

Newsletter March 4 2019

Dear Parents and Caregivers - Welcome to week 6.

Thank you so much to all of you who attended assembly on Friday. It was an uplifting experience (You'll know what I am talking about if you were there).

This week we are trialling a new regime for morning tea and lunch. We have been having some difficulty with children eating and some research out of Christchurch suggests that children need to play straight away then settle with some food before they learn.

This new PLAY - EAT - LEARN is a change from the regular EAT - PLAY - LEARN cycle we have always used.



To help children to focus on their learning, we will be reversing times for morning tea, lunch and play so that children will play first then return to class or normal eating areas, eat and be calmer and ready to learn. It may require a slight change to our timetable in the future.

Research shows the body physiologically responds differently to the two activities – Playing and Eating:

Play – the body response is more aroused and heightened.

Eat – the body response is to naturally calm.

The aim is to provide a time to focus on eating in a calm, settled way.

We are also encouraging students to bring a wholemeal bread sandwich with butter, peanut butter or marmite to eat in the middle of the first block. This would replace the fruit break we had previously. This provides your child with a complex carbohydrate snack which releases energy slowly throughout the morning and improves concentration. Water is also very important for students learning and we ask that all students have a named drink bottle at school each day so they can access water throughout the day.

Momo Challenge - Netsafe NZ advice.

Netsafe has received reports relating to young people who have been exposed to a harmful online “game” known as the Momo Challenge. Although we have **not** received any reports of young people in New Zealand taking part in the “challenge”, we are aware that some young people have seen content relating to Momo and have been very upset by the content and imagery. There has also been talk about whether this “challenge” is real or a hoax. Regardless of whether the actual challenge itself exists, individuals who come across Momo related content may experience emotional distress at seeing it – particularly younger children.

Netsafe encourages anyone that comes across content relating to the Momo Challenge or other similar ‘challenge’ content to immediately report it to the social media site or website that it’s on. In New Zealand, it is against the law to incite another person to take their own life. If somebody is targeting a young person to play this “game”, or attempting to incite suicide, you should contact the Police and Netsafe for help, and a mental health service for support. Netsafe can also provide advice for any parents who are concerned about this challenge. If young people are expressing feelings about self-harm or suicide then this should be followed up with appropriate mental health support.

Netsafe’s advice for parents about exposure to upsetting content:

- Have a conversation with young people about what to do if they do come across upsetting content online
- Let your child know that they can come to you when they find something upsetting and they won’t get in trouble
- Stay calm if they do come to you – don’t assign blame, reassure them that it’s not their fault and don’t punish them for seeking help
- Normalise their feelings – let them know that it is normal to feel scared, confused or upset
- Don’t over-react by taking away the technology – this may make them less likely to talk to you if something else happens
- For young children in particular, consider using parental controls to block out specific keywords like “Momo”
- If you or your child comes across this type of content report it to the platform that it’s on
- If your child is expressing any concerning feelings, follow up with mental health support
- If you know that a young person has been engaging in this challenge, report it to the Police and Netsafe, and contact a mental health service for support.

Thursday March 7 - Wacky Hair day and House competitions.

This Thursday the School Council have organised a fun day for the children and hope to raise funds for the Westpac Helicopter Trust after two of the children here at school have utilised the service. The children are invited to bring some coins for a coin trail and also to wear their House colours and have Wacky Hair for the day. The games start at 10am.