From the Principal

Thank you

I would like to make a personal ‘thanks’ to the Westgarth PS community, students, parents and staff for making me feel so welcomed and supported this year. It is my aim to work with families as a community to provide the best education that we can for all of our students. When parents are involved in their children’s education at home, they do better in school. And when parents are involved in school, children go farther in school and the schools they go to are better (Henderson and Berla, 1994, p.15). This is why Westgarth Primary School is such a great school and also the reason why we will continue to get even better.

I would also like to recognise the work of the wonderful staff at Westgarth PS. We are so lucky to have such dedicated and hardworking people nurturing your children/our students. Their contributions to the school within both within their classrooms and the community are appreciated and valued. Their commitment to the students and school and their flexibility in adjusting to the many changes they have faced over the past 24 months is a credit to them. In particular I would like to thank Michael Connelly for his work in year one this year. We wish him the best for his return to Alphington PS. To Lily Ceron-fernadez for her work in Spanish/Science over the past semester. Lily has accepted a position at Geelong Grammar for 2016. Thanks to Winter for her work in year one. She will be travelling next year. Thanks to Shayne for her work in year three for the past two years. She will be building a business in the hills. To Sarah Teague for her work in year 5 replacing Holly who went on family leave. We may see her back again next year doing some relief teaching. To Truda who has done a wonderful job in the kitchen/garden program this year. She plans to get her own garden in order! All of our other staff will be returning in 2016, along with Jane Mullen, Holly Bishop, Josie Felton and Phana Phoumin all of whom will return from family leave.

I would like to wish you all a safe and wonderful summer break and I look forward to seeing you all in the New Year.

LOST PROPERTY · LOST PROPERTY · LOST PROPERTY · LOST PROPERTY · SAY NO MORE!

Year six graduation

Last Thursday night at the Furlan Club, we celebrated the primary schooling of our 64 graduating year six students. After a dinner with staff, the students were joined by their family for presentations and performances. The current school captains, George Dafnas and Jade Leung gave speeches of behalf of the student body and were acknowledged along with vice captains Mikaila Young and Max Corcoran for their contributions throughout the year. House captains and vice captains were also acknowledged: Rucker (red) Harry Shaw, Labanya Zerna, Liam Withers and Camille Ibrahim; Gerrard (green) Christian Gerassimou, India Wallace, Gemima Gazis, Connor Harris; Urquhart (yellow) Theora Michalopoulos, Lachlan McKain, Ben Simons, Inez Martorell; Walker (Blue) Will Moran, Kiri Osbourne, Will Leslie and Grace Young.

Continue next page...
Four students were awarded Citizenship Awards (two presented by Northcote RSL and two Westgarth PS) for living the school values of Respect, Integrity, Excellence, Working together and Responsibility and upholding the school motto of ‘Be Safe, Be Fair, Be friendly’. The two students presented with the Northcote RSL awards were Ben Simons and Chloe Pattas. The Westgarth PS citizenship awards went to Kiri Osbourne and Lachlan McKain. Federal Minister for Batman David Feeny donated an award for Outstanding Achievement which was presented to Ella Parker.

While it is important to acknowledge students for outstanding achievements, some of which have been mentioned above, I would like to congratulate all the graduating year six students on their hard work, wonderful outcomes and for trying their best. High marks and awards don’t always acknowledge the personal effort individuals make to their learning. It is important that we don’t lose sight of the achievements of all of our students and I hope they are as proud of their outcomes as we are. We wish them the very best for their transition to secondary school and for the future.

Furthermore, I would like to acknowledge the wonderful contributions made to the school over many years of the families whose youngest child is leaving this year. For some families this could amount to fifteen years contributing to the school. We thank you all and wish you the very best for the future. Thanks you and good bye to the following families: Ambrose/Tyson/Senior, Bolitho/Gorringe-Smith, Corpuz/Jordan, Craig/Mann, Dafnas, Dimartino, Emmanouil, Harris/O’Meara, Harvey/Renton, Jenkins, Jenkins, Karabogias, Ketharanathan/Raleigh, Kruse, Marotta, Massey/Stephens, Maxwell/Leuschner, Moran/Ryan, Nguyen, Petropoulos, Rossi, Rountos, Shaw/Long, Silberstein, Stone/Ogden, Tehan/Silverson, Young/Shortell & Zerna.

