Dear parent/caregiver

Term 1 Week 2

Welcome back to the 2012 school year at Minchinbury PS. We hope our students and parents had a great break and were able to enjoy the holidays despite the disappointing weather. You might have noticed the greeting at the top of the newsletter. In each newsletter over the coming year we will extend our greetings and farewells in one of the 39 different languages represented by students in our school. This week’s greeting is in Filipino. Keep watching for next new greeting!

Staffing
This year we welcome back Mrs Berwick as deputy principal. She will be working Tuesday to Friday each week. Mrs Bourke will relieve as deputy principal on Mondays. Sadly, during the holidays, Miss Roberts gained full-time employment at St Marys North PS. We wish her a happy time at her new school. New to our school this year is Miss Fedele who will be teaching S1F and Mrs Short who will be teaching S1S. Mrs Llewellyn is taking leave at present and her class will be taken by Mrs Garcia. A copy of this year’s staff list is included in this newsletter.

Our executive staff this year is as follows:

Principal: Mrs Pauline Baker
Deputy Principal: Mrs Elise Berwick and Mrs Natalie Bourke
Assistant Principals: Mr Stuart Holstein, Mrs Sullivan and Mrs Umback (Rel), Ms Dayhew (Rel), Mrs Vyse (Rel)
School Administrative Manager: Mrs Sue Moore
School Counsellor: Mrs Carol MacGregor

Kindergarten Enrolment
This week the Kindergarten students have attended an interview with their parents and participated in the Best Start assessments to help determine the starting point for their learning. All Kindergarten will start at Minchinbury on Monday 6 February. The P&C will be hosting a ‘Tissue and Cuppa’ morning tea for parents on this day. Drop by after you drop off and come and meet our wonderful P&C members who will offer you a friendly smile and shoulder to cry on once your little ones have settled. They will be waiting for you in the XX.

P&C Meeting
The P&C Association will be holding their first meeting of the year on Wednesday 15 February. The P&C is made up of interested parents who like to know how and why things happen at school so they can be well informed about their child’s education. Meetings are held twice a term usually in Weeks 3 and 7. One meeting is held in the mornings – 9.15am and the other held in the evening starting at 7.00pm. Daytime meetings are held in the AV room at the bottom of the library stairs and the evening meeting is held in the staffroom. All families are invited to attend the meetings, learn about the school and its operation, raise concerns and discuss events taking place. We hope you can join us at our first meeting.

School Grounds
This year we are welcoming two Kindergarten students who have physical disabilities. To help them move around the school safely, a number of improvements have been made to the playground. All posts have been marked with a yellow strip to help them to clearly visible. Stairs have been painted with a non-slip yellow paint and additional hand railings have been installed. Extra seating has also been installed and bollards have been placed at the tops of stairs to prevent wheelchairs and walking frames from toppling over. Parents with prams are reminded to please use the ramped walkways when accessing the various playgrounds. A special disabled drop-off zone has been created in the car park, as both of our new students need to use this space to be able to come to and from school. Parents are requested to keep this space clear at all times. It is not a parking space.

Eftpos Facility
The school now has the ability to accept payment for things like voluntary contributions and excursions via eftpos or credit card. Excursion notes will include information for paying by credit card. Parents wishing to use eftpos will need to come to the office to do this. We know many parents will be pleased that we are now able to provide this service.

Swimming Carnival
Excellence Assembly
Class Organisation for 2012

Staffing Information
This week we welcome Mr Brough and Miss Roberts to our school. Mrs Bell has returned to the school part-time and we are very happy to have her back. Mrs Sullivan is continuing on leave until Term 3 when she will teach with Mrs Leitch. Miss Nafe who married last term will be using her married name, Mrs Vasek as will Miss Lee who is now Mrs Vyse. Please see the attached staff list for details of the various classes.

Mrs Llewellyn is taking leave for the first two weeks of term. Mrs Jacobs will take S1LG this week and Mrs Garcia, who will take the class regularly every Tuesday, will teach them next week until Mrs Llewellyn returns.

