



## IMPORTANT DATES

Monday 29th–Friday 2nd Aug  
SSG Meetings

### AUGUST

Thursday 15th  
School Council Meeting

Friday 23rd  
Curriculum Day (Student free  
day)

Thursday 29th  
Fathers Day Stall

### SEPTEMBER

Thursday 19th  
School Council Meeting

Friday 20th  
Last day Term Three

### OCTOBER

Monday 7th  
First day Term Four

### NOVEMBER

Tuesday 5th  
Melbourne Cup Day Holiday

### DECEMBER

Friday 20th  
Last day Term Four

## BUS SERVICE

Please contact Crown Coaches  
on **9845 1455** if your contact  
details have changed and if  
your child will not be on the  
bus for any reason.



## Principal's Report

### SSG Meetings this Week

Once again week 3 is extremely busy for families and the staff with the **Student Support Group Meetings** before and after school to review the Individual Education Plan goals for Term 3.

Your child's Semester One report can provide a great start to considering future goals. Parents coming to school for these meetings is often a challenge due to our distance from many homes and the change to routines. So our thanks to the many parents who are able to attend the SSG for their child this week and to those who arrange telephone meetings to ensure home-school engagement.

### SAS Trivia night

It was great to see so many families, friends and staff at our 80s Trivia night held at Duncan McKinnon Reserve on Saturday night. A great night was had by all and significant funds were raised as well.

A big thank you to all the people who helped to make the night a success with a very special mention to Trevor Price who managed the overall event.

### School Review and the New Strategic Plan

We have successfully completed our School review and are finalising our New Strategic plan. Our Senior Education Improvement Leader, Stuart Andrews will present to staff at our next whole school meeting.

### School surveys

This week the school will be sending the Parent / Carer survey to a random selection of families (usually this is around 80 families.) If you receive a survey, it would be appreciated if you could please find the time to complete it, as the data is always helpful in our aim to continually improve SAS. This data helps us see how well we are going compared to other similar schools.

### School garden beds

As the weather starts to warm up we will be using our garden beds more. If there are families or carers who have some time to help with the gardens please let me or the office know.

### Southland

Since winning the Southland / Westfield Local Hero with Cindy last year we have continued to work closely with Southland. They are continuing to discuss ways that the Centre can become more Autism friendly. If you have any ideas you would like the school to follow up with please let me know.

**Bruce McPhate**  
*Principal*



## Assistant Principal News

What a very busy start to the term! It is great seeing some fabulous work within classrooms around patterns and our History Unit – Then and Now. If you go past room 404, have a look at the displays of old and new with the different TV’s, washing machines, clothes, buildings and transport. It is scary that I remember some of these items!



Staff are looking at moderating of assessments, Modified Hanen training for new staff, some staff attending CPR training and there is ongoing child safe and OHS professional development.

### SPOT Team

Our Speech and Occupational Therapists also do an amazing job working across the school with our students. Their role is extensive and varied, sometimes working with individuals, sometimes working with small groups and at other times working with teachers to upskill and support classroom staff to implement programs. Mariela (School Psychologist) and Jess Tang (Social Worker) also do a fabulous job working with children, supporting families and advising staff. I know the leadership team feel extremely fortunate to have dedicated staff across the whole school.

### Student Support Group Meetings

Student support groups are always a great opportunity to discuss what your child has achieved and areas for focus. This term new Individual Learning Plans will be forwarded to you. We welcome your feedback and your input into the goals. As always, if you need additional meeting times, you are most welcome to make an appointment with the class teacher at a time that is convenient to both of you.

### Attendance

Whilst I know it is sometimes challenging getting students to school and some mornings are tricky getting here on time, it is important that children attend regularly. Having a day off a fortnight can result in more than a year less of schooling. Saying this, it is important to note that if a child is unwell they should be kept home for the wellbeing of themselves and others.

### Planning

We are already looking at our numbers for next year and beginning to offer limited places. If you think you may be moving, or other circumstances have changed, and you will no longer require your child to be enrolled at Southern Autistic, please let the school office or a staff member know. This way we can offer the place to another student.

We thank you for your anticipated support in this matter. Have a great week.

