In this issue:

- 2014 School Leaders
- Catch Up Morning Tea
- Focus on Curriculum
- School Wide Positive Behaviour Support
- Toowoomba West ECDP
- Go Blue for Autism
- Every Day Counts
- Access to Justice of the Peace
- Visits to Paediatricians
- Keeping It Together: KIT
- Violent Video Games – Research
- Raising Expectations Conference

2014 SCHOOL LEADERS
Year 7:
Lochie Kurtz and Maddie Holdsworth
Year 6:
Drake Ronke and Munesh Gounder

This year, as well as a cohort of Year 7 students graduating and transitioning to Clifford Park Special School, our Year 6 cohort (who will have completed 12 semesters of education) will also be transitioning. That is why we have four school Leaders this year!

On 13 March, I accompanied our School Leaders to the Empire Church where all primary school leaders in the Toowoomba Regional Council Area had morning tea with Mayor Paul Antonio, local MP Trevor Watts and Councillors. I can tell you that I was one of the proudest principals present. Our School Leaders behaved impeccably as they sat and listened to leaders speaking, mingled for morning tea and had their photo taken. Well done!

Leaders from the left: Lochlan Kurts, Madison Holdsworth, Drake Ronke (front) and Munesh Gounder, waiting to board the taxi for the Empire Church

Our 2014 School Leaders pose for a photo with Mayor Paul Antonio, Trevor Watts MP and Councillors

Earlier this week our School Leaders were presented to the rest of the school on parade. Drake, Madison and Munesh were presented to their peers and staff as our School Leaders for 2014. (Lochie Kurtz was absent due to illness.) Family members and friends who could make it posed for photos as well.

CATCH UP MORNING TEA – POSITIVE BEHAVIOUR

Thanks to those Parents and Carers who attended our Catch Up Morning Tea on 11 March. This was a very informal event during which Megan Apalais (our P&C Vice-President) gave an outline of the new School Wide Positive Behaviour Support (SWPBS) program which our school and many others around the state are adopting.
Anita, Nikki, Megan, Theresa, Dot, Ngaire, Nicki, Tina, Paul and Mark came in for the Morning Tea Catch Up. (Missing was Jenny who returned a little later.)

Glenn and Lea also attended to update those present on issues, including the Junior Secondary agenda which will impact on all students in Queensland states schools at the end of this year. At the end of 2014, Year 6 and Year 7 students around the state will be transitioning to their high school.

Megan intends to have another Catch Up Morning Tea in May – date to be announced early next term. Hope you can make it!

FOCUS ON CURRICULUM

Every teacher in our school is developing units of work using the Australian Curriculum. Education Queensland has developed units of work from the Australian Curriculum to support teachers, which cater for all students up to Year 10. These units are referred to as C2C (Curriculum into the Classroom). Within these resources are units of work to cater for students with disabilities (C2C for SWD). Our teachers are using these materials to inform their planning, along with the support of Amy Olson, our Curriculum Co-ordinator. C2C for SWD looks at contexts for learning which match students’ chronological ages, but then looks at content which is at a developmentally appropriate level for each student.

After the Easter break, your child’s teacher will be contacting you to arrange a meeting to discuss your child’s ILP (Individual Learning Plan) and curriculum program for Semester 1.

As reported in our last newsletter, an ILP is required when a student is provided with a higher or lower year-level curriculum than their age cohort. An ILP documents curriculum content, teaching strategies and assessment provisions for the next reporting period. Decisions are based on collaborative analysis of student achievement data and in consultation with the student’s parent/s. An ILP documents:

- the differentiation and focused teaching already provided to the student
- the year-level of the curriculum to be provided during the next reporting period
- focussed teaching strategies to be used during the next reporting period and any other support to be provided

The purpose of the ILP is to provide you with an overview of the curriculum your child will be covering in the areas of Mathematics (each term), English (each semester) and Science (each semester). This curriculum-based approach is very different to previous plans (such as IEPs and ISPs) which were very much individually goal based.

SCHOOL WIDE POSITIVE BEHAVIOUR SUPPORT

Recently, our SWPBS External Coach, Racheal Watson, visited our school, interviewed me, a number of staff and students to complete a survey of our current school practices and beliefs around behaviour. We will have the results of her survey early next term.

Our school team (including parent rep Megan Apalais) have been meeting each fortnight after school. At the last meeting we completed our SWPBS Action Plan. Our school team has come up with our short ‘purpose’ which we will be presenting to our school community early next term for feedback.

I am very proud to announce the opening of our newest program. Our Regional Executive Director of Education, Mr Greg Dickman, has determined that our campus will be the site of a second Early Childhood Development Program in Toowoomba, which will be servicing young children with special needs in the prior to prep age range on the western areas in and around Toowoomba.

This facility, Toowoomba West Early Childhood Development Program, is located on our grounds (next to the Kath Dickson Child Care Centre on the corner of Gladstone Street). It is managed by our school’s administration staff but operates as a separate entity – under Early Childhood Development Program guidelines. This program will service the following school catchment areas: Kingsthorpe, Gowrie, Meringandan, Oakey, Jondaryan, Kulpi, Harristown, Newtown, Toowoomba North, Wilsonton, Rockville, Fairview Heights, Glenvale, Bunker’s Hill, Cambooya, Vale View and Drayton.
Young children with diagnosed disabilities or suspected disabilities who live in these catchment areas and meet eligibility for ECDP enrolment will be serviced by our ECDP. This support may take the form of programs based at our centre, outreach support visits to the child’s kindy setting or home visits, depending on the age and needs of each child.

