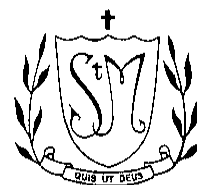


# St Michael's Parish School

## Ashburton

268 High St Ashburton VIC 3147  
 PH: 9885 3105 PH: 9885 3105 FAX: 9885 0070  
 Parish Priest: Fr Hien Vu PH: 9885 2498  
**School Advisory Council President:** Kim Day  
**Parent's & Friend's Co- Presidents:** Mary Skehan  
 Mishael Figuiera

Principal: Geraldine Dalton  
[principal@smashburton.catholic.edu.au](mailto:principal@smashburton.catholic.edu.au)  
[www.smashburton.catholic.edu.au](http://www.smashburton.catholic.edu.au)  
[kim@maja.com.au](mailto:kim@maja.com.au)  
[maryskehan@bigpond.com](mailto:maryskehan@bigpond.com)  
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- QUI SIT DEUS - WHO IS LIKE GOD -

THIS NEWSLETTER IS ALSO AVAILABLE ONLINE [www.smashburton.catholic.edu.au](http://www.smashburton.catholic.edu.au)

### WEEKLY NEWSLETTER 3<sup>RD</sup> FEBRUARY 2011

1/11

#### DIARY DATES 2011

DIARY DATES 2011		
<b>Feb 2011</b>		
Thurs 3 <sup>rd</sup>	8.50am	Term 1 commences
Mon 7 <sup>th</sup>	6.00pm	OSHC Meeting in Staffroom
Wed 9 <sup>th</sup>	9.00am	Yr. 6 Leaders Speeches in The Hub
Wed 9 <sup>th</sup>	7.30pm	PFA Meeting in Staffroom
Fri 11 <sup>th</sup>		Yr. 3, 4, 5 & 6 swimming
Fri 11 <sup>th</sup>	2.45pm	Assembly in The Hub
Sun 13 <sup>th</sup>	10.30am	Opening of School Year Mass
Tues 15 <sup>th</sup>	9-11.00am	School Swimming Carnival Yr. 3-6
Tues 15 <sup>th</sup>	7.30pm	School Advisory Council (SAC)
Thurs 17 <sup>th</sup>	7.00pm	Parent Information Evening P-6
Fri 18 <sup>th</sup>		Yr. 3, 4, 5 & 6 swimming
Fri 18 <sup>th</sup>	7.00pm	Prep & New Families Welcome Drinks
Tues 22 <sup>nd</sup>	9am -1pm	District Swimming Harold Holt Pool
Tues 22 <sup>nd</sup>	2-8.00pm	Child Chats
Fri 25 <sup>th</sup>		Yr. 3, 4, 5 & 6 swimming
Sat 26 <sup>th</sup>	6.30pm	St Michael's Youth Mass Yr. 5-8
Sun 27 <sup>th</sup>		Ashburton Festival
<b>MARCH 2011</b>		
Wed 2 <sup>nd</sup>		PFA Meeting in Staffroom
Thurs 3 <sup>rd</sup>		Interschool Sport Yr. 5 & 6
Fri 4 <sup>th</sup>		Yr. 3, 4, 5 & 6 swimming
Tues 8 <sup>th</sup>	6.30pm	Yr. 3 Sacramental Meal in the Hub
Tues 8 <sup>th</sup>		Shrove Tuesday
Wed 9 <sup>th</sup>		Ash Wednesday
Fri 11 <sup>th</sup>		Yr. 3, 4, 5 & 6 swimming
Sun 13 <sup>th</sup>		Parish Family Activity
Mon 14 <sup>th</sup>		<b>LABOUR DAY PUBLIC HOLIDAY</b>
Tues 15 <sup>th</sup>		School Photos
Tues 15 <sup>th</sup>	5-7.00pm	Open Evening
Wed 16 <sup>th</sup>	9-11.00am	Open Morning
Thurs 17 <sup>th</sup>		Interschool Sport Yr 5/6
Fri 18 <sup>th</sup>		Yr. 3, 4, 5 & 6 swimming
Sat 19 <sup>th</sup>	6.30pm	Yr 1/2 Mass
Sun 20 <sup>th</sup>	11.30 -1.30	Open Morning
Sat 19 & Sun 20	6.30, 9 & 10.30	Yr 1/2 Masses
Tues 22 <sup>nd</sup>	7.30pm	School Advisory Council (SAC)
Fri 25 <sup>th</sup>		Yr. 3, 4, 5 & 6 swimming
Tues 29 <sup>th</sup>	7.30pm	First Eucharist Parent Info
Wed 30 <sup>th</sup>	9.30am	Principal Presentation
<b>APRIL 2011</b>		
Fri 1 <sup>st</sup>		Yr. 3, 4, 5 & 6 swimming
Sat 2 <sup>nd</sup>		School Enhancement Morning
Wed 6 <sup>th</sup>		PFA Meeting in Staffroom
Fri 8 <sup>th</sup>	3.30pm	<b>Term 1 ends</b>
Thurs 21 <sup>st</sup>		Holy Thursday
Fri 22 <sup>nd</sup>		Good Friday
Sun 24 <sup>th</sup>		Easter Sunday
Mon 25 <sup>th</sup>		Easter Monday/ANZAC Day
Tues 26 <sup>th</sup>		ANZAC Day holiday
Wed 27 <sup>th</sup>		<b>Term 2 commences</b>

