Principal’s message

Welcome back to a new year! The students have managed to breeze through their first week with enthusiasm and no complaints. They have new mathematics software to use that aligns with their text books and new “text type” writing software, to assist them in honing their writing skills for all purposes of writing, for example: information reports, exposition, narrative and recount etc. I have also purchased some high interest books, both fiction and non-fiction for the more advanced readers.

We have received 3 new laptops that were ordered last year and these will be installed in the next couple of weeks. The department has also allocated to us a new desktop computer which will be installed shortly. This means that all students at Marra PS will now be able to simultaneously access a computer!

The students are enjoying playing on the equipment in the shade, as the construction of our COLA was finally completed last week. It’s great that they will be able to utilise the equipment during wet weather also.

Students have been exercising their brains by participating in “Brain Gym” exercises. I have had the students do some of these exercises in the past, but after attending a 1 day workshop in Bourke last week, I now have an audio disc that covers all the exercises. The main concept of “Brain Gym” is that students need to be able to direct both sides of their bodies to move simultaneously and to cross over the mid-line of the body, for example, lifting the left knee and tapping it with the right hand and vice versa in quick succession. Once students can easily perform these cross over exercises, they are more easily able to use both sides of their brains to analyse complex mental tasks. Basically, we perform better at mental tasks once we’ve moved around a bit!

Anita Moore
Principal
**In the Classroom**

This term, students will be learning about the Solar System and the effect of the Moon on the Earth. During HSIE (Human Society and its Environment) they will be researching Aboriginal Cosmology, Aboriginal Dreaming and the diversity of people’s beliefs. They will be producing artworks that compare night and day and art that celebrates special events, differences and signs and symbols. During music lessons, they will be exploring rhythm, pitch and notation; they will be composing their own ostinatos and performing them in front of the class. Hopefully by the end of term, they will also be able to play a tune on the recorder.

![Image of Saturn](image1.png)

**Swimming Carnival**

The swimming carnival will be held in Nyngan next week on Wednesday 16th February and commences at 9.30am.

![Image of swimmers](image2.png)

**Philosophical Ethics Education**

Please see the letter below from Primary Ethics Ltd. Ethics education will be offered at some schools and commences this year. Volunteers from the community are needed to make it happen. If you are interested, please follow the links for more information.

![Image of philosopher](image3.png)
Dear Parents and Community Members,

**EXPRESSION OF INTEREST IN BECOMING A TEACHER OF PHILOSOPHICAL ETHICS AND/OR ETHICS COORDINATOR**

Philosophical ethics may be offered at your child’s school in 2011, as an option solely for students who have opted out of SRE/scripture. A volunteer Ethics Coordinator will manage the ethics program at each school.

Parents or community members interested in teaching philosophical ethics, on a voluntary basis, are invited to complete an online Expression of Interest form at www.primaryethics.com.au

Interested persons must:

- Satisfy the following essential selection criteria:
  - be comfortable working with and be able to engage with children
  - have an interest in helping young people to think about ethics
  - have an open-minded, inquiring outlook
  - be a good listener
- Commit to teaching the course for at least one year,
- Be available to attend a two day training course (dates and venues to be determined, although the first one is scheduled for Sydney on February 1-2, 2011),
- Have daily access to the internet and email,
- Complete a Working with Children Check - Student/Volunteer at their own expense ($12.50) and not have a criminal conviction for:
  - a crime against a minor; or
  - violence; or
  - sexual assault or
  - the provision of prohibited drugs.
- Complete a *Keeping Them Safe* online child protection module,
- Successfully complete a training course conducted by *Primary Ethics*,
- Diligently participate in any other training or support activities provided by *Primary Ethics*,
- Diligently teach the approved course in philosophical ethics, using the materials and following the processes given by *Primary Ethics*,
- Cooperate with the school Principal and Staff, and
- Consistently and punctually attend classes for which he or she is responsible.

Interested persons might also satisfy one or more of the following desirable criteria:

- A degree in some relevant field (e.g. arts or humanities)
- A teaching qualification
- Group facilitation experience
- Classroom experience
- Previous work with young people

For further information about the philosophical ethics course and to register your Expression of Interest as a Volunteer Ethics Teacher and/or an Ethics Coordinator, please go to: [www.primaryethics.com.au](http://www.primaryethics.com.au)