Executive Function Skills. So what are Executive Function skills? These are skills that develop in infancy and continue to develop as we grow and mature. They are:

- Sustained attention
- Switching attention
- Goal setting
- Problem solving
- Planning
- Acting on a plan
- Sticking to a plan
- Prioritising
- Assessing risk
- Error checking
- Decision making

As parents and teachers our role is to support in developing STOP THINK SKILLS that go to building working memory. It is working memory that we then put into gear to complete tasks throughout life.

At the Junior School Assembly last week, I talked about Automaticity. This is being able to know things instantly without having to spend time working it out. Examples of this include knowing basic number facts, days of the week, months of the year, minutes in an hour, times tables, sight words. Knowing things automatically means that the brain can then focus on the stretch - the problem that might have been set. If a student has to spend all his/her time working out basic adding it does become tiring and there will be little left in brain energy to get to the end of the task.

We want our students to think, not just rehash number facts. We want to present students with engaging and challenging opportunities to learn that give them stretch. For them to do this it comes back to executive function the STOP, THINK SKILLS.
What does this mean for parents?

- Providing opportunity for challenge in a whole range of ways and situations beginning early in a child’s life, and expecting that many things will be a struggle and that this is good.
- Encourage risk-taking.
- Support what is happening at school and know that at times your child will not want to do the work because it is hard. Hard is good, especially when it is encouraged and supported.

If you want to know more about executive function and working memory, I draw your attention to the work of Martin Westwell. Martin is the inaugural Director of the Flinders University Centre for Science Education in the 21st Century. He works closely with DECD and was a recent speaker at the ACER RESEARCH CONFERENCE 2013: How the Brain Learns. If you are interested in knowing more about Executive Function and Working Memory, Google with links to Martin.

**NAPLAN**

As you may have heard through the media in the past few days, the Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority (ACARA) identified an error in the background placement of national average indicators in NAPLAN Individual Student Reports for the Language Conventions (spelling, grammar and punctuation).

To this end a decision was made by ACARA to reprint Year 3, 5, 7 & 9 Individual Student Reports for South Australia. This will mean that the report will come in two parts to parents.

The first will be the individual Student Summary Report (blue) and it will go out in the post next week as required by DECD.

The second will be the National Individual Student Report and that will be sent out in Term 4, 2013 after it has been received. It is this report that has to be reprinted due to production error.

**STUDENT REPORTS**

Student reports Year 5 to 12 will be sent home with students on the last day of term; Friday 27th September. If your child is absent on the day we will endeavour to send their report home with a sibling. Any reports not sent home will be available for collection from the Library during the school holidays.

**INDIVIDUAL LEARNING PLANS**

If your child is in Year 6/7, 8 or 9/10, this reporting cycle we are including a copy of his/her ILP (Individual learning Plan) again for your information in with their school report. This document contains vital information about a student’s school progress and the factors that could aid them or may hamper their learning journey.

You will see that this document contains many test scores, and this data is collected from students over a regular testing cycle that takes place usually at the end of term one and during term 3 each year.

This ILP contains testing data that was collected in the May 2013 testing cycle. The information from the November 2013 testing cycle will be included on the ILP and sent out in term 1, 2014.

Other useful information is included such as attendance, class-room support, school report grades and comments from teachers on work habits, styles and noted problems and behaviour management issues.

In short this document provides a very good snapshot of how your child is performing. We have also included a document on How to read Your Child’s ILP. We hope this assists parents and caregivers to check the data and to also add any pertinent information to this document that they think will help their child achieve or help teaching staff better assist their child to learn.

We also invite parents to ask questions of home-group and subject teachers so that they understand these measures and the implications they can have for their child’s academic and social performance.

There is a tear-off slip on the letter included with the ILP that may be returned to the school along with any comments you may like to add to your child’s ILP.

We urge you to take the time to look over this document again carefully and to use parent/teacher interviews as a forum for further discussion, or simply telephone the front office to make an appointment time. This is particularly advised if your child is performing at below the National Benchmarks.
**PARENT EMAIL ADDRESSES**

Due to the roll out of the new computer LearnLink features throughout South Australian schools, we are asking parents and caregivers to please send a return email to the school email address below. This will ensure we have your latest email address, or indeed an email contact address we don’t already have – dl.750_info@schools.sa.edu.au

Having your email address allows us to contact you in a timely and efficient manner in relation to a variety of school issues. As LearnLink capabilities continue to improve and expand we will be utilising it a lot more to keep parents and caregivers informed.

**EMOTIONS**

Mrs Wrights’ Yr5/6 class has been doing work on emotions for English and exploring how they feel.

**SAD**
When you are sad there is a feeling inside you that doesn’t want to be there.
It just wants to get out and be free. Sadness is like being in a dark hole.