### Welcome to 2011 at St Michael's!

This new year, like a new born child,  
 Is placed in our hands.  
 The old year has gone.  
 The days and weeks and months to come  
 Are pure gift;  
 They carry God's blessing.  
 Bless us, O God,  
 And bless the time and seasons  
 Yet to come.  
 That we may gain wisdom of heart.  
 Fill this New Year with your grace and  
 Compassion so that all who come into our lives  
 May see a reflection of your Spirit.

Dear Parents, Caregivers, Students and Friends,

Happy New Year and welcome to the new school year here at St Michael's School. We give thanks to God for new beginnings and an opportunity to reflect upon and name our hopes and dreams for 2011.

We especially welcome all new families to St Michael's as we begin our new year together; we hope you enjoy the friendships and support of our wonderful community.

#### St Michael's Staff 2011

*"Beautiful indeed and of great importance is the vocation of all those who aid parents in fulfilling their duties and who as representatives of the human community, undertake the task of education in schools. This vocation demands special qualities of mind and heart, very careful preparation, and continuing readiness to renew and to adapt"*

Declaration on Christian Education  
 Gravissimum Educationis  
 Proclaimed by Pope Paul VI  
 October 28, 1965.

This year we warmly welcome back Louise Klindworth from maternity leave. Louise will be sharing 1/2 AK with Janet Atkinson and will be teaching Thursday & Friday. We also welcome Mary Skehan to a regular admin role on Wednesday and Thursday.

For the rest of us (old faces) we have begun 2011 in the spirit of collegiality that has always been strength of the St Michael's staff. Some of us will be teaching a new year level, some of us will be stepping out of daily classroom practise, some of us will be working with different colleagues and teaching teams and all of us will be in a different physical working space. Whatever the tasks are before us in 2011, I know that the staff of St Michaels will continue to support each other in the caring and generous manner that we are known for, this is one of the things that I most value about working in the St Michael's community.

