Month of March, 2014

Wed 12 Whole School Assembly - Class 6F
Fri 14 PSSA - Bye
Mon 17 Merrylands Open Day
Thu 20 Area Swimming Carnival - six students to attend
Thu 21 National Day of Action Against Bullying and Harmony Day - see note to follow
Wed 26 Whole School Assembly - Class 5F
Thu 27 Debating

Month of April, 2014

Wed 2 Teddy Bears Picnic - note to follow
Tue 8 P & C Meeting - all welcome - 7.00 pm in the staffroom
Wed 9 First rehearsal for Our Spectacular - Choir to the Opera House
       ANZAC Day ceremony
Thu 10 Easter Hat Parade - note to follow

Information correct at time of printing, 12 March, 2014

Excursion notes sent home this week

Camp Berry deposit for excursion for 5F and 6F students $50 Last day for payment 13 March, 2014
Our Spectacular - Choir to the Opera House $35 Last day for payment 27 March 2014
Dance Group T Shirt note - sizes only required Sizes due 27 March 2014
Payment for Workbooks and resources - K to 6 Last day 27 March 2014
Dance Fever - K to 6 $20 Last day 27 March 2014

Dear Parents,

It is hard to believe that we are half way through Term 1 already. It has been an extremely busy term with students, teachers and parents working in partnership to provide a great education for students at our school.

Last night we held our P&C Annual General Meeting (AGM). It was a very positive meeting and new office holders were voted in. Congratulations to our new President - Sharmaine Falzon; Vice President - Marnie Harte; Treasurer - Sharon Blinko; Secretary- Jenni Kane; Fundraising Coordinator- Skye Jones and Uniform Shop Coordinator Dianna Greenhill. Our school community is very appreciative of the outgoing P&C office holders who did such a terrific job last year and some enjoyed the role so much they put their hand up for another year. Thank you.

Thank you to our wonderful P&C who do great things for our school every year. I would like to encourage and welcome new members to our P&C. The association meets regularly at on the second Tuesday of the month at 7pm in our staffroom.

Dear Parents,
Reading

It is very important to help your child at home practise their reading skills. The most effective thing you can do to assist your child is read with them every night. Research shows that reading for 10-15 minutes with you or to your child each night can really assist your child to become a proficient reader and this will impact on their overall learning. Do the maths - 15 minutes times 365 days times 10-12 years is a lot of reading practice at home. Children whose parents read with them every night have a great head start in learning.

When reading to children keep it FUN! Choose books your child will enjoy (you know their interests) and if your child struggles read it with them. Ask children to use the illustrations, letters and story line to help them read. If they don’t know a word, leave it out and read on to the end of the sentence. Often the word will become obvious if the child is listening to their reading.

Use the old reading strategy Pause, Prompt and Praise.

Pause Give your child time to work out the word. Don’t jump in too early to help, then let them think, look at the illustrations and the letters to work the word out themselves.

Prompt Assist them by asking questions such as – can the illustrations help you? What about the beginning sound can that help you to work out the word?

Praise Congratulate them for good fluent reading and correcting their mistakes if they notice what they say doesn’t make sense or doesn’t look right (match the letters).

National Day of Action against Bullying & Harmony Day -2014

Our school has registered as part of the National Day Against Bullying and Violence being held nation wide along with Harmony Day on the 21st March. This is a day where communities across Australia take a stand together against bullying and violence and celebrate and encourage harmony in schools and the community.

Widemere Public School is dedicated to creating supportive school environments, free from bullying, harassment and violence in or outside of school. It is not ok at any time.

We have zero tolerance against bullying behaviour at our school. We encourage students to accept differences because everyone is different and everyone does things differently. And we feel this should be celebrated.

Our school will be celebrating both Harmony Day and Anti-Bullying Day on Thursday the 20th March due to sport being held on Friday. We will celebrate as a school by participating in many activities that teach anti-bullying strategies and celebrate harmony.