Class Organisation

Minchinbury PS

A great school….. close to home!
We are starting the year with the following class organisation. There will be four Kindergarten (Early Stage 1) classes, six Stage 1, six Stage 2 and six Stage 3 classes – a total of 22 classes. Our school population is 568 with a number of additional enrolments anticipated.

Each year our school has to make decisions about how classes will be organised within the DET staffing formula. Unfortunately, the number of students in each year doesn’t always divide evenly into the number of classes we can form. This then means we need to form joined year level classes. This year all of our classes from Years 1 to 6 are stage classes. The curriculum for all key learning areas (KLAs) is written in stages of achievement not year or grade levels. Achievement of stage outcomes usually takes between 18 months and 2 years -sometimes less, sometimes more.

Regardless of whether your child is in a composite / stage class or a single year class, they are grouped for learning to meet their needs. Teachers are highly skilled in working in groups and utilise this practice in a range of KLAs. Rest assured that whatever class your child is in that he/she is learning the appropriate curriculum material for their stage of schooling.

Kindergarten News
Our new Kindergarten students began enrolling today and will continue tomorrow and Monday from 9.00am to 12.30pm. Kindies will be staying at school all day until 3.00pm right from the start. Parents are asked to wait in the area outside the Kindergarten rooms away from the doors ready to collect them from the classroom at the end of the day. This will be the practice for the first couple of weeks. When Kindies are confident with the layout of the school, we will take them under the COLA at the end of the day to be dismissed.

Swimming Carnival
Students in Years 3-6 will participate in the annual swimming carnival on Friday 4 February at the Emerton Leisure Centre. The carnival is for competitors only. Students not attending are expected to attend school on Friday.

Band News
Band rehearsals and tutorials begin on Monday 7 February for both the training and intermediate bands. Students participating in the band program this year should have received the tutorial schedule. Any problems, please contact Mrs Anderson.

Choir News
Congratulations to our choir who auditioned for the 2011 PULSE Concert at the Opera House. The choir has been successful and have been invited to once again perform. Well done, everyone.

Dance Camp Auditions
Mrs Anderson will be holding auditions for students interested in attending the WSR Dance Camp in late March. Auditions will be held in Week 4 and students will need to prepare a one-minute dance routine to perform.

P&C Meeting
As we were unable to fill the executive positions of the P&C last year, we will be holding a public meeting to see if there is interest in re-establishing the Association at the school. This will be held at 9.15am in the AV room at the bottom of the library stairs. All interested parties are welcome to attend. Preschoolers are welcome.

Canteen News
A reminder to parents that we have a large number of students enrolled who have peanut allergies. In keeping with recommendations from the Department of Education and Training, the school does not sell peanut products including peanut butter sandwiches and SAOs. Some students are so sensitive to peanut products that a reaction can be triggered from just touching someone who has eaten peanut products. Parents are asked to consider not sending peanut products to school with their children.

We are always looking for parent volunteers to help in the canteen. If you have some spare time, please let Mrs French or Mrs Gatt know.

Assemblies
Every fortnight students will attend stage assemblies where merit awards are presented, classes present items for entertainment, and special events are celebrated. Parents are invited to attend any of the assemblies even if their child’s class isn’t performing. Students love to share their successes with others so it would be great to see parents visiting on these occasions.

Homework
Students should begin homework next week. All classes have homework assigned weekly. Kindergarten homework is informal in nature at the beginning of the year and includes activities like listening to stories, nursery rhymes, helping with shopping and food preparation, and talking about what’s happening in the family. Formal homework will be set later in the year.

Homework will be set four nights per week. The days may vary from stage to stage. Teachers will set homework so that it can be completed within a given time frame. This will vary for individual students according to their ability, level of interest and difficulty involved. However, the following general time allocation will serve as a guide:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Stage Class</th>
<th>Time Frame</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Early Stage 1</td>
<td>1-15 minutes (Term 4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stage 1</td>
<td>20 minutes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stage 2</td>
<td>30 minutes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stage 3</td>
<td>45 minutes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Should your child be spending an excessive amount of time to complete homework or appears to be

Minchinbury PS

A great school..... close to home!
experiencing difficulty with the tasks, please write a note for the teacher in the homework book or contact the school to make an appointment to discuss the matter with the teacher.