<b>Parish Priest</b>	Fr Hien Vu
<b>Principal</b>	Geraldine Dalton
<b>Deputy Principal</b>	John Sandy
<b>School Officers</b>	Kathy Muhllechner (Mon, Tues, Thurs, Fri) Mary Skehan (Wed, Thurs)
<b>Prep HM</b>	Clare Hicks (Mon-Wed & Fri) Jo Mannix (Thurs)
<b>Prep H</b>	Therese Harrington
<b>Year 1/2AK</b>	Janet Atkinson (Mon -Wed) Louise Klindworth (Thurs, Fri)
<b>Year 1/2CL</b>	Ann Lagreca (Mon) & Jo Carter (Tues - Fri)
<b>Year 1/2G</b>	Yvette Gavalovic
<b>Year 3/4CL</b>	Kimberly Chin (Mon-Thurs) Ann Lagreca (Fri)
<b>Year 3/4M</b>	Helen Meehan
<b>Year 3/4SL</b>	John Sandy (Mon – Wed) Joelle Lake (Thurs, Fri)
<b>Year 5/6C</b>	Frank Cotela
<b>Year 5/6JC</b>	Jonathan Connor
<b>Year 5/6M</b>	Sharyn Mizzi (Mon – Thurs) & Jo Mannix (Fri)
<b>Learning &amp; Teaching Leader</b>	Kerrin van Mourik
<b>Reading Recovery</b>	Annie Engellenner
<b>LOTE (Italian)</b>	Sandy Incerti (Tues, Wed)
<b>Music</b>	Sally Cameron (Tues, Wed)
<b>Visual Arts</b>	Debra Chapman (Tues, Wed, Thurs)
<b>Physical Education</b>	Rudolf Lameijn (Tues, Wed, Thurs, Fri)
<b>Library Resource</b>	Maree Galvin (Thurs, Fri)
<b>Student Services</b>	Ann Lagreca (Thurs)
<b>Library Technician</b>	Marg Fernon (Fri)
<b>Integration Aides</b>	Geraldine Esmore (Mon–Fri) Ann Alymer (Mon – Wed)
<b>Maintenance</b>	Rod Dixon

### Welcome to School Preps of 2011!

Our Prep students have settled into school life beautifully today, we hope their learning journey is full of excitement and wonder. Welcome to school: Alexandro Axaris, Ryan Barr, Adele Browne, Olivia Durkin, Charlie Escot, Olivia Faller, Jade Foley, James Gorman, Finn Grogan, Amali Hawkins, Ryan Jemmett, Charlotte Jennings, Ella Jennings, Lucas Johnston, Mia Kelly, Harry Lanigan, Jason Mallampati, Daniel Martin

Samuel Mazza, Isabella Petrone, Jasmine Rando, Eliza Smith, Abbie Sullivan, Abbey Vicino, Joshua Yannicos, Vincent Ball, Jessica Barone, Zoe Bolge, Patrick Boothey, Samuel Bowden, Conor Burke, Lauren Edwards, Harrison Elustondo, Emily Groves, Toby Hickey, Jessica Higgins, Bailea Hutchinson, Patrick King, Grace Lameijn, Sullivan Mardling, Danaan Robinson, Sebastian McNamara, Poojanie Nanayakkara, Hannah Pettenon, William Roache, Liam Savage, Ronan Shaw, Christopher Timbs, Joshua Webb.

### New Students

Today was also a new beginning at St Michael's for a number of students in year levels other than Prep. Welcome to: Aden Tran, Sophie Elustondo and Cailen Robinson.

### Daily Organisation

A reminder that the daily timetable is as follows:

8.50 am bell.	First learning session begins.
10.50am bell.	Supervised eating time.
11.00am bell.	Morning recess.
11.40am bell.	Morning recess ends, drink and toilet etc.
11.45am bell.	Second learning session begins.
1.45pm bell.	Afternoon recess.
2.25pm bell.	Afternoon recess ends, drink and toilet etc.
2.30pm bell.	Third learning session begins.
3.30 pm bell.	School dismissal. * Mon 3.15 pm

Assembly is Friday of every even week at 2.45 in The Hub. The first assembly will be Friday February 11<sup>th</sup>.

### Visitors

All visitors to the school are required to sign the visitor's book at the office and collect a visitor's badge. You will appreciate that this is a safety measure to ensure we are aware of all persons on the school grounds.