Students have the opportunity to dress up in clothes from other cultures or in green and gold or orange for Harmony Day. We will also be completing an art activity which will be hung in the school hall. Students will be given anti-bullying wristbands to be worn on Thursday the 20th March. Even though this is a mufti day no a gold coin donation is required.

Cyber-safety

This week we have Constable Rabbi Hadad the Police Community Liaison Officer from Holroyd Local Area Command discussing Cyber-safety with our Year 5 & 6 students. He will be particularly discussing facebook and how to keep safe on this very popular site. Here is some information from Community Health about how to keep your child safe online.
Prevalence

An estimated 72,000 children (or 3% of all children who used the internet at any location between April 2008 and April 2009) had experienced one or more personal safety or security problems online at some time in their life.

The most common problems were:

• accessing inappropriate material,
• having strangers ask for or gain access to personal information, and
• experiencing online bullying or threatening behaviour.

Danger signs

• Your child constantly sits on the computer in chat rooms or instant messaging, from straight after school to very late at night.
• Your child begins showing unexplained money or items that come from "a friend you don't know".
• Your child starts being secretive about what they are doing online – this could include anything from minimising screens as you walk past to not letting you see their blogs/chat/social media sites.

Tips for parents:

Educate

• Find out about the internet.
• Make children aware of risks.
• Don’t take everything at face value – people aren’t always honest online.
• Teach children cyber-safety rules.
• Always keep passwords secret.
• Think before posting information – once posted it’s difficult to remove.
• Never give out identifying information such as home address, school name or telephone number.
• Set profile to ‘private’.
• Use privacy settings when posting photos online.
• Avoid responding to messages from unrecognised email addresses.
• Never click on links in emails from strangers.
• Don’t accept offers that seem too good to be true.
• If a threatening message is received they should 'STOP, BLOCK, TELL'.

Empower

• Encourage and support children in their internet use.
• Reassure your children that they can tell you anything without fear of losing internet access.

Make the Computer Safe

• Set up the computer with an internet filter.
• Install security software such as anti-virus, anti-spam, pop-up stoppers and firewalls.

Supervise

• Supervise children’s activities on all devices – keep computers in public areas.
• Set a technology curfew – all devices gathered each evening for recharging.
• If you suspect your child has been contacted by a predator, try to save a copy of the chat log (or whatever form the contact takes) for evidence. Call Crime Stoppers 24-hour line 1800 333 000 to make a formal complaint.
• Call 000 if you believe a child to be in immediate danger.
• Telephone the Cyber-safety Contact Centre 1800 880 176 for information or advice.
Useful Websites

- Cybersmart is a national cyber-safety and cybersecurity education program managed by the Australian Communications and Media Authority (ACMA)
  This is the Department of Education & Communities’ website for practical help for parents.

Your children will be using computers and the technology for the rest of their lives. You are in the great position of being able to get them off to a safe, positive start.

Workbook Payment

To enable students to use their new workbooks and qualify for our subsidised rate ($5 off) please ensure you have paid for your child’s workbook well before the due date 27th March. Students will use their book as soon they are paid for.

Mini Bus

Thank you to all the parents who have given up their afternoon seat for students waiting for the Uniting Church mini-bus.

As students are often waiting 20 to 25 minutes after school for the mini-bus to arrive we felt it was much safer for students to go straight to the green seats so we are entirely aware of which students are waiting for the mini-bus, which students are waiting for their parents to pick them up and which students are with their parents chatting.

We also decided it was a safer option as there is one tree which is waiting to be removed near the bus line up area even though this tree is not considered dangerous.

Safe Trees

After the tragedy at Pitt Town Primary school where a young student was killed and a staff member and 2 other students were injured I thought you might like to know how our school addresses these issues. Last year we had a qualified arborist come to check the safety of our trees and we had one tree removed land two more identified for removal but not dangerous. As you may be aware schools had to pay in the past and we will pay the $7000 to remove the two identified trees and trim some others and hopefully receive a rebate from the Department of Education and Communities.