School Charges and Voluntary Contributions 2016
Notice of Family Payment Schedule 2016... School Councils are responsible for developing and approving a school-level parent payment schedule compliant with DET Guidelines. The Westgarth School Charges and Voluntary Contribution has been reviewed by Westgarth Primary School Council and has passed a motion that the Family Payments will increase in 2016 by $12 in the Essential Items/consumables section and by $30 in the Excursion and In-house Activity section. These charges have increases to reflect a more realistic cost for excursions/activities and increased costs of materials.

The following table is provided for your information showing costs to families in 2016. If you have any queries about this information please do not hesitate to contact myself or Susan Price, Business Manager on 9481 5577.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year Prep/1/2</th>
<th>2016</th>
<th>Year 3-6</th>
<th>2016</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
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<td>Essential Items/consumables</td>
<td>$170</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Excursions/In-house Activities</td>
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<td>Excursions/In-house Activities</td>
<td>$100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>First Aid Officer</td>
<td>$40</td>
<td>First Aid Officer</td>
<td>$40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grounds Improvement/maintenance &amp; Special Projects</td>
<td>$50</td>
<td>Grounds Improvement/maintenance &amp; Special Projects</td>
<td>$50</td>
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<tr>
<td>Kitchen Garden Program</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>$320</td>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>$410</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Telstra Kids grant
We are delighted to announce our success in applying for three grants of $1,200 each from Telstra. Our Telstra Kids grants will be used to supply gym matting for a passive play area and games and equipment for our Out of School Care Program (OSHC)

Huge thanks to Jen and Christie from Telstra, who are parents at Westgarth, for applying for the funding for us. We are very excited to share in the million dollars the Telstra Foundation provides each year to help kids across Australia to connect to their local communities.
Changes in 2016 – inc. Spanish news
As mentioned in the last newsletter, the library is moving to Brooke St for 2016 into what was Mark’s year 2 class this year. This is to accommodate an extra year 5 class in the WEB. The resource room will be the new home of our Spanish/Science class. We are also excited to announce that we will be providing an extra Spanish class for each class for a term. Esmi will be returning to teach Spanish through the area of performing arts. To start the year the students in years 3 and 4 will have this extra session per week. This is on top of the current 100 minutes of Spanish and also separate to our music program.

Staffing
The Department of Education and Training, like many employers, have a family friendly employment policy that allows teachers to return to part-time work until their youngest child is school age. Like many of the families at Westgarth who access work/life balance through part-time work, some of our teachers work part-time as well. Similarly in other professions this involves job sharing and as such some of our teachers are required to share a class. Processes are in place to ensure communication about day to day happenings occur, protocols ensure tracking of student work and outcomes and a team approach to planning ensures consistency across the year level. Our aim, like yours, is to maximise student outcomes so if you have any concerns about your child’s social, emotional or educational progress please speak to the class teachers.

Resilience talk
On Thursday 3rd December we hosted a talk by Peta Sigley from the Resilience Institute. Peta presented to parents about how to support their child to build resilience. Peta pointed out that to develop resilience people need to experience some adversity or disappointment. We need to support our children through tough times rather than shield them from them. Some of the other suggestions she made were:

- Help your child learn to help others. This gives them strategies and helps them develop empathy.
- Help your child to build social connections with a broad group of friends, not limit them to exclusive friendships.
- Develop and keep routines to help provide security and predictability, however having a break from routine is also important to reduce worrying.
- Help your child to focus on positive thoughts rather than dwell on negative ones therefore teaching children to be positive self-talkers is very important. To do this you need to model it yourself.
- Keep things in perspective. When your child is experiencing a difficult situation, help them to look beyond the current disappointment and focus on an optimistic future.