### Early collection/ Late drop off

If you are bringing your child to school late or picking them up through the day, you need to complete the sign in/out book at the office and Kathy or Mary will call your child to the office.

### Permission Forms

All students have taken home a medical/photo permission/local excursions form (gold) that must be completed and returned to school tomorrow.

### Uniform

The students look great in their uniforms. Staff have been emphasising that correct school uniform reflects pride in our school, therefore wearing it correctly is a priority.

### Summer uniform

**BOYS:** Shirt: short sleeved St Michael's mid blue polo  
Shorts: Navy blue  
Socks: Navy blue Shoes: Black  
Windcheater and/or Bomber Jacket St Michael's navy blue



St Michael's hat.

**GIRLS:**Dress: St Michael's checked dress

Shirt: Short sleeved mid blue polo

Shorts: Navy blue

Socks: White/Navy Blue Shoes: Black

Windcheater and/or Bomber Jacket St Michael's navy blue

St Michael's hat.

**SPORTS UNIFORM:** Navy blue shorts or tracksuit pants

St Michael's sports polo shirt Sports shoes

House colour T-shirt only required for sports carnival (November)

All classroom teachers will advise on what extra days your child wears sports uniform.

**Please Note:** "Sneakers/Runners" are not part of the school uniform. Please keep them, sports and PE sessions only. Students doing lunchtime sport need to change into runners at lunchtime.

Only studs or small sleeper-style earrings are suitable for school. No necklaces or bracelets are permitted.

From time to time the children will be allowed to wear "casual" clothes. Parents always receive notification in advance of these occasions.

Welcome back to you all, I'm looking forward to a great year working with you all.

**Geraldine Dalton**

**Principal**

[principal@smashburton.catholic.edu.au](mailto:principal@smashburton.catholic.edu.au)

## LEARNING & TEACHING NEWS

Welcome back to all members of the St. Michael's learning community. I hope that you have enjoyed a refreshing, happy break from your usual work and routines.

There is an air of vibrancy and excitement at school. The teachers have been busily planning, organising and preparing their classrooms for the much anticipated return of their students. It is of paramount importance to us, the staff of St. Michael's that our students feel safe, happy and welcome at school.

Evidence of this is found in the signs of welcome: getting to know you games, displays of student's names, clean classrooms, thoughtfully arranged furniture (*that is conducive to collaborative learning*) and the happy, smiling faces of our teachers.

For 2011 everyone has moved classroom location! Even I have moved and can now be found in the room under the stairs, next to the uniform shop...just call me 'Harriet Potter'!

**Kerrin van Mourik**

**Teaching & Learning Leader**

[kvanmourik@smashburton.catholic.edu.au](mailto:kvanmourik@smashburton.catholic.edu.au)

## RELIGIOUS EDUCATION NEWS

It's so exciting to be back! Over the last few days the school has been abuzz with preparations for our new school year! We look forward to working together to ensure that all our children and community members feel a sense of belonging and a terrific school year. We particularly look forward to celebrating at our Beginning of School Mass on Sunday 13th February at 10.30am. This is a wonderful opportunity for our whole school community to gather together and give thanks and bless our new school leaders and teachers. The following prayer was part of our staff prayer on our first day. Have a super year!

Dear Lord,

I welcome you

I ask for new paths

This new year.

This new year.

I breathe in your freshness

I ask for guidance

This new year.

This new year.

I say no to the negative

I ask for wisdom

This new year.

This new year.

I look for the positive

I ask for compassion

This new year.

This new year.

I say yes to peace

I ask for the ability to really listen

This new year.

This new year.

I ask for balance

I pray that I am generous with my gifts

This new year.

This new year.

I ask for inspiration

I ask for courage

This new year.

This new year.

I awaken to your gifts

I ask to be welcomed

This new year.

This new year.

I seek the unknown

I ask to belong

This new year.

This new year.

I embrace all I encounter

This new year.

*adapted(Matthew Slater 2009)*

**Clare Hicks**

**Religious Education Leader**

[chicks@smashburton.catholic.edu.au](mailto:chicks@smashburton.catholic.edu.au)

## STUDENT WELLBEING

Welcome back to all our students and their families. It certainly has been fabulous to see all those beautiful faces around our school today. Of course an extra special welcome to our 50 new prep students. This has been such a special day for you and your families. We welcome you to St Michael's with open arms and a warm heart.

We look forward with such hope and optimism as we begin this new school year. It is a time reconnecting with each other, establishing new and nurturing relationships built on trust and mutual respect. Friendships.

As we focus on building a positive school community over the next few weeks we look forward to sharing our stories and creating a strong sense of belonging for all our school community.

Attached to this newsletter is an information sheet about how we can support our children in their return to school. Hope you find it helpful.

**Annie Engellenner**  
**Student Wellbeing Leader**  
[aengellenner@smashburton.catholic.edu.au](mailto:aengellenner@smashburton.catholic.edu.au)

#### UNIFORM SHOP OPENING HOURS WEEK 1 & 2 2011

Friday 4 <sup>th</sup> Feb	8.30am & 3.30pm
Monday 7 <sup>th</sup> Feb	3.30pm
Tuesday 8 <sup>th</sup> Feb	8.30am & 3.30pm
Thursday 10 <sup>th</sup> Feb	8.30am & 3.30pm
Friday 11 <sup>th</sup> Feb	8.30am

We will be opening during these times during Week 1 & 2 of Term 1. If you wish to order uniforms and are unable to make it during these hours – we also have the “office basket” facility – send your order and payment in a clearly marked envelope “UNIFORM SHOP” and the order will be sent home with your child in a couple of days.

**Order forms will be available from the office or outside uniform shop.**

**Melanie Rossato & Lori Andrewartha**

#### NEWS FROM THE SENIOR SCHOOL

##### STUDENT LEADERSHIP 2011 -SCHOOL LEADERS

As we begin a new school year, it is time to commence the selection process for new student leaders. At St Michael's there are three great opportunities open to senior students where they can participate and contribute to the decision-making within the school and to take on responsibilities for a variety of activities – As School Leaders, Sports Captains or as part of a Student Action Team.

In this week's newsletter we will focus on the School Leaders positions.

##### SCHOOL LEADERS

This position is open to 4x Year 6 students (2 girls and 2 boys). Their roles and responsibilities include representing the school, hosting assemblies and leading the Student Representative Council.

Interested Year 6s will be asked to nominate themselves as a candidate by **Friday 4<sup>th</sup> of February**. They will be required to present a speech on **Wednesday 9<sup>th</sup> of February** to students (Year 3s to 6s), teachers, Ms Dalton and Fr Hien.

Selection will be by a ballot that involves students (Year 3s to 6s), teachers, Ms Dalton and Fr Hien.

**Frank Cotela, Jonathan Connor, Sharyn Mizzi, Jo Mannix**  
**Senior School Teachers**

#### PFA COMMITTEE NEWS

Welcome back everyone we hope you all had a fantastic break! We are looking forward to a busy and exciting fundraising year at St. Michael's, thank you to all the parents who have accepted a position on the PFA Committee for 2011.

##### 2011 PFA Committee

**Co- Chairpersons** - Mishael Figueira & Mary Skehan

**Deputy Chairperson** - Vacant

**Treasurer**- Vanessa Goldsmith

**Secretary**- Jenny Burke

**Uniform Shop** - Melanie Rossato & Lori Andrewartha

**Class Rep Liaisons** – Kate Foldi & Mary Mazza

**General Committee Members**- Angela Mason, Mary Mazza, Kate Foldi, Michelle Frazer, Karen Deriu, Kerri McFarlane, Prue Hynes, Tanya Ovens, Jenny Walsh and Simone Jemmett.

