Dates to remember:

- Fri 20 Feb - Book Club due
- Wed 25 Feb - Fri 27 Feb - Yr 5 Cooba camp
- Fri 6 Mar - Second hand uniform shop
- Thurs 12 Mar - TPS Swimming Carnival
- Tues 17 Mar - School Board 6pm
- Tues 17 Mar - P & C AGM 7pm
- Sat 28 Mar - Twilight Fair 1pm-6pm
- Tues 31 Mar - iBean Café breakfast

For further dates including a five year school term calendar, please go to our website & look at the School Calendar under 'Our School'.

Notes & payments due:

- Fri 20 Feb - Yr 5 Cooba camp payment

FROM THE PRINCIPAL

VISITING THE SCHOOL

In order for us to monitor all visitors to the school and meet our legal requirements related to Working With Vulnerable People, we ask that all parents/visitors ensure they sign in at the Front Office every time they come to the school.

2015 ANNUAL OPERATING PLAN

Four main areas have been identified as our focus for this year:

* Track student achievement with sophisticated, evidence based data;
* Create new capacity to strengthen community relations and engagement;
* Invest in a safe and supportive learning environment;
* Deliver inspiring, innovative and inclusive education;

We will continue to report on our progress at P&C and School Board meetings and through the newsletter.

CHAPLAINCY

Torrens is again able to offer the services of a School Chaplain. This is not a religious teaching position nor a counselling position, but is one of welfare support offered to teachers, students and parents. More information regarding this person and their role will be available shortly.

BUILDING WORKS FOR 2015

We will be upgrading the last five classrooms in the senior corridor this year. The Education and Training Directorate along with the school and P&C are funding this program and it will certainly be nice to see the entire school looking like it all belongs together. We will also be replacing carpet and lino near the two rooms at the exit doors for the junior and senior playgrounds as well as asphalt in the courtyard.

We are planning to improve the playground by painting the handball wall in the senior space and examining our options in the courtyard. There is a lot to do!

Sue Mueller
Would you like to synch your calendar with the school calendar?

Follow these instructions for iCalendar Sync (also found on the home page of our website under ‘Subscribe to our calendar events feed’)

How to subscribe to Calendar feed

Using Microsoft Outlook - Windows

In Outlook, at the bottom left hand corner, select Calendar
In the top menu bar and select tab Tools
From drop-down menu select Account Settings
In the ‘Account Setting’ window select the Internet Calendars tab and click [New] icon
In the ‘New Internet Calendar Subscription’ window paste your schools URL in the field e.g. http://www.torrensps.act.edu.au/ical_feed
After pasting your school URL, click the [Add] button
A pop-up window will appear - rename the calendar and click [OK] and Close

Note: If you only download the link and do not subscribe, you will not receive iCal updates

NB: Due to the settings on Outlook, times for events will show an hour later than they actually are. This is currently being investigated by IT Services in order to rectify it.

Using Apple Mac

Open iCal
In the bottom left corner click the + to add a new calendar, rename calendar to school name
Select newly created calendar
Right click or Control click to open the dropdown menu and choose subscribe
Paste your school URL e.g. http://www.torrensps.act.edu.au/ical_feed
Click subscribe

Note: Optional: Sync apple devise with your iTunes to migrate calendar across all devices

Using Apple Mac – Handheld devices

Locate the [Settings] icon and select
Scroll to Mail, Contacts, Calendars and click the option
In the ‘Accounts’ selection and click the option
A choice of options will appear, choose Other;
From available options select Add Subscribed Calendar
In the field titled Server place your schools URL e.g. http://www.torrensps.act.edu.au/ical_feed
Click [Next] and [Save]

Using Android

Open up and log into your personal Google account at http://www.google.com/calendar
On the left hand side of the page select other calendars and select the drop down arrow
Select Add by URL
Click Add calendar
To rename the calendar, roll the cursor over the calendar you want to rename
Select the drop down arrow
Click [Calendar Settings]
Rename calendar in Calendar name text box and click [Save]

Note: Sync devices with your Google account to migrate calendar across

If you only download the link and do not subscribe, you will not receive iCal updates

If you are still having problems with these instructions, please contact the Front Office for assistance.
Free workshop for parents & carers of children with autism!

