Dear Families,

I am really grateful for the feedback that many families have been providing to me about how the school is going throughout the first 5 weeks of this term. We have such a professional staff team and all children are highly engaged in their learning as witnessed daily when I visit classes.

We are very conscious of the large number of new families in the school and how schools do things differently, and wanted to offer some updates to questions that I have been approached about. I hope this helps in some small way for all new families to settle into Mount Barker South Primary School.

Update on future parking plans

There is a shortage of parking around the school and this is abundantly evident at the end of school most days. Parents are asked to observe parking signs which have been erected with the safety of children in mind. Parking within the school grounds is not encouraged for the same reason. Please remember the “kiss and drop zone” is for a quick drop off and pick up as we have children and families with disabilities who need to park in the designated areas at the front of the school.

Due to the safety risk to children in the very near future we will be closing the Kiss and Drop zone and only DECD staff, buses and families with a disability permit will have access. This will mean all families will need to park along the streets. Thank you for your assistance and respect in supporting our children to be safe.

Hot Weather & Wet Weather

**Hot weather** On days of extreme heat or wind, our policy is that our students remain inside and are supervised by their teachers. Our hot weather temperature for staying inside is 36 degrees or over. If a child also has particular health care needs we would support them to play in the library. **Wet weather** Children remain indoors under supervision during wet weather. At recess and lunch time a wet weather bell is sounded to indicate to students to return to class.
**Attendance**

Once children turn six, they are legally obliged to attend school daily unless unwell or for certain special circumstances. Parents are responsible for regular attendance of younger children once they have been enrolled. It is important that children’s regular attendance is encouraged and that they are not kept at home unless absolutely necessary. Good habits and practices start early in life. Having a day off school for your birthday or to go to the movies is not a legitimate reason and sends a message that school is not important. DECD have a target of 95% for attendance that they would like all schools to reach. Our school has also set this target in our school improvement plans and need your support to make sure all children are at school every day.

If your child is absent, please phone in the morning to notify the school Ph: 8391 1197 or place a written note in their diary the following day explaining the absence. If you wish to remove your child from school for 1 week or longer for holidays etc then you must seek in writing permission from myself to exempt your child from school. Exemption forms are available at the front office.

**Late Arrival** - If your child is late to school please sign them in at the Front Office prior to going to the classroom, this will avoid any confusing of receiving a text message stating your child is absent from school when they are in fact at school.

**Early Collection** - When this is necessary an early collection form or a note must be completed. Early Collection forms are available at the office and must be completed by the adult collecting the student.

Once a student has arrived at school they will not be allowed to leave without written permission.

**Messages**

Messages to teachers can be sent through the student diary or Communication Books or note. Telephone messages through the school office to your children during the day should only be requested on an emergency basis.

**Medication**

Children who require regular or daily medication must have a Medication Management Plan signed by a medical professional. Please check with the office that your child’s medical plan is current and up to date. If you require any medical forms to take to the doctor for a review or yearly update, these can be obtained from Jane in the front office. If you are unsure about whether or not your child needs a medical plan please speak to Jane (our senior First Aid Officer) in the front office.

**Accident and Illness**

If a minor injury or illness occurs, your child will be looked after by their class member. Staff members hold a current DECD first aid certificate. Children must first see a teacher on yard duty if hurt in any way. They will be sent to the office when necessary where we have staff with current senior first aid certificates.

In the case of illness or major accident, parents or guardians will be notified, and the appropriate action taken. An ambulance will be called if required. It is therefore important that parents make sure that the emergency contact information is up-to-date at all times.

In the event that emergency contacts cannot be made, the school will take whatever action is required for the safety of the child. If necessary, an unwell child will be seen by a local doctor, usually the family doctor. Parents are advised NOT to send sick children to school.

**Excursions**

At our school teachers are encouraged to plan excursions, performances and camps as part of their educational program. We attempt to provide at least 4 weeks’ notice to families, but sometimes a fantastic opportunity will appear and we may need to provide a shorter timeframe in order for the children to access the event.

Children will not be permitted to leave the school grounds on school excursions without the written consent of their parents. Aquatic Consent and Medical Forms must be completed for any activities involving swimming. On an annual basis consent for short walks is requested via the Student Information Form.

Parents are encouraged to discuss with the Principal or office staff any financial difficulties that may hinder a student’s participation in these activities as we can make some alternative arrangements.

Students are expected to abide by the school dress code on all excursions and outside events.
So what are my children learning in Mathematics at the South and how are they learning it?

In South Australia the release of the Australian Curriculum has provided the opportunity to think deeply about not only what we want our students to learn, but also how we want them to learn so that they become powerful, expert learners.

