Dear Parents and Caregivers

Do you know what ‘sesquipedalian’ means? Until last week, I didn’t either, and nor did any of the other school leaders at my table! We all made what we thought were good guesses, but we were not even close. The presenter at the workshop told us the word meant ‘pedantic’ and after looking it up myself, it also means a love of using long words!

So, where was I last week? I was fortunate enough to be invited to attend the latest ‘Principals as Literacy Leaders’ (PALL) course in Adelaide and I use the word ‘fortunate’ for a couple of reasons, including:

- the quality of the course, its presenters and well researched material and
- the match between the course’s intent and our own site improvement plan with its focus this year on reading comprehension.

Last night’s staff meeting was the first step in our journey to learn more about reading comprehension and best practice and attendance at the two days last week helped me clarify how I would work with staff to achieve this goal. It meant I could incorporate other people’s thinking about how to look at our data and teach staff the process at the same time, which I think is exciting!

Our focus this term will be investigating our data about reading comprehension, working out what it is telling us and what our actions will be as a result. Further to this, as a staff we have committed to attending a workshop by a leading educator in this field, Sheena Cameron, on the Saturday after Easter in Adelaide. The timing, I think, will work for us as we build on our understandings from the data and can then make changes to our practice where needed in the remainder of the year. The remaining three days of the PALL course (in May, August and November) will give me the opportunity to reflect on how things are going and work with staff to refine our work in this area.

The comment by one of the facilitators last week is true for me; Leonie said that after the first two days of the course we would be busting to get back into our schools and start! She was so right!

One of our other goals this year is to have over 95% attendance and no unexplained absences, a whole of department target that I would seriously like to meet, given our attendance rates are generally lower than this and lower than some other local schools. In order to do our job effectively as teachers, we need students to be at school every day possible and would encourage parents to make appointments and family commitments out of school hours wherever possible. If your child is away, a phone call, note or email giving the reason for the absence would be appreciated. We can then mark our roll books accordingly. Thankyou for your ongoing support with this matter.

Finally, we have been informed that there will be an interruption to our power supply here at the school next Tuesday between 8 am and 3 pm. A day without technology could be a good thing, but let’s hope the weather is mild!

Tracy Griffin

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>11th March</td>
<td>Adelaide Cup Holiday</td>
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<tr>
<td>14th March</td>
<td>Parents’ Club Meeting 9 am Library</td>
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<tr>
<td>21st March</td>
<td>Assembly 2.45 pm</td>
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<td>26th March</td>
<td>Governing Council 8 pm</td>
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<td>29th March</td>
<td>Good Friday</td>
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<td>1st April</td>
<td>Easter Monday</td>
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<td>12th April</td>
<td>Last Day Term 1</td>
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PARENTS CLUB NEWS

We held our first Special Lunch for the year with Laura Allen and Kathy Behn organising and helping out on the day. Thankyou both!

Chris Palmer has had a delivery of Dried Apricots and Dried Peaches that are now for sale in the Front Office. Prices are: Dried Apricots $12 for 500 g, $21 for 1kg, Dried Peaches $11 for 500g, Currants $8 for 1 kg, $4.50 for 500g, Dried Pears $10 for 500g, Sultanas $4 for 500g.

MANOORA HALL NEWS

Manoora Hall will again be holding a Market on Easter Sunday, 31st March from 9am to 3pm.

Yoga on Wednesday nights will only be held again after the Easter break.

HAVE YOU RECEIVED THE SCHOOLKIDS BONUS?

Do you know about the Schoolkids Bonus? It is a new cash payment to help eligible families and students with the costs of primary and secondary school studies. Around 1.2 million families have already benefitted from the first wave of payments in January 2013 – have you?

If you receive a family or income support payment, including Family Tax Benefit Part A, you could be eligible to receive $410 a year for each primary student and $820 a year for each secondary student, with half paid in January and half paid in July.

The Schoolkids Bonus replaces the Education Tax Refund (ETR) and is a much simpler system. You no longer need to collect receipts and payments are made automatically so you don’t have to wait months to make a claim via your tax return. Unlike the ETR you can choose how you use the payment to best support your children’s education – whether it be school books, stationery, uniforms, school fees, or excursions.

Check your eligibility by visiting australia.gov.au/schoolkidsbonus and if you think you might have missed out on the January payment, contact Centrelink – either in person at a Centrelink-Medicare Office or by calling 132 468.

RSPCA NEWS

ATTACHMENTS:
- Student Personal Data Check Sheets. Please amend if there are changes to your phone numbers or Emergency Contacts and return to school.
- Emergency Contact List for Bus Matters including Mobile Phone Numbers
- Emergency Contact List including Mobile Numbers
- 2013 Committee Members for Governing Council, Finance Committee and Parents’ Club