Our first meeting for this year will be on **Wednesday 9<sup>th</sup> February at 7.30pm in the staffroom**, it's not too late to become a member and we encourage as many parents as possible to join the General Committee.

So if you are interested please feel free to come along to the meeting.

We will also be holding a Class Rep Morning tea/information session, we will confirm the date shortly for all new Class Reps for 2011, so if you are interested in the role and would like some more information please come along. Our new Class Rep Liaisons are Mary Mazza & Kate Foldi, so if you have any questions please feel free to speak to either of them. We already have several mums on board, which is fantastic! Remember dads are welcome as well.

##### UPCOMING EVENTS

**Prep and New Families Welcome Drinks**

**Friday 18<sup>th</sup> February starts at 7pm @ Michelle & Greg Barr's House** (save this date in your diaries -invites will go home shortly)

**Ashburton Festival - Sunday 27<sup>th</sup> February**

##### THANK YOU

**Mary Skehan -0408 377 774 & Mishael Figueira -0401 001 967**  
**Co- Chairpersons - PFA Committee**

#### ALTAR SERVERS ROSTER

5-6<sup>th</sup> February:

**Saturday 6.30 pm:** Tate H, Caitlin M, Tara S

**Sunday 9.00am:** Maddy B, Lucy & Sara M, Chiara S

**Sunday 10.30am:** Alicia BJ, Gabriella MC, Sabrina W

12-13<sup>th</sup> February:

**Saturday 6.30pm:** Hannah & Joel P, Tod P

**Sunday 9.00am:** Maddy B, Hannah & Kieran W, Stefan Z

**Sunday 10.30am:** Gaby B, Ashley B, Isabella D, Rose H

19-20<sup>th</sup> February:

**Saturday 6.30pm:** Caitlin M, Hannah & Joel P,

**Sunday 9.00am:** Joseph A, Edward & Lucie B, Olivia M

**Sunday 10.30am:** Ashley B, Lara C, Sally K, Maeve T

26-27<sup>th</sup> February:

**Saturday 6.30pm:** Tate H, Nana-Adoma & Osei-Kwame OA, Luke S

**Sunday 9.00am:** Maddy B, Hannah & Kieran W, Stefan Z

**Sunday 10.30am:** Gaby B, Ashley B, Isabella D, Rose



**The Ashy Redbacks**

ASHBURTON UNITED JUNIOR FOOTBALL CLUB INC.  
ESTABLISHED 1971



Wendy's Music is available at St Michael's for 2011.

To find out more or to register your school for this wonderful program, log on to [www.wendysmusicsschools.com.au](http://www.wendysmusicsschools.com.au) or email [schools@wendysmusic.com.au](mailto:schools@wendysmusic.com.au).

**2011 Registration Date Sunday February 13, 9.00am – 12 noon**

**Burwood Reserve, Warrigal Road, Burwood 60 G7**

So pop it in your new diaries and come on down to sign up at the Ashy Redback's Club House. While you are there, have your new mouthguard fitted and ordered, ready for the first bounce of the season.

We look forward to celebrating with you 40 Years of the mighty Ashy Redbacks in 2011.

Go Ashy!

**Simon Brownhill**

**President**

AUJFC – [www.aujfc.org.au](http://www.aujfc.org.au)

### CDF STUDENT BANKING

Student Banking will continue this year, please send passbooks through the office baskets on Tuesdays.

### TUCKSHOP

The Tuckshop will continue this year, please send lunch orders in on Mondays and Fridays. A new price list will be sent home today.