Easter Hat Parade

On the 10th April WPS will be holding an Easter Hat Parade and Easter Raffle. This raffle is a major fundraising effort by our P&C. We are asking parents to donate a chocolate Easter egg so our school can make up colourful baskets to raffle at the Easter Hat Parade. Last year we had many donations of single eggs of all shapes and sizes and Easter Egg gift boxes. The P&C Association members put together wonderful baskets for the raffle. Please support our school by sending in Easter Eggs and buying our raffle tickets. Please start sending eggs to the classroom for collection.

Uniform

It was wonderful to see so many of our students wearing full school uniform. An excellent way of showing respect for our school is to wear the school uniform proudly every day. We hope to see all students in full school uniform (maroon pants or shorts, white polo shirt, white socks, black school shoes and a school hat) every day. Most of these items are available at our school uniform shop on the first Wednesday of the month. Head bands and hair ties should be maroon or white.
Whole School Assembly

After consultation with the Parents & Citizens Association we have made a decision regarding our assembly time-tabling. From this term onwards we will be holding our assemblies fortnightly due to the constant demand of a crowded curriculum. We feel that it is important to offer our students a well-rounded curriculum with many opportunities for their social, emotional, physical and academic development.

Even though our assemblies are fortnightly merit cards will still be handed out at the same rate as if there were weekly assemblies. This may take a bit of time initially but we are planning to change the merit system to make it more achievable at our school. Students who have reached high levels of achievement will be acknowledged and celebrated. Thank you for your understanding.

Remember No Hat No Play

If your child is not wearing a hat they must sit under the Covered Outdoor Learning Area (COLA) out of the sun. Check your child’s bag every morning - does your child have a hat?

Zone Swimming Carnival – Thursday 6 March

Last Thursday 25 students represented our school at the Zone Swimming Carnival. All the students had an enjoyable day and despite their nerves did their very best. The effort that was put in was commendable.

Congratulations to these students who have made it through to the Area Carnival and will be representing Merrylands Parramatta Zone at Homebush, Thursday 20th March.

Paige Attard – Junior 50m Breaststroke, 10yrs Girls 50m Freestyle
Isaac Earl – 9yrs Boys 50m Freestyle
Junior Girls Relay Team – Hannah Jeffree, Isabel Jeffree, Paige Attard, and Johanna Blinco

Thank you also to all those parents who were able to come along on the day to support our school.

New Medical Information Required, Up to Date Student Info and Family Employment Form

It is important that we keep our school records accurate at all times. A request for student information sheet and medical information sheet was sent home again this week. Could you please complete these and send them back to school so that we can update all the records of all our students.

There are still parents/carers who have not sent back these forms. Could you please send them to the office as soon as possible. After three requests it is very disappointing that Mrs Saunders will need to contact by phone parents/carers who have not sent in these forms that are vital to your child’s health and education.

Out of Bound Areas

There are many parts of the school that students are not allowed to go. We call these areas the ‘out of bound areas’ for example: behind the buildings; on the old equipment; near the bike rack; on the stairs; on walkways behind the hall; in the teachers’ car park; and near the old barbeque area. This is a safety issue as they cannot be seen by the teacher on duty to monitor their behaviour and safety. Please support us and talk to your child about why they are not allowed in some parts of the school.

School Gates

The front and back gates will be closed from 9.20 am. Only the main gate at the front of the school will be open for visitors. You should always visit the school office and sign in so that we are aware who is in the school at any given time. This keeps your child safe at school.
Money Collection Days

Money collection days for all money collections (School, P & C, Book club etc) are only Wednesdays and Thursday only, please do not send money to school on other days.

All money should be sent to the class teacher of your youngest child so that she can mark your child’s name off on the family list.

If you are paying by cheque please **do not pay** for excursions, sport etc on the same cheque as you are using to pay for the Voluntary Contributions and Classroom resources and workbook invoice. Your support is appreciated. Please do not include payments for school excursions etc with any money due to the P & C such as raffles etc as they are not dealt with by the school office staff but by volunteers of the P & C.

