The great majority of children benefit from structures and routines, both at home and at school. For many children, routines are more than just helpful—they are essential in helping them navigate their world.

Organisational skills come naturally to very few children. Like most things, they need to be modelled and taught. As we start a new school year, there are some key routines that, if established now, will help children develop the organisational skills to be independent and effective learners. Every child should have:

- a regular time and place for doing homework: depending on family commitments and lifestyles, this may be straight after school, after dinner or in the morning. Providing a quiet place away from tv and other distractions, will aid concentration.
- a weekly timetable: a whiteboard in your child’s bedroom with the week’s commitments scheduled in helps them to prepare and be organised for what is needed each day.
- a special spot where notes and newsletters from school are put. Lost notes lead to missed deadlines and opportunities.
- a routine of packing the school bag each night, so that all the right materials and books are in place and ready to go.
- limited “distractions” in terms of stationery and pencil case items.
- routines for getting changed after school so that uniform items are ready and waiting in the right place for getting dressed each morning.
- all belongings clearly labelled with his/her name so that they can be identified if lost.

In helping our children to develop independence and strong organisational skills, we need to be providing guidance and support while not doing everything for them. Age, maturity and individual skills will vary from child to child. Some children constantly lose items with little concern for the cost or inconvenience of replacing them, safe in the knowledge that they will just get another one, be it lunchbox, hat, jacket, newsletter, permission note! Where carelessness and disorganisation are chronic, consequences, such as going without a replacement, may need to be considered.

Busy families with busy lives have much to cope with. Good systems of planning and organisation help to eliminate stress and give order and predictability to children’s lives. Time spent now, establishing good routines, is an investment in developing strong skills for our children’s futures.

**Value of the Week**

The Personal Value for the coming week is that of Responsibility, with a particular emphasis on “learn all you can”.

Part of becoming an independent and self-directed learner is taking responsibility for one’s own learning. Appreciating that it is your responsibility to pay attention in class; to be on task; to complete work within the set time; to produce your best work; to ask questions; to seek help if you don’t understand; to listen; to concentrate; to complete homework: these are all components of “learning all you can” and of developing responsibility.

Next week, teachers will be talking with students in class and at assembly about this value and will be looking for opportunities to reward students who demonstrate these behaviours.

Parents can assist by also talking about responsibility and how it relates to learning, and encouraging their children to “learn all they can” each and every day.

**Dates to Remember 2010**

**Term 1**

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>24</td>
<td>Welcome BBQ</td>
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<tr>
<td>25</td>
<td>District Swimming Carnival</td>
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<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>P&amp;C meeting 7 pm</td>
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<tr>
<td>25</td>
<td>“Jolly Bops”</td>
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<tr>
<td>29</td>
<td>School Photos</td>
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<td>1</td>
<td>Last Day of Term</td>
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**Term 1 Money & Note due**

<table>
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<th>Date</th>
<th>Amount Due</th>
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Reminder

To enable us to provide your child/children with appropriate care, please ensure that the school is advised of any changes to medical conditions/allergies, parent/carer and emergency contact details.

Create East 2010

Sydney Region schools are invited to nominate students who are gifted and talented in the arts to take part in Create East’s 2010 production, ‘TOYBOX’.

This regional initiative is a three-day workshop, culminating in an integrated, high quality performance. The event is run separately to Create South, which is also offered in Sydney Region in Term 2.

Who  Gifted and talented students from Years 4, 5 and 6 in Band, Choir, Dance, Drama & Visual Arts.
How  Student application forms are available from the office. Please complete the application, attach cheque and return to the office no later than Wednesday, March 3.
Where  Seymour Theatre Centre, Chippendale Glebe P.S., Glebe (Art group only).
Cost  $110
Further Information  Please contact Mrs K. Stevenson-CPPS or Renee Adele-Create East Coordinator  Email renee.adele@det.nsw.edu.au

The Green Club

The Green Club meets on the first Friday of every month, from 3.30 to 4.30pm. We discuss environmental issues and work on environmental projects that make a difference to our school.

