Dear Parents

It's always good to have a holiday, but I must say it's also nice to be back. What I like particularly, is that we now have a seven week unbroken period to finish off all our 2013 work. With the national curriculum in place, there is a lot of it left for this year I can tell you. In literacy, numeracy and science we are completing Unit 7 and there is still the five week Unit 8 to deliver as well. That means we will be working right through to the last days of school to get it all taught, assessed and reported. This brings me neatly to my first newsletter item.

Attendance
This week, all our teachers are sending home notes to parents about unexplained absences. Education Qld requires that we record reasons why children are not at school. If we are not told, they go into the roll as unexplained and during audits we are asked to explain why we have written this. Parents get notification of this come report card time. On the last page there are two figures – days absent and number unexplained. Interestingly, one of the most common complaints we receive from parents is about these unexplained absences. The great majority of our parents, write notes, phone or email us to explain why their child is not at school and we really appreciate this. Sometimes the messages get lost and absences are recorded in the unexplained column and appear on the report cards. Lots of parents don't like this because they are keen for their child to be at school every day unless sickness or injury intervenes and thus unexplained absences look like their child ‘wagging’ school to them. (This hardly happens, by the way, at primary schools.) Unfortunately, there are also some children who have a long list of unexplained absences. This means they are having many days off and we don’t know why. Every day, we record absences in our school operating software called ‘OneSchool’. As principal, I can log onto OneSchool and I get a graph of the student attendance for the previous twenty weeks. It makes for interesting viewing. The bars on the graph have a distinct pattern. They are lower on Mondays, go up in the middle and drop on Fridays. Our children are taking plenty of long weekends. On the last day of Term 3, one third of our students were absent, that's about 125 students away. Last year our overall attendance rate was 92%, about the same as the State average. This year it is standing at 91%. These figures look alright until they are broken down. There's good news, 68% of our students are here almost every day. There's average news, 27% of our school is here three-quarters of the time or a bit better. There is very bad news, 5% (15-20 students) are here a little more than half the time. If you look at this last group, that means that by the end of Year 12, if the trend continues, they would have only done 6 years of school. It’s a simple equation, the more you are here, the more chances you have to learn and succeed. Even more simply put, every day counts.

QSR
We are finishing off our Quadrennial School Review (QSR) at present and will this is occurring I thought I might report the main findings. As I stated above, our attendance rate has sat between 89% and 92% over the last 4 years, close to the state average. As far as Academic Performance goes, our lines are trending upwards in reading, writing, spelling and grammar and punctuation, but maths is being persistently difficult to improve and will be an ongoing focus. Our parents remain satisfied in our school performance about 90% of the time and our teachers about 98% of the time. We still look forward to engaging more parents and more parents more often, but in general the school, in my opinion, is moving in the right direction. The full QSR report, when completed and ratified in the next three weeks, will be presented to the next P&C Meeting and will also be available for all to peruse on our website.
Measles Outbreaks
This last item is copied directly from Qld Health and is important for all to read

Urgent public health alert for schools and early childhood education and care services
What is the concern?
Queensland Health is concerned about the number of measles outbreaks in Queensland this year. There have been 24 people notified with measles so far this year, three of whom were school aged and one toddler. There have also been measles outbreaks occurring in other states, with young children and school aged children infected. Large measles outbreaks are occurring in other parts of the medical world, including in our nearest neighbours in Indonesia (Bali) and Thailand. Measles outbreaks in Australia usually commence with a person who was infected overseas. Measles is a highly infectious disease that causes people to feel very unwell. It can cause complications such as middle ear infections and more serious complications such as pneumonia (lung infection) and encephalitis (inflammation of the brain). Complications are more common and more severe in people with a chronic illness and very young children. Approximately 60% of deaths from measles are associated with complications, especially pneumonia in the young and encephalitis in adults.

The virus is spread from an infectious person during coughing and sneezing or through direct contact with secretions from the nose or mouth. Because measles is so infectious it can spread rapidly in schools and early childhood education and care services where non-vaccinated children and or adults attend.

