Principal’s Pen

Dear parents and caregivers,

Welcome back to Term 2 and a very warm welcome to the new families who joined our school last week.

Our improvement agenda for 2014 is clearly focussed on the consolidation of Explicit Teaching in all classrooms.

Our Staff maintains a focus on the various aspects of explicit teaching being targeted. These include: checking for understanding, setting the pace of teaching and learning as a result of this, and appropriate learning goals for each lesson.

Having clear and concise learning goals which children also understand, serves to focus the teaching on the specific skills and understandings of the lesson. Children also then know if they have been successful in the learning. This work will be ongoing this year with our goal to continually improve all aspects of teaching and learning across the school.

We also consistently review student achievement, with targets with a view to helping children achieve the best they are capable of in their learning.

Parents can help with this by showing an active interest in the work children have undertaken at school during the day. Ask them what they have been learning. Have them demonstrate their learning to you. Take the opportunity to listen to them read to you or you read to them (even the older children). Let them see you enjoying reading – for pleasure as well as for work. The more you, as parents, support the work of the school, the more successful and happier your children are likely to be.

We are fortunate to have dedicated teachers at Balacalava who continue to work extremely well with your children in classrooms each and every day.

BREAKFAST READING PROGRAM

Our breakfast reading program commenced on Monday, the second session on Thursday, with a great turn out for the first week. Students read, ate breakfast and were ready for learning when the bell rang. The year 6/7 students were outstanding role models and read with the younger students. Students who read 5 times will receive a bookmark which has to be signed off by a teacher or adult. This will entitle them to a FREE small chicken wrap and a钙Yum milk. The breakfast program runs twice a week on Mondays and Thursday at 8 – 8.25am. Parents and caregivers are welcome to come along and read with their child or other children. Parents will not be able to have the free breakfast but the tuckshop will be starting their parent coffee shop next week and adults are welcome to buy breakfast there.

DON’T BE AWAY, COME EVERY DAY

EVERY DAY COUNTS AT OUR SCHOOL

Our school encourages all parents and members of our community to support the “Every Day Counts” message.

Date Claims

Fri 9 May Mother’s Day Stall
Thu 15 May School Disco
Thu 19 Jun School Photo Day
Fri 20 Jun Athletics Carnival
Tue 24 - 27 Y6/7 Senior Camp

Jane’s Jottings & Information P.4
Principal’s Pen continued....

- all children should be enrolled and attend school on every school day
- attendance is the responsibility of everyone in the community
- children may find themselves in unsafe situations if they choose not to attend or skip school.

While most students attend school consistently, there are a small number of students who are absent from school without an acceptable reason and this may harm their education. Going shopping, visiting family, staying up late and being tired or extending school holidays are not acceptable reasons to be away from school.

Research shows that if your child has a record of good attendance, they are more likely to achieve high results in the future. If your child is away, you need to let the school know the reasons beforehand, or within two days of returning to school. For more information or if you need support regarding your child’s attendance, see our school principal and download the guide for parents at: www.education.qld.gov.au/everydaycounts/

Please remember the importance of children attending school every day. Queensland state schooling data shows that:

- Attendance and achievement are linked
- Mondays and Fridays and days adjacent to public holidays are more likely to be absent by students. Understanding the value of continuous schooling and minimising the impact of family events on learning is critically important for a student’s academic success.
- Students not present in school are more likely to miss critical learning building blocks and are, as a result, less likely to feel a sense of mastery over the curriculum and their own learning. The recommended attendance range is between 95 and 100% attendance rate.
- This means that a child can only miss 10 days of school in a whole year, or 5 days a semester, or 2½ days a term.

NAPLAN testing time again. Our students in Years 3, 5, 7 and 9 will soon participate in the annual National Assessment Program – Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN) to assess their skills and understanding in the areas of reading, writing, language conventions (spelling, grammar and punctuation) and numeracy. The tests will be conducted in all state and non-state schools across the country from 13–15 May. An individual NAPLAN report for each child will be sent home later this year. Results provide additional feedback for parents, carers and teachers on how students are progressing in key curriculum areas. Please contact the school if you have any questions about your child participating in NAPLAN testing. Further information is available on the ACARA website: http://www.nap.edu.au/

General News

POPPERS CHILDREN’S GROUP
What: FREE 6wk kid’s group for 6-9yr olds experiencing parental separation
When: Mon April 28th to Mon June 2nd from 3:30 to 5pm (afternoon tea included.)
Where: Relationships Aust. 125 Grafton St, Cairns
Contact: 1300 364 277 to register

POPPERS CHILDREN’S GROUP
What: FREE 6wk kid’s group for 10-13yr olds experiencing parental separation
When: Mon April 28th to Mon June 2nd from 3:30 to 5pm (afternoon tea included.)
Where: Relationships Aust. 125 Grafton St, Cairns
Contact: 1300 364 277 to register

Meet Prep A

In Prep A we have been busy learning about numbers and counting every day. Number snap and patterning are some of our favorite activities!

We have been busy making lots of friends

And busy having our dentist students visit every week to talk about brushing our teeth and healthy eating!

Jane Termaat
Principal