**EMBARRASSED**
He feels insecure and ashamed. The moment is awkward, he just wants to get out of the situation as fast as anything. He is mortified, sitting alone, thinking no one’s going to talk to him again. He feels self-conscious, humiliated, embarrassed, and uncomfortable. HE WANTS TO LEAVE!!

**HAPPY**
He felt as free as a bird soaring through the sky. As happy as a kitten playing with yarn. His smile stretched across his whole face. When he walked he was basically flying in the air.

**Angry**
He feels annoyed, like a lion on the prey. He feels fierce, like he’s about to attack!

**DO YOU HAVE A 2013 TEEN DENTAL VOUCHER FOR YOUR CHILD?**
If your child is due for their Dental check-up before the end of the year, ring your school dental clinic Murray Bridge South – 85 323051 NOW to see if you can obtain an appointment before the voucher expires.

**Make use of this valuable voucher.** The vouchers are only valid until the end of December and appointments are filling fast so ring now to ensure you don’t miss out.
Note: SA Dental Service is only able to offer an appointment if your child is due for their dental exam.

**PURPLE SPOTTED GUDGEON**

In the last newsletter we announced that there were new Purple Spotted Gudgeons in the fish tank in the front office. This small native fish that were once common in the Lower Lakes and Murray region are now endangered and during the recent drought were at risk of local extinction. A number of populations in receding backwaters were captured and held in tanks for safe keeping and breeding purposes so that they could be re-released into their natural habitat when the water returned. Not all of these fish can be returned to the wild and that is one reason why we are lucky enough to have some. The fish tank was purchased with a grant from the NRM Education group as announced in a previous newsletter and the fish were supplied thanks to Adam Watt from the Department of Environment, Water and Natural Resources. Four young girls have volunteered to be the “Gudgeon Gang” to help look after the fish and to provide information to students about the fish and the importance of maintaining a healthy environment and the habitats needed for our native species. More information will continue to be placed in the newsletter over the next few months.

**ADELAIDE SHOW**

On the 10th, 11th and 12th of this month, in week eight, a handful of Years 9-12 Ag students travelled up to the Royal Adelaide Show to compete with 5 steers and 6 wethers. From the year 9/10 class Jemma Williams, Alex McPherson, Jessie Bland and
myself went along, with David Bristow, Marcus Rowett, Dale Appelkamp, Alysha Eckert, Kaitlin McKenzie-Campbell from the year 11 class and three year 12 students, Alana Standley, Zac VandenBrink and Jamie Thompson. For a few of us students this was a first and new experience which we thoroughly enjoyed and will always remember.

We all left on Tuesday; some of us travelled with Mr. Jurgs, while the others travelled with Miss Low and Hamish Jurgs. We went straight to the show grounds where Mr. Jurgs and the people who travelled with him unloaded the wethers and got them settled into their pens. Later that night, the steers arrived, with the assistance of Mr. Rowett, and we joined the rest of the team and settled the steers into their pens as well. At nine o’clock we went off to Hamilton Secondary College where we would sleep Tuesday and Wednesday night. We all set up our swags in the gymnasium and most of us showered.

On Wednesday, everyone got up at six in the morning and by seven, we were at the show again and checking on and preparing the steers and wethers. That day the wethers were being judged, and the wether-leading team stood for just over an hour holding our lovely wethers. We didn’t win anything for our wethers but we were still happy and excited, especially with Zac to entertain us. There was never a dull moment and we were on our feet all day. Later in the evening, we were given two hours free time to enjoy the Royal Adelaide Show. Most of us stayed to watch the fireworks and when they finished we went back to the college for some much appreciated sleep.

Thursday morning we were up bright and early again at five am and within a short time later, we were preparing the steers for the competitions. We all worked extremely hard on Thursday; from brushing steers to mucking out their pens. A few of us went home earlier that day with Hamish while the others stayed for another hour of free time.

Beth Jurgs got some amazing photographs of everyone at the show and we were very happy to have the year 12’s join us for their last time and we hope that they enjoyed themselves as much as we did. We want to thank Miss Low and Mr. Jurgs for their help too, and also Hamish and Beth. We miss our steers and our wethers very much and had so much fun!

**Brenda Ballock, (Wether leader) Year 9**

The 2013 show team was pretty successful considering the state that some of the steers were in a month ago. The Santa Getrudis (Hashtag) wasn’t looking promising regarding his behaviour and neither were some of the others. However, once we arrived at the show, all of our hard work paid off. I was rapt with how my Black Angus (Wellington Lodge Hendrix) behaved, earning me a 5th out of 11 in the Experienced Handler class, and a 6th in his weight class. Mr. McFarlene, his breeder, even came up to me and congratulated me on his looks and behaviour! That was an achievement in itself. I was very impressed with the four other handlers, who all had not done any handling before.

