Communication

Thank you to all, both parents and teachers, who attended our Class Information sessions over the last fortnight. Hopefully this gave you a small insight into your child’s school day. Building and maintaining links and communication channels as a school community is fundamental to ensuring successful learning and development for our students.

The beginning of every year brings a number of trials and tryouts for teams and activity groups. As such, it can be a stressful time when students don’t make the cut or miss out on a chosen activity. I have included an article on resilience in today’s newsletter which may help if you are faced with a disappointed child. It tries to focus on the positive and moving forward when we don’t get what we want rather than dwelling on the negative.

Year 6 students are currently receiving, the Expression of Interest for Placement in Year 7 at a NSW Government Secondary School application form. This is a very important form, as it is the means by which your preferences for your child’s high school are lodged and processed. Please carefully read the Information for Parents and Carers attached to the form. Every year, forms are incorrectly completed. Mistakes or not completing the form carefully could see you missing out on the school of your choice. Children should not complete these forms.

For children wishing to enrol in their local public high school, the process is very easy: complete Section A and Section B.

For children wishing to enrol in a non-local school, the process is a little more complicated and requires more thought and careful writing.

Most high schools in our area receive more non-local applications than they can accept, and fill their non-local vacancies on the first round of preferences. Therefore, it is important that you carefully consider your non-local preferences, and your specific reasons for wanting that school. Careful thought should be given to the reasons for seeking placement at each of your non-local schools. Identify specific features/programs/structures/facilities of that school that you value as providing the best match for your child and his/her talents or needs.

Also, be aware that these are not the actual application forms. They will be issued by the high school which offers you a position. Every Year 6 student needs to return a form with the relevant section/s completed, even those not requiring a position next year in a public high school. Please also be aware that this process only applies to government high schools. There is no cross-sector processing of applications. No Catholic or independent schools can be included on this form.

All forms are due back to our school by 18th March. Many of the surrounding high schools are holding Open Nights and Information sessions for prospective students; these are often advertised in the local paper. If you are interested, these nights are a good way to get a feel for a school. Our local high school, Blakehurst High is offering tours and information.

Mrs Anne Whale
Relieving Principal

Blakehurst High School Information Evening Year 7 2012
15th March, 2011
4-30 to 6-30 pm - Tours of the School
6-30 to 7-00 pm - Formal Address by Principal and Students.

Dates to Remember 2011

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<th>Term 1</th>
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<tr>
<td>25 Feb Teeball/Softball Training—The Green $40 Hip Hop</td>
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<td>10 Mar Y1&amp;2 Poulton Park $65 PSSA season 1</td>
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<td>17 Mar Zulu Song &amp; Dance  Y2 Recorder orders</td>
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<td>28 Mar School Photos Zulu Song &amp; Dance</td>
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Next week, we will be focusing on the Social Value, “Care”, with an emphasis on displaying concern for the feelings of others.

Empathy is one of the most valuable attributes a person can develop. Being able to understand the way another person feels enables sensitivity, concern, kindness, tolerance, fairness and a host of other values.

Young children are naturally egocentric—their world revolves around themselves and their needs and wants. Leading them away from this narrow and potentially selfish viewpoint is one of the most important things we can do for them. Children who are kind, considerate and caring are generally well-liked and go on to be the kind of adults who make our world a better place.

This week we will be helping our children to feel and think about what it would be like to be in someone else’s shoes; to understand why people are different or act they way they do; to think before they speak and to include and be kind to all.

A word from our school captains, Leah and James.

The Opening of the School Year

On Thursday February 17th, we, as the school captains, represented Connells Point Public School and attended the DET Opening of the 2011 School Year.

There was a magnificent performance including wonderful dances by Pagewood Public School and the Newtown High School of Performing Arts, together with great songs from the Sydney Region Choir.

We heard many fascinating speeches by students from primary to high school levels and even from university students and graduates. Among other items, we also heard songs by the Sydney Region Middle School Band, conducted by Mr Skues.

At the end of the ceremony, there was a combined performance that closed the show. It was very entertaining.

Special thanks to Mrs Green and Mr Gaston who gave up their time to come with us.
Our budding musical performers had their first taste of being members of the school band, when they met Mr Skues, Mr Dickson and a number of other helpers who willingly showed them how to prepare and use their instruments. Can you recognise these talented young students?
Resilience

School is an opportunity for much more than academic achievement; it is a caring place in which children can learn a myriad of life skills. As much as we would like to defend our children from the difficulties in life, from experiencing crisis, change or loss, we cannot! However, we can give them the tools to recover from difficult times when those hit.

*Life is not about what happens to us but what we do about it* - Ronit Baras

One of the most useful life skills is **resilience**. For some children, changing seats in the classroom, a friend saying, "I'm not your friend anymore", or not being invited to play during a break can be "the end of the world". Still, the way children (and adults) deal with these difficulties is what sets them apart. Psychologist Dr Barbara Leffler says, "Resilience can be learned and developed".

Resilience is part of our emotional intelligence. When faced with a problem, resilient people focus on finding a solution rather than getting depressed and feeling like victims. Resilience is another name to emotional strength.