South Canberra Woden -
March 25
Register your place:
positivepartnerships.com.au

COME AND LEARN THE FUNKY
TRADITIONAL RHYTHMS OF WEST
AFRICA ON DJEMBE.

This ADULT only opportunity begins on Friday
13 February (each Friday morning of term 1) from
8:30am — 9:00am in the Performing Arts room.
Please make other arrangements for your toddlers
and school age children. Drumming is a great way to
connect with people, relieve stress, and challenge the
brain and the body - all while learning a musical instrument!

Thank you,
Kirrilee Turner.

REMINDER TO ALL PARENTS

If your child has a medical condition, please
ensure you have filled out the appropriate
form (available from the Front Office) and
provide an action plan and medication, if
necessary.

If your child requires medication during school
time, you will need to bring the medication to
the Front Office and fill out applicable form to
enable us to administer it.

Thank you,
Front Office staff.

STUDENT BANKING

Winner of bank draw
PIPPA V.
Congratulations!
The Instrumental Music Program will be starting a new Year 5 brass band this year. All Year 5 students have been assessed over the last week. Our IMP teacher for 2015 is Jane Rayner who will be assisted by Zach Raffin for this term. Shortly I will be receiving a list of possible students that have been selected for the band.

Please consider this opportunity for your child, it is a fantastic musical experience with lasting lifelong skills.

If you did not receive an information letter from the IMP last year please ask your child to come and see me and I will give them a copy. If and once your child has been accepted into the Year 5 band there will be a parent information session where you will be able to have your questions answered.

I look forward to helping your child through their band experience.

Kirrilee Turner
Performing Arts
Year 5 band teacher.
Death Cap Mushrooms

Do not touch, pick or eat any wild mushrooms!

Death Cap mushrooms are one of the world’s deadliest mushrooms and can be found across the Canberra region, usually in late summer and autumn. There have been four deaths and many poisonings in the ACT in the past 15 years due to Death Cap mushrooms.

In Canberra, Death Cap mushrooms often grow near established oak trees in mild, moist weather. Death Cap mushrooms have been found growing on school grounds in the ACT.

Parents and teachers are asked to remind children not to touch, pick or eat any wild mushrooms.

As the Death Cap mushroom can easily be confused with edible varieties, adults are also strongly advised not to touch, pick or eat any wild mushrooms. It is difficult, even for experienced collectors, to tell the difference between the Death Cap mushroom and edible wild mushrooms.

All parts of the Death Cap mushroom are poisonous and eating even a small amount of the mushroom can be fatal. Cooking the Death Cap mushroom does not make it safe.

If you suspect that you or one of your family members might have eaten Death Cap mushrooms, you should seek urgent medical attention at a hospital emergency department.

If you believe you have spotted a Death Cap mushroom, do not touch the mushroom with your bare skin. If it is in your own yard, the best option is to leave it be and make sure others stay away from the area. The mushroom will die in a few days.

If you believe you have spotted a Death Cap mushroom growing in a public area, please contact Canberra Connect on 13 22 81.

P&C meeting
Thank you to everyone who came along to our first P&C meeting of the year — it was great to see such a large turnout! We heard about the staff’s plans for the coming year and got updates from the Twilight Fair organisers about the great work that has been done so far. We also discussed social events that we’d like to run later in the year.

The focus of the P&C is to strengthen the teacher/school community/parent partnership. If you have any ideas for events that we could run (and that you’d be willing to help with!) please contact us by email (torrenspnc@gmail.com).

The next meeting will be our AGM, on Tuesday 17 March (Week 7). Hope to see you there!

Rebel Sport Rewards at work
Do you have a Rebel Sport Rewards card? Join the Rewards Program at Rebel Sport, quoting Torrens Primary, and every time you buy something in the store our school gets money towards a credit. Our account currently has more than $700 in it, which the P&C will use to purchase sporting goods for our school.