Being the only experienced handler, they all looked to me for guidance, which intimidated me. However, they didn’t need much help, as all performed and led amazingly! I was very proud and extremely happy with Jessie in particular, who at first didn’t even know she was leading! To come from that to where she ended up (in 3rd place!!!) is amazing and I expect she will continue the great work into the next couple of years. Well done team, I’m looking forward to watching you over the next few years.

**Alana Standley (Steer leader) Year 12**

A big thank you to the breeders who supplied the steers this year; the Daley’s, Moyle Park, Jamestown; The McFarlane’s, Wellington Lodge, Tailem Bend; the Eckert’s from Mentara Park, Malinong who also supplied the wethers; the Lintern’s, Seymour Vale, Tungkillo and the Evans family, Roean from Willalooka. We also need to thank the sponsors of the show team who, among other things, allowed us to look great in new tops; Thomas Foods International; Meningie Fodder; Hincks Rural Fencing; Coorong Ag-Services; Meningie Veterinary Clinic, Rowett Transport and Mentara Park. A big thanks to Hamish Jurgs who
played a big role in selecting the wethers, and the Red Angus steer, and who drove a number of students to and from the show and gave up work for 3 days to help at the show. Thanks also to Beth Jurgs who took photos during the main two days of showing and judging.

ADELAIDE CHOIR

On Wednesday, 18th September we were able to represent the Meningie Area School at the Festival of Music Choir Concert 10. We left for Adelaide at 7am and travelled up with Mrs Wright and Mrs Hood.

After arriving, we went into the hold under the stage of the Theatre. We rehearse with all of the other students for three hours. We shared our rows with students from Seaford R-7 School, Jervois Primary School and Murray Mallee Schools.

After our morning rehearsal we had lunch and went to the movies to see Smurf 2. This was followed by a quick, light tea.

At 6:40 we once again descended into the hold-following our lines carefully so we didn’t get confused.

Our families and supporters came to watch in the audience, and as the curtain rose an audible gasp filled the Theatre as everyone saw the choir for the first time. This was followed by a fantastic concert-singing, dancing, music and visual displays of lighting and sound.

Well done everyone!

The Adelaide Choir members this year are Kobie Hood, Ronnelle Clarke, Bridie Blake-Burrows, Karis Ling, Penny McManus, Tori Rigney, Kayla Rebner, Chelsea Thurston and Lucy Waser.

Our next choir performance will be next Friday at end of term assembly, and then in week 3 next term the whole choir- year 4-7- will be performing at the Murray Mallee Choir Festival at the Murray Bridge Town Hall. (Details from a choir student or Mrs Wright) Tickets will be available through the school until Monday 23rd September or from the Murray Bridge Visitor Centre.

STRANGER DANGER !!

With the school holidays approaching it is timely to remind children of ‘Stranger Danger’

- Let someone know where you are going and the time you will return.
- Be alert, walk confidently and keep to well-lit and populated areas.
- Walk against the flow of traffic and, if possible, walk with another person.
- Do not hitchhike or accept a ride with strangers.
- Be aware of your surroundings and know your location at all times.
19 September 2013

Dear Parent

NAPLAN Student Reports

On Friday 6 September the Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority (ACARA) identified an error in the placement on the background shell of national average indicators in one area of the Year 5 and 7 NAPLAN Individual Student Reports for Language Conventions (spelling, grammar and punctuation). Importantly there are no errors related to the NAPLAN test or scoring or student results at any year level.

ACARA accepts responsibility for the error, acknowledges the inconvenience and regrets any disruption this may cause to schools and parents, however the decision to reprint has been the right decision to make. This decision will delay the release of the 2013 student reports for South Australian schools until Term 4. No incorrect reports will be released to students.

Although the background shell of Years 3 and 9 student reports contain no errors, a decision was made by ACARA, in consultation with the South Australian Department for Education and Child Development, to reprint and redistribute all student reports for South Australia.

The reason for the decision to reprint all student report was due to:

1. An error in the placement of the national average indicators. This error may have resulted, in some cases,:
   - A parent having difficulty in reading the student report and understanding a child’s result; and,
   - A child’s result appearing above or below the national average when this was not the case.
2. The costs associated with unpacking and repacking already prepared packages and associated risk of erroneous reports being released to students and carers.

The national Individual Student Report (ISR) will be forwarded to parents during the week commencing 21 October 2013; however South Australian schools and parents will still receive some NAPLAN information this term.

The South Australian Test Administration Authority produces two additional supplementary reports to the ISR. These South Australian generated reports are called the Individual Student Summary Report (ISSR) and the School Summary Report (SSR). These reports have been provided by the Department for Education and Child Development to your school. Please do not hesitate to contact the South Australian Test Administration Authority on 8226 3269 if you require further information or assistance or go to www.nap.edu.au

Yours sincerely,

Robert Randall
Chief Executive Officer

CONSISTENT SCHOOL ATTENDANCE helps young people to achieve and play a positive role within their communities - Every day counts!