According to Dr Leffler, everyone is born with a different temperament and how it interacts with our life experiences, can determine how resilient they become. However, resilience can also be learned. We cannot control many of our life experiences; we can only control our response to them. As parents and teachers, our role is it to help our children respond positively and with strength.

**Are you Robbing Your Child of their Resilience**

**Robber 1:**

**Fight all their battles for them**

Nothing wrong with going into bat when kids struggle or meet with difficulty inside or outside school, but make sure this is the last resort, not the first option.

**Resilience notion 1:** Give kids the opportunity to develop their own resourcefulness.

**Robber 2:**

**Make their problem, your problem**

Sometimes parents can take too much responsibility for issues that are really up to children to work out or decide. Here's a clue if you are wondering what I am talking about: a jumper is something a mother puts on her son when she is cold!

**Resilience notion 2:** Make their problem, their problem.

**Robber 3:**

**Give kids too much voice**

In this era of giving children a voice it is easy to go overboard and allow them too much of a say in what happens to them. Kids often take the easy option to avoid hard or unpleasant situations.

**Resilience notion 3:** Make decisions for kids and expect them to adjust and cope.

**Robber 4:**

**Put unrealistic or relentless pressure on kids to perform**

Expectations about success and achievement are important. Too low and kids will meet them. Too high and kids can give up. Too much and kids can experience anxiety.

**Resilience notion 4:** Keep expectations in line with children's abilities and don't put excessive pressure on them.

**Robber 5:**

**Let kids give in too easily**

Resilient learners link success with effort. They don't give up because they don't like a teacher or when confronted with multi-step or more complex activities. Similarly they don't bail out of a sporting team half way through the season because the team is not winning or they are not enjoying it.

**Resilience notion 5:** Encourage kids to complete what they have started even if the results aren't perfect.

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Robber 6:
Neglect to develop independence
Don’t wait until they are teenagers to develop the skills of independent living. Start early and promote a broad skills set so that they can look after themselves if you are not around.

Resilience notion 6: Don’t routinely do for kids what they can do for themselves.

Robber 7:
Rescue kids from challenging or stretch situations
There are many times kids are put in situations that are outside their comfort zones. For instance, giving a talk, singing at the school concert or going on school camp may be challenges for some kids. They are all situations that kids usually cope with so show your confidence in them and skill them up rather than opt for avoidance.

Resilience notion 7: Overcoming challenges enables kids to grow and improve

Swimming Carnival

On Tuesday this week we had our swimming carnival. We caught the bus from school to the pool. On arrival at the pool there was a light shower of rain. Everyone was settled into the stands in houses and the cheering started. Before starting the races, we had to sing Happy Birthday to Mrs McCain.

The carnival started with the 100m freestyle and the age races for freestyle, breastroke, backstroke and butterfly. While the kids were swimming there was lots of cheering going on.

We had a break for lunch before the finals and relay races were swum. Dr McKirdy got each house to sing their chant and they were sung with lots of enthusiasm.

Throughout the day we were allowed to go to the canteen. Our water safety teacher Mr Parsons went to the rescue of a student that he thought needed help.

Clean up was done and we were on our way back to school. The rain stayed away.
We need to wait to see which house won. A good day was had by all involved.

Lara 3F

It was a cold start to the morning and I wasn’t looking forward to jumping into the cold 50m pool. It was not long before we were all swimming in the pool and it turned out to be a warm day. Almost everybody did freestyle in the races but not many did butterfly.

There was some great cheering going on in the crowd and Dr McKirdy gave out 1,000 house points to the loudest house cheers. It was great to see lots of parents at the carnival cheering for their children.

I always look forward to our swimming carnivals because not only do we get to swim in the pool but we also get to sit with our friends and eat ice blocks together. Everybody should give a big clap for Miss Benson for organising our carnival.

George 3H
OUR SWIMMING CARNIVAL,
15TH FEBRUARY
Thanks for all your support during Maroon Day.

Together we raised $610.00

In support of the Queensland schools affected by recent disasters.
What a wonderful display of support we experienced last Thursday! Maroon for a day was a great success. Connells Point Public School community raised $610.00 and participated with genuine concern for our Queensland school communities.

2011 SRC representatives will be presented with their badges at the primary assembly Thursday 24 February. We are looking forward to another busy and exciting year.

SRC Teachers
Mrs Murray and Mrs McCain

The gate on Connells Point Road will be locked each morning at 9.40am for security reasons. It will be re-opened at 3pm each afternoon.

Class parents are still needed for the following classes.

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If you would like to become a class parent, please contact Sue.

Come and play rugby with your mates at Blakehurst Rugby. We have the most picturesque home ground in the competition and coach’s who believe in passing on the proper values to your children. We are a rugby club dedicated to bringing the best out of your children in a fun and enjoyable atmosphere.

Training is on Wednesday evenings for the 7’s up and is held at “The Green”, Merriman st, Kyle Bay

Contact—Arthur Brown, 0414520637, arthur08@tpg.com.au