Term1 – Week 4

Calendar

Term 1

Uniform Shop

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Day</th>
<th>Time</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Wednesday</td>
<td>2:30pm – 3:30pm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thursday</td>
<td>8:45am – 9:30am</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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Dates to Remember

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Date</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Glenwood HS Information evening</td>
<td>19th Feb</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meet the Teacher evening</td>
<td>6th March</td>
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</tbody>
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Please check the calendar attached to this newsletter for other dates (as well as the website if you misplace your calendar)

Parents and Citizens Association

This week sees the re-launch of our wonderful Parents & Citizens (P & C) association for the 2013 school year. The first meeting of the year takes place on Tuesday, 19th February. The Annual General Meeting will begin at 6.15pm sharp in the school common room (enter via the front office door and then come down the hallway).

If you are new to our community you may not realise the vital work of our P & C. It is not just a body of people who raise funds for the school, it is a group of dedicated people who give their all to represent the community by forming a common vision, a common language and common experiences. Their voice is your voice and therefore your children’s voices. Please consider whether you can offer your support by becoming part of this dynamic team! If you cannot attend meetings physically you may be able to volunteer your time or ideas in other ways that are equally valuable in assisting us to work together to achieve our united goals.

One of the things our school is currently working on with the P & C is better ways to communicate and connect with parents and the wider community. Leanne Hazell (P & C President) has already distributed this request via the P & C network. It is very pleasing to note that we have already received some very useful feedback and ideas from a variety of community members. Community consultation, communication and feedback will also be up for discussion at the P & C meeting so please come along if you get a chance.

As we begin this new school year, I would like to personally thank the current P & C for their tireless efforts in making our school a terrific place to be by connecting parents, students

NEWS FROM THE PRINCIPAL

School organisation update

Thank you to parents and teachers for such a smooth transition to our new classes for 2013. Our numbers have settled at about the 730 mark meaning that we have been able to maintain our new 29th class. Our school leadership team and teaching staff have heard nothing but good feedback from our parent community about class placement and matching of students to teachers. From a school population of over 700 students, our Deputy Principals have only received 5 phone calls from parents concerned about their child’s placement. We are pleased to say that most of our parents have faith in us as educators and realise the reasons that we place students in a class is often beyond what is visible at the surface level. It is about which group of students and which classroom will afford your child the best possible education they can receive for that school year.
and teachers in a meaningful and relevant way. Their work never goes unnoticed by our teachers and visitors to our school. In fact, on their recent visit to our school Premier O’Farrell and Minister Piccoli took the time to ask about the P & C contributions and activities and were extremely supportive of their involvement in making our school a better place to be for our kids. Without their generosity and support, their ideas, passion and drive for school improvement, we would not be able to provide all that we do in our classrooms and our non-classroom settings for our children’s education. So a big thank you from the teachers and children of Parklea PS!

Below is a photo of our new passive playground funded by the P & C who also helped in the design.

During this time Lane has modelled the inquiry process with a class of children. The class is composed of students from four Year 4 classes who were intensively engaged in developing their own skills and understanding of inquiry. Within this process, students learned more about thinking tools and why they were using them. Becoming more independent learners and how this looks in terms of completing task cards, tracking the use of thinking tools, brainstorming ideas and organising these ideas for more in-depth learning and reflecting upon their own learning through learning journals.

These children will also become student leaders of inquiry when their own class is completing their own inquiry work. Teachers across the school have spent some time watching, learning and acquiring new skills and ideas to implement inquiry in their own classes and continue to develop greater understanding of C21st learning. This will in turn ensure that our already accomplished teachers will be even better in providing engaging, high quality learning for their students.

Best wishes,
Ross Sutherland

NEWS FROM THE DEPUTY PRINCIPALS
Meet the Teacher Evening
In the words of educational academic John Hattie (and thank you to Mrs Alice Chen - mother of Lily Chen in 4S) for this timely reminder, “it is the quality of the teacher that makes all of the difference!”
On that note, we would like to remind you that our ‘Meet the Teacher’ evening, will be held on Wednesday, 6th March from 5.30pm. A separate note will go home next week after we have consulted with the P & C about the new format. Please keep an eye out for the note as there will be a return slip that you will need to complete and return as soon as possible.