The children who were members of The Green Club in 2009, will continue to be members for Terms 1 and 2 this year. Expressions of interest from children who wish to join the Green Club will be accepted towards the end of Term 2.

The first Green Club meeting for this year will be held on Friday, March 5. Please meet at the school BBQ area, where we will welcome back our worms. Thank you.

Poppy Kostantakis
Green Club Coordinator

Education Tax Refund

Eligible families can claim up to $375 per primary school student and $750 per secondary school student for legitimate educational expenses under the Education Tax Refund (ETR), but according to the Australian Taxation Office (ATO) only half have lodged a claim, leaving more than $500 million in unclaimed benefits. So save those receipts. Taxpayers still have until March-April 2010 to claim out of pocket education expenses for the 2009 school year, if they lodge their individual tax returns through a tax agent.

For more information about the ETR visit: www.educationtaxrefund.gov.au or phone 13 28 61.
Help Needed!!

Stage 1 teachers are in need of parent or grandparent helpers to assist with reading groups this term. You will be given a small group of children to work with and assist with their reading. The teachers will have all the work prepared for you. Please note, you may not necessarily be with your own child. If you have some spare time and would love to assist, please complete the slip below and return it to Mrs. Doulos or to the office by Monday, February 22.

Please ensure you circle the day/days you are able to assist.

Reading groups in Stage 1 are on:
Monday—Thursdays at 10.30-11.30am.

To allow parent helpers to focus on the students they are supporting, this role is not suitable for parents who would need to bring pre-schoolers with them.

Your help would be most appreciated.

Mrs. E. Doulos
Year 2 Teacher

STAGE 1 READING GROUPS

Yes, I am willing to assist with Stage 1 reading groups.

Parent Name .................................................................

I am available to assist on: (please circle) Monday Tuesday Wednesday Thursday

References

As families prepare applications for high school, we sometimes receive requests for written references to be provided to support these applications. It is our policy that we do not provide written references for students. We believe our reports are comprehensive, and provide full and appropriate information about students’ performance, application and behaviour. We do not require references for students enrolling at our school, and no public school should request references from a previous school as a requirement for enrolment. Please let Mrs. Hewson know if any government high school is requesting references for non-local applicants.

Free Vaccinations for Swine Flu

If you haven’t already taken advantage of free vaccinations against Pandemic A H1N1 (swine flu), NSW Health is strongly advising everyone over six months of age to be vaccinated. NSW Health’s Dr Kerry Chant says: “Children who are beginning school for the first time may be coming into contact with many more people than they normally would, so it is vital that parents and carers check that their child’s vaccinations are up-to-date, and make sure they get their child vaccinated against pandemic influenza.

Further information on H1N1 (swine flu) can be found at: www.emergency.health.nsw.gov.au/swineflu/index.asp
Welcome to all families attending our P&C meeting for the first time. Thank you for making the time to support this parent organisation which is such an important part of our school. I hope you will become "regulars" at these monthly meetings.

Our classes are established and operating smoothly. English and Maths groups are underway in Stage 3, with Stage 2 commencing tomorrow, I believe. Our Best Start Kindergarten assessments have been completed and classes are in routine and settled in for a great year of learning.

WEBSITES
Two important websites were launched last month, the more important being our revamped school website! We will be using it more and more to provide you and the wider community with information about our school and matters of educational importance generally. We are uploading our school notes and Newsletters, and will be including grade information and examples of student work etc, as the term progresses. If you haven't yet, please enter www.connellspt-p.schools.nsw.edu.au on your Favourites!

The Department of Education and Training has identified schools’ websites as the main means of distributing the 2009 Annual School Reports. Only a few hard copies will be printed for those families who don’t have access to the internet. Eventually, our Newsletter may also become electronic. It would save a huge amount of paper and labour, so I encourage families who are not yet connected to the world wide web, to seriously think about moving in this direction.

I know families from overseas are viewing our website and I hope that our school families find it a quick and helpful site from which to gain lots of information. Please let me know of any things you would like included, and if we can, we will do our best to meet your needs and incorporate your suggestions.

The other website launched last month has had a few more "hits" than ours, I believe! The My School website has certainly dominated the headlines and caused much controversy and conversations. Interestingly, I've not had one parent or community member make any comment to me or ask any questions about our ratings or performance! I hope our families felt that the information they accessed confirmed what they already believed about our school, and that there were no unpleasant surprises in what they read. It's interesting to note that the groups of "statistically similar" and "local" schools include, but do not identify, those that have academically selective classes, such as OC classes for Year 5 students. Notwithstanding, our aim has been, and continues to be, to provide the very best educational experiences for our students. Our emphasis is on literacy and numeracy, but our families also know that we provide a wide range of activities and opportunities in other areas to promote the talents and interests of students of all abilities. It would be very sad if the measure of a school’s "success" came to be only what can be measured in a NAPLAN test.

BER PROGRAM
Our building program is well under way, for both the classroom and library blocks. Despite the rain, I’m told that the Library block is only a couple of weeks behind schedule, and the classroom block, just one week behind. It is anticipated that the buildings will be completed by August.

You may have heard that we were briefly without water last Friday, when an excavator damaged the water main. All credit to our building contractors who, within twenty minutes, had purchased 500 bottles of water for students and staff to ensure that no one went thirsty while the water supply was interrupted. Their teams worked very hard to repair the pipe, and we were back to fully operational an hour after the pipe was ruptured. Their efforts, and those of our staff in distributing the water bottles quickly and efficiently, were greatly appreciated.
Our painting program is not complete, which is unfortunate. Rectification works will see quite a few areas being repainted. It is important that we get quality work, and we won’t settle for anything less for our school. New carpet was laid in what is currently 3M’s classroom on Saturday, all part of the National School Pride work funded by the Federal Government’s economic stimulus package.

**DANCE AND SPORT SELECTIONS**

This is a busy time of the year, with many children trying out, perhaps for the first time, for selection in PSSA teams and dance groups.

One of the harsh realities that we face is that not all children will be selected for an activity they have set their hearts on. Places are limited, because we can only select for a set number of places in the PSSA competition, or because we can only supervise or train a restricted number of students.

It is important that children understand that even talented students miss out on spots, because we have so many talented students who work hard and perform well. Every year, there are disappointed students and disappointed parents. Our teachers do their very best to select on merit, based on their judgment and what they see on the day. Your support in helping children handle disappointment (or success) gracefully is crucial to their ability to grow and learn. I advise children to only try out for selection if they feel they can handle missing out. No child should expect to be selected; if they are, then that’s a wonderful bonus.

Children who are lucky enough to make a team are expected to be considerate of those who may be feeling very disappointed. Having empathy for how others are feeling is a very important quality that we encourage in all our students, and this time of year is the perfect opportunity to demonstrate it.

**WELCOME BBQ**

I look forward to seeing all families at our Welcome Barbecue next week. Let’s hope for fine weather! I remind those attending that all DET sites ban the consumption of alcohol at events at which children are present, and that there is no smoking within school grounds at any time.

*(Mrs)* Anne Hewson

**Awards**

Principal’s Awards have been received by:

