Dear parent/caregiver

Term 1 Week 11

We have finally reached the end of Term 1. The weeks have just flown by! It is a real pleasure working with our lovely students, watching them grow and learn so enthusiastically. Many thanks to all of our dedicated teachers for their continued efforts to provide quality educational experiences for students. It has been a busy and industrious term.

Staffing News
It is with sadness that we announce the retirement of Mrs Annette Lee. Mrs Lee has been a member of our English as a Second Language program since her appointment to Minchinbury in 2008. She has worked with many students across the school assisting them in the development of their language skills. We wish Mrs Lee every happiness in her retirement. Her last day with our school will be Friday 29 April.

Stage 1 Excursion to the Schoolhouse Museum
Stage 1 students appeared to enjoy their visit to the Schoolhouse Museum. They were able to experience what it was like to be a student in a school in the early 1900s. The students participated in lessons that would have been popular back then and they got to see how students of the past used pen nibs and inkwells for handwriting.

Stage 2 Excursion to The Rocks
Last week Stage 2 classes visited Sydney’s historic Rocks area. They took part in a walking tour of the area and many of them took on character roles throughout the tour adding to the information being shared by the tour guide. The days were highly successful and the students learnt a lot about Australia’s early settlement.

Election Day Sausage Sizzle
Members of the P&C held a sausage sizzle and cake stall at our school on Saturday 26 March during the state government election. The P&C raised $1000 from this event. Many thanks to the volunteers who ran the barbecue and sold the cakes. Thanks to those members of the community who bought refreshments on the day. We appreciate your support.

Snail Trail
Last Thursday Stage 3 organised a ‘snail trail’ fundraiser for the Year 6 Farewell. Students had to bring in as many silver coins as possible. The total amount raised was $1528.15. The winning class with the longest trail was S3C and they will receive a pizza party. Special mention goes to KP who came fourth – there are only 20 students in the class and they did an outstanding job to come fourth. For their effort they will receive an ice block.

Parent/Teacher Interviews
Thank you to all of the parents who came to school yesterday and those who will be attending this evening. We are always really pleased to see you and discuss your child’s progress. If for some reason you were unable to attend, please contact the school and we will attempt to make another time for you. Thank you to all of the teachers who made themselves available across the two days. Next term we will be sending home a detailed written report covering your child’s achievements across the first half of the year.

Easter Raffle
The P&C drew their Easter raffle on Monday morning during the assembly. Ethan Molnar in KB won first prize of a fantastic Easter hamper. The P&C has raised close to $700 from this event. The guessing competition was won jointly by Barbara our crossing supervisor and Bostyn Graham in S1BH. They both guessed 146 eggs in the container. Congratulations to all our prize winners.

Debating News
Try-outs for the school debating team were held recently. Twenty-eight students competed for just ten positions. It was great to see so many students willing to have a go and come thoroughly prepared with a one-minute speech. The standard of speeches was exceptionally high and many students demonstrated not only their skills in public speaking but their ability to think clearly and logically, and present an argument as to why schools should not ban homework! Congratulations to the following students who were selected for the debating team for 2011:

Sana Aslam S3R, Brooke Paulley S3W, Jade Boncukcular S3M, Vanessa Policarpio S3C, Rachel Varley S3J, Laura Matekovic S3J, Leilani Betham S3J, Kaela Tavares S3R, Nicole Singh S3C and Brittany Ford S3W.

Mrs Dayhew is looking forward to working with them to further develop their public speaking and debating skills.

Sport Successes
Over the last few weeks a number of our students have tried out for a range of sporting teams. Congratulations go to the following boys who made the zone soccer team – Blake Ford, Rhys Steward, Blake Maybury and Walid Kabir. Christie Luke has been successful in making the girls’ soccer team. Aasir Khan is currently taking part in trials for the Sydney West Cricket Team. The following students attended the regional swimming carnival at the Homebush Aquatic Centre – Trystan Adkins, Leilani Betham, Jazmin Taylor, Amy Houeis, Monique Portelli, Charlotte Brownjohn, Aydan Houeis, Matthew Varley, Jordan Petersen, Damian Sutrisno, Jadd Munzer, Jake McKean, Keanu French and Blake Maybury. Congratulations to our very talented sportspeople.

Voluntary Contributions
Each year the school receives a grant to pay for a range of classroom equipment which students use. These include things like paper, exercise books, pencils, scissors and other consumable materials.

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The amount we receive works out to be approximately $50 per student. This is not a lot of money for each student and does not provide for additional resources like library books, computer equipment and software, sporting equipment, and other resources we regularly use. Information has been sent home regarding voluntary school contributions. Contributions are $30 per child. Please send your voluntary contribution as soon as possible and be eligible for an entry into the prize draw. We rely on this support from our school community to assist with purchasing resources for our students and making our learning environment exciting and inviting for everyone. The prize draw will be conducted at the Monday morning assembly in Week 2 of Term 2.