**Anaphylaxis, Health Care, Medical and Technology Permissions note**

Some of you have asked why we need to re-issue a medical and permissions note for each child every year. It is a requirement from the Department of Education and Communities (DEC) that schools complete this process at the beginning of every 12 month period. These notes form the basis of your child’s safety and health at school. If your child has a medical condition (no matter how mild eg. mild asthma), it is imperative for the school to know about it so that your child’s condition can be managed successfully in a large environment with many personnel who may be coming into contact with your child. DEC policy states that a health care plan developed in consultation with the doctor, the parents / caregivers and the school is mandatory for every child who has a medical condition (particular those conditions requiring frequent medication). These plans are reviewed on a yearly basis so that the school can be up to date with the ongoing management and support of your child. If your child falls into this category, please advise us of this condition via the medical form (being sent home with this newsletter today). Your child’s teacher will be in contact with you if more information is required (under the Workplace, Health and Safety Act the school can request additional information / documentation from a health care provider).

Anaphylaxis is another area that our school is working on so that we can provide the safest environment that we can. All staff have completed the online course by the Department of Health and have been checked off on the Workplace, Health and Safety register. Staff will also be accessing further face-to-face training in both anaphylaxis and CPR. This training is a mandatory requirement for any personnel working within a school environment. Our staff will also be provided with training on the administering of an Epipen or Anapen (depending on the child). An Epipen is available at all times on our playground (carried in a bag by a teacher on duty). Individual students with a anaphylaxis diagnosis should also have their own Epipen stored at school. If your child has this condition it is mandatory for you to contact the school to make a meeting time to discuss the development of a health care plan for your child.

The note being distributed with the newsletter today also outlines permissions for use of technology, filming and photography information. Please complete this form as soon as possible and return it to your child’s teacher by no later than Friday, 1st March.

**School Calendar**

Please find attached to this week’s newsletter a school calendar for Term 1. You can also find a calendar on our school website (this is updated regularly).

This year in term 2, the Department of Education and Communities (DEC) have provided each school with an additional staff development day. This day will see our school working with Kellyville Ridge PS on the introduction of the new K-10 English Syllabus. These days will be ‘pupil free” meaning that students do not return from the term 1 holiday break until Wednesday, 1st May.

**Respect and Responsibility**

This week Mrs Gracie and I have had cause for concern with a number of parental complaints about other parents who are not demonstrating respect whilst inside the school grounds. Can we remind you that if you have a concern or issue about another child, it is not appropriate for you to approach that child to voice your concerns. Of course, we are all adults and the school would deem it more appropriate for parents to solve problems by the concerned
parent talking to the parent of the child of concern. However, we must remind you that your behaviour is 'on show' and therefore noticed and reported on by others. If you must do so, please approach parents in a sensitive and respectful manner as you would do so in your own home environment. If the school has cause for concern about a parent or adult's behaviour, the parent in question may be asked to leave the school grounds under the “Enclosed Lands Act” of NSW.

Kindergarten – What a great start!
A big thank you to Mrs Ogie and her wonderful Kindergarten teaching team. Kindergarten students are extremely settled and relaxing into life in their new school. This week, they will be moving out into the big playground and we ask all parents to ask your own children to be mindful of the Kindergarten students’ needs and to provide guidance and support if required.

Positive Behaviour for Learning News
On Tuesday and Wednesday this week the leaders of our Positive Behaviour for Learning team Mrs Marsonet, Mrs Millson-Fitzgerald and myself, attended a state-wide conference hosted by the Western Sydney schools' region and the University of Western Sydney. The conference titled, 'The Long and Winding Road: Ensuring Quality Construction of Social and Academic Supports Through Positive Behaviour for Learning,' was led by Dr Tim Lewis from the University of Missouri representing the national Positive Behaviour Interventions and Support leadership team from the United States.

Here is a snapshot of our learning over the past two days:
We cannot “make” students learn or behave but we can create environments to increase the likelihood students learn and behave. Children are not born bad or naughty, they learn from actions, words and people that form their learning environment. From these individual learning environments children come to school with many different 'learning histories', for example, everything we do in school is mediated by language. If a child grows up in a home environment where they are hearing negative language for the majority of the time, those children will likely acquire that negative language because they do not know any other way to communicate and socialise.

Negative home language is seen as completely normal' or acceptable to them. It is not until they get to school that this negative language is 'mediated' by the social norm of school and classrooms. This is when children from those environments begin to learn that what they have previously learned (learning history) 'disconnects' to what our expectations are in a school environment. This 'disconnect' means that school and teachers have more to teach that child in less time because their peers are already demonstrating more socially appropriate behaviours and language. It becomes our responsibility to teach and practise these skills with the student so that we increase the likelihood that they are successful at school and in later adult life.
We also learned that punishment doesn't teach most kids anything but the need to not get caught doing the wrong thing! However, if we combine a clear consequence system with the explicit teaching of school-wide behavioural/social expectations and a positive reward system, then at least 80% of our students will respond to this 'universal' / school-wide system in a socially appropriate manner with high success rates. By combining these elements with explicit feedback and progress monitoring, students will be more likely to self-reflect and then begin to self-manage their own behavioural choices.

Our job as educators and parents is to work out how to increase students' access to direct feedback that is explicitly related to the academic, social, emotional behaviours they are practising. One evidence-based method of providing direct effective feedback is for every negative comment or feedback you give to a child, you need to find at least 4 opportunities where the student is demonstrating the socially appropriate behaviour and directly reinforce that behaviour in a positive and explicit manner. This reinforcement assists the student to see the 'connect' between demonstrating the appropriate behaviour and being firstly rewarded by actions and words from others, and in time rewarded from their own self-reflection and sense of achievement.

Apart from the very interesting and informative information presented by Dr Lewis we took away the following thoughts for our future. Dr Lewis shared the following acronym representing the challenge of PBL for schools - "AFOG" translated as 'another flippin' opportunity for growth'. This resonated with us as we believe we are in a 'growth' phase and we need to embrace that growth in a positive way that has great impact on our students, teachers and community. He also left us with some final words as we continue on our teaching and learning journey with positive behavioural supports - "Telling is not the same as teaching and told is not the same as taught."

From our two days of highly intensive professional learning we have learned that environments that increase the likelihood of successful behaviour are guided by a core curriculum implemented with fidelity. Therefore, the current focus for our PBL team is to introduce systems that focus on teaching and practising school-wide expectations in both classroom and non-classroom settings, and assessing and analysing student data to ensure that our school-wide systems and interventions are working effectively with high success rates for students.

We know that this cultural change will take between 3-5 years to implement and then a number of years to review, analyse, modify and change so that what is put in place now will be sustained long term into our future. Thank you Dr Lewis for teaching us that Positive Behaviour for Learning is a marathon not a sprint! Now to get on those joggers and trackpants...

Thanks! and have a wonderful week!
Mrs Gracie and Ms Denham
Pause for Celebration!
Thank you for the wonderful feedback we have received from some parts of our parent community re consultation about student placement for the 2013 school year. We have been working really hard to get this part of the puzzle in place and we think this has been our best year so far!

10th February 2013

Dear Mr Sutherland, Ms Denham and Mr Fisk,

At the end of last year I wrote to ask for your consideration in placing Alex into a class with a constant friend due to the difficult start he had to the 2012 school year. I am now writing to say thank you for the consideration in placing Alex into his class.

From the first day of class allocation he came home from school with a huge smile on his face and an enthusiasm for school we have not seen in him for a long time.

Alex was so happy to be in a class with friends and not separated from them as happened previously. He is also extremely excited that Mr Fisk is his teacher and has come home from school every day full of enthusiasm for what he has done at school that day and for what he will be doing in class in the days ahead.

It is extremely pleasing for us to see this level of excitement and enthusiasm for learning in Alex and look forward to the year ahead.

With thanks
Yours sincerely

Leanne Tadic