Dear Parents and Carers,

With the passing of the term’s halfway point, I am continually impressed by the diligent and sustained attitude to learning demonstrated by our hardworking students. It is very pleasing to see the students trying hard to be their best in their classrooms, sporting ventures, in the playground and representing the school in the broader community - reinforcing to all that Gorokan Public School students are indeed safe, respectful learners.

Principals’ Conference – Last Thursday and Friday I attended the Connect Ed Principals’ conference. Over 300 Principals were in attendance and we were informed of latest research in education and inspired about best practice in 21st century learning. A highlight for me personally was the keynote speaker, international educational leader Sir Ken Robinson. He spoke via satellite from America about the importance of developing creativity in young learners. I look forward to sharing this experience with the staff and putting this information into practice at Gorokan Public School.

Choral Festival - Our Senior Choir joined over 300 other choir students at Wamberal Public School for their Choral Festival rehearsal last week. They sounded amazing and were outstanding.

The Sports in Schools program continued this week for all students. The students are buzzing about the program and it is wonderful to see them enjoying this important area of learning. Please ensure that the nominal $5 per student payment is finalised as soon as possible. The payment slip can be found on page 3 of this newsletter.

Rugby League Literacy - The Australian Rugby League have been visiting our school on Mondays to hold literacy workshops with our K-2 classes. The program encourages our children to read daily and lead a healthy active lifestyle.

Zone Cross-Country – Congratulations and best wishes to our talented runners who will be competing in the Wallarah Zone Cross-Country Carnival on Friday 29th May at Wyong Race Course.

The school has been successful in applying for the Sporting Schools program (not to be mistaken for the Sports in Schools program which is currently running), which will be integrated into school sport to avoid disruption to learning and school routines.

This funded program will be at no cost to parents and carers, and will involve students from Stages 1, 2 and 3, in building their soccer skills.

Netball - Our senior netball team played at Baker Park, Wyong on Monday at a PSSA Gala Day knockout. They played with teamwork, determination and skill and won two out of their three games. Congratulations to the girls on this outstanding result.

Toukley Rotary Pride of Workmanship Awards – Congratulations to Erica Voorwinde and Jenny Ehlers who were successfully nominated for this prestigious community award for their service to the students of Gorokan Public School.

Sydney Writers’ Festival – Last Thursday 47 students represented the school at the Sydney Writers’ Festival at Sydney Town Hall. The students were totally engaged as they listened to authors and illustrators telling their inspirational stories. Some of our lucky students even got to go on the stage during this special event.

National Sorry Day – The school recognised national Sorry Day yesterday in class and at the whole school assembly. This day gives people the chance to come together and share the steps towards healing for the Stolen Generations, their families and communities.

Cyber Safety Talks – Whether in the classroom or at home, children are using technology more and more in their day-to-day lives. Cyber safety provides advice on keeping your child safe in the online world. Our Stage 2 and 3 students will be participating in cyber safety talks on Thursday 28th May and an afterschool session will be held in the library at 5:30pm on the same day for parents and carers who wish to attend.

Together we can make a difference.

Jesmond Zammit

Principal
Kindergarten Supervisor – Mrs K Lansdowne

Lost Property - Outside KE/T there is quite a lot of lost property. If your child is missing any jumpers or jackets please check this area. All your child’s belongings should be clearly labelled with their name.

Rumbalara - A note will be sent home this week for the Kindergarten excursion to Rumbalara (Girraakool Picnic Area) on the 24th June. The cost will be $20 which will cover the cost of the bus and entry into the park. Please keep the information part of the note when money has been sent in so that you know when, where and what to bring.

Sports in School - Thankyou to the families that have paid the $5 for Sports in School. The children are enjoying this engaging program on a Friday.

KE/T - Bridget, Grace           KH - Kiralee
KL - Kirsty, Jack              KS - Charlee, Makayla

Reptile Park Excursion - Year One will be going to the Reptile Park on Thursday 18th June. A note went home this week.

Sports in School - We have an amazing program running each Friday called Sports in School. It is provided at a very discounted rate of $1.00 a week and students are asked to bring in $5.00 to cover the costs that would include the next 5 weeks.

Cyber Safety - On the 26th of May at 5.30pm there will be informative workshops held in the Library regarding Cyber Safety. These sessions are excellent and will provide all parents with invaluable information regarding your child, the use of technology and safety.

Class Awards - We have had some great programs running at our school focusing on sport, gross motor skills and fitness. At times we have not been able to hold our grade gatherings due to these fantastic programs. We will give out awards for these weeks within our classes from this week onwards.

School News

You Can Do It - Congratulations to the following students who were ‘Confidence’ award winners:

K-2
Ryder, Milly, Karne, Harmony, Indianna, Cooper L, Kiralee, Charlee, Jasmin, Kaylah, Cody C, Lachlan J, Makani, May, Owen, Chloe, Logan, Breanna, Bianca, Zamaya, Blake, Sienna, Jaxon

3-6
Frase, Tanaeyah, Taylah, Sine, Reuben, Serena, Ryan, Emily, Kayla, Taine, Lachlan, Mileena, Dakota, Jake, Joshua, Delta, Harry, Mia, Dilan, Cameron, Paris Rose, Jacob Stubbs
Internet safety presentation helps children stay safe online - Young people today are immersed in digital technologies. They use the internet and mobile phones to socialise, study, exchange ideas and play. While online activity has many benefits, there are also risks.

