FROM THE PRINCIPAL.....

2017 Improvement Agenda
This year, our school’s strategic improvement agenda for 2017 focuses on three main pillars:

1) Systemic curriculum delivery: English
2) Expert Teaching Team
3) Effective Pedagogical Practices

These pillars have been selected as the central body of work to continue our improvement journey for improved student learning outcomes. The specific actions chosen to achieve these targeted improvements will be outlined in detail in upcoming editions of the newsletter.

Supporting our Improvement Agenda is the Investing for Success funding that we receive from the Australian government. State schools use Investing for Success funding to support students to achieve improved outcomes across all areas of schooling. This year, we are anticipating receiving approximately $12,500 which is targeted to support our improvement agenda through providing a Curriculum Implementation Officer to work with teachers to further develop their skills and knowledge of the Australian curriculum, release for teachers for planning development, observation, coaching and feedback sessions, and professional learning in a Coaching Accreditation Program.

Growth Coaching
Part of our school’s improvement agenda for this year is to further develop our school’s pedagogical practices. That is, the ways in which we function and work as a teaching team within the school to provide a consistent language and framework for interacting with students through teaching, assessing and reporting. In order to do this, we will be embedding the culture, climate, processes and protocols of classroom observation and feedback to support professional development to encourage reflective practice and action learning. In order to achieve this, I will be participating in a Coaching Accreditation Program facilitated by Growth Coaching International. The first two days of this professional learning will be held this coming Tuesday and Wednesday and these will be followed up by a further two days in June. My thanks to both Miss Doyle and Mrs Unwin who will be covering my teaching role in the classroom over these days, providing consistency and continuity for students in the senior class.

Student Absences
Many thanks to our families who are notifying us of absences in line with the Unexplained Absence policy expectation that is now mandatory for all state...
schools. There are several ways in which to notify our school if your child is going to be absent on a particular day: email to admin@springbrookss.eq.edu.au, text the school mobile 0439 669 489 or call and leave a message on 5548 3333. If we are not notified by the day of the absence, you can expect a phone call to inquire where your child is to ensure that they are safe and accounted for. We thank you for your ongoing support with this.

Uniforms
The orders of printed polo shirts have now arrived and are available for purchase. School photos are coming up on 17th March so if you need to get a new uniform item, now is the perfect time to do so!

Book Club
Thank you for continuing to support Book Club, a program that provides you with an opportunity to purchase books at a reasonable price for your children. The first issue orders have arrived and were distributed to students this afternoon. Each order you place earns free books and teaching resources for our school and we thank your orders!

Parents and Citizen’s Association
The Annual General Meeting for our P&C is coming up in a couple of short weeks and all of our school families are invited and welcome to attend. The P&C is a small group of dedicated families who work together to support our school through fundraising initiatives and social activities for our students. It would be great to have new members join the P&C and to see some new faces at the meetings. The next meeting, the AGM is scheduled for Thursday 16th March, starting at 3:15pm in the school library.

Ashmore Bike Safety Centre
Our years 4 and 5 students will be participating in a full day excursion to the Ashmore Bike Safety Centre on Thursday March 16th. Students from Numinbah Valley SS will be joining us on the day. The day aims to teach students the importance of road safety when riding pushbikes in the neighbourhood to ensure safety at all times. This is a particularly important message for our students when there are few bike paths or footpaths for them to ride on. This activity costs $5 and includes bus travel to and from the centre in Ashmore. Information and permission forms will be coming home next week so please look out for them.

Cross Country
Our cross country event with Numinbah Valley State School students will be happening on our school grounds on Wednesday 29th March. All students will be involved in a cross country race and enjoyable fitness activities when the races are finished. This is a whole day event and our P&C will be providing a sausage sizzle and food stall with some goodies for the day. Miss Smith will be plotting the courses and we look forward to seeing all of our students enjoying the

Sarah Jane Ash
Principal ☺

Upcoming Dates

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<td>Bike Safety Centre - yrs 4 and 5</td>
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<td>16/03/17</td>
<td>P&amp;C Meeting - Annual General followed by General Meeting</td>
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<td>Money Smart sessions for students</td>
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<tr>
<td>29/03/17</td>
<td>Cross Country with NVSS @ Springbrook SS</td>
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Moving beyond asking, “What did you do at school?”

By Michael Grose

Ever found yourself asking your child the same bland question about school?

“So, how was your day? What did you do at school today? What did you learn?”

If these are your default questions the chances are that you’ll get a one or two word reply along the lines, “Fine!” “Good!” “Okay” “Nothing much.”

These answers don’t really tell you a lot. On the other hand, these types of questions don’t ask a great deal.

So how can you move beyond the mundane when you talk with kids about their school days?

Set the atmosphere

It helps to create the right atmosphere for conversations. A quick “How was your day?” as you pick a child up from after-school is a rapport-builder or mood checker, but little more.

If you drive you may learn a bit on the trip home, particularly if you keep the radio off and are able to keep some distance between kids and mobile devices. Alternatively, walking home together may loosen up your child’s tongue and put them in the mood for talking.

Give kids a chance

Most kids need some time and space to unwind before expecting them to talk about their day, particularly if you are going to launch and ask them questions. This makes sense as most adults would feel annoyed if they were assaulted as soon as they walked in the door about their day, “How was your day? What did you do? Who did you see?” Ahh! Stop!

Create conversations rather than ask questions

The dinner table makes a great place to talk, if all televisions are off, mobile devices are left behind and you take the time to make it more than a pit stop. One way to kick off a conversation is to ask kids if they’d like to hear about your day. From my experience kids are often interested in the most mundane things that go on in an adult’s day so don’t think you have to make it sound grander then what it is. This gives kids permission to talk about their own days; your story can stimulate conversations which provides openings for kids to ask questions and share a little or in some cases a lot about their own day at school.

Interesting questions lead to interesting conversations

The questions you ask to prompt a conversation will often say a great deal about you and what you value. If you focus only on academic or learning questions then it indicates that’s what you value.
Moving beyond asking, “What did you do at school?”

It helps to take conversations and your questions in different directions to get a multi-faceted window into your child’s school life but also an indication of your child’s interests, social skills and welfare. Here are some examples of question starters that may prompt different responses from kids about their time at school:

1. Tell me what made you laugh today?
2. Who did you play with at recess today?
3. Did you do anything that was brave?
4. If I spoke to your teacher, what would she tell me about you?
5. What did your teacher talk about today?
6. Is there anyone in your class who needs to be in time out?
7. Where’s the best place to hang out/play at school?
8. Tell me one good thing that happened to you today?
9. Who were you nice/kind/friendly to today?
10. Did anyone push your buttons today?
11. What did you do that you were proud of/happy with today?
12. What’s something you learned with a friend today?
13. What’s your teacher’s most important rule?
14. If today was a musical instrument what would it be? Why?
15. If you were a teacher tomorrow, what would you teach the class?

Next time you ask a clichéd and dull question about your child’s day stop yourself before you utter the words. Instead think outside the square and ask questions that may stimulate a response beyond “Fine” or “Nothing.” And remember they may not feel like talking, which is fine too. Like adults, kids need to be in the right mood and the right environment if they are going to share a meaningful conversation about their day.

Visit our website for more ideas and information to help you raise confident and resilient young people.

Special note: I’m thrilled to announce that my latest book Spoonfed Generation: How to raise independent children is out. It’s available at parentingideas.com.au

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