Dear parent/caregiver

Term 1 Week 4

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Our Kindergarten students enrolled at school on Monday 6 February and they appear to be happily joining in with most games and activities. This year we have a unique situation – there are only 21 girls but there are 57 boys. To cater for this imbalance, we have created a ‘boys only’ class. This class is being taught by Mrs Troy. The Kindergarten teachers have completed the Best Start assessments and are working on collating the data. We are looking at scheduling interviews with Kinder parents in Week 6 of this term (last week in February). Information about dates and times will be going home soon.

Excellence Assembly
On Friday 3 February, School Captain – Brandon Ford and prefect Caitlin Christie accompanied me to the Rooty Hill HS Excellence Assembly to celebrate the outstanding achievements of the high school students in 2011. It was wonderful to see a large number of our ex Minchinbury students receiving recognition for their achievements. Congratulations to all recipients and to Rooty Hill HS on another successful year.

Class Organisation
Our enrolments have improved dramatically since the end of the year where our anticipated enrolments indicated a reduction of one class. Incoming students now require us to form an additional class. The stage in which this class will be formed will be finalised in the next few days. Parents will be given advance notice of any changes to their child’s class.

AFL Skills Workshops
Students in Years 1 - 6 participated in a short skills workshop with members of the Western Sydney AFL team. The AFL will be running some after school workshops in the near future. Information will be sent home for parents to consider their child’s participation in this activity.

P&C Meeting
The P&C Association held their first meeting of the year on Wednesday 15 February. There were only a few parents who attended which is disappointing. We really value parent involvement in the school and would love for all new parents and any ‘old timers’ to come along and find out what’s happening in our school. The next meeting of the P&C will be on Tuesday 13 March at 7.00pm in the staffroom.

Interactive Whiteboard
A new Interactive Whiteboard (IWB) was installed in Room 6 of E Block. We hope that this will allow Stage 3 classes to have greater access to this technology and opportunities to team-teach and learn from other experienced staff. Each IWB costs $7500. As we are able to raise extra funds during the year, we will try to purchase additional permanent IWBS for installation in other classes in the school. At present we have eight permanent IWBS and three mobiles to cater for 22 classes. It would be wonderful if we could have one in every room.

Swimming Carnival
115 students in Years 3 - 6 participated in the annual swimming carnival on Wednesday 8 February at Ripples, St Marys. The carnival was for competitors only. Thanks to Mr Brough and Ms Zuber for organising this event. Although the weather wasn’t the best, those participating had a good time. Students who placed first and second in the various events will now go to the Zone carnival on February 22 at Mt Druitt Pool. Information has been sent home to successful students. Minchinbury PS is the organising school for the Zone Carnival this year. Mr McKenzie is the organiser and he will be assisted by Mr Brough, Ms Zuber and Mr Holstien.

Student Leaders Investiture
This year the Student Representative Council (SRC) will be coordinated by Mrs Leitch and Mr Brough. Elections for SRC Reps will be taking place this week. As we have been delayed in getting all the student leaders’ information collated, the Investiture Assembly will be held in Week 5 - 23 February. We apologise for any inconvenience.

Useful Websites for Parents

www.minchinbur-p.schools.nsw.edu.au

This is our school’s website. On our website you can find copies of our school newsletter, photos from events that have occurred at school or during excursions as well as copies of the notes that go home to parents each fortnight. You can always check the website for any missing notes, print them off, fill them in and return them to school. We are establishing a Media Club where students will be working on projects that can be added to the website telling everyone about the great things that happen in our school.

Minchinbury PS

A great school….. close to home!
**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. 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 will be sent home next week regarding voluntary school contributions. Contributions are unchanged at **$30 per child**. Please send your voluntary contribution as soon as possible and be eligible for an entry into the prize draw of a school winter uniform. 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. If contributions were received from every student, the school would have enough money to purchase two permanent IWBs ($16,500). Unfortunately, in past years we only receive between $3000 and $4000. Your cooperation in this matter would be greatly appreciated.

**School Merit Awards**

Throughout the year, students will be working towards meeting school expectations in relation to behaviour and achieving merit awards in the areas of respect, safety and learning. Our school expects students to be respectful, safe learners. Our merit awards will be awarded to students who have demonstrated appropriate behaviour under these areas. The awards will recognise students who have shown the expected behaviours in each area. These behaviours are outlined in our Discipline Policy, a copy of which can be obtained from the office.

In order to receive a bronze award, students need to achieve a merit certificate from each of the three areas – respect, safety and learning. Once they have achieved their three merit certificates they will be presented with their bronze award. They then need to receive another three certificates in each of the three areas to receive their silver award and then likewise for gold. In all, students need to achieve nine certificates by the end of the year to receive their gold badge.

This year our Positive Behaviour for Learning Team will be evaluating the current awards system. Feedback from parents will be sought. Ideas from other schools will be examined. Changes and/or modifications will be made during the year in readiness for 2013 school year.

**School Sun-Safe Policy**

Our school has a policy of ‘no hat – play in the shade’ to protect students from the damage that can be caused by the sun. Our school uniform offers parents and students the choice of either a surf hat or a cricket hat in school colours. These hats provide the best protection for your child and are what we prefer students to wear. Please ensure your child wears a hat to school every day and that you have applied sun-screen to them before coming to school.

**REACH! Choir**

Mrs Leitch will once again be organising this choir for interested students in Years 3 - 6. The REACH! choir performs in the REACH! music festival held in September over two evenings. An expression of interest has been given to students. Mrs Leitch will be conducting auditions in the near future.