This talk was presented to a general audience and may not provide the specific answers for your own personal situation. If you are concerned about your own child please feel free to speak to Jo or Carolyn at school or seek advice from your family’s medical practitioner.

Surveys
We are always keen to hear your thought so we can make improvements. The education sub-committee of school council are currently seeking feedback about reporting at WPS and student leadership. A survey for students and parents was sent out via Tiqbiz last Thursday and one about reporting for parents only, will be available also on Tiqbiz this week. I would encourage you to complete each of the short surveys as the information gained will help inform our decision making in these areas next year.

School governance working party update
The school governance working party has met a number of times throughout the year to construct new Standing Orders which are informed by best practice. This work will continue into term 1, 2016 with the aim of having a new WPS Standing Orders ready for the new school council in March.

Jo Wheeler
Diary Dates 2015

Wed 16 Dec    Year 4 - 6 Neon Disco Party 6.30pm to 8pm in the gym
Thurs 17 Dec   Last day of term. Students dismissed at 2.30pm
Fri 18 Dec    Curriculum Day - Student Free Day

Meetings 2016

Fundraising    Wed 3 February  8.30pm Jessamy’s house
Education      Wed 10 February 7.00pm Staffroom
Policy         Fri 12 February
OSHC          Wed 17 February
Finance        Thurs 18 February 8.30am in Jo’s office
School Council Wed 24 February 7.00pm Staffroom

School Dates for 2016

First Day for Year 1 - 6    Thursday 28 January
First Day for Prep           Monday 1 February

Term Dates for 2016

Term 1 28 January to 24 March (as 25 March is public holiday)
Term 2 11 April to 24 June
Term 3 11 July to 16 September
Term 4 3 October to 20 December

OSHC News - Curriculum Day Friday 18 December 2015

The program will run for the whole day and if you require a booking please call Mike on 9482 3323 or email asc.westgarth.ps@edumail.vic.gov.au. A flat rate of $40.00 will apply.

Music News

Prep – 2 Musical Performance – What a fantastic evening it was on Tuesday!
The weather was great (considering what was forecast), the sausages were well cooked, the cakes delicious and the children were spectacular. To all the aliens, astronauts, rocket-ships, birds, bees, trees, mermaids, fish, scuba divers, sharks, seaweed, gardeners, farmers, seeds, dreamers, lollipops, naughty school children and mean teachers I say a huge congratulations and thank you. You were all fantastic! Thanks to all the staff who helped out with organization, preparation and for managing the children so well on the night. Thanks to my job sharer Clare Hopper for all her help with setting up and the great percussion work. Thanks to the team who worked tirelessly on the BBQs and sushi. I didn’t get a sausage but I believe they were excellent.

I’ve organized many concerts in my career but this was the first time I’d opted for live music. Usually live music + outdoors + children = disaster, but on this occasion, the gamble really paid off. It was one of the most rewarding concerts I have been a part of.

Thanks to all the parents, carers and family members who came along on the night and organized such wonderful costumes. It was fantastic to see such a high level of support for the Prep - 2 Musical Performance.

I’d like to wish everyone a happy and safe holiday and I look forward to teaching your children next year.

John Carr, Music Specialist.

Lost Property - All lost property will be on display at Brooke St (in front of school office) and Clarke St (near art room) tomorrow, Wednesday 16 December.
Please come and retrieve any lost items. Items not collected will be donated to Diabetes Australia.
A fog watch has also been found, please come to the office to collect.
School Council News

School Council met for the final time this year on Wednesday 2 December. The meeting started with a celebratory Vietnamese dinner provided by Jo and her team.

At the meeting that followed:

- School Council approved the Master Plan for the ongoing development of the school facilities. The Master Plan has been ably led by Mark Dinning and the Environment Sub-committee and provides an exciting template for the ongoing improvement of the school’s facilities to support the education of the kids of Westgarth. School Council expressed its appreciation to Mark and the Sub-committee.

