FOCUS ON CURRICULUM
(This week: Miss Megan’s Class)

We have had such a busy year so far in I Block and would love to share some of the wonderful things we have achieved. Our major focus has been on implementing the National Curriculum this year in the areas of English and Maths. We have also covered units of work in Health and Physical Education and currently, Art.

Developing independence is a major focus in our room. All the students are becoming independent and confident in our class routines and organising their belongings. Sometimes they even organise Miss Sonja and me, if we’re not ‘on our game’!!

Communication is also very important in our room. The young people in our room are using varying levels of communication, from very early communication to systems such as Proloquo2go using an iPad. PECS (the Picture Exchange Communication System) is one of the major forms of communication we use in our room. All the students are creating a sentence strip using “I Want” and discriminating to choose a desired item from many symbols. Speech and the art of conversation are also very much encouraged. The students are beginning to seek out both Sonja and myself and their peers to tell us stories, engage in conversation and play at their individual level. It is wonderful to see all the students developing these skills. Talking with your children and getting to know them at their level has been a privilege. Their delightful personalities make our classroom an enjoyable place to be, every day.

In amongst all the fun, we do work very hard. During our streamed Literacy sessions, we have worked on many areas such as phonic awareness, pre-writing and writing activities, fine motor skills, pre-reading and reading skills and shared reading using a variety of books. The introduction of Letterland into our school has been amazing. The students absolutely love the Letterland songs and characters as they learn the letter names, sounds and formation.

Our cooking program is also literacy-based, linking our cooking each week with the letter / sound we are currently studying. Playing the songs and being the ‘teacher’ with the character cards has even become one of our choices for reward time!! In first Semester our genre focus was on Labelling.
We read books such as “Duck on a Bike”, “Brown Bear, Brown Bear” and “The Very Hungry Caterpillar” and learnt to recognise and label main characters, events and objects in the story. This Semester, we are working on responding to literature in various different ways. One of our favourite stories so far has been “I Went Walking”, with the students being able to predict the upcoming events in the story, sequence events of the story and describe the characters.

Our focus in Maths in Semester one was on Number, as we engaged in a wide variety of songs, games, hands-on activities and written activities involving recognising numbers 0-10, matching amounts, recognising groups of items and counting. We also did some great work sorting items into various categories (including shape, colour and size) and making patterns using these.

This Semester, we have been looking at the area of time, focusing on recognising and sequencing the days of the week, which days are home days / school days, the difference between night and day and the activities we do in the night / day, activities that occur in the morning, middle of the day and at night time.

We are currently in full swing (often with a paint brush!!) with our Art unit. We are doing some fantastic work, with a variety of different media to look at warm and cool colours. All of the children are really enjoying this unit – and I must say so am I!! Watch out Picasso here we come!!

HEALTH ALERT

The statewide Senior Nurse Manager in Education Queensland has requested that schools notify parents and carers of the following information:

“If a student has diarrhoea they are not to return to school 24 hours from their last loose motion. If they have bloody diarrhoea or diarrhoea following animal handling activities, carers need to contact their medical practitioner.”

As you may have heard, a new E-coli virus has come to light following the recent Brisbane Exhibition.

STAFFROOM FOR IMPROVEMENT

We have entered into the Staffroom for Improvement Competition and would really appreciate your support and the support of your family and friends. Our staffroom has not had a makeover in many years, as I put the needs of our students and their programs ahead of a staffroom makeover when determining our school budget.
How to Play
It’s easy to participate in Staffroom for Improvement! When you do, not only will you have the satisfaction of supporting your school – you’ll also have the chance to win one of five $1000 QTMB bank accounts.

Start by registering your details here:  
Once you’re signed up, we’ll send you an email to verify the information you provided. Just click the link in the email and you’ll be on your way!

You can visit this website each day, and click on The Big Red Button to support your school. The first time you visit, your click will give one apple to your teachers. Your second visit and click will count as two apples. Your third visit and click will give... (can you guess?) ...three beautiful juicy apples to your teachers. From there, the sky’s the limit! Come back each day and watch your apple giving power increase. We know your teachers will really appreciate your effort!

NEW APP ALLOWS YOU TO ACCESS SCHOOL WEBSITE INFORMATION EASILY!
Just reminding parents and carers about an Education Queensland app that allows you to access information about your child’s school. The QSchools app appears to allow you to access all information on that school’s website. When any new items are uploaded to the website, parents/carers could receive an alert to let them know about it. Fantastic!

It’s free from the App Store (for apple products) or Google Play Store (for androids).

