Dear Parents,

I am delighted that this term, our year 4, 5 and 6 students, like many others in the state, will participate in a Department of Education and Communities initiative: the Tell Them From Me student feedback survey. The survey aims to help improve student learning outcomes and measures factors that are known to affect academic achievement and other student outcomes. The focus of the NSW-wide survey is on student wellbeing, engagement and effective teaching practices.


The survey is a great opportunity for our students to provide our school with valuable and quick feedback on what they think about school life, how engaged they are with school and the different ways that teachers interact with them. Schools in Australia and around the world have used the Tell Them From Me survey to help improve how they do things at school.

I want to assure you that the survey is confidential and school staff will not be able to identify individual students from their responses. The survey is conducted online and will typically take less than 30 minutes to complete. It will be administered during school hours between 9 March and 2 April.

Participating in the survey is entirely voluntary. A consent form and FAQs for parents/carers about the survey is being sent home with students. If you do not want your child or children to participate, please return the form to school by Monday 9th March.

A reminder to parents that whenever possible, pick up or home time arrangements for your children should be communicated in writing. We fully understand that sometimes arrangements can change during the day and these can only be done over the phone.

Have a great week!

Stan Kowalski
School Awards

Congratulations to-
Kai, Liam, Montanah, Patrick, Shae, Evie, Gabriel, Mitch, Shae'Anne, Montanah, Alexis

Principal’s Awards

Congratulations to-
Shae, Patrick

Friendships to boost your child’s learning
If children are happy socially they tend to be more engaged in their learning. So teaching your child about the importance of making friends is as vital as learning their ABCs.

Canteen News

Roster

Monday 9/3          T.Roels
Tuesday 10/3         J Baillie
Wednesday 11/3      J Baillie, A.Nelson, R.Coello
Thursday 12/3        J Baillie,
Friday 13/3           T Roels, C.Griffiths

ST PATRICK’S DAY MEAL DEAL. This is to be held on Wednesday 18th March and notes went out last week. All orders and money are to be to the canteen by Friday 13.3.15 so we can organise the supply of our goods. NO OTHER HOT FOOD WILL BE AVAILABLE ON THIS DAY - ONLY BASIC SANDWICHES. This is a great way to celebrate our first meal deal and we can all go green. There are spare notes available at the canteen.

Price list for 2015. We are still in the process of organising our new price list. I will advise you when this will be finalised and it will go out with the newsletter. In the meantime just keep using the price list from last year. There are also copies of these available at the canteen.

2015 INTERNATIONAL COMPETITIONS AND ASSESSMENTS FOR SCHOOLS (ICAS)
ICAS is a highly regarded assessment program for schools in SCIENCE, ENGLISH, MATHEMATICS, WRITING, DIGITAL TECHNOLOGIES and SPELLING which provides a comprehensive hard copy and online report for your child in each subject. Your child will also receive a certificate to recognise their achievement. More information is available at www.eaa.unsw.edu.au/icas/about

Notes will go home with interested students

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Grandparents Morning

10.00am Tuesday 17th March
Concert followed by Morning Tea

A donation of cake/slice/biscuits would be appreciated. They can be left in the Wattle & Banksia wet areas on the morning of Grandparents Morning

School Terms and Vacations 2015
Term 1 - Tues 27th January to Thurs 2nd April
Term 2 - Mon 20th April to Fri 26th June
Term 3 - Mon 13th July to Fri 18th September
Term 4 - Tues 6th October to Fri 18th December
**GENERAL INFORMATION**
Administration Office Hours - 8.45am - 3.45pm
School commences at 9.15am
School finishes at 3.15pm
Students are supervised from 8.45am
9.15-11.15 Class session 1
11.15-11.45 Play
11.45-1.45 Class session 2 which includes lunch
Inside at 11.45
1.45-2.15 Afternoon tea and play
2.15-3.15 Class session 3
The two 2hour sessions will be split by "fruit breaks"
Barbara Petchenik Children’s Map Competition 2015

Competition’s theme is “My place in today’s world”. Entries can be nominated in four age groups: under 6 years, 6-8 years, 9-12 years and 13-15 years. The deadline for participation in the contest is Thursday, 2 April 2015.