Visitors/Volunteer Badges

It is important for the safety of all at Widemere Public School the students, the staff and the parents who volunteer to assist in many different ways around the school that all visitors report to the office so that we are aware who is in the school at any given time. The badges that we ask people to wear indicate to staff and other members working in the school that they have reported to the office first. Please continue to support us in this endeavour. This keeps your child safe at school.

No Parking in staff car park

Parents/carers/Woosh parents are reminded that parking in the school car park between the hours of 8 am and 4 pm is not permitted.

P & C Association News

As the P & C AGM meeting last night the following parents/carers have been elected to the following positions:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Position</th>
<th>Name</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>President</td>
<td>Mrs Falzon</td>
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<tr>
<td>Vice President</td>
<td>Ms Harte</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Treasurer</td>
<td>Mrs Blinco</td>
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<tr>
<td>Secretary</td>
<td>Mrs Kane</td>
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<tr>
<td>Fund raising</td>
<td>Mrs Jones</td>
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<tr>
<td>Uniform Shop Coordinator</td>
<td>Mrs Greenhill</td>
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Uniform Shop Hours - Opening hours - 8:45 am to 9:15 am - First Wednesday of the month

| Date       | |
|------------|--|---|---|---|---|---|
| 5 February | 5 March | 2 April | 7 May | 4 June | 16 July |
| 6 August   | 3 September | 8 October | 5 November | 3 December |

Uniform Shop News!

In time for winter the uniform shop have

* Long sleeved school polo school shirt with school emblem
  Cost $20 in sizes 6, 8, 10
  We have available: 20 size 10 25 size 8 30 size 6
  Only available until stock runs out.

* Keepsake/Satchel bag for storing school reports/NAPLAN tests/awards
  Cost $10

For Sale - Soon - Ponte and Track pants at a reduced price.
Widemere P & C Fundraiser - Easter Raffle

To help with the first fundraiser for the P & C we are asking parents/carers to donate an Easter Egg to be used for the Easter Eggs Raffle. Eggs etc can be left in your child's classroom.

Your child will be receiving a book of raffle tickets for the Widemere Public School P & C Easter raffle. Please support your P & C in this fundraiser and return all tickets to school when sold or by Monday 7 April, 2014.

Widemere Out of School Hours Care (WOOSH)

Woosh is operating on the grounds of widemere public school from block f. The centre operates before school care from 6:30 am to 9:00 am, after school care from 2:30 pm to 6:00 pm and school holiday program daily from 7:00 am to 6:00 pm. Parents/carers can book their child in for casual care or have a regular booking. All OOSH educators are qualified and experienced with the OOSH sector. For further information please free to contact the centre director, Lauren Golding on 9757 1904 or by mobile on 0417 647 310 or alternatively you can email woosh@holroyd.nsw.gov.au

Support your Local Business

If you would be thinking of selling or wanting to buy a property please contact Francesca Luccitti on 9756 3040 or mobile 0430 393 396. Ray White Greystanes is located at 3/81 Hibiscus Street, Greystanes.

Ultimate Health

Ultimate Health Greystanes has a team of qualified therapists in the areas of Speech Pathology, Physiotherapy and Dietetics. We cater to clients of all ages who have a range of support needs. Our team of professionals will work together closely to ensure that your services are catered just for you.

We provide services at our clinic or can come to you (off site) when necessary, based on your needs.

Our therapists are all registered for Private Heath Fund rebates. We offer HICAPS so that claiming rebates from your health fund is done for you. We are also registered under medicare for the Enhanced Primary Care Plan initiative.

For further information please ring 9756 5633 or visit us at 30 Carnation Street, Greystanes 2145. Website www.ulthealth.com.au

The Good Guys

If you would like to help our school it can be as easy as purchasing items that you would have purchased anyway from another supplier from The Good Guys at Prospect or Wetherill Park. Both stores are fantastic supporters of our school.

For every purchase at either of these stores we receive dollar points towards purchasing items for our fundraising needs. All you have to do is mention our school and these dollar points will be tallied. Just keep these stores in mind when purchasing fridges, washers, dryers, stoves, air conditioning, TVs, computers, dryers etc. Your purchase can really help our school and prices are very competitive!

P & C Committee

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