Also, if you have not visited our website recently, then do have a look when you get the chance:
https://toowwestspecs.eq.edu.au/Pages/default.aspx

STAFF HAPPENINGS
Cyndy Hass has recently left and is now on maternity leave. Replacing Miss Cyndy on Mondays and Tuesdays to deliver Non-Contact Time for teachers will be Trish Bullock.

ALL ABILITIES PLAYGROUNDS
A handy contact for our families who are looking for All Abilities Playgrounds can be found on the following sites via social media:

For Facebook
Parents – Find an ‘All Abilities Playground’ near you.

For Twitter
Parents – Find an ‘All Abilities Playground’ near you.

P&C NEWS
It’s all happening this month for the P & C. You may recall that our P&C launched its second annual Toowoomba Business disABILITY Awards in July, inviting community businesses and organisations to nominate.

The Business disABILITY Awards is an innovation of our P&C Association to encourage the employment and empowerment of people in the Toowoomba Region with a disability. The secondary purpose is to promote the importance of disability education in Queensland, and the effect that this has on the future employment opportunities for the students. There are three categories of awards:

- Nominees for the category of Employment have encouraged the employment of someone with a disability within their business. This would also include any adjustments made to assist in this employment. The business can nominate themselves or be nominated by a third party.
- Nominees for Innovation and Access have innovatively adjusted their business practices to assist people with a disability from the general public. This may include, but not limited to access to a building, specific equipment purchases etc.
The businesses can nominate themselves or be nominated by a third party.

- Nominees for Community Group Engagement are not for profit community organisations that have specific innovative practices that support members of the community with a disability. The group can nominate themselves or be nominated by a third party.

Tonight, Tuesday 10 September, sees the 2nd annual Toowoomba Business disABILITY Awards being staged at the wonderful Weis Restaurant Marquee, with guest speaker the amazing Kurt Fearnley OAM.

The awards have a new branding, and have grown somewhat from 2012’s inaugural event. The finalists have been announced and these are:

- Cane and Able Travel
- Bounce Café
- Life Without Barriers
- Social Sports Network & PCYC
- Toowoomba Grammar School & Sony Camp
- Toowoomba City Golf Club
- Ability Enterprises

“The quantity and quality was amazing this year” The Chair of the Judging Panel and Awards Patron Judy Antonio said. “What an honour it is to be associated with this amazing event and this amazing school community.”

Finally, a big thank you to all those families who supported our recent Pie Drive. The drive made just under $600 for our P&C. Thanks to Tina Wilson who co-ordinated the drive along with Megan Apalais and others who assisted with packing on delivery day.

Paul Wilson (P&C President)

KEEPA WATCH ON OUR SCHOOL THESE HOLIDAYS

Parents and carers can help take care of our school or any school by reporting any suspicious after-hours activity to School Watch on 13 17 88.

By keeping an eye out we can work together to create a safer school community and help to reduce vandalism, theft and arson in our school.

If you see something suspicious, please don’t intervene. Call the School Watch number and let the local police or State Government Protective Security Service deal with the matter.

Remember, there is a public holiday (Labour Day, usually in May has been re-scheduled) at the beginning of Term 4. Monday 7 October is Labour Day with school commencing on TUESDAY 8 OCTOBER. As this will be the last newsletter before the break, on behalf of staff I’d like to wish all of our families a happy and safe holiday. In the meantime, I hope to see you at our Sports Day next Tuesday from 9.00-12.00 to support your children!

Till next time

Regards

Lea

P&C MEETING

OUR NEXT P&C MEETING WILL BE HELD ON TUESDAY 22 OCTOBER AT 5.30PM
Everyone is welcome!

UNIFORMS!

Our Uniform Convenor is Debbie Ritchie. If student uniform orders are lodged during the week, Deb will come in to fill those orders on Fridays.

Uniform shop has the following For Sale:

- Second-hand Polar Fleece Jumper (brand new – never been worn)
- 2 x Size 12 new shirt $20
- Second-hand clothing
  - 1 x Size 8 Polar fleece Jumper $12
  - 3 x Size 6 Polo Shirts $8 each

★★★★★★ Coming Events ★★★★★★

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<th>Date</th>
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<td>19.09.13</td>
<td>Talk Like a Pirate Day!</td>
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<td>07.10.13</td>
<td>Labour Day public holiday in Qld</td>
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<td>08.10.13</td>
<td>Term 4 resumes for students and staff</td>
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<td>21.10.13</td>
<td>Statewide Pupil Free Day in Queensland</td>
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<td>10.12.13</td>
<td>Graduation Night</td>
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