Guitar and ukulele lessons
The P&C is continuing its arrangement with Canberra School of Music to offer guitar & ukulele lessons this term. For more information please email torrenspnc@gmail.com.

Free music lesson day
Canberra School of Music is offering a FREE LESSON DAY on Sunday 1 March 2015

The day where you can book a completely obligation-free FREE lesson and get a full-on brush-up on all things instrumenta!
Free lessons are available on piano, guitar, bass guitar, violin, viola, cello, trumpet, trombone, drums, vocals, flute, clarinet, saxophone.
Free instruments are provided

This year, FREE LESSON DAY will run in THREE locations: Belconnen, Weston Creek and Jerrabomberra.

How do I book?!
Just submit your details by booking online and we'll tee up a time for you ASAP!
http://www.trybooking.com/GVHA

Key dates
* Second hand uniform shop Fri 6 Mar 2015 (Week 5)
* AGM Tue 17 Mar 2015 7pm
* Twilight Fair Sat 28 March, 1–6pm
Can you help???

The Twilight Fair is on SOON...
1-6 pm Saturday 28 March—the biggest event on the school calendar.
We need your help for it to be the success we all want it to be— for our kids and the school. Can you help out for ½ to 1 hour on the day? Email torrenspnc@gmail.com

THANK YOU

To our most recent generous sponsor, Steve Thomas from Edge Real Estate for donating the production and display of signs to promote the Fair. Edge will also have free balloons for the kids on the day.

LIGHTS – CAMERA - ACTION

Did your child perform at the talent quest? Would your child be interested in showing his or her talent at the Twilight Fair?

The P&C invites your child to perform at the Twilight Fair. We are unable to provide a direct invitation due to privacy considerations but would like to offer the opportunity for your child to showcase his or her talent.

To nominate or for more information email the P&C: torrenspnc@gmail.com
10 golden rules for parenting success in 2015

As the requirements for effective parenting shift and there seems even less time to juggle family life, here are 10 golden rules to guide you on your parenting journey.

1. Talk more
With families shrinking, kids getting busier and tech devices rapidly multiplying the opportunities for family members to engage in face-to-face talk is under serious attack. Regardless of their age, the best way to influence your children is talk to them. The kitchen table is one place to do this, but there are plenty of other places where you can talk. If talk becomes difficult, try driving with a child or young person in the car with the radio off. They are bound to break sooner or later.

2. Lean on others
A recent Australian survey found that 50% of parents are seriously struggling with their parenting, yet only 10% of this group would ask for help. I suspect there are many reasons for this including fear of being judged a poor parent; that parenting is expected to be hard; and lack of trustworthy support networks. Author Steve Biddulph once said that parents don’t parent well in isolation. He’s right. It’s incredibly important to build your support networks and get ‘spare parents’ into your child’s life. Start by working closely with your child’s teacher; a natural ally.

3. Build confidence
With so many parents reporting that they have a child experiencing anxiety it would seem that we are currently experiencing a crisis in children’s confidence. It would also seem that we have somehow forgotten how to absorb children’s fears, insecurities and anxieties, and instill a sense of confidence that these can be overcome. Using a mixture of coaxing, coaching and cajoling parents need to find a way to impart in children a sense of courage to put themselves in new or potentially awkward social situations; to have a go at activities where failure is a real option; and to contribute to the wellbeing of others, which reduces anxiety and fear.

Here are 10 golden rules to guide you along your parenting journey in 2015:

1. **Talk more**
   - With families shrinking, kids getting busier and tech devices rapidly multiplying the opportunities for family members to engage in face-to-face talk is under serious attack. Regardless of their age, the best way to influence your children is talk to them. The kitchen table is one place to do this, but there are plenty of other places where you can talk. If talk becomes difficult, try driving with a child or young person in the car with the radio off. They are bound to break sooner or later.

