Hello and welcome back to the ever changing landscape of Toora Primary School for 2017.

My name is Bob Tinker and I have been Principal of Tanjil South Primary School (near Moe), for over twenty years. I’m grateful for the opportunity to work at Toora. It’s my hope that this community will be happy with what I have to offer as I intend to apply for the position, once it is advertised early this year, with a view to moving house if that outcome should occur.

I have spent my whole career in small schools because of the lifestyle these areas and communities enjoy. Yesterday I enjoyed talking with all of the staff about some changes I think would benefit the students and that would help us transition to the Victorian version of the Australian National Curriculum.

The most noticeable change will be to the daily timetable. The new timetable will consist of a two hour block for English, a 20 minute break, an hour of Maths, then Lunch, followed by two more separate hours of class time with a 15 minute break in between. Start and finish times will remain the same. This timetable will allow for full hours of separate subject areas to be conducted without having to switch direction in the middle of a 90 minute block.

The morning break will remain at 11am but Lunch will be at 12:15. In the afternoon there will be a 15 minute break at 2pm.

Another change I would like to introduce is the arrangement of classes. At the close of 2016 the tentative class groupings were P to 3, and 4 to 6. Following discussions yesterday we have decided to reduce the size of the junior class (since they need the best chance to acquire all of those foundation skills…) by moving the Year 3s into the senior class. But wait… there’s more…. To try and get the best outcomes for all students in English, we will be operating as three classes for the first two hours most days. Mr Whittle will have the 3/4s and I will have the 5/6s. In order to create time release for the teachers, I will also be taking the 3s to 6s for Maths.

Finally, it’s been my experience that students learn better when their brains are hydrated…. particularly in the warmer weather. In view of this, I would encourage all students to acquire a pop-top type water bottle (so it won’t spill if it tips over…), that can stay in the room with them all day to drink as needed. It is important to make sure it’s only water they drink however, because we don’t want students to operate during a sugar high.

This week will be a warm up week for the students to get back into school mode gently. We have new notebook computers that still require some setting up, some of the supplies are yet to arrive and we’ll be mucking around with the bells a bit. We all wish Rachel the best as yesterday was her last day before starting family leave. It’ll take the students some time to adjust to the new dynamic but by next Monday we’ll be full steam ahead. Feel free to come and talk with me if you have any concerns or good ideas… or if you like talking about aircraft and woodwork. I look forward to getting to know everyone over time. Once again I would like to reiterate that it is my intention to stay. I hope I can create a period of stability in the years to come. By my standards this is a reasonably formal message. Where possible I try to infuse humour into most things I do, so I hope my style doesn’t offend anyone…. It is certainly not my intention to annoy people so please let me know if I cross any lines. This message is actually the newsletter that will normally come out on Thursdays… as of next week it will revert back to Thursdays. I feel just as nervous as the Preps on their first day, but at the same time a bit excited. The main difference is…. that I have to come to school on Wednesdays…. Last thing… I like to be known as Mr T.

Let’s get started! Mr T.

Welcome to our new students and their families. Today we welcome Scarlet, Ella, Lara, Hamish and Jerara to our school. Pictured here with their classroom teacher Mrs Gilbertson
3. SCHOOL COUNCIL NOMINATIONS
A brief outline of the role of School Council follows later in this newsletter. I encourage anyone who would like to contribute and is able to commit to nominate for this active group. I am only too happy to elaborate on the role should anyone feel they may be interested. Our current School Council consists of; Parent Members: Tara Hollier – President, Nigel Plowright, Emma Hughes, Anna Hopkins, Jen Delaney . DET Members: Rachel Wiggins, Bob Tinker Executive Officer, Community Member: Vacancy

Thank you to all of our School Council members for their tremendous effort working on behalf of our school community maintaining a watchful eye on the policy development and educational programs at the school. 2017 will be a busy year with our School Review and subsequent development of our new Strategic Plan.

I will be calling for nominations on Monday 6th February to enable us to be able to meet as a Council this term. Please see me if you are interested and/or would like to know more.

4. SWIMMING
First Semester Swimming Program will run each Wednesday for 6 sessions all students in Grade 1-6 (Prep students will participate in the last 3 sessions). Students will need to bring bathers and towel each Wednesday for the duration of February and March. A more intensive program will run in Second Semester for all students at Toora Primary School. Permission forms are going home with students today.