- Finance sub-committee described a communication soon to go out to parents to provide more transparency to the school community on where our government and fundraising funds go. This is to address feedback from parents and carers that more information on this would be valued.

- Policy presented three updated policies which were approved. These were the Sunsmart, Camp and Head lice policies. All School Council policies can be viewed on the school website.

- Safe Travel Working party reported on the response from Darebin Council to the proposal they had received for improvements to roads, crossings and bike parking to improve travel safety and promote cycling and walking to school. The response included a number of wins. With the response from Darebin Council completing the work the working party was set up to do, School Council decided to bring the Safe Travel Working Party to a close. This will free up space for possible future working parties next year. School Council thanked the Working Party and especially its convenor Sally Moxham for their tireless work in consulting the school community and advocating with Darebin Council.

- Outside School Hours Care (OSHC) reported that they are experiencing some difficulties with late arrivals of parents and carers to pick up their children. It appears that parents assume the session finishes at 6.00 p.m. Parents are reminded that the OSHC Handbook provides that the program times for After Care are 3.30 pm to 5.50 pm for a 6.00 pm close. This means that children are to be collected by 5.50 pm, to enable the staff the remaining 10 minutes until 6.00 pm to pack up and have staff discussions regarding any issues that arose during the session. It is not possible for these discussions, and the pack up, to occur while there are children present. Please ensure you arrive to collect your children from OSHC before 5.50 p.m.

Finally both Jo and I expressed our appreciation (Jo to School Council, and I on behalf of School Council to Jo and her team) for the pleasure of working together in 2015. The leadership, teaching and non-teaching staff of the school have put in a very big year of work, continuing to deliver on the day to day work of educating our kids, while also commencing a substantial program of change and improvement. You only have to walk into the staff room and look at the posters and whiteboard to see the degree to which the whole team is engaged in continuous improvement activities.

School Council wishes everyone a great Christmas and new year; and a restful break somewhere in there.

Ian MacLean - President
SPORT NEWS

Swimming trials
All current grade 3-5s were given the opportunity to try out for the Westgarth 2016 swimming team.

We took a group of about 60 students to the Northcote pool and ran heats and finals in all swimming strokes. This was the first year we have run the trials like this and it worked really well. It was a wonderful day – perfect weather for the pool! All students swam exceptionally well and we all had fun. Thank you so much to all the parents (and one grandpa) that came and helped out on the day – walking to and from the pool, judging, marshalling, recording and cheering. We couldn’t have run the day without parent help so thank you. Thanks also to our teachers, Tom and Jane, who came with us to the pool.

Below are the students that have made it through to the Northcote district swimming which will be held on Tuesday 23rd February. Have fun training over the holidays!

| Harper W | Leigh Mc | Ben C | Orson D | Chloe S |
| Zoe H | Scarlett T | Sophie A | Alannah S | Estella J |
| Jonah A | Nathan Mc | Darcy W | Orlando O | Siena Y |
| Kala B | Mahala L | Isabelle M | Catherine M | Torren A |
| Harry E | Henry HM | Max B | Caeden Y | Sophie H |
| Kyra J | Lulu B | Zoe W |

Interschool sport Grade 5/6
Westgarth entered 4 sports into our district’s weekly summer sports – bat tennis, cricket, rounders and softball. All students played really well and always showed great sportsmanship. Our cricket team and bat tennis team came 1st in our district (both teams won every single game)! Our girl’s rounders team came 2nd by the smallest of margins. Well done to all the Grade 6 students who competed in summer sports.

Rushe Lynch
PE

XIE XIE, Thank You for Your Interest In Chinese Mandarin Classes at Westgarth Primary

We are delighted with the expression of interest regarding our Chinese Mandarin classes at Westgarth Primary School. The response from parents was swift and enthusiastic. Thank you, parents & Jo, our ever supportive principal. Xie Xie, thank you in mandarin!