**Julia Sadler**

**Assistant Principal**

### SWPBS School Wide Positive Behaviour Support Information Session

When: Tuesday the 13<sup>th</sup> of August 2019 9:30 – 10:30 AM

**OR**

Thursday the 15<sup>th</sup> of August 2019 6:00 – 7:00 PM

Where: Southern Autistic School Conference room

*School-wide positive behaviour support (SWPBS) is a framework that brings together school communities to develop positive, safe, supportive learning cultures SWPBS assists schools to improve social, emotional, behavioural and academic outcomes for children and young people.*





## EEP and Junior School News

It was wonderful to see students returning from the midyear break looking happy to be at school. After returning from Long Service Leave, I was delighted to see the students so settled after the holiday and returning so quickly to the school routines that were established through Semester One. It was also great to see our hardworking staff well rested after the break. I'd like to thank Bel Welburn for filling in for me for 2 weeks at the end of Term Two.

We are already in the midst of Week 3 with Student Support Group meetings running across the school. This week provides a valuable opportunity for teaching staff to meet with parents to discuss the learning and goals for their child. Most of our parents have been able to make a time to meet, but if you have missed out please contact your child's classroom teacher to make an alternative time. Teachers will be writing Individual Learning Plan goals over the next weeks and parent input is very important in this process.

We will continue to run our Junior and Lower School Parent Afternoon Tea Social Groups through Term 3. Please join us next Wednesday, 7<sup>th</sup> August in the Conference room behind the office to meet up with other parents for a chat.

This term our school-wide learning focus in the Victorian Curriculum area of English is phonics. Teachers have been assessing students to develop targeted learning plans. In the Speaking and Listening strand this may consist of exploring sounds in the environment, responding to name, matching words to their objects or imitating letter sounds. For the Reading and Viewing strand the learning focus may involve the exploration of letters, matching pictures, sounding out letters, segmenting and blending. The Writing strand may focus on exploring sounds through word play and rhyme, using images to express wants, identifying beginning sounds or writing words.

***Kirsten Schmidt***  
***Junior School Leader***

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## Lower School News

In the last week of Term Two, groups 310, 311 and 312 attended an interactive sensory performance of a space adventure called Whoosh at the Arts Centre in the city. They went on a custom-built spaceship to tour outer space, tasted space food, experienced hyperspace and travelled to the mysterious Planet X. As you can see from the photos, the students had an amazing time!

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It's been a good start to Term Three for all the students in Lower School, with everyone settling back well into the school routine. Group 304 have been busy working both in and out of the classroom.

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Students in 309 have been checking their individualised schedules and rotating to the coloured work stations during Literacy and Numeracy sessions. Students have been exploring new and familiar activities by working independently, working with staff support, sharing space and materials.

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## Upper School News

### Mental health and autism

Whilst mental illness can be more common for people on the autism spectrum than in the general population, the mental health of people with autism is often overlooked.

Anxiety disorders are very common amongst people on the autism spectrum. Roughly 40% have symptoms of at least one anxiety disorder at any time, compared with up to 15% in the general population. Understandably, this can lead to sadness or depression – one reason why a mixture of anxiety and depression is common.

It is thought that a combination of factors, leading to vulnerability to stress, is likely to explain why anxiety disorders are more prevalent in people with ASD. Biological differences in brain structure and function, a history of social difficulties (leading to decreased self-esteem and a tendency to think of threats as greater than they are) and problems with finding flexible responses to apparent threats are all likely to contribute.

Many people on the autism spectrum may have difficulty describing the symptoms they experience. A sudden change in behaviour could mean they have developed an anxiety disorder, even if there is no complaint of the typical symptoms. If you want more information, please visit

<https://raisingchildren.net.au/autism/communicating-relationships/connecting/social-skills-for-children-with-asd>

<https://www.autism.org.uk/about/health/mental-health.aspx>

At Southern Autistic School, we use a range of strategies to help support students that may suffer from anxiety. We make the day as structured and as predictable as possible, by using timetables and lots of visuals. We use programs like the Zones of Regulation to help students recognise when they are feeling anxious “high” or depressed “low” and we teach students what to do when they recognise how they feel. Because people on the spectrum find some social interactions quite challenging, we utilise other strategies to help students to understand some social interactions. These include Social Stories, Video Self modelling and Talking Mats.

We have a great wellbeing team, including Mariella Aloj, who is our school’s Psychologist and Jessica Tang, our school’s Social Worker and this team is extended to our Speech and Occupational Therapy Team as well. The wellbeing team can make recommendations to teachers to best support students. The wellbeing team can support parents by suggesting outside services or make referrals to Mental Health support outside school.

