



Birkdale South State School

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PRINCIPAL: C R EVEANS

Dear Principal/P&C President

(18 state primary schools in Redland Shire. Prepare individual letters for P&C President and Principal)

Are you interested in developing tomorrow's leader today?

If you are then read on about the opportunity for two children from your school to be part of the inaugural Redland Shire Children's Voice Council

The Children's Voice Council is an initiative of the Discovering Democracy/Young Citizens Program Reference Group.

The Discovering Democracy Program is a federal government initiative: to educate and encourage young people to learn more about the democratic history of Australia; how government works; and how to make a contribution to the political process.

During 1999, Year 4 to 7 teachers participated in professional development to implement the Discovering Democracy program.

The Young Citizens Program is a Redland Shire Council initiative. Since 1998 the Redland Shire Council has offered the Young Citizens Program to teach young people about the role of local government in their community.

The Young Citizens Program's main objective is to provide classroom talks, field trips and other Council services that complement the school curriculum.

Frances O'Loughlin manages the Young Citizens Program.

By taking part in the Young Citizens Program, students see their local government in action in a way that empowers them to have a say in their own community.

The Discovering Democracy/Young Citizens Program Reference Group is the link that has been established between the Redland Shire Council and the state schools. The group aims to strengthen the links between, schools, the Discovering Democracy program and the Young Citizens Program.

The Children's Voice Council is an initiative of the Reference Group and will provide primary school students with the opportunity to have a real voice in their local community.

Redland Shire has a Junior Council, which represents secondary school students. The Children's Voice Council or CVC will provide primary school children with an introduction to democratic decision making at a local government level.

Each of the 18 state schools in the Redland Shire has been invited to nominate two CVC representatives. Schools decide how the representatives are to be selected and are encouraged to make use of suggestions from the Discovering Democracy kit.

School student representatives must have parental support, as they are required to transport their child to and from CVC meetings and activities. Only one student representative will attend CVC meetings at any time. Schools are to determine how this will be managed at each individual site.

Dianne Andrews, teacher librarian from Cleveland State School has volunteered to manage the CVC. She will work with Frances O'Loughlin from the Young Citizens Program.

The CVC will meet four times a year. Nominated members of the CVC will liaise with the Junior Council after each CVC meeting to pass on the results of their deliberations.

The members of the CVC represent the various student councils that operate in schools. The CVC should provide students councils with an opportunity to provide a children's perspective on local government issues.

All schools have been requested to inform Dianne Andrews of their representatives for 2000. If you have not done so please act on immediately.

The initial meeting of CVC representatives will take place on Thursday 10 February at 3:30 pm. Parents are asked to have students at the Redland Council Building in Bloomfield Street by 3:20 pm. The students will be met by Dianne Andrews and Francis O'Loughlin.

The CVC representatives will attend the first meeting of the Redland Shire Council as observers on Tuesday 22 February at the Council Chambers. Parents are asked to have the students at the Bloomfield Street office by 3:20 pm.

On Tuesday 22 February CVC members will be presented with a CVC badge by a representative from the Redland Council.

The Discovering Democracy/Young Citizens Program Reference Group is planning a four day workshop for all CVC representatives. The workshop will be conducted in Cleveland from the 13 to 17 March 2000 commencing each day at 9:00 am and concluding at 3:00 pm. Parents will be responsible for organising daily transport to and from Cleveland for their own child.

The aim of the four-day workshop is to provide the students with the opportunity to:

- get to know each other;
- develop as a team;
- further develop their understanding of civic;
- further develop their personal skills of communication, research and problem solving.

Attached is a copy of the draft program for the proposed CVC workshop titled 'Developing Tomorrow's Leaders Today'.

Attending the CVC workshop will be similar to attending school. Children will need to bring their own lunches. Children will be under the supervision of local state school teachers and administrators.

The cost of the CVC workshop will be \$ 100 per child. This covers the cost of additional supervision, materials and a souvenir shirt.

All participants will be provided with specific details about the CVC workshop in the near future.

Schools will be invoiced for the cost of the CVC badge. The anticipated cost is \$25.00

I thank you in anticipation of your support for this project and look forward to sharing the outcomes with you and your school community.

Yours sincerely

Chris Eveans