We are pleased to announce that there will be Mandarin classes at Westgarth Primary next year! We will be sending out emails to all of you parents who have sent in your expression of interest by the first week of January. This is to advise you of the day, time and classroom.

Our students will be taught Mandarin which is a language as distinct from a dialect (there are many Chinese dialects, for example, Cantonese). Our teachers are trained in applying Accelerated Learning techniques (music, play, story telling & relaxation).

For further information, please contact me at moni@accschinese.com

Westgarth Primary School 6
2015 Wrap-Up
What a year! The community of Westgarth has been galvanised on many fronts this year. Fundraising, events, entertainment, craft, science, movie nights and much more! We have many talented, energetic and organized parents who have contributed to creating a connected community, raised vital funds, and enhanced the whole school experience.

HIGHLIGHTS
Formal establishment of Parent and Friends, with inaugural voting of office bearers and creation of our own logo. An incredible Whopping Great Fete with its many dedicated volunteers on all fronts and at all levels. You know who you are, plus we acknowledge Janine O’Connell’s well earned retirement from the Fete Coordinator role and wish to thank her for taking on this massive task and running such a fantastic event for the past 2 years. An awe-inspiring Westgarth Idol…start dreaming of your next act now! Everyone is still raving about our new Super Science Club with its opening trifecta of Astronomy Night, WPS Super Science Club Launch, and Science and Technology Night. Less dazzling but just as important…Welcome Picnic, Special Persons’ Day Stalls, Icy Pole Day, Prep Orientation Parent Welcome Session, Neon Disco and more. Our Makers Group beavered away on many crafty projects over cups of tea, scones and gluten-free biscuits. Our FURS stalls have shared second hand uniforms and our crack Sausage Sizzle volunteers catered for many events!

Parents and Friends 2016

DO YOU HAVE IDEAS, A TALENT / INTEREST OR JUST VALUABLE TIME AND ENERGY TO SHARE? Get involved and get support….contact westgarthpandf@gmail.com. Or tweet @WestgarthPandF

We acknowledge the dedicated work of Jessamy Miller (President) and Emma Savage (Secretary) for shifting Parents and Friends into top gear this year. Thanks also to Jacqueline Maplesden (Vice-President), Nerida Weller (Communications), Caroline Roberts (Treasurer) and others who have joined us at the Red Door for planning sessions!

School Uniform Shop - Aplus HOLIDAY TRADING TIMES
WE CLOSE - WEDNESDAY 16 DECEMBER 2015 AT 4.00PM
WE RE-OPEN - MONDAY 11 JANUARY 2016 AT 9.00AM
OPENING HOURS JANUARY 2016 MONDAY to THURSDAY 9.00AM – 4.00PM FRIDAY 9.00AM – 1.00PM
CLOSED JANUARY 26 for AUSTRALIA DAY
THE MANAGEMENT AT AGS PRINTS P/L 133 Bakers Road North Coburg 9354 8345
First Lego League robotics competition 2016 - Years 5&6
Thanks to everyone who got their registration forms in on time at such a busy time of year!
We’ve had a great response and have enough Year 5/6’s interested to form 2 teams! We will be in touch to confirm details of training dates at the beginning of term 1.
This is an exciting new program for Westgarth and we can’t wait to begin training with the awesome teachers, parents and students of Westgarth and Robogals!

Happy holidays from the Super Science Club
It’s been a wonderful start for the Super science club, and we have achieved so much already with an astronomy night, Code club, science club launch/fair, a stall at the fete, a science and technology night as well as some activities already lined up for 2016. Thank you to everyone who contributed, and came along to our events, it’s been truly amazing to see the enthusiasm for science in our school community and we look forward to seeing you all again in 2016.
If you would like to share science and technology ideas/activities for the school holidays, and keep in touch with like-minded families over the break, check out our FB page.
https://www.facebook.com/groups/861214847260006/

WESTGARTH CODE CLUB – AT SCHOOL AND HOME

One of the spin-offs of Science Club has been the introduction of our very own Code Club. Thank you to Ben, Leah, Michael, Gede and other parent volunteers for making this happen! Already students are making great progress through the CODECLUB curriculum using the program SCRATCH. There have been some really inventive projects and some have even been used for students’ enquiry topics.

Give it a try over the holidays, and share your projects in our online studio. Suitable for ages 8-12. Here’s how:

Start Scratching - Code Club at Home
On a PC with Internet access, start the browser and type:-
www.scratch.mit.edu. If you don't have a Scratch Account (login), select “Join Scratch” on the top line. Follow the steps to create a username (and password). Don’t forget to write these down. A parent’s email address is needed to complete the process. You can then login to Scratch and start programming.
The Code Club exercises are available at:-
http://projects.codeclubworld.org/en-GB/ It’s best to start with Term 1 and work through the first few exercises in order as they build skills and techniques.

Share your work in the Westgarth Studio
The Westgarth Code Club has created an online Studio on the scratch.mit.edu site to show off the great work the students have made.

ONLINE STUDIO: http://j.mp/westgarthstudio

How to share your project:
1. Email gede.suparsa@gmail.com your Scratch project and I’ll upload it for you, or
2. If you have an account setup on scratch.mit.edu, send me (gede.suparsa@gmail.com) a link to your project and I'll link to it. Note: you or your parent’s email address needs to be confirmed to share projects.
Are you thinking of renovating and need an affordable short term house to rent in Northcote?
We are an ex-Westgarth family going on a holiday around Australia in Term 3, 2016.
We are looking to rent out our house for 3 months from the end of June to the end of September and thought it may be perfect for someone renovating in the area that wants to stay close to the school.
It is a 4 bedroom, 2 bathroom double, fronted home in Andrew Street and would come completely furnished. We are hoping that for a reduced rate of rent our tenants could care for our dog and two cats as well. Tenants are more than welcome to bring along their own pets as well. For more information please call Alex on 0488 446 695.

For Sale: Yamaha PSR-290 keyboard and stand. Call Jean on 0439 368 043.

We’re back…the Thomson St. pet-minding service is available. Due to great success last year my three children are offering their services to mind your pets over the holidays. Kiri, Toby and Ella have experience of minding guinea pigs, rabbits, insects, reptiles, cats, chooks and dogs. Fees are $2/day, negotiable. We would prefer the pets to be in a 5 minute riding area around Dennis station. Or they can stay with us and squeak to our pets. Available dates are from 20th Dec. to 15th Jan. Please text Tamsen on 0437864784.

Friends of Westgarth Movie night
JOHNSON PARK
MONDAY 21 DECEMBER
7.30PM FOR AN 8PM START
BYO PICNIC RUG. DRINKS. SNACKS AND INSECT REPELLENT

Community Advertisements

DECEMBER/JANUARY SCHOOL HOLIDAYS TENNIS COACHING - MAYORS PARK TENNIS CENTRE, CLIFTON HILL
Refreshments and loads of fun are provided. Places are limited so please call 9482 5200 or email: jeffb@mayorsparktennis.net
Priority will be given to students attending all four days. Term tennis coaching is also available.

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It is a 4 bedroom, 2 bathroom double, fronted home in Andrew Street and would come completely furnished. We are hoping that for a reduced rate of rent our tenants could care for our dog and two cats as well. Tenants are more than welcome to bring along their own pets as well. For more information please call Alex on 0488 446 695.

For Sale: Yamaha PSR-290 keyboard and stand. Call Jean on 0439 368 043.

We’re back...the Thomson St. pet-minding service is available. Due to great success last year my three children are offering their services to mind your pets over the holidays. Kiri, Toby and Ella have experience of minding guinea pigs, rabbits, insects, reptiles, cats, chooks and dogs. Fees are $2/day, negotiable. We would prefer the pets to be in a 5 minute riding area around Dennis station. Or they can stay with us and squeak to our pets. Available dates are from 20th Dec. to 15th Jan. Please text Tamsen on 0437864784.