by ensuring your child is at school between 8.30am and 8:50am each day.

Thank you for your attention to this important matter.

Kind Regards,
Catherine Cox-Walliss
Some current thinking on how we can all help children to develop a growth mindset from Carol Dweck: Praising effort alone, she says, is useless when the child is getting everything wrong and not making progress. Either students will feel misled when they are eventually confronted with the reality of their low achievement, or the hollow praise will convey adults’ low expectations for them. Instead, she advises teachers and parents to praise a child’s process and strategies, and tie those to the outcome.

For example, Dweck suggests these phrases: "Wow, you really practiced that, and look how you've improved." "See, you studied more and your grade on this test is higher." "You tried different strategies and you figured out how to solve the problem." "You stuck to this and now you really understand it."

Our aim is for all children to develop a growth mindset and to make progress at the South. One way we do this is through goal setting with students. So how do we set SMART goals with our students and families and what are they???

SMARTAR Goals – what are they?
Goals should be SMARTAR - specific, measurable, attainable, realistic, time-based, agreed upon and reviewed

The acronym SMARTAR has a number of slightly different variations, which we use to provide a more comprehensive definition for goal setting:

- **S** specific, significant, stretching
- **M** measurable, meaningful, motivational
- **A** attainable, achievable, acceptable, action-oriented
- **R** realistic, relevant, reasonable, rewarding, results-oriented
- **T** time-based, timely, tangible, trackable
- **A** agreed upon
- **R** reviewed and celebrated

Goal Setting with Students
At the South Individual Conferences are held with each student to share and discuss their learning data. This is when a teacher may ask the student “How do you think you are going? What do you want to improve upon? What do you find difficult? What is the next small step for you in your learning to focus on? What support do you need?

Staff support students to identify two or three challenges and collaboratively develop a short term goal. Decisions regarding how data will be gathered and recorded are determined at this point (tally, bar graph, smiley face chart etc).

Weekly evaluation of the data being gathered is reviewed and shared with the student and other staff members.

Then the SMARTAR short term goals and actions are revised based on the data/evidence collected. It is important to note that students must have a clear understanding of their goal in order to work upon it and to feel success.

Examples of how we support our children to understand their goal is by using child speak language and specific classroom goals and standards. Student friendly goals are then posted in the classroom. A copy is kept in the student learning folder and on their desk for student reference. When reviewing the goals families are invited into the school to share in the child’s achievements and to set the next learning goal.

Here are some current SMARTAR goals that children from across the school are working on in English & Mathematics.

- **To write a 4 sentence paragraph with 2 binding conjunctions by the end of week 4.**
- **To independently write two sentence joined by a binding conjunction by the end of week 6.**
- **To independently add a two digit number with regrouping, for example 39+24 or 48+37 by the end of week 8.**
- **To understand place value for numbers greater than 1000 by the end of week 9.**
- **To write one spelling sentences with one adjective by the end of week 9.**
Socceroos World Cup Qualifier
Australia vs Tarjikistan
Adelaide Oval
7 - 0