The Mathematics Curriculum taught daily at the South is aligned to the Australian Curriculum which is divided into the following content fields:

1. Statistics and probability
2. Measurement and Geometry
3. Number and Algebra

We also teach and expect children to develop the following skills of:

1. Fluency
2. Problem solving
3. Reasoning and
4. Understanding

As a parent you could help support your child’s Mathematical thinking by asking questions such as:

What can you recall? How could you record that mathematically? What words could you use to describe?

These types of questions would build your child’s fluency skills.

To also build your child’s problem solving skills you might ask.....

What are you being asked to find out or show? What information is helpful? What information is not useful? In what ways can you model and plan? In what ways can you solve and check? Would you do it a different way next time? How efficient was the way you did it?

In addition, to build your child’s reasoning skills you could ask......

In what ways can you prove it? What else could it be? In what ways can you communicate? Why did you choose to? Can you explain it to me? In what ways can your thinking be generalised? In what ways are these the same or different? Is there a rule we could use to describe? What can you infer?

Finally to enrich your child’s understanding skills you might ask......

What patterns, connections or relationships can you see? How are these the same as each other? Which is the odd one out? Can you answer backwards questions? If the answer is “x”, what might the question be? What’s missing? Can you represent or calculate in different ways? What is another way to work that out?

In the end supporting Maths development is about finding ways to encourage your child to be confident in exploring and asking questions about their maths learning.

This can be done as you are driving in the car or cooking dinner, as Maths is all around us and is used daily in all events that we do.

So my advice as both a mother and teacher is to make the Maths learning REAL to your everyday life with your children. This way they will see Maths as being natural and NOT just a subject that they learn at school. It will help them to see the meaning of their Maths learning and build connections to their life.

I hope this helps explain how you can support your child’s Mathematical knowledge and understandings.

Kind Regards,
Catherine Cox-Walliss
We all want our children to enjoy and benefit from their school experience and for many children, participating in sport is an important part of that experience. Student involvement in sport helps them to develop sporting skills, self-esteem, fitness and friendship.

We firmly believe our children will benefit greatly from a comprehensive understanding of the rules, expectations and requirements of playing sport at primary school. Above all, this will lead to a greater enjoyment of sport by everyone involved and a strengthening and development of our school's community.

At the moment we have some programs booked in for before, during and after school, they are listed below. Please keep an eye out in the newsletters for updates in Physical Education and Extra Curricular Areas.

**Term 1**
- Primary (Yr. 4-7) After School Touch Football - Wednesdays
- All ages handball through PALS lunch time Tuesdays
- All ages - Athletics from Athletics SA in class on Thursdays

**Term 2**
- Primary (Yr. 4-7) After school Netball - Thursdays
- Primary (Yr. 4-7) After School Soccer - Thursdays
- Junior Primary (Rec-Yr. 3) After school Softball/Teeball Wednesdays
- All ages - After school Chess - Mondays
- All ages Basketball in class on Thursdays
- Selected team - before school Netball training for SAPSASA
- Selected team - before school Football training for SAPSASA

**Term 3**
- All ages Dance program in class on Wednesdays

**Term 4**
- All ages Cricket program in class on Thursdays

As part of our step up in sport and extracurricular activities this year two students have been elected as student representatives and will aim to work with staff to build an engaging program for all students. These two students are Jyah England and Jayden Holt. I want to congratulate them on taking on this role and I look forward to working with them.

**Jyah**

**Jayden**

If you are interested in assisting with any of these sporting activities then please email myself at kate.nolan522@schools.sa.edu.au or come and see me before or after school in Room 13. All of our after school programs are run through external companies with teacher supervision, however, we are always looking for volunteers for before school activities and programs.

I look forward to hearing from you and seeing your child out engaging positively with sport and extracurricular activities at our school.

Thanks Kate Nolan

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**School Fees**

The 2016 Invoices for School Fees and Activity Levy were sent home on Tuesday 16th February. These invoices are overdue. Please see Jane in the Front Office for an Instalment Agreement if required.

The Front Office is open from 8.30am to 3.30pm for payment of invoices in person. Payments may be paid by cash, cheque or credit card. Payments by credit card can also be paid over the phone or via the detachment portion of Invoices or Statements sent in to the Front Office.

School Card Application Forms are for families who are eligible for assistance with paying school fees. Eligibility is based on 2014/2015 family income. Please refer to application forms sent home to all families, if you require a school card form please collect one from the Front Office. **Please feel free to contact Jane in the Front Office with any finance queries.**