BE SAFE  BE RESPECTFUL  BE RESPONSIBLE

PBL (Positive Behaviour for Learning) Purpose Statement:
Toowoomba West Special School is committed to promoting a safe, respectful and responsible school community that enables our students to reach their full potential.

Behaviour Focus for next week:
‘I leave my personal items at home’

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STAFFING

Students and staff settled well into the 2016 school year as we now approach the end of Term 1. This year we have 12 new Preppies as well as a number of students in other year levels who are new, with a total of 62 students. We also have an Early Childhood Development Program (for your children under school age with special needs.) This program currently caters for more than 40 children in the Prior to Prep age group with numbers growing as the year progresses.

Our front office staff includes Alison Green (Business Services Manager), Mary O’Shea and Sandra Thompson. Mary and Sandra work on a part-time basis as Administrative Assistants. I am continuing to work in a permanent part-time capacity for four days each week, generally Mondays to Thursdays. On Fridays, Glenn Gatehouse (our Deputy Principal) is Acting Principal and Laura Masters is Acting Deputy Principal.

This year our support staff are:
- Grace Gnu (Physiotherapist)
- Helen Buchanan (Speech-Language Pathologist)
- Cheryl Brown (Occupational Therapist)
- Kerrie Halaufia (Guidance Officer)
- Tammy Saxton (School Nurse)

PBL: POSITIVE BEHAVIOUR FOR LEARNING

PBL is an evidence-based, schoolwide universal system of student behavioural support. This year we are continuing with ongoing revision of our implementation into classrooms and school wide systems. Each week we explicitly teach our behaviour focus for the week. Each behaviour focus relates to one of our three behaviour expectations of BE RESPECTFUL, BE RESPONSIBLE, BE SAFE. Next week’s Behaviour Rule is to  I LEAVE MY PERSONAL ITEMS AT HOME.

This relates to our expectation BE RESPONSIBLE.

It was great to see families at our P&C Welcome BBQ on 23 February. This was followed by our P&C’s Annual General Meeting. Parents and carers were then able to go with their child’s teacher to learn more about their child’s program for the year ahead.

As a result of elections at the AGM, officer bearers of our P&C for 2016 are:
Paul Wilson (President), Mark Powell (Vice-President), Mellissa Hill (Minutes Secretary), Laneska Bassett (Correspondence Secretary), Mark Powell (Treasurer), Nikki Powell (Uniform Co-ordinator with Amy Seawright volunteering to take on the role of Race Day Co-ordinator for 2016.

Many thanks to these wonderful people who have volunteered to give up their time and energy to support our school. We expressed our thanks to Megan Apalais who was not standing for positions this year after five years of active support. Megan has been a quiet but driving support behind P&C events such as last year’s very successful Race Day, raffles, our Community Art Show, school uniform and numerous other P&C activities. Megan will continue to be the parent representative on our school’s PBL Team and has been attending fortnightly meetings with us into her third year. Megan was also instrumental in organising monthly Parent Catch-Up morning teas during which she would update parents and caregivers on PBL implementation within our school. Megan, we will miss your presence on our P&C team but look forward to your ongoing support as a parent of the school. Thank you!
Miss Yvonne’s boys are very proud of their reward books!

Yvonne Gordon’s boys have all saved up 10 rockets full of stars. For some of those boys, it is a massive thing to be able to ‘delay gratification’ – to be able to keep saving their stars for a larger reward rather than trading them in much earlier for a smaller one. It is wonderful to see these guys maturing! Collectively they have chosen to have a reward lunch with me and are looking forward to their picnic next week!

SCHOOL PHOTOS

Peter Rickard Photography commenced taking photos of our students and staff last week. (These are being taken individually as we have learned from experience that it is near impossible to take photos of groups with all students smiling!) While most of the photos were taken, Peter and staff will return after Easter until all students have been captured so please do not worry if your child was absent last week. More information about photo packages / prices will be sent to parents in the future when available.

B BLOCK REFURBISHMENTS COMPLETE!

You will remember that refurbishments to B Block commenced half way through Term 4 last year and went right through the Christmas holidays. We are thrilled with the results. Teachers and teacher aides were able to move back into 6 teaching areas, the library and two eating areas during the week before students returned. As a result, classes were able to hit the ground running!

This project has transformed this block from 1975 and brought it into the 21 century! Spaces have been redesigned and modernised with functional areas and surfaces throughout. All asbestos ceiling tiles and external wall panels have finally been removed.

Thanks go to Glenn Gatehouse who worked closely with a range of government and non-government entities to re-design and facilitate the construction. Our teaching, non-teaching and ancillary staff all did a marvellous job with moving the entire contents of B Block into shipping containers then returning things to their new places. It was very much a team effort!

Storage cupboard surfaces have a combination of ‘front runner’ (which Velcro will adhere to) and magnetic, writeable surfaces, both of which are practical surfaces for displays and teaching tools.

Each classroom now has an additional smaller teaching room (with viewing window) and a teacher’s office.

What would a renovation be without new furniture as well!

The budget included the capacity to purchase new furniture for our classrooms, library and eating areas. One classroom (currently unoccupied) will become a permanent sensory room for our students in the future.
Last month we staged the official launch of the Telstra Country Wide Kids Grant here at our school to acknowledge and celebrate our $10,000 grant to enhance our technology and communication needs. Scott Mullaly has been negotiating with us to develop and implement a plan which allowed us to purchase a Beemz system (whereby movement passing through laser beams can create music!), BoardMaker programs (to support the development of visual aids and communication systems, as well as GoPro camera and accessories to enhance the recording of video footage for data collection purposes. The Beemz system will be going into our sensory room.

Left: Mr Glenn and students (Seth, Isaac and Tegara) show us their Telstra caps and water bottles.