At this early stage, our program is staffed with teacher Cara Viel and teacher aide Jillian Hatherall, with support from support services team members Shan Tharumanathan (Physiotherapist), Anita Hickey (Occupational Therapist), Helen Buchanan (Speech-Language Pathologist) and Kerrie Halaufia (Guidance Officer).

Yesterday students and staff went blue for Autism and raised $60. Thanks to those families who were able to get into the spirit at such short notice.

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EVERY DAY COUNTS!
As we reach the end of Term 1, parents and carers are reminded of the importance of sending children to school every day. Being at school every day counts, with one day absent each week quickly adding up to two months of missed lessons in a year.

Unless your child is ill, it is expected that your child will be at school, learning every day of the school year. More information on the importance of regular school attendance is available at: http://education.qld.gov.au/everydaycounts/index.html

After the holidays, we will be sending home order forms for your child’s school photos, so do watch out for that in your child’s communication book.

Have a happy and safe Easter break till school resumes again on Tuesday 22 April.

Till next time

Lea

★★★★★★ Coming Events ★★★★★★
Every Wednesday Gail Saw, our Uniform Co-ordinator comes in to collect and place orders for uniforms.

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<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fri 4 April</td>
<td>Last day of Term 1</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tues 22 April</td>
<td>First day of Term 2</td>
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<tr>
<td>Fri 25 April</td>
<td>ANZAC Day</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tues 13 May</td>
<td>Parent Catch Up Morning Tea</td>
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<td>15 Nov</td>
<td>P&amp;C Race Day</td>
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ACCESS TO JP
Mr. Glenn, our Deputy Principal, is a registered Justice of the Peace (Qual.). Should you need the services of a JP (Qual.) please enquire at the office to make a time to meet with Mr. Glenn.

Visits to Paediatricians or other specialists:
If your child has a paediatric or neurologist’s appointment coming up, please let your child’s teacher know. This will enable us to provide an update about your child’s progress at school. Paediatricians tell us that they find information from school to be very valuable e.g. in relation to a child’s behaviour, ability to concentrate, cognitive and physical skills, energy levels etc. while at school. It would be desirable to have at least one week’s notice for a report.

KEEPING IT TOGETHER - KIT
Our Physiotherapist, Shan Tharumanathan, came across this great resource on the CanChild Website that she thought could be useful for the families of ECDP children...
(and any family of a child with a disability!) It’s called The KIT: Keeping It Together: http://www.canchild.ca/en/canchildresources/parents_kit.asp and is designed to help parents organise information about their child’s disability and assist with communication/interaction between parents and service providers (e.g. health, education). There’s also a Youth version that is designed to help youth with disabilities organise their information as they start to take responsibility during the transition to adulthood.

**VIOLENT VIDEO GAMES – LATEST RESEARCH**

Kerry Halaufia, our Guidance Officer, recently came upon some current university research which may be of interest on the effects of violent video games on children.

**Life Lessons: Children Learn Aggressive Ways of Thinking and Behaving from Violent Video Games, Study Finds**

**Date: March 24, 2014**  **Source: Iowa State University**

Iowa State researchers found that over time children who repeatedly play violent video games will start to think and act more aggressively.

Children who repeatedly play violent video games are learning thought patterns that will stick with them and influence behaviours as they grow older, according to a new study by Iowa State University researchers. The effect is the same regardless of age, gender or culture. Douglas Gentile, an associate professor of psychology and lead author of the study published in JAMA Paediatrics, says it is really no different than learning math or to play the piano.

"If you practice over and over, you have that knowledge in your head. The fact that you haven't played the piano in years doesn't mean you can't still sit down and play something," Gentile said. "It's the same with violent games -- you practice being vigilant for enemies, practice thinking that it's acceptable to respond aggressively to provocation, and practice becoming desensitized to the consequences of violence."

Researchers found that over time children start to think more aggressively. And when provoked at home, school or in other situations, children will react much like they do when playing a violent video game. Repeated practice of aggressive ways of thinking appears to drive the long-term effect of violent games on aggression.

"Violent video games model physical aggression," said Craig Anderson, Distinguished Professor of psychology and director of the Centre for the Study of Violence at Iowa State and co-author of the report. "They also reward players for being alert to hostile intentions and for using aggressive behaviour to solve conflicts. Practicing such aggressive thinking in these games improves the ability of the players to think aggressively. In turn, this habitual aggressive thinking increases their aggressiveness in real life."

The study followed more than 3,000 children in third, fourth, seventh and eighth grades for three years. Researchers collected data each year to track the amount of time spent playing video games, the violent content of the game and changes in a child's behaviour. The length and size of the study made it possible for researchers to detect and test even small effects.

Boys reported doing more physically aggressive behaviours and spending more time playing violent games than girls. However, even when researchers controlled for gender, the violent video game effects on behaviour were the same for girls and boys.

**Children learn both good and bad behaviour.**

That earlier cross-cultural study, led by Prot, Gentile and Anderson, found that pro-social media – video games, movies or TV shows that portray helpful, caring and cooperative behaviours -- positively influence behaviour regardless of culture. The study, the first of its kind, tested levels of empathy and helpfulness of thousands of children and adolescents in seven countries. In combination, these studies show that the content of the video games youth play – pro-social or antisocial -- determines their impact on real world behaviour.

Story Source: (The above story is based on materials provided by Iowa State University.)