**Anzac Day Service**

We will be holding an Anzac Day Service on Friday 29 April which is the day after students return for the beginning of Term 2. Parents are invited to join us at 11.45 am under the COLA where we will remember our past and how our country has been shaped. Students are asked to bring with them some flowers so we can make some floral tributes that will be used during the service and will then be taken to the memorial at Rooty Hill RSL.

**NAPLAN Testing**

The NAPLAN 2010 Tests for students in Years 3, 5, 7 and 9 will be held from Tuesday 11 May to Thursday 12 May 2011. For more information and test samples, see [www.naplan.edu.au/parents/parents.html](http://www.naplan.edu.au/parents/parents.html)

Parents will receive feedback about their child’s performance, including individual reports for each child sometime in early Term 4.

**Uniform Shop**

Next term the Uniform Shop will be open every second Wednesday commencing Wednesday 4 May. Opening times are from 8.45am – 10.00am on even school weeks. Orders can still be placed at other times.

**No Dogs Allowed**

In keeping with our duty of care to students, staff and visitors, we cannot allow dogs onto school grounds at any time. This includes dogs in the care of an owner on a lead. Being on a lead does not guarantee against a dog attack. We ask for your support in this matter by ensuring that dogs are kept out of school grounds. Please don’t leave dogs tied up outside the school while you come in to collect your child. Dogs need to be supervised at all times. We believe this will help us make our school a safer place to be.

**Student Absences**

If your child is absent from school, it is your responsibility as a parent/caregiver to provide an explanation, preferably in writing, for why they could not attend school. If your child is going to be absent for several days, we ask that you make contact with the child’s teacher to indicate this. If your child needs to take leave from school for a period of more than 15 school days, you are able to apply for an exemption from attending school. For this exemption to be granted, you must complete the appropriate application form, available from the school office, giving acceptable reasons. If the reason involves travel overseas, you must provide a copy of travel documents that indicate your child will be out of Australia and unable to attend school. Please be aware that at times conditions, such as completing work set by the class teacher, are imposed as part of an exemption. The application for exemption is considered and approved by the Deputy Principal or the Principal of the school and at times by the Regional Director.

**School Vacation**

The holidays start at 3.00pm on Friday 8 April. **School resumes for students on Thursday 28 April.** The school will be closed for the Anzac Day Public Holiday on Tuesday 26 April. Staff will attend the School Development Day on Wednesday 27. All students start on Thursday.

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**Notes Home This Fortnight**

- Stages 1 - 3 Parent Interviews
- Years 3 & 5 NAPLAN Information
- Whole School ANZAC Ceremony
- Whole School Mosquito-borne Diseases
- Whole School Luke Priddis Foundation Support Group
- Whole School Dance Nova
- Whole School Lego Club and Lego Drive

**Brain Bender**

This fortnight’s question:

**Which is the odd one out?**

February, July, November, December

*Answer next issue.*

Last issue’s question:

What has four legs, a tail, eats cat food and sees equally well from both ends?

*Answer: A blind cat.*
Definitions

**English**

*Tense (When is it happening?):* refers to time and tells us whether the process or action is taking place now (*present tense*), has taken place (*past tense*) or will take place some time in the future (*future tense*).

- *I like* school. [*present tense*]
- *My mother liked* school. [*past tense*]
- *My baby sister will like* school. [*future tense*]

There are several different forms of the present, past and future tenses so we can express a wide range of meanings. These tenses are *simple* or *indefinite form*, *continuous form*, *perfect form* and *perfect continuous form*.

**Maths**

*Decimal*: based on the number 10. 0.25, 0.5, 0.75 are all decimal numbers.

**Technology**

*Analog*: Continuous and without breaks. A steady uninterrupted flow. Analog is like water flowing in a stream. The opposite of analog is digital. Digital is non-continuous. Digital is like the rain that falls individually as separate drops.

Positive Behaviour for Learning

This week’s target is:

‘We speak politely!’

Schools and classrooms are places where the best models of social interaction should be found. Teachers model the ways that language should be used and explain the purposes for using language. Students practise and develop their skills in speaking politely, using appropriate volume, making eye contact, using facial expressions and gestures, making good language choices and conveying information appropriately.

It is with this in mind that the school does not tolerate swearing, shouting, answering back, rude gestures or inappropriate facial expressions. We ask all students to speak to others the way they would like to be spoken to. Parents should also consider their own language when speaking in front of children as often children only repeat things they have seen or heard from other significant people in their lives.

**Food for Thought**

“Be an explorer. The universe is filled with wonder and magical things”. ~ Flavia

Have a great holiday with your children!

Useful Websites for Parents


This is the website for the NSW Count Me In Too program. At this site you can find a section for parents where there are interactive counting activities, information pamphlets and a DVD. There are practical ideas to support children’s mathematical thinking.

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