From the Principal

Dear Community,

**Attendance - “Miss School-Miss Out”**

I wish to reiterate to parents the importance of your child’s attendance at school every day, unless they are unwell. There is much evidence to suggest that children missing school can have an adverse effect on their academic and social learning which can in turn have very far-reaching consequences. Teachers plan learning programs in a sequence so children can learn to read, write and understand maths. By not being at school, even for one day, a child can miss out on important lessons that might mean they experience difficulty down the track. Please ensure wherever possible that appointments are out of school hours or in holidays and only extraordinary events should result in school non-attendance. The Education Department has identified improved attendance for students as a high priority. When your child is absent it is very important that you phone, email or write a note to the school to report your child’s absence. A verbal word from a sibling will not be sufficient. Schools, parents, children and the government all have a part to play in supporting families and children to ensure they have the best possible education. Attending school regularly is the first step in achieving this. After all, every day really does matter. Thank you to everyone for your co-operation in keeping your child at school and learning.

I would also like to make mention that it is extremely important that students arrive at school before 9:00 a.m. as the bell sounds at 8:55 a.m. Classes start at 9:00 a.m. and if late, children miss valuable instructions and learning experiences that ultimately can limit their learning. Other ways in which you can maximise your children’s learning include:

- Providing them with a healthy breakfast.
- Ensuring they receive adequate sleep.
- Providing them with healthy snacks/meals and water.

This will help to sustain their thinking and learning throughout the day.

**Social Skill Focus – Listening**

Listening is an extremely important skill, which is used when people are trying to communicate with each other. Listening helps you understand things, follow instructions and helps you to know what you have to do. Following are some key things to remember when practising the skill of listening:

- Look at the person.
- Give them your full attention.
- Let the speaker finish before you talk.

**PIPS Testing**

The Performance Indicators in Primary Schools (PIPS) assessment is a program that assesses the early literacy and numeracy skills of Prep students across Australia and other parts of the world. PIPS testing is conducted through the use of a computer program. Students do not have to be able to use a computer as the test is done with the teacher. Each assessment takes about 20 minutes. PIPS information can help teachers to identify individual students’ strengths and weaknesses in literacy and numeracy, plan individual programs for some students, identify possible hearing and sight problems and identify possible behavioural problems which may affect student learning. Mrs Maree Grace, our Prep class teacher is conducting the PIPS testing.
Mathletics
Mathletics is now up and running for those students that are wishing to access the program from home.

Administration of Medication at School
A reminder to parents that in accordance with Department of Education guidelines to administer medication can not be administered to students at school unless the appropriate forms have been filled out. This applies to both non-prescription and prescription medicine and includes EpiPens. For students with EpiPens, an individual medical action plan written by the student’s medical practitioner should also be provided to the school. These forms are available from the office. For further information or for a full copy of the Department of Education’s policy on the administration of medication in schools, please contact the office.

Swimming Carnival – TOMORROW
We desperately need parents to help with the swimming carnival tomorrow, Tuesday 18th February. In past years we have received help from the swimming club, but they are unable to provide the same level of support this year. So if you are coming to the carnival and could help us out it would be greatly appreciated. Should it be raining tomorrow we will only be conducting a Grade 3-6 carnival to select a team for the North East swimming carnival. Unfortunately the Scottsdale pool is heavily booked and we are unable to conduct the carnival on another day.

Active After School Program
A reminder to parents that the AASC program is commencing this week for students in Grades 3-6 with Tennis (4 weeks) and Cricket (4 weeks) on Tuesdays and football on Thursdays from 3:15 p.m. to 4:45 p.m. If you would like your child to participate in this program please fill in a form at the office.

Regards, Carol Stingel

Notices to be Returned to Class Teacher or School Office
- Swimming Capabilities for Grade 3 students and students who are new to the school
- Grade 6 Permission Letter

Merit Awards
Grade 1-2 Hailey: Caitlyn Burns for being a quiet, independent worker who finishes her work on time. Angus Creese for getting his own work finished on time and always helping other class mates.

Grade 2-3 Gerke: Bryan Atkins for trying hard to work more quickly. Oscar Creese for great concentrating and getting jobs done well.

Grade 4-5 Somerville-Hall/Lewis: Si’anna Atkins for showing care with her work and listening to instructions well. Bradley Milne for being an excellent help and showing leadership to others on the class.

Grade 5-6 Reid: Tom Barnett for great social skills - being fair in all situations. Kimberley Hall for excellent effort in all English tasks. Fantastic work.

Ukelele
Ukelele lessons will start this Friday for some students in Grades 4, 5 and 6. If your child has elected to be part of this program please send $4 on Friday to cover the tuition fee. Some students have paid for a new ukelele. They will be issued at the first lesson. If your child has their own ukelele please make sure it comes to school every Friday. Ukelele students will also need to bring a folder to put their music in. Recorder folders would be suitable for this purpose.

Breakfast Program
When: Thursdays
Time: 8:30 a.m. - 8:50 a.m.
Where: Discovery Centre
Why is breakfast the most important meal of the day? Breakfast is important in re-fuelling the body with energy and nutrients, kick-starting the day. If breakfast is skipped, the result can be feeling lethargic and tired and lead to difficulty concentrating and behaviour difficulties in the school environment.

Information provided by Australian Red Cross