5. PARENT PAYMENTS (formerly known as School fees)
Family Statements are attached to this newsletter. Toora Primary School Council has passed the School policy in line with the Department of Education’s guidelines. The policy includes a number of payment options to support parents to access the materials and services associated with their child’s education. The school-level parent payment policy is available on the school website. If you have any queries or wish to discuss your circumstances and the options available to you, please contact the school to make an appointment

6. TOORA PLAYGROUP
Our Toora Supported Playgroup will recommence in the school stadium each Tuesday morning between 10:00 and 12:00pm as of the 7th of February. The Playgroup will run each school term. Michelle from the South Gippsland Shire Council welcomes families from Toora and surrounding areas to participate. The Playgroup aims to provide opportunities for parents to play with their children in a relaxed, informal setting. If you would like further information please contact Michelle on 0417 388 911 or 03 56629200

1. PREPS
Prep children attend Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday each week for full days until the end of February. The Prep teacher may be in touch regarding a suitable time for some prep assessments during this time.

2. YEAR 3-6 CAMP PAYMENT
All Year 3/4/5/6 families will receive an update later in Term 1 regarding cost of the Wilsons Promontory camp, allowing families to budget for this cost and select payment plan if that is an easier achievable option.
Hello Everyone,
My name is Alana and I feel so enthusiastic about getting to know your beautiful community. When I’m not being a Chaplain, I am volunteering with my local youth group, running camps for young people, singing and playing lots of music and being passionate about different issues in the wider West/ South Gippsland Shire.

I will be working at Toora PS on Tuesday and Wednesdays. Please feel free to come in and have a cup of tea and a chat, and look forward to some exciting events in the future!
Your new Chaplain, Alana xx

My name is Hope Haughie and I am a student teacher in my final year at Federation University. I currently live on a small hobby farm just out of Yarram township, with my husband and two teenage sons. Throughout 2017 I will be teaching in the Prep-2 classroom with Louise and I look forward to getting to know all of the students and families who are a part of the school community.

MAINLY MUSIC TOORA
Mainly Music will start again for the term on Thursday 9th February from 9.30am (try and get there about 10 mins before this if possible). This is a one hour music, dance and singing program which is great fun for all pre school children (even babies and crawlers).

We hold the program in the Anglican Church Hall Toora which is attached to the Anglican Church at the top of Dutton Street.
The program is $3 per child and morning tea is provided. We hope to see you on Thursday. If you want more information contact Rachel on 56862257 or check out our Facebook page MainlyMusicToora or mainlymusic.org.

REMINDER:
- All visitors to the school MUST sign in at the office before entering the classroom area.
- Bus travellers must have a note handed to either the office or Bus Duty teacher or a note in the communication book if they are not travelling home on the bus.
- Bus Students are Supervised from 8:15am until 3:50pm. All other students are supervised between 8:45am - 3:30pm.

VIEW OUR NEWSLETTER ONLINE
Our newsletter can be viewed online on our website at any time as well as via a link on our FaceBook page.
www.tooraps.vic.edu.au

‘LIKE’ us on Facebook: TooraPrimarySchool
**Information: School Council Elections 2017**

**What is a School Council and what does it do?**

All government schools in Victoria have a school council. They are legally formed bodies that are given powers to set the key directions of a school within centrally provided guidelines. In doing this, a School Council is able to directly influence the quality of Education that the school provides for its students.

**Who is on the School Council?**

There are three possible categories of membership:

- A mandated elected Parent category. More than one third of the total members must be from this category. Department of Education and Early Childhood Development (DET) employees can be Parent members at their child’s school as long as they are not employed at the school.

- A mandated elected DET employee category. Members of this category may make up no more than one third of the total membership of school council. The principal of the school is automatically one of these members.

- An optional Community member category. Its members are appointed by a decision of the council because of their special skills, interests or experiences. DET employees are not eligible to be Community members.

The term of office for all members is two years. Half the members must retire each year, creating vacancies for the annual school council elections.

**Why is parent membership so important?**

Parents on school councils provide important viewpoints and have valuable skills that can help shape the direction of the school.

**Do I need special experience to be on school council?**

No. What you do need is an interest in the school and the desire to work in partnership with others to help shape the school’s future.

**What do you need to do to stand for election?**

The principal will issue a notice and call for nominations following the commencement of Term 1 each year. All school council elections must be completed by the end of March.

If you decide to stand for election, you can arrange for someone to nominate you as a candidate or you can nominate yourself in the Parent category.

DET employees whose child is enrolled in a school in which they are not employed are eligible to nominate as parents for the school council where their child is enrolled.

Once the nomination form is completed, return it to the principal within the time stated on the notice of election.

If there are more nominations received than there are vacancies on council, a ballot will be conducted during the two weeks after the call for nominations has closed.

**Remember:**
Ask at the school for help if you would like to stand for election and are not sure what to do. Consider standing for election to council this year. Be sure to vote in the elections.

**Contact Acting Principal, Bob Tinker for further information.**