Parents can help with homework by:
- taking an active interest in homework;
- ensuring there is time set aside for completion;
- encouraging and supporting students to complete homework;
- providing where possible, a suitable place for homework to be done;
- monitoring homework by signing completed work; and
- communicating with teachers any concerns about homework.

Uniform Shop
The uniform shop will be open every Wednesday from 8.45 to 10.00am starting on 2 February. Orders can be placed at the front office.

Family Information
If you have had a change of residence, phone number, emergency contact details or custody agreements, please call into the office and update this information with our office staff as soon as possible.

Parking in School Grounds
Parents are reminded once again that there is no parking in school grounds for the purpose of picking up and dropping off of students in the mornings and afternoons. There are only a limited number of parking spaces and these are for staff and deliveries.

Parents Visiting the School
All visitors must report to the office to sign the visitor’s register and take a visitor’s identification card before going to classrooms. Please make sure you follow these procedures when visiting the school so that we can account for all people in an emergency situation.

There should not be any need for parents to visit classrooms during learning times, especially between 9.00am and 11.00am. All birthday cakes can be left at the office and they will be sent to classrooms just before recess as this is the most appropriate time to cut and distribute treats.

If you come to school early, please make sure that you are supervising your pre-school children keeping them out of gardens, not playing on stairs, swinging/standing on railings and the like. Please help us keep our school safe by keeping an eye on your children. Parents are also reminded that smoking is not permitted on any school site. If you wish to smoke you must leave the premises.

Before and After School Care
CubbyHouse Australia provide excellent before and after school care for our students. They operate from 7.00am to 8.30am and then again from 3.00pm to 6.00pm daily. Their programs provide a range of interesting and varied activities for all students as well as nutritious snacks. Please consider using the centre for your ‘before and after’ childcare needs and help to keep this valuable resource at the school.

Definitions

**English**

*Past Participles*: There are two kinds of participles: **present participles** and **past participles**.

Past participles combine with an auxiliary (helping) verb to make a complete verb.

I had walked on the footpath.

**Maths**

*Cylinder*: A three-dimensional (3D) object that has two circular ends and a curved surface joining the ends.

**Technology**

*URL*: Is the address of a website on the World Wide Web. To visit a website you type the URL into a browser. URL stands for Uniform Resource Locator. Other Internet resources have URLs too, but if the URL starts with **http://** then you know it's on the World Wide Web.

**Brain Bender**

This fortnight’s question:

What is usually filled in the morning and emptied at night, except during Christmas when it is filled at night and emptied in the morning?

Answer next issue.

**Notes Home This Fortnight**

| Stage 1 | Active After-School Communities |

Minchinbury PS

A great school… close to home!
Minchinbury PS is a Positive Behaviour for Learning school. Positive Behaviour for Learning (PBL) refers to a system of school-wide processes and individualised instruction designed to prevent and decrease problem behaviour and to maintain appropriate behaviour. The process facilitates the development of quality learning environments in which all students feel safe, secure and can flourish as individuals.

The school has been implementing this approach since 2006. We look at:

- A proactive systems approach to school-wide discipline (NOT a curriculum) designed to be responsive to current social and educational challenges;
- A focus on prevention;
- A focus on instruction;
- Using data gathered to inform our practice.

Our school has developed three expectations of behaviour – we want all Minchinbury students to be Respectful, Safe Learners. Each week we have a target behaviour that we are developing with students eg We move safely around the school. These are explicitly taught, practiced and reinforced across the week. All expected behaviours are stated in the positive, that is, what it is we want students to do eg walk to lines, speak politely, wear your hat instead of using the negative “don’t…”.

In each newsletter we will provide information about our weekly targets and you might like to reinforce these with your child. We will also provide some information about what’s happening with PBL.

**Food for Thought**

“Someone’s sitting in the shade today because someone planted a tree a long time ago. ~ Warren Buffett”.

Have a great week!

Pauline Baker 3.2.11
Principal