If you need anymore information, please contact me via email on [vandernest.denise.d@edumail.vic.gov.au](mailto:vandernest.denise.d@edumail.vic.gov.au) or by phone at school.

**Denise Van Der Nest**  
**Upper School Leader**

### Photos in classrooms to support students to be less anxious at school.





## Senior School News

### SSGs

It's has been lovely catching up with some of the families this week during SSG meetings. Don't forget if you could not make it into school, class teachers will be happy to arrange a phone meeting with you.

### Fried Rice

This tasted even better than it looks! Thanks to room 506, staff now have the opportunity to become paying customers to these talented Pre-VCAL students. Not only do they plan the menu, they budget, take and collate orders, shop for ingredients, prepare the food and then hand deliver the completed meals. Covering several curriculum areas including literacy and numeracy, this integrated task is one all of the students enjoy.

*yum*

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I will be away from school from the 5th—16th August. Elaine Curran will be replacing me for this time. Please contact her if you have any questions while I am away.

**Cindy Longley**

I'll be back  
soon...



## Media Arts

Students in Senior School are excited and costumes are almost all sorted as we begin filming for our school concert movies!

***Marco Gallucci***  
***Media Arts Teacher***

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## The Push Up Challenge

Several staff at SAS have recently participated in The Push Up Challenge to raise money to support Headspace, National Youth Mental Health Organisation.

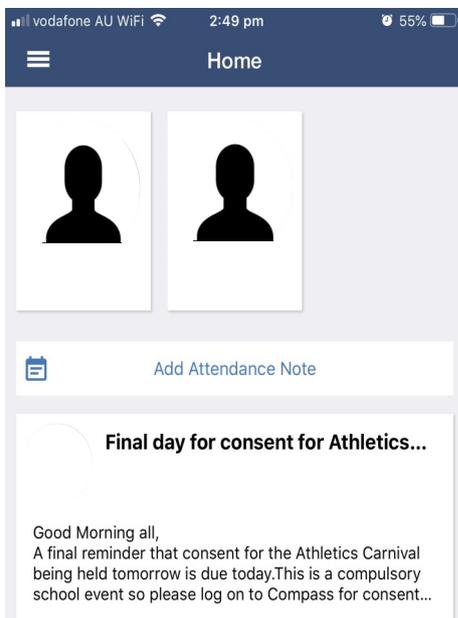
The challenge, over 3 weeks, was to complete 3,128 push ups – the number of lives lost to suicide in Australia in 2017. Each day, a new target was set, linked to a mental health statistic, e.g. 105 – 15 minutes of sunlight each day for 7 days equates to 105 minutes per week which can reduce levels of distress; 216 – the number of studies published that investigated the benefits of mindfulness.

Most mornings and after school, the team got together to support one another to achieve the push up target.



### COMPASS NEWS — Attendance Approvals

In the latest update of the Compass Mobile App adding attendance notes is now easier and quicker. Under your child's photo you will now see a link to Add Attendance Note. Click on this link and follow the prompts to report your child's absence.

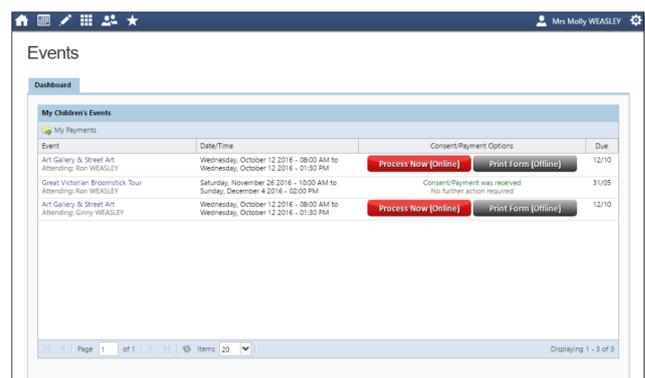


### COMPASS NEWS — Events

You will receive a notification on your Compass homepage (accessed via Browser version) when there is an event that requires your approval or payment.

**Event Consent/Payment Required**  
There are 2 event(s) awaiting your consent and/or payment.  
[Click here for more information](#)

To provide the consent required, click the notification. This will take you to the Events page, where you can see all events that require your consent, and those that are upcoming that you have already consented to.



## SAS on Facebook

Parents are invited to link into our parents Facebook page as a forum to exchange information or simply connect with each other. Search 'Southern Autistic School' for the link to become a friend.