2. **Lean on others**
   - A recent Australian survey found that 50% of parents are seriously struggling with their parenting, yet only 10% of this group would ask for help. I suspect there are many reasons for this including fear of being judged a poor parent; that parenting is expected to be hard; and lack of trustworthy support networks. Author Steve Biddulph once said that parents don’t parent well in isolation. He’s right. It’s incredibly important to build your support networks and get ‘spare parents’ into your child’s life. Start by working closely with your child’s teacher; a natural ally.

3. **Build confidence**
   - With so many parents reporting that they have a child experiencing anxiety it would seem that we are currently experiencing a crisis in children’s confidence. It would also seem that we have somehow forgotten how to absorb children’s fears, insecurities and anxieties, and instill a sense of confidence that these can be overcome. Using a mixture of coaxing, coaching and cajoling parents need to find a way to impart in children a sense of courage to put themselves in new or potentially awkward social situations; to have a go at activities where failure is a real option; and to contribute to the wellbeing of others, which reduces anxiety and fear.
5 Lead the gang
Parenting is now an individual endeavour. There is a place for parenting the individual child, but there is also a place for parenting the whole gang (even if you and your child make up the gang). Your ability to pull your family together and get them singing off the same song sheet will impact on your family’s harmonious relationships; your children’s sense of other (empathy) and their general resilience and coping mechanisms. There is nothing so magical to witness as a family pulling together when the chips are down. This doesn’t just happen. It takes real leadership by parents to make a family act like a family!

6 Build developmental knowledge
Many challenges parents experience with their children are due to a developmental mismatch. That is, parents raising their ten year old as if they are eight. The nuances of parenting are age-related, yet due to inexperience we so often don’t read the cues. Recently, I witnessed a mum and dad tearing their hair out trying to communicate with their nine year old son. For the first time he was saying no to them. They thought him stubborn and disobedient. I thought him normal, as nine can be a problematic age, where usually malleable children suddenly start changing. Puberty is stirring. When this couple’s second child turns nine she will experience the benefits of her elder brother paving the way and breaking her parents in for her.

7 Practice problem-ownership
Please, please, please allow children to own their own problems. Children of all ages can be creative when they have problems to solve. Everything is a potential problem to kids and they need opportunities to resolve them themselves. By all means, coach, guide, give hints but give them a chance to sort out relationship issues; challenges with teachers and academic challenges themselves.

8 Swim against the tide
Listen to talkback radio, read the headlines of a newspaper or watch a current affairs TV program and you’ll realise that, right now, we live in an incredibly judgemental society. Parents are harshly judged as well. Allow your kids to walk to school and you risk being judged as negligent. Drive your kids to school and you risk being told that you are spoiling them and neglecting their physical wellbeing. It takes a strong parent to swim against the tide of popular opinion. It also takes a strong parent to deny her child say a mobile phone when every other child has one. It helps to say “This is the way we do it in our family.”

9 Be brave
Perhaps the biggest challenge facing parents, and their children, is the ability to let go of their parental reigns and give kids the freedom they need to develop autonomy. It’s relatively easy to develop children’s independence at home as the stakes aren’t as high. If they can’t cook a meal then you just have to do it for them. However, developing children’s independence outside the home is a different story. Many parents feel decidedly wary about granting children and young people more freedom. There is the perception that the world is a dangerous place. Granting kids freedom has an element of risk; that’s why parents need to be brave. Having the courage to let go is a basic requirement of parenting. It won’t stop you worrying, but that’s part of the game.

10 Add emotional intelligence to your parenting mix
With kids experiencing mental health challenges at a depressingly high rate it’s time to add some emotional intelligence to the parenting mix. While many schools are now introducing emotional and social programs on the curriculum, it’s important that parents develop a deep understanding of how emotions work: how emotions can be recognised; how they can work for us and against us; how we can regulate our emotions so they don’t overwhelm us; and how to recognise and respond to the emotions of others. These sound like life-changing skills if learned, are capable of impacting significantly and positively on future generations.

Michael Grose