Independence is a quality we wish to see in our students, as they develop maturity and the skills necessary to make good decisions. Wise parents judge readiness, and present opportunities for their young children to gain confidence—a pre-requisite for independence. An independent person is self-reliant and able to make decisions according to the situation they are in. It might start in simple ways, such as purchasing something at the shop with Mum or Dad standing next to them and then moving further away as the child feels more capable.

Many children benefit from rehearsing and practicing a new skill before they implement it. For instance, parents might practice with their child what they will say and do when they go into the shop. Rehearsing this a few times builds confidence and makes the experience less daunting.

A strategy like this is useful anytime we wish our child to try something new. Many children become anxious about new situations, because they worry about what might happen, and if they will be able to handle the unexpected. Travelling to high school in Y7 might need rehearsal in the holidays before school starts.

As parents, we also need to decide if our children have all of the skills necessary for independence. For instance, being physically able to ride a bike is not all that is required for deciding a child is ready to ride his or her bike to school. We need to consider their judgement, their distractibility, their understanding of road rules, the route they will be taking, the risks involved from traffic and other people, and their capacity to make good decisions in an emergency.

Similarly, deciding when a child is ready to catch a bus without adult supervision is not just a question of having a bus pass or knowing when and where to get on and off the bus. It also involves consideration of what other things might happen, and rehearsing with the child how they would deal with different situations. What if the bus doesn’t come? What if the bus driver misses the stop or follows a different route? What is appropriate behaviour on the bus? What do you do if other children misbehave? Deciding that your child has the skills and strategies to cope with the “what if’s” as well as the straightforward aspects of a task, is part of the risk assessment parents make before extending independence into new areas.

Developing independence in our children is often a challenge, not least of all because we are, in effect, relinquishing some of our power and control. This is where our own judgement, planning and faith in our children is crucial. We need to be very sure our trust is well founded, and that we have prepared our children fully for the next stage in their development. The benefit is knowing that our children are becoming increasingly confident, mature and capable of acting safely and appropriately when they are out of our sight.

Developing Independence

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Value of the Week

Next week’s value is “Cooperation”, with focus on the aspect of being a team player. A team can be any group to which a child belongs—school, class, friendship, sporting, dance, choir, band, club, etc.

In talking with students about this value, we place emphasis on the commitment required when one is part of a team. Not letting the team down—by pulling out, not giving your best, being late, not attending practices or rehearsals, by putting self-interest ahead of others—needs to be central to any decision made by a team member. Criticising others in the group is also not part of being a team player. Team players are supportive, positive, dedicated, reliable, cooperative, selfless and committed.

Parents can assist the development of these values by spelling out expectations, very clearly, when children express interest in joining a team or a group. Ensuring their participation, until the conclusion of their commitment, is crucial. Making sure that they see things through is a life-skill which will serve them well in their future.
As part of the 2010 Education Week activities, the school will be holding its annual **Book Fair** on **Thursday, 5 August** from 8.30am till 4.00pm. You are invited to accompany your child/children to the **library** in order to purchase a book and donate it on the student’s behalf. All donated books will be acknowledged on the inside cover.

For anyone unable to attend on Thursday, books will also be on sale on **Friday 6**, 8.30 to 9.30am and 3.30 to 4pm.

Bloomin’ Books is the school’s supplier and all donations are quality resources that are extensively used by K-6 students.

Your continued support is greatly appreciated.

Dr M. McKirdy  
Teacher - Librarian

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**Band News**

Best wishes to **Chrystal, Fiona** and **Oliver** who will be performing on Sunday, August 1 at **Sydney Region Music Festival** at the Opera House. We trust that our **senior choir members** will enjoy the experience of being part of the massed choir at the festival. It is a wonderful occasion and we congratulate all those who will be participating!

We also wish the children in **Senior Band** performing in **Port Fest** at Port Hacking High School on Sunday, August 1, the best of luck.

A reminder to parents: Band Camp is being held 30, 31 August and 1 September.
**Spelling Bee**

The school spelling bee will be held on **Wednesday, 25 August** in the school hall. The Premier’s Spelling Bee was introduced in 2004 as a fun and educational way for primary school students to engage with spelling. The competition is open to all government primary, central and community schools in NSW and comprises two divisions – **Junior for Years 3-4** and **Senior for Years 5-6**. Regional Finals are held in various locations across NSW at the end of Term 3. Each year the State Final is held at the Eugene Goossens Hall, ABC Centre, Sydney, with the final hour of the Senior Final broadcast live on ABC Local Radio. The competition attracts significant publicity through media and television coverage. The word lists and more information is available from the following website [https://www.artsunit.nsw.edu.au/speaking-competitions/spelling-bee/2010-premiers-spelling-bee](https://www.artsunit.nsw.edu.au/speaking-competitions/spelling-bee/2010-premiers-spelling-bee).

Heats for Years 2, 3 and 4 will be held in the morning session starting at 9:40 and heats for Seniors will be held from 12:20pm in the hall. Students who place 1st and 2nd in each division will progress to the next round.

**Athletics Carnival**

The Y3-6 Athletics Carnival will be held on **Wednesday, 11 August at Sylvania Athletics Track**. Students, at the moment, are involved in trials for Discus and Shot Put, with the top eight qualifying for the final at our carnival. Unfortunately, due to the construction of the new library, we have lost our long jump pit. As a result, we will need to run two long jump pits at the carnival to cater for the usual demand in long jump. Please note that the long jump, as well as the races, will be a priority to be completed at the carnival.

**The District Track Carnival** will be held at **The Crest Bass Hill** on Tuesday, 17 August with the 100m, 200m, Relays, Tug O’ War and Tunnel Ball to be contested.

**The District Field Event Carnival** will be held on Monday, 23 August at **Olds Park**. This will involve Shot Put, Discus, Long Jump, High Jump and the 800m races. Notes will be handed out on Thursday 12 to students who qualify for these carnivals.

If your son/daughter is in Year 2; is turning 8 this year; competes at Little Athletics; and you wish for them to compete in our 3-6 carnival, please collect a note from the office or from our website. Year 2 students must be transported to and from the carnival by a parent/caregiver and supervised whilst at the carnival.

**Cupcake Day Postponed**

Year 2 Cupcake Day on Friday, 30 July has been postponed to **Friday, 6 August**

**Canteen Roster**

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<th>Friday</th>
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<td>Julie</td>
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P & C News continued

Pick Up Zone Supervision Roster

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<td>Heidi</td>
<td>Lilia</td>
<td>Mrs M</td>
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Community News

MindQuest
ST GEORGE GIRLS HS
VICTORIA ST KOGARAH

On Saturday 18 & Sunday 19 September 2010 the fifty second NSW Talent Enrichment Weekend MindQuest will be held for primary students from Years 1-6 at St George Girls HS. These include gifted and talented students, gifted underachievers and students with above average ability with a special interest. Students will have an opportunity to participate in over 37 exciting, fast paced courses in the two day program. They include courses in chemistry, earth sciences, drama, lego robotics, art and much, much more. Many of these highly successful courses have been run in the past and students’ evaluations suggest that they have been challenged and enriched by the experience. The cost of the weekend is $160 (including GST).

Contact your school for a brochure or Shelagh Poray 02 4233 2328
Closing Date: Friday 27 August 2010