**Dance Groups**

Miss Kane, Miss Woodbury and Mrs Bartlett will be organising dance items this year. Students in Years 3-6 may audition for the dance group in Weeks 5 and 6. Announcements will be made during the Monday morning assembly to confirm the day and time of auditions.

**Regional Dance Camp**

The Western Sydney Region Dance Camp will be held from 20 - 22 March and will cost approximately $180. Talented dancers (male and female) in Years 4-6 (preference will be given to Stage 3 children) may audition for this camp on 21 - 22 February at school, in the hall with Mrs Anderson.

This three-day residential camp held at Kurrajong offers talented dancers in the Western Sydney Region an incredible opportunity to work with professional dancers in the dance and entertainment industry, offering tuition in a wide variety of dance styles. After the camp, a talent squad is formed and selected students may be invited to perform with the Regional Dance Troupe.

Places are limited and will be selected via an audition process. To audition, each student must present a one minute solo routine of their best style of dance. This maybe, jazz, lyrical, funk, hip-hop, or contemporary. Students must supply their own music,
preferably in CD format or bring their own iPod and speaker dock. If you think your child is a talented dancer, please encourage them to prepare a routine for the audition.

Band
The school band operates every Monday after school between 3 - 6pm. Students are placed in either the training band or intermediate band and rehearse from 3 - 4pm, followed by half-hour tuition sessions. The cost is $135 per nine weeks' tuition. If your child is interested in learning an instrument eg flute, clarinet, saxophone, trumpet, trombone, drums or bass guitar please contact Mrs Anderson or the school office for the Band Information Booklet. All instruments are available for hire with the exception of bass guitars and drums.

*Bass guitar* lessons are now being offered at 5.30pm on Mondays. If you are interested, you will be required to provide your own guitar and amplifier. Three places are available for bass guitar lessons.

Regional Music Camp
The Western Sydney Region Music Camp will be held from 22 - 25 May and will cost approximately $200. Stage 3 Intermediate Band members, string players (violin, viola, cello) and talented vocalists are invited to attend this four-day residential camp held at Kurrajong. See Mrs Anderson for further information if your child is interested in attending.

Djembe Drumming
Mrs Booth, Mrs Bell and Mrs Bourke will be organising this group this year. Djembe drumming is a wonderful, inexpensive music opportunity for children at Minchinbury Public School. Places are limited due to the number of drums available for use. A participation fee of approximately $30 applies to all participating members. Students owning their own 10” or 12” djembe drum may participate in this group - behavioural conditions apply. Djembe drumming usually operates during Terms 2 and 3 and the group performs at the REACH music festival held at Rooty Hill in September. Mrs Booth will ask for an expression of interest, later in the term.

**Recorder Group**
Mrs Anderson will be forming a recorder ensemble using descant, alto and tenor recorders this year. Practise sessions will be held at recess time one day per week starting in Term 2. Students in Years 3 - 5 may apply to participate in this group. This group will be in training for the 2013 Opera House Instrumental Music Festival.

Pedestrian Crossing
Since school has returned, we have had a number of parents stopping their car on the pedestrian crossing to let students out to enter school in the morning. This is **very unsafe** and illegal. Parents should make sure they follow all road rules and restrictions in and around the school. Parents are also reminded to enter the school via the pedestrian gates and not the gate to the car park. Some students have almost been injured by parents who have parked in school grounds without permission and have entered or left the school driving at dangerous speeds. Please park safely outside the school and ensure students enter by the **pedestrian gates**.

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.

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**Definitions**

**English**

*Prepositions*: show relationship between nouns or pronouns and other words. Preposition means placed in front, so they are usually found in front of nouns or pronouns.

- **in** the soup
- **near** them

In these phrases, in and near are prepositions: in is related to soup; near is related to them.

Prepositions are said to govern nouns or pronouns in the objective case. Prepositions are usually short words although some, like underneath, are long. Some common prepositions are:

- across
- among
- beneath
- before
- during
- into
- like
- of
- on
- over
- to
- up
- with
- from
Maths
Discount: a reduction in money.

Technology
Fax: A fax machine is used to transmit (printed matter or an image) by electronic means. The word history of fax is short for facsimile Latin fac simile make similar; a system of transmitting and reproducing graphic matter (as printing or still pictures) by means of signals sent over telephone lines.

Brain Bender
Loosely suspended
By hand it is ended.

What is it?
Answer next issue.

Last issue’s question:
Which word can be placed after the following to make a new word?
ink black night rain

Answer: Spot.

Notes Home This Fortnight

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Positive Behaviour for Learning
This week’s target is:

‘We follow classroom rules!’

In the first few days of the school year, all teachers have worked with their students to develop classroom rules that reflect our school’s behaviour expectations of being safe, respectful learners. Teachers discuss and negotiate with their students the rewards for following classroom rules and what the consequences should be for not following them.

These are all developed in line with the school’s Expected Student Behaviour (School Rules). Please encourage your child to follow the expectations for their classroom, respond to consequences appropriately and be the best learner they can. A copy of the school’s behaviour expectations is included with this newsletter.

Food for Thought
“Love is the condition in which the happiness of another person is essential to your own”.
Robert Heinlein

Hope you were remembered on Valentine’s Day!

Have a great week!
Keni një javë e madhe!

Pauline Baker
Principal
16.2.11

Minchinbury PS
A great school…… close to home!
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A great school..... close to home!