For more detailed information about the competition, please visit the MSIA website http://mappingsciences.org.au.

All about apostrophes

Not knowing where to place apostrophes can haunt people for their entire lives. Here’s an easy guide to help your child understand what they mean, how to use them and get them right, now. Find out more: http://www.schoolatoz.nsw.edu.au/homework-and-study/english/english-a-to-z/-/english_glossary/8Qum/551/apostrophe+denoting+ownership
The compulsory years of schooling

In New South Wales, all children from six years of age are legally required to attend school or be registered for home schooling. After they complete Year 10 and until they turn 17 years of age, students then have the following options. They may also be in:

– full-time further education and training (e.g. TAFE, traineeship, apprenticeship);
– full-time, paid employment of an average of 25 hours per week; or
– a combination of both of the above.

Children are expected to attend all school activities, on time. Regular attendance helps your child:

– develop the skills needed to access the world of work and other opportunities
– to learn the importance of punctuality and routine
– make and keep friendships.

What if my child has to be away from school?

If your child has to be absent from school, you must tell the school and provide a reason for your child’s absence. To explain an absence parents and carers may be required to:

– send a note to the school, or contact the school via electronic means such as SMS text message, fax or email, or
– telephone the school, or
– visit the school.

A small number of absences may be accepted by the principal. For example, if your child:

– has to go to a special religious ceremony
– is required to attend a serious or urgent family situation (e.g. a funeral)
– is too sick to go to school or has an infectious illness.

Did you know that if a student misses as little as eight days in a school term, by the end of primary school they will have missed over a year of education?
What are school Principals responsible for?

Principals help to ensure the safety, welfare and wellbeing of your child. Principals have to keep accurate records of student attendance and the reasons for any absences. Principals are responsible for accepting or not accepting a parent’s explanations for their child’s absences. Principals may request further information from parents for long or frequent absences, even where they are explained by parents as being due to illness.

When absences are unexplained by parents, or the explanations are not accepted by the principal, the school will work with parents to help address the issue. The main aim is to sort out what is preventing the child from getting to school and putting strategies in place to help. Sometimes, the school will ask support staff and other agencies to assist.

What might happen if my child continues to have unacceptable absences?

It is important to understand that the Department may take further action where children of compulsory school age have recurring numbers of unexplained or unacceptable absences from school. Some of the following actions may be undertaken.

- Attendance meetings and compulsory attendance conferences

Parents (and sometimes their child) can be asked to go to a meeting with school personnel and other regional officers. The aim of the meeting is to help identify strategies to support the child and family. Other agencies may also be invited along to help, if parents agree.

If the school and other regional officers have tried to help improve a child’s attendance, without success, parents (and sometimes their child) can be asked to go to a compulsory attendance conference. The conference will be run by a trained conference convenor. The aim of the conference is for the school, parents (and sometimes their child) and other identified agencies (“the parties”) to further identify the issues which are impacting on a child’s attendance.

The outcome of a compulsory attendance conference is for the parties to agree to undertake certain actions to improve the child’s attendance. These actions are written in the form of undertakings.

- Applications to the Children’s Court – A Compulsory Schooling Order

Legal compliance can be sought through an application to the Children’s Court for a Compulsory Schooling Order. The aim is to assist a family and/or child to address the issues which are preventing satisfactory school attendance but has the added enforcement of a Court’s powers.

- Prosecution in the Local Court

If all attempts by schools and regional support staff fail to improve a student’s attendance, action can be taken in the Local Court and the result can be fines up to a maximum of $11,000.

Further information regarding school attendance can be obtained from the following websites

Policy, information and brochures:

The school leaving age:

Do you need an interpreter?

Interpreting services are provided, where possible, for parents/carers who do not speak or understand English well and for Deaf parents/carers who use sign language. The Telephone Interpreter Service is available 24 hours a day, seven days a week at the telephone number: 131 450. You will not be charged for this service.

See the website address: