

FROM THE PRINCIPAL

Dear Parents

The first week of school ran very smoothly with students and teachers settling down to academic work very quickly. Last week's newsletter gave a brief outline of Term 1 and this week I have a little more space to write about school activities in more depth so I will use it to detail the points pertinent to this time of year, especially for parents new to our school community.

Enrolments

As you are aware, the Education Department resources schools according to the number of students enrolled. Their census day is Thursday of this week. On Thursday, we expect our enrolments to be at least 370 (the largest initial enrolment for 20 years) which will give us a 15th teacher. That teacher will form a new class in the upper school, which will change from 5, 5/6, 6, 6/7, 7 to two Year 5s, two Year 6s and two Year 7s. As we have predicted that this may occur, timetables, rosters and class lists have been prepared to accommodate the changes. The class will start on February 9, the Monday of Week 3.

Assemblies

Every Tuesday morning at 8:50 we have a full school assembly in the area between 'B' and 'C' Blocks. Wet weather is the only reason we miss an assembly as our parade area is shaded but not water proof. I consider assemblies to be particularly important to school life for several reasons. Firstly, it is an opportunity for me to speak to all students about important activities, issues or events. It enables me to set a school tone, give reminders of important dates or discuss school rules. Secondly, it is a time when we can highlight the successes and achievements of our students. Students of the week are announced on every assembly; classes of the week receive the Wii and special students are recognised for their great work in competitions, sport or community service. Thirdly, it is a time when parents can be a part of school proceedings. We regularly have 40 to 50 parents in attendance and it makes for a more informative and enjoyable experience for all. A particularly important assembly will be occurring in Week 4 when we present our new School Captains with their badges. I recommend our assemblies to all parents and invite everyone to attend as often as they can.

Parent Car Park

The car park on the southern side of our grounds is for the use of the parents. I am the first to admit that it is far from perfect. The space is limited and the area is very congested at the peak times, especially around 3:00pm. Last Friday, a three car

accident occurred on Handford Road near the car park exit, probably due to the congestion and some drivers' impatience. We take steps to make the car park as useful as possible, but much of the responsibility for a calm, safe and manageable environment falls on the goodwill of parents. Several ways that the car park can be made better as follows:

- Stagger your pick up times – Last week the car park was almost empty by 3:15pm each day. I am on duty there till around 3:20pm so all students are supervised and can wait a few minutes after the bell.
- Park away from the school and pick up on foot – Liberty Drive has car parking space and Handford Road, north of the school is also available to leave your car and walk into the school to pick up your children
- Follow the rules inside the car park – We especially need parents not to park in the lanes where cars exit onto Handford Road. We also need parents to use the 2 minute zone wisely.
- Encourage your child to walk or ride to and from school – This saves you coming at all and is also great for their health and fitness and is better for the environment.

Active School Travel

This follows on neatly from the section above. Last year, we were part of the Brisbane City Council's 'Active School Transport' Programme. For many this meant 'Walking Wheeling Wednesdays', which were very successful with up to three quarters of our students either walking riding or car pooling to school some weeks. This year we will still have Walking Wheeling Wednesdays but we won't have prizes or incentives to participants, except for one Wednesday each term. We want everyone to actively travel every day if possible but once a term we will have a big breakfast and survey the classes to see which one is the most active. We have a trophy for them, kindly donated by Councillor Victoria Newton.

Tuckshop

Our Tuckshop is run by volunteers from our P&C and due to a number of factors, there are very few available. It appears that this year, it will open only two days per week due to this difficulty. This is unfortunate but necessary. If you have time to help, please let us know as the Tuckshop provides a great service to our students and saves our busy parents plenty of time in the mornings making school lunches.

Interschool Sport Levy

Taigum State School has been particularly successful in interschool sport over the last few years. Much effort and organisation goes into making it happen across the Bramble Bay District.

As with most activities, it comes with a cost which unfortunately has to be picked up by our parents. To run sport we have to hire buses, pay for grounds and ground markings, organise referees, pay first aid staff and pick up any incidental expenses along the way. In the past, we have charged a weekly fee to parents but it often goes unpaid and we regularly run sport at a loss. This year we intend to charge a one off levy per season to cover the costs involved. Students in interschool teams will bring home notes with the details very shortly. The levy is non refundable but we intend to keep it to the bare minimum to pay for all expenses incurred in providing sport.

Electronic Newsletters

A major problem with newsletters is getting them home. Many parents complain that they haven't received one in many weeks. To address this problem we provide two alternatives. Firstly, our newsletters go up on our website within 24 hours of their issue. Secondly, it can be emailed directly to your home by typing this link http://mailouts.austnews.com.au/subscription/T/taigum_ss_signup.html into your web browser and following the prompts thereafter. The emailed version is in full colour and is very attractive. Neither of these delivery methods depends upon children so they are very reliable.



Mark Fisher
Principal

FROM THE LIBRARY

Welcome back to all returning families and a big welcome to new families. I hope you all had a very enjoyable and restful holiday.

Library sessions commence this week. All classes from Prep to Year 7 have the opportunity to borrow books from the Library during these sessions. In order to protect our library books, all students are encouraged to use a library bag [any type will do]. For safety purposes, we ask that Prep and Year 1 students do not use a plastic bag for borrowing. Class library days are as follows:
Monday: Year 1C; Year 6/7S; Prep CD.
Tuesday: Year 5W; Year 7G; Prep B.
Wednesday: Year 4T; Year 4D; Year 6M.
Thursday: Year 5/6G; Year 2B; Year 1i.
Friday: Year 2/3H; Year 3J.
In addition to borrowing during their class library session, students are most welcome to borrow books at lunchtime on any day, provided their books are returned.

Bookclub Issue 1 brochures for 2009 will be distributed later this week. Orders, together with

payment, are due in at the Library by **Friday 20 February**. Payment may be made by cash, cheque or credit card. If paying by cheque, please make cheque payable to Taigum State School. If paying by credit card, instructions for this are on the back of the brochure.

For those families new to Bookclub, it is an opportunity to purchase items from the publishing company, Scholastic, at a cost that is generally less than the recommended retail price. Scholastic aims to offer high quality materials at competitive prices. There are eight issues of Bookclub a year, two per term. Brochures are distributed to students, and parents can order items by completing the order form which is on the back of the brochure. All orders need to be sent to the Library for processing. Payment can be made by cash, cheque or credit card, as listed above. Orders are then processed on the due date and are usually received within one to two weeks. They are then distributed to students. If you wish, parents can collect their order from the Library themselves. You just need to write "**Hold for parent**" on the order form.

If you have any questions regarding library borrowing procedures or Bookclub, please feel free to see me in the Library.

Kind regards

Theresa McArdle
Librarian

P&C NEWS

Greetings all and welcome back to school. I hope everyone had a great Christmas break and are ready for the year ahead. The P&C Committee would like to welcome all our new students and parents to the school and we hope you have all had a great first week.

This year we are looking for someone to volunteer their time as a Tuckshop Convenor. This job would involve ordering stock, purchasing fruit/veg, etc and organizing our volunteer staff. Our Tuckshop will be open for 2 days a week only on Thursdays and Fridays from 8.15am-12.00pm, so if you think you could help us out please call into the Uniform Shop or see any of our P&C members. Also, if you have just a couple of hours to spare as a volunteer we would greatly appreciate your help. Failing this, our tuckshop will be closed permanently.

Our next P&C meeting will be held on Tuesday 10th Feb at 9.30am in the Staffroom straight after assembly, so call in for tea/coffee and a chat as we always welcome any new faces.

Have a great week
P & C committee