What can schools and childcare services do?
It is very important that schools and child care services are aware of the current measles risk and inform parents to keep children away if they think they could have measles. Parents should be advised to ring their GP or 13HEALTH if they think their child has measles as confirmation of measles infection requires medical assessment and laboratory testing. Schools and childcare services are encouraged to strongly recommend that parents ensure their children and staff are fully vaccinated against measles and if possible, keep a list of any unvaccinated children and staff. Unvaccinated children and staff will need to be excluded from any school or childcare where a measles case has been confirmed. Anyone born in 1966 or after who has not had two documented measles vaccinations or documented immunity should get vaccinated. Measles vaccine is free. Your local Public Health Unit will provide advice and support to you, in the event of an outbreak of measles within your Centre or Service. A list of the Public Health Units is available at http://www.health.qld.gov.au/cho/default.asp

What if parents refuse to keep their child away?
The Public Health Act 2005 gives the person in charge of a school or early childhood education and care service specific powers that enables them to direct a parent to keep a child who has or may have measles away from school for a prescribed period of time.

A measles fact sheet and other measles resources are available at: www.health.qld.gov.au/cdcg/index/default.asp

Mark Fisher
Principal

Prep B - Darzel for always being friendly, helpful and hard working
Prep CD - Ben for wonderful story writing
Year 1i - Byron for being a bright and happy member of the class
Year 1L - Makenna for his energetic participation in classroom activities
Year 1N - Danica for writing a fantastic procedure
Year 2H - Jaimey for always doing her best being a great role model
Year 2J - Riley for always doing her best work in class
Year 3B - Olivia for settling in to her new class and school very nicely
Year 3TM - Tyler for working exceptionally well on retells in reading groups
Year 4C - Alex for participating well in class discussions
Year 4/5G - Lebron for co-operative attitude in all class activities
Year 5W - Leah for starting work straight away on joining our class and demonstrating beautiful manners
Year 6S - The Whole Class for being so excited n finding number patterns in maths this week
Year 6/7G - James for improving his concentration in class
Year 7C - Amber for making excellent progress with her song analysis in English
BOOK AWARDS

Congratulations to the following students who received awards for their bookwork on Friday 25th October 2013.

- 1i - Ger Kler Htoo
- 1L - Yuvraj
- 1N - Roqaya
- 2H - Shakota
- 2J - Lebron
- 3B - Zoe
- 3TM - Tyler
- 4C - Tanisha
- 4/5G - Cooper
- 5W - Billy
- 6S - Zoe & Lavinia
- 6/7G - Joshua
- 7C - Kara

FROM THE OFFICE

PaCE MEETING

Our next PaCE Meeting (for parents of ATSI students) will be held on Monday 4th November at 2.00pm in the staffroom. All interested parents are welcome.

SCHOOL SWIMMING

Class swimming lessons have commenced. All students must wear a swimming cap and rash vest so please remember to pack these items along with your togs and towel. Only those students with an illness substantiated by a letter from their parent or a medical certificate will be excused from swimming lessons.

INTERSchool SPORT

Round 2 of Interschool sport will be played on Friday, 1st November. Permission forms and payment requests have been sent home and must be returned prior to your child being able to participate.

2014 BOOKLISTS
Order forms for 2014 Booklist requirements (Prep – Year 7) were sent home with your child last term. Please ensure you have received your copy.

If you wish to purchase the pre-packed supplies, please return your order form with payment to the office on or before Wednesday 27 November.

Your pre-packed supplies will then be available for collection from the school between Wednesday 22nd January and Friday 24th January 2014.

**STUDENT COUNCIL**

**ICY CUPS**

Icy cups will be on sale each Thursday, 2nd break, from the hall canteen. Cost is still only 50 cents.

**SCHOOL BANKING**

Congratulations for being involved in the School Banking program this year. If you have collected 10 or more silver Dollarmites tokens you MUST redeem them for a reward before the end of Term 4 as you won’t be able to use these extra tokens next year. The Dollarmites moneyboxes will no longer be available from next year so collect them now.

Select the reward item(s) you want by completing the coupon on your rewards card and take it, along with your 10 tokens per reward, to school with your next School Banking deposit. 8 exciting new rewards are coming in 2014!

**FROM THE P&C**

Hi Everyone,
We’re heading ever closer to Christmas and our Christmas stall. Thank you to all those who very kindly donated Chocolates and biscuits over the last couple of weeks! This week we are asking for donations of candles, soaps, face washers and any (empty and clean) glass jars. Once again if you would drop them into the Uniform Shop it would be hugely appreciated! Thank you!