**Interested in**

**Zumba, Belly Dancing, Mosaics, Pilates, Yoga, Learning Italian or French, Computer classes,**

**English Classes and many more. Then have a look at Alamein Neighbourhood and Learning Centre brochure for Term 1 2011. You can pop in to see us at Alamein or pick up a brochure at the school office.**

Alamein Neighbourhood and Learning Centre

49 Ashburn Grove, Ashburton, 3147

Phone: 98859401

(Located opposite Alamein Railway station)

Email: [admin@alameinnlc.com.au](mailto:admin@alameinnlc.com.au)

Website: [www.alameinnlc.org.au](http://www.alameinnlc.org.au)

### PARISH NEWS

**Welcomers:** Please contact Melinda Richardson 9886 9572 or 0419 399 487 if you are able to help with our hospitality ministry. We especially need volunteers urgently for the Saturday 6.30pm Mass.

**Flower Team:** Would you like to assist a small group of women who each week arrange the flowers, to create a prayerful environment for our liturgies according to the church's seasons? Training will be provided. Come along and join us when we meet briefly after the 10.30am Mass on Sunday 6 February.

Call Annette 9885 4815 for more information.



**Salesian College - Bosco Street Chadstone Applications for Year 7 2012 close on Friday 25 February.**

To find out more join us for **Open Evenings Monday 14 February or Thursday 17 February - Commencing at 7.00pm** Please contact College Registrar on 9807 2644. [mmenz@salesianchad.vic.edu.au](mailto:mmenz@salesianchad.vic.edu.au) or [salesianchad.vic.edu.au](http://salesianchad.vic.edu.au)

extend

**OSHC**

Extend After School Care at St Michael's School

Welcome back to another exciting year at Extend. We hope you have enjoyed your holidays and are ready for more entertaining and exhilarating activities that will sure make this school year one to remember!

To see what jam-packed activities we have in store for your child be sure to check the OSHC room to see the Term plan.

All families must register annually

Government regulations require all families to complete and sign a 2011 registration form for each child prior to using an Extend service.

Don't forget to also complete & sign the ezidebit form.

2011 Registration forms are available from the Extend website or from the school office.

Booking Procedures & Terms 2011

For booking terms and cancellation procedures for 2011 please check the OSHC room or contact Head Office for further information.

We look forward to seeing you at Extend!

**enrolment hotline**

Phone our friendly customer

service staff on:

**1300 366 437**

[www.extend.com.au](http://www.extend.com.au)

## Belonging at school makes a difference



Tommy's Aunt Sue had just arrived for a visit.

"Hi Tommy. You're a big school boy now! How is school?"

"Good," Tommy said.

"What do you like about it?" asked Aunt Sue.

"Friends - Allan and Georgio."

"Great! You've made some friends already."

"I like my teacher too."

Aunt Sue also talked to Tommy's friend, Lulu, who had come over to play.

"What about you Lulu? How do you like school?"

"It's good. If I need the teacher then I have to put up my hand. But if I need help at playtime I can ask Jackie," said Lulu.

"Is Jackie your friend?"

"Jackie's my buddy. She's a big girl."

"What does a buddy do?"

"She helps me if I don't know where to go or other stuff. She helps to look after me 'cos she's big and I'm new."

## Starting school is a big change for kids...

Not only do they have to cope with schoolwork and teachers, but they also have to get used to being part of a class and a whole school. A lot more is expected of children when they start school and there are lots more people to get on with. It helps kids to know that there are people at school who will look after them.

## Belonging improves mental health and learning

All children need to feel that school is a safe place where people will care about them, where their needs for support, respect and friendship will be met, and where they will be able to get help to work out problems. When these needs are met children develop a sense of belonging at school. Belonging is very important for mental health.

Children who feel that they belong at school are happier, more relaxed and have fewer behaviour problems than others. They also learn better, are more motivated and more successful with schoolwork. Research into children's mental health has found that a sense of belonging at school helps to protect children against mental health problems and improves their learning.

Making friends and having positive relationships with teachers helps children develop a sense of belonging at school. Having older "buddies" to turn to helps younger children feel that school is a place where they can get help if they need it. Looking after younger children encourages caring and helping in older children and helps to reduce conflicts and bullying. These are some of the ways that children's sense of belonging at school can be supported.