Cooper
Tiarna

Congratulations to these students for consistently displaying our Values in Action.
AGM
We held our AGM on Tuesday night and I have been re-elected as President of our P&C.
As in the past few of years, I will endeavour to perform my role to the best of my capabilities. I can assure you that my first and foremost objective is to support Connells Point Public School in whatever way I can in a dedicated, friendly and professional manner.
Working with me on the P&C Committee are:
Vice Presidents: Diana Valmas & Susan Jeakings
Secretary: Alison Woof
Treasurer: Jo-Anne Jenkins
At the P&C AGM we were very proud to give Mrs Hewson a cheque for $40,000 to spend in areas that Mrs Hewson feels will benefit our school the best. I’m sure Mrs Hewson will detail where the money will be spent once all funds have been allocated.
A BIG thankyou to everyone at Connells Point Public School for your support and generosity. All the money we raise goes back into making our children’s schooling bigger and better!
At our AGM Liane Madden resigned as our Newsletter Advertising Coordinator. I would like to thank Liane for all her hard work over the past few years. Liane has done an exceptional job in obtaining and organising all the advertising on the front cover of our newsletter. Our Newsletter is an excellent communication tool between the school and our parents and without the advertising we would not be able to publish it on a weekly basis. We are now looking for someone to take over this role. If there is someone who has a gift for selling then this job is for you! Liane has not left the school and she has offered to help and advise whoever takes over this role. If you are interested, please contact me and I will arrange for you and Liane to meet.
A few events being held this year are: Family Portrait Day, Connellswealth Games, Trivia Night and a Glamour Make Over Night. Stay tuned for more information about these events!
The P&C meets on the third Tuesday of each month at 7pm in the staff room to discuss various events and happenings in our school. It is a good way to keep yourself up to date with what is going on at your child’s school. Please feel free to come along and join us. If you cannot make these meetings but would like to table something please do not hesitate to contact me on: 0404 022489.
Looking forward to working with everyone throughout 2010.

Sue Szalay
P&C President

2010 CLASS PARENTS
We are looking for one or two people to be a class parent for each class. The class parent puts together a class list complete with telephone numbers and email addresses so that you can easily contact your children’s classmates. This person is also responsible for communicating any important P&C information to all the parents within your child’s class. If you are interested in being a class parent, please contact Sue Szalay – 0404 022489.
Welcome to 2010 BBQ and DISCO

The P&C Committee extends an invitation to all families at Connells Point Public School to join us at this annual event to welcome new families to our school community.

WHEN: 24th February, 2010 at 5.45pm – 8pm
K-2 Disco – 6pm – 6.45pm / 3-6 Disco 7pm – 8pm

VENUE: At the School

YOUR HOSTS: The P&C Committee supported by the School Council

Sausages and chicken kebabs will be provided at a cost of $2.00 each. Soft drinks & water will also be available.

A gold coin donation for the Disco on the night would be appreciated.

WHAT TO BRING: Your picnic rug and/or chair and dancing shoes! You may also bring along some of your own nibbles and drinks.

RSVP: Friday 19th February using the form below

To assist with catering, please return this form together with your money to your class teacher or to the office by Friday 19th February.

The ________________________________Family of Class(es)

will be attending the school Welcome BBQ and Disco.

No. of adults attending____________________ No. of children attending____________________

No. of Sausages_________________________ No. of Kebabs__________________________

Please indicate if you are a new family to the school □

Please indicate if you could assist on the night with the □ Setup, □ BBQ, □ Welcome table or □ Disco Supervision

Contact name & Phone: ________________________________

Connells Point Public School is a Smoking and Alcohol Free Zone.
St Mark’s Anglican Church have joined forces with the Lions Club and have registered a Clean Up Australia Day site at Kyle Bay (next to the Bowling Club).

We are looking for people (parents, kids, grandparents, uncles & aunties etc) to come along on Sunday March 7 at 10.30am until 12.30pm to the park next to Kyle Bay Bowling Club and help clean up the area. After the ‘clean up’ there will be a Sausage Sizzle. If you are interested in coming along, please enter your details into the following website.  http://www.cleanupaustraliaday.org.au/Kyle+Bay

Don’t forget to bring your sunscreen, sunglasses, a hat, gloves and sturdy shoes on the day!

Community News

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**2010 Clean Up Australia Day at Kyle Bay**

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Don’t forget to bring your sunscreen, sunglasses, a hat, gloves and sturdy shoes on the day!

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**Georges River College Peakhurst Campus**

**School Open Night**

Tuesday February 16, 2010

6.30-8.00PM

School Dome

Phone Mr Rick Seretis Principal
Or Mr Neale Harries Deputy Principal
On 9153 9966 if you require more information

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**Endeavour Sports High School**

**School Open Night**

Wednesday March 10, 2010

6.00-8.00PM

School Hall

Phone Mr Dale Palmer Principal
Or Mr Alan Maclean Deputy Principal
On 9524 0615 if you require more information