This Friday is Interschool Sports, Round 2, and the P&C will once again be selling Zooper Doopers, Ice Monys and cold drinks so don’t forget to bring some money with you!

Many thanks and have a great week!

Chloe Boswell
P&C President.

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DATES TO REMEMBER

COMMUNITY NOTICES

SCHOOL CHAPLAINCY CELEBRATION

Geebung, Taigum and Zillmere State Schools are holding a combined School Chaplaincy Celebration on Friday 1st November at The Salvation Army, corner of Handford & Roghan Rds, Taigum.

- 4.45pm Fun Games
- 5.30pm BBQ Dinner
- 6.30pm Concert

Che-Jazz Show team (dance group)
Performances by Geebung SS
Performances by Taigum SS
Performances by Zillmere SS
Principals vs Chaplains Challenge
Message from the Chaplains

- 8.00pm Finish

**BBQ Pricelist**
Sausage Sizzle $2.50
Drinks $1.50
Ice creams $1.00
Donuts $1.00

HOSTING AN INTERNATIONAL EXCHANGE STUDENT

**TAKE HOME A BIG BROTHER OR BIG SISTER**

Southern Cross Cultural Exchange is seeking volunteer host families to host international exchange students arriving in for a stay of one term, one semester or two semesters. Give your children the wonderful opportunity to have an international big brother or big sister by hosting one of our exceptional international students arriving in Australia in February 2014 for their 3, 5 or 10 month programs. Our international students from Germany, Italy, Finland, Colombia and Mexico will live as a local, attend a local secondary school, arrive with their own spending money and comprehensive insurance cover – all arranged by Southern Cross Cultural Exchange. Visit us at [www.scce.com.au](http://www.scce.com.au), email [scceaus@scce.com.au](mailto:scceaus@scce.com.au) or call us toll free on 1800 500 501, request our international student profiles, and capture the spirit of family and friendship!

**CHITTY CHITTY BANG BANG**

Experience the action packed story of the magical flying car, *Chitty Chitty Bang Bang*, with eccentric inventor Caractacus Potts, his two children Jemima and Jeremy and the delightful Truly Scrumptious.

Sensational sets, stunning special effects, Ian Fleming's irresistible story, and an unforgettable score by the Sherman Brothers (Mary Poppins) all add up to a blockbuster musical that everyone will love. Boasting a stellar Australian cast of over 70 headed by David Hobson, Rachael Beck, Shane Bourne, George Kapiniaris and Tyler Coppin as the Childcatcher, *Chitty Chitty Bang Bang* will fly into QPAC for a strictly limited season from 19 November until 22 December 2013. To book tickets visit [www.qpac.com.au](http://www.qpac.com.au) or call 136 246.
Learn Karate & Self Defence

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For more information call 0409 474 494 or find us at www.agkk.com.au

FIRST LESSON FREE
Sibling relationships affected by disability: Perspectives of mothers and fathers

What is the purpose of the research?
The purpose of this research is to investigate how disability impacts the childhood sibling relationship. We are interested in whether parents’ views about the sibling relationship are the same for mothers and fathers, and whether these views change when one child in the family has a disability.

Are you looking for people like me?
The research team is looking for families with two or more children living within the family home.

We are particularly interested in recruiting families in which one child (aged 6-12 years) has a disability (physical, intellectual/cognitive, hearing, vision or developmental), however this is not a necessary requirement for participation. Your second child must be under the age of 18, and have no diagnosed disabilities or severe/chronic medical illnesses.

Mothers and fathers must both be willing to participate.

What will you ask me to do?
In this study, mothers and fathers will be asked to separately complete a short 5-10 minute questionnaire about the sibling relationship – that’s it! We will send out the questionnaires to you, and even give you a postage-paid envelope to return it to us; it’s as simple as that!

I am interested – what should I do next?
If you would like to participate in this study, please contact Melissa Allison (melissa.allison@connect.qut.edu.au) for details of the next step. You will be provided with further information to ensure that your decision and consent to participate is fully informed.

Thank You!

QUT Ethics Approval Number: 1300000466