Dear Parents and Caregivers

We have a busy term ahead of us which seems to be the norm. I hope you had a wonderful time with your children over the holidays, we are glad to see them back at school.

Things will look a little different around the School as we have managed to find some extra support in the middle primary area. Ms Brown will work in Room 7 which will allow us to provide intensive programs for students and run a Gifted and Talented program.

Reports were sent home at the end of last term. If you have any concerns about things reported please make an appointment with class teachers to discuss those concerns or issues.

Included in this edition of the newsletter is an article by Danielle Murphy outlining the benefits of having nature play areas in the School. Please take a moment to read the article as there are some exciting things planned for the area. Danielle has been working hard to develop a plan and to further develop the area as well as working with a small group to source extra funding to ensure that the playground can grow into a very valuable resource for the School.

This Wednesday will see the staff participating in a School Development Day. (Remember this is a pupil free day.) Staff will be involved in learning how to give feedback to each other and looking for ways to continue the process of continuous improvement of programs for students.

I would like to remind parents that there will be a P&C meeting this Thursday morning, 23rd July, at 9:00am in the staff room of the school. All are welcome to attend.

David Sawers

MISSION STATEMENT

Sawyers Valley Primary School aims to create and foster an environment where students become independent learners, enabling them to take responsible control of their lives and contribute meaningfully to society.
READING WORKSHOP
Dear Parents and Community Members
Are you interested in helping young people become successful readers? Many children need a little extra support to improve their reading skills so they can read independently.
In August, Chidlow Primary School is running a short course at the school to give you the confidence to work one to one with children.
If you are interested and can spare a couple hours of your time, please contact the school and let us know.
Drop by the office and leave your contact details at the front office or ring or e-mail. We will get back to you with the details of when it will be happening.
For more information, please contact Chris Hennessy or Denise DeWolfe at Chidlow Primary School
Tel: 9572 4132
E-mail: denise.dewolfe@education.wa.edu.au, christine.hennessy@education.wa.edu.au

PLAYGROUP PRATTLE!
A big Hello to everyone from the littlest people here at Sawyers Valley Primary School.

We would like to keep you informed of our ‘happenings’ so will occasionally put some information in the newsletter to keep everyone up to date and so that you can share news with other community members about our great group!

We have been operating since the beginning of the year and we have a whopping 20 families+ enrolled in our great program. We have access to the old LOTE room – the transportable ‘over the bridge’ and have transformed it into a delightful space to come and play!

After many discussions as a group we have decided that there is just one thing missing! And that is an outside place to play!

Together we are making plans to develop the small area in front of the playgroup into a fabulous little play zone, complete with swings, a slide in the slope, a fairy garden and some elements to help us practice our emerging gross motor skills. Spread the word so that potential families know that this project is in the pipeline!

Keep watching the newsletter for more info about our progress…

PSST – we are busy making plans for an amazing event to happen later this year to help us raise some much needed funds for our playground area. It might have something to do with ‘camping out’ here at the school…
# Honour Certificates

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**P&C NEWS**

**Cross Country**
The P&C will be holding a cake stall at the Cross Country on Friday the 31\textsuperscript{st} July.
We would appreciate donations of baked goods or fruit to sell along with tea and coffee. Items can be dropped off at the stand on the day. (Please ensure ingredients are attached to any baked items)

**P&C General Meeting**
This Thursday 23rd July
9.00am in the Staffroom

**SCHOOL BANKING**
Banking takes place on Fridays 8.30 to 8.50 am in the Wet Area with Mariana from Bendigo Bank.

**Opening Accounts** - You are able to open a bank here at school.
You will need:

⇒ Your child's birth certificate
⇒ Medicare Card
⇒ A parents drivers licence (because the children are under 12 years of age)

We do have a few forms in the office for school banking.
OUR nature play zone at SVPS!

It was one year ago that our historic pines area was opened up for the business of play at our school! My, how time has flown by!

Let’s remind ourselves of WHY we decided that this was an important move for our students and our school…

Why build a nature-based playground?

Well, the obvious answer is that they are really fun and kids love them. They can get dirty, create, climb, build and burn off steam.

While that may be good enough for some, others in your community or organisation may be looking for more concrete evidence of their value before committing to the concept.