To help your children stay safe online, Gorokan Public School is hosting a Cybersmart Outreach—Internet Safety Awareness presentation. Designed for parents, teachers and students, this presentation is provided by the Australian Communications and Media Authority (the ACMA) as part of a national program of cybersmart initiatives. The Cybersmart Outreach—Internet Safety Awareness presentation is thorough and non-technical. It covers a range of issues including:

- the ways children use the internet and emerging technologies
- potential risks for children online, such as cyberbullying, identity theft, inappropriate contact and exposure to inappropriate content
- tips to help children stay safe online.

The Cybersmart Outreach—Internet Safety Awareness presentation will be held on:

Thursday 28th May 2015 starting at 5:30pm in the school library

To register your attendance, please contact Mrs Ranse at the school as soon as possible. Enrolments will also be accepted on the night.

Fruit & Veggie Friday - This Friday 29th May, 2015. Menu is being advertised outside the canteen. Lunch orders as normal.

Book Club - Brochures for Scholastic issue 4 have been sent home. Orders with money should be returned by Monday 1st June, 2015

Little Cake Day - This term's little cake day will be held on Friday 12th June, 2015. Years 1 and 5 are asked to make a donation of cakes or biscuits to go towards little cake day. Any donations can be left at the canteen in the morning.

Entertainment Book – The Entertainment Book is a new fundraiser at Gorokan Public School and we’re sure it will become one of our favourites. The Books sell for $60 and we keep $12 for every one we sell. The Entertainment Book gives you access to thousands of up to 50% off and 2 for 1 offers for Newcastle, the Hunter, the Central Coast and Port Stephens’s best restaurants, cafes, attractions and theme parks. Plus it has best in market prices for over 1,500 hotels and resorts that you can use whenever you like until 1st June, 2016. Please see the ladies in the canteen if you would like to purchase one of these books.

Sport in Schools Program

Please complete and return to your child’s teacher

I hereby give permission for my child

............................................. Class .................................

To attend the specialist PE program in Term 2.

Payment of $5.00 for the term is attached.

Signed ........................................ Date ..................
Don’t be daft about Minecraft

By Jason Fox

Minecraft may be the best trend to hit boy world in years. Writer Jason Fox explains the attraction and outlines the benefits for kids.

If you have a young child or teenager, chances are you’ve heard about Minecraft. It’s a video game that’s kind of like digital LEGO, except that you’re in an ever-evolving world with seemingly limitless possibilities. It’s a game that inspires deep exploration, collaboration and creativity.

But parents are worried. And rightfully so, to a degree. Too much of a good thing can be a bad thing.

So, let’s have a look at what makes Minecraft so engaging, why blanket bans aren’t a good idea, and how to manage your child’s play.

Minecraft is an infinite, non-winnable game

Unlike a book, a game of chess, or a football match, a Minecraft game doesn’t end. There’s always more that can be explored, and more that can be done. The projects you undertake in Minecraft are self-initiated: no one is telling you what to do. And the process of making progress within Minecraft is completely autonomous – no one is telling you how to execute your projects and achieve your goals. It’s self-regulated learning at its finest.

But being able to ‘unplug’ and manage time and energy are essential skills your child needs to learn too. So, here are three ways you can help them manage Minecraft in your house:

1. Show genuine interest (this should be your first step)
If your child plays Minecraft, ask them to take you on a tour. Show an interest in their passion, and ask them questions like: what are you trying to build? What are your goals? What are the steps you need to take? What’s the coolest thing you’ve found? Set aside at least an hour for this.

It’s highly likely they’d love the chance to share this with you, which will help you to open up a new level of connection with them.

2. Encourage interactivity correctly
Minecraft’s multiplayer mode allows your child to play and build in the same online world as their friends.

But remember: there are a lot of idiots on the internet, so do the following two things:

a) Create your own server or ‘whitelist’ – it’s like having an invite-only friend list.
b) Use a family-friendly server – you can Google these to find the right one to play in.

3. Don’t ban – bracket
Banning something like Minecraft should be the very last resort, as it usually only serves to enhance the craving for it. Instead, make it part of their daily ‘free time’. Try not to have this at the end of the day or make it contingent on homework being completed, as this may only create angst, rushed homework and late nights. After school is best, especially if it’s bracketed by dinnertime, where all phones and computers are turned off.

My true hope is that you give option #1 a very good go first. And if #1, #2, #3 don’t work, I’m hoping you’ve found them an even better game to play.

Dr Jason Fox keeps savvy people up to date with the latest in motivation design. Learn more at www.drjasonfox.com

Published by Michael Grose Presentations. All rights reserved. For more ideas, support and advice for all you’re parenting challenges visit: www.parentingideas.com.au