Staff and P&C President Paul Wilson display the items purchased via the grant alongside Telstra Country Wide’s May Boisen (in yellow)

**DATE CLAIMER:**
Toowoomba West P&C Race Day
Saturday 29 October

**SCHOOL ROUTINES**
I’ll take this opportunity to remind parents about a few logistical issues around our school routines.

**Arrival Time:**
School begins at 8.45am each day. Arriving by this time each day ensures that students get off to a positive start as part of the group. Arriving later can disrupt the group and can make it more difficult for children to focus on the activities at hand and then takes more time to settle the group again. Of course this is unavoidable at times, but your co-operation with this matter would be appreciated.

Please be aware that staff are not rostered on duties to supervise students before school until 8.15am so by arriving after this time you can help to ensure your child’s safety.

**Transport:**
For those families whose children access bus or taxi transport, I know that the transport companies need to have children dressed and ready for pick-up each morning to avoid delays in getting children to school on time. Correspondingly, parents need to ensure that they are home before drop-off time each afternoon. Please be aware that if your child is going to be away, it is your responsibility to notify your transport provider beforehand. Also, taxi and bus staff should not be given the responsibility of transporting medication for your child to and from school. Please bring these in yourselves and complete any necessary forms.

**Emergency Contacts:**
Due to the nature of our students, it is necessary to be in phone contact with parents / carers in case of emergency. Would you please ensure that the school has your latest contact details at all times, especially mobile phones?

**School Lunches:**
Meal times are extremely busy times at our school – it’s a case of ‘all hands to the pumps’! For this reason, staff do not have enough time to deal with food which requires significant preparation e.g. microwaving, if this can be avoided. Please try to send in foods which are already prepared and do not require heating.

Also, in an effort to improve student and staff safety, the school eating areas no longer have sharp knives. It would be appreciated if parents could cut up as much food at home, if this is necessary. Please try to send in foods which are already prepared and do not require heating.

**Could you please ensure that all lunch equipment is labelled?**
This is especially helpful and time-saving for staff members who may not routinely work with your child on a daily basis such as supply staff.

We encourage healthy eating so please try to send in fresh, healthy foods to encourage good eating practices, along with a water bottle. Water is our preferred drink at school. Starting this as early as possible will encourage good habits for the future.

**School Gates:**
In the interests of safety, we have a separate Parent / Carer Pick-Up Gate from the Taxi / Bus Gate. As you approach our front gates the Parent / Carer Pick-Up Gate is on your far left and the Taxi / Bus Gate is the main, central gate.

If your child is arriving after school has started or being collected during the day, please call in at the office. Office staff will arrange for a staff member to come to the office to escort them to class or bring them up from class.
Our front gates can be a point of congestion, especially in the afternoons during pick up time. Most of the staff are on duty at that time, marshalling students into bus / taxi groups and ensuring that the right students get into the right transport etc. It is advisable to keep conversations with your child’s teacher brief at this time, so that all children’s safety is maintained. This is not meant to stifle communication with staff. By all means make a suitable time with your child’s teacher to discuss any issues with them at length.

Spare Clothes:
All parents are urged to send in a spare change of clothes for your child (more, depending on your child’s needs). Irrespective of the toileting needs of children, accidents happen. They may include spilled drinks, water play etc. Please ensure that all of your child’s personal clothing and any personal belongings are clearly labelled. If you have clothes at home from last year’s school supply, please return them. We need them for future emergencies. If you have any old clothes (not necessarily uniforms) which your children have outgrown, we would appreciate such a donation to our spare clothing pool for emergencies.

Visits to Paediatricians:
If your child has a paediatric, neurologist or other specialist visit 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 and other specialists tell us that they find information from school to be extremely 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.

MISS LEA’S LEAVE
I will be taking Long Service Leave after the Easter vacation for a period of four weeks. I am going to Italy to visit family and Turkey (where we will be at Gallipoli on ANZAC Day). During my absence, Glenn Gatehouse will be Acting Principal and Laura Masters (our Curriculum Co-ordinator) will be Acting Deputy Principal.
If I do not see you before the end of term, do have a happy and safe holiday period till school resumes on Monday 11 April.
Kind regards
Lea

★★★★★★ Coming Events ★★★★★★

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<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>24.03.16</td>
<td>Last day of Term 1</td>
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<tr>
<td>11.04.16</td>
<td>First day of Term 2</td>
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<tr>
<td>25.04.16</td>
<td>ANZAC Day public holiday</td>
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<tr>
<td>02.05.16</td>
<td>Labour Day public holiday</td>
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GOVERNMENT APPROVED

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 him.

SAILABILITY

Come and Sail with us
Sunday the 20th of March
Our Mission
“To provide people with Disabilities the opportunity To participate in the sport of Sailing in a safe, fun and supportive environment.”

WHERE: Darling Downs Sailing Club, Cooby Dam (Straight ahead through the gates Loveday Cove)
WHEN: 9.30 am until 2.00 pm approx.
COST: $8.00 per person for 30 minute (approx.) Sail time
      $ 15 for 2 in a family
      $ 20 for 3 in a family
Tea, coffee, slices, sausage sizzle and drinks available to purchase or bring along a picnic and enjoy the beautiful surrounds of the foreshore while watching. We encourage all to come and have a look, even if you are not sailing, and enjoy an idyllic, relaxing day near the water.
Limited spaces so please contact us to book and to discuss needs.
Contact: ddsailability@gmail.com
       Go to our Facebook page
       Or call if you have no email access.
Glen Garvey:  0419176441
Please visit our Web site for more info: www.sailabilitydd.org

*Weather conditions permitting. Any changes will be posted on our Facebook page, so please check there if in doubt.

*Also a spare set of clothes is recommended in case of any splashes on the water