Fortunately researchers at the University of WA have found that natural playgrounds provide children with more opportunities than typical pre-formed playgrounds to develop gross-motor skills. In their literature summary of what makes a good play area they noted that contact with nature has been associated with a number of health benefits for children, such as improved cognitive function, increased creativity, improved interaction with adults, reduced attention deficit hyperactivity disorder symptoms and reduced rates of aggression.

In addition, the report 'Children's contact with the outdoors and nature: a focus on educators and educational settings' prepared by the Children & Nature Network synthesises research and studies that focus on the impact of nature education and educational settings.

Summary of key benefits from current research:

Children who play regularly in natural settings are sick less often. Mud, sand, water, leaves, sticks, pine cones and gum nuts can help to stimulate children's immune system as well as their imagination.

Children who spend more time outside tend to be more physically active and less likely to be overweight.

Children who play in natural settings are more resistant to stress; have lower incidence of behavioural disorders, anxiety and depression; and have a higher measure of self-worth.

Children who play in natural settings play in more diverse, imaginative and creative ways and show improved language and collaboration skills. Single use, repetitive play equipment becomes boring quickly.

Natural, irregular and challenging spaces help kids learn to recognise, assess and negotiate risk and build confidence and competence.

Children who play in nature have more positive feelings about each other. Bullying behaviour is greatly reduced where children have access to diverse nature-based play environments.

Symptoms of Attention Deficit Disorder are reduced after contact with nature.

See more at: [http://www.natureplaywa.org.au/programs/nature-playgrounds/benefits#sthash.kTX1A6Mg.dpuf](http://www.natureplaywa.org.au/programs/nature-playgrounds/benefits#sthash.kTX1A6Mg.dpuf)

At this point in time our area primarily consists of a range of natural ‘loose parts’. The students often use these to build imaginative structures such as cubbies, shops, teepees and sometime whole communities with a set of complex and fun roles and rules. At the moment they are enjoying collecting honkey nuts and using these as ‘trade’ for other items. It is a fantastic opportunity for our
students to practice their negotiation skills, engage in conversation, cooperation and even develop conflict resolution skills – all very important life skills! Teachers can model and teach these skills in the classroom but it is out in playground that students get the opportunity to really practice and refine these emerging skills.

An exciting little snippet of information is that the Natureplay team are busily preparing a Natural Resource Management grant that will include the development of our natureplay area as a priority, alongside some weed control/management and Eco-education for our students with the Nearer to Nature crew. Childscapes, a natureescape design company, is working on a design for the area and we are looking forward to sharing this with the school community when it is complete.

We were lucky enough to have a visit this week from Simon Cherriman, our local ornithologist (you may have seen the article and cartoon about him in the Echo last week?) and he is assisting us with surveying our area and the creek zone for local fauna and flora and the potential for rehabilitation. He was very impressed with our zone as it presents at the moment and recalled having similar things on offer to him as part of his childhood school experience. Connecting our children with nature is so important and valuable for a whole range of reasons – who knows where this love will take them? Perhaps up into the tree’s to create nest boxes for local fauna and birds just like Simon? Watch this space as we are planning to have Simon come to the school to do an educational session with the students and then build some nest boxes to site around our beautiful school!

As a local film maker and photographer, Simon was recently featured in The West and is promoting a wonderful photography competition for children. If you want to find out more please visit…
Posters will be on display on the Green Team noticeboard in the wet area!
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<td>7/9 School Board Meeting Senior Production Rehearsal At School</td>
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<td>14/9 Junior Production Rehearsal at Kalamunda Limited Ticket Sales</td>
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From Wednesday 15th July to Tuesday 8th September 2015 you will be able to collect the Earn & Learn stickers when you shop at Woolworths.
For each $10 you spend you will get 1 sticker. Once a sticker sheet is completed, simply place it in the Collection Box at Woolworths or bring it to the office. We have some sticker sheets in the office.

Woolworths have once again partnered with Modern Teaching Aids, so the school will be able to choose resources from various categories including Science, Mathematics, English, Art & Crafts, sports equipment and more.

Please help us collect and many stickers as possible so we are able to make the most of this opportunity.