Principals Message

For some time now our school has had some ongoing issues with late payment for activities and excursions. This is a problem because it makes organisation and planning of events very difficult. Often we need to confirm total student numbers with excursion providers and bus companies in advance. Also, if students are not participating in a particular activity, excursion or event, we have a responsibility to develop a supervision plan and suitable alternate activities for them. This was discussed at the last P&C meeting and with the P&C’s support we are introducing a new standard system whereby payments for ALL future events and excursions must be received NO LATER than 3:30pm two days before the activity or excursion is to take place – effective from today onwards. Two days provides adequate time for our staff to ensure a suitable plan is in place for those not participating and gives us time to notify organisers of final student numbers.

This new system will be first applied for the Hunter Life Education visits occurring next Monday and Tuesday. This means that families that haven’t yet paid for their child to attend will need to do so no later than 3:30pm tomorrow. Payments for Life Education after 3:30pm tomorrow will not be accepted. Hopefully, families can understand that this is a necessary system to ensure our good organisation for the students. We will continue to support families to meet payment deadlines by reminding students in class, putting reminder notices in the newsletter and through push notifications on the Skoolbag app.

Please keep in mind that small payments towards any school activity, excursion, book pack cost etc. can be made at any time in the lead up to deadlines. Some families have paid off book packs and /or more expensive overnight excursions for example by paying $5 a week. If you have any questions about the new system, please don’t hesitate to contact me at school.

Have a great week.

David Holland

P&C meeting
The next school P&C meeting is scheduled tomorrow night (18th March). The meeting commences at 7pm in the library.
School Values Focus
Our school has five core values which we explicitly teach students and promote within our school: Respect, Responsibility, Resilience, Integrity and Excellence. To assist the students in better understanding what these values mean and why they are important, we’ve started to focus on one particular value each week in the school assembly. For the next few weeks, the focus is on the value of Respect. In last week’s assembly we read the students a story called ‘Same, but a little bit diff’rent’. This book shows how people can be the same in some ways but different in others. The key message is: Respect can be shown by accepting others even when they are different from us. This Thursday we’ll be talking about why it is important not to judge others by appearances. Perhaps you might like to have a discussion around the dinner table this week about Harmony Day and accepting those that are different from us.

This week’s value: Respect
Key Message: Accepting others even when they are different from us

Binless Day
The Enviro Crew have moved the date of the binless day to Thursday (19/3) to give families a little more time to prepare. The philosophy behind a binless day is simply to promote and be active in trying to reduce our everyday waste. Students are asked to bring their food on Thursday in containers rather than plastic wrapping. Ideally, food should be fresh and not pre-packaged, but if your child would normally bring snack foods which are pre-packaged, for binless day perhaps place them in containers. The Enviro Crew will have some small prizes to hand out on Thursday to students whose lunchboxes are plastic and wrapper free.

Parent Teacher Interviews
Interviews are scheduled for next Tuesday evening the 24th March. By now you should have received a letter from your child’s teacher offering an interview. If you haven’t yet returned it and would like an interview with your child’s teacher please return the note asap (spares can be found on the app and website). The teachers will start notifying families of their interview times this week. If at the last minute something comes up preventing you from attending your scheduled interview, please phone and let us know.

Note: Some teachers’ interview schedule has already been filled for next Tuesday. The teachers will endeavour to offer families additional time for an alternative day and time.
Harmony Day – Out of Uniform Day

On Friday, 20th March, our school will be celebrating and recognising the importance of Harmony Day.

Harmony Day is celebrated around Australia in March each year. It’s a day when all Australians celebrate our cultural diversity. It’s about inclusiveness, respect and a sense of belonging for everyone. In 2015 we celebrate 15 amazing years of Harmony Day…and it’s all because of you! We want to thank you, the amazing people in our community who live the ‘everyone belongs’ message each and every day.

This year Cardiff South will celebrate by participating in peer support group activities which will see children from Kindergarten to year 6 working together to complete a specific Harmony Day activity. Activities will expose children to different cultural experiences in dance, art, storytelling, music and/or sport.

Students are invited to come out of uniform and wear something orange for the day. A gold coin donation is requested. The money raised from Harmony Day will be donated to the family of a little girl from Cardiff Public School who is terminally ill with high medical costs. Although she is from a different school, we feel that joining with the Cardiff PS community to assist this family, fits right in with the themes of Harmony Day – respect and a sense of belonging. Thanks for your ongoing support.

School Cross Country
The school’s annual cross country event is planned for Thursday 26th March. The carnival is for students 8 years and older. All students are expected to participate in their age race to the best of their ability and have been practicing in the lead up during fitness times at school. The races will start at 11:30am and will be run on the school grounds. The 8, 9 and 10 year olds will run 2km and the 11, 12 and 13 year olds will run 3km. Ribbons will be awarded at a school assembly for students finishing 1st, 2nd and 3rd in each age division. Parents are welcome to join us in the K-2 playground as spectators, you may like to bring a camp chair and a hat. The fastest four runners for each age division automatically qualify to represent Cardiff South at the Zone Cross Country on Thursday 23rd April at Federal Park, Wallsend.

Homework Forum
On Wednesday 1st April the School Council will be hosting an open forum on homework. This parent forum is the next stage in the School Council’s work to review and update our school’s homework policy. The forum will commence at 7pm in the school hall and all school families are invited to attend. The evening will include feedback from our 2014 homework survey, a presentation from Mr Holland on what research is showing about homework, and then participants will be able to contribute ideas and suggestions through small group discussions on key issues including: How much homework per grade? What tasks should be part of regular homework? How do we meet the needs of all learners? How do we get a balance between rehearsing skills and applying them? How can the school support parents with homework? The aim is to be finished by 8pm. The School Council hope that you are able to attend and come prepared with helpful ideas or suggestions.
**Re-scheduled Zone Soccer Trials**
The zone soccer trials that were postponed last Friday due to wet weather have been rescheduled for this **Thursday, 19th March**. They will commence at 12pm at Taylor Park, Barnsley. For more information, please speak with Mr Jardine.

**PSSA Netball Training**
Miss Glawson will be conducting netball training during lunch every Tuesday starting next week, 24th March. The girls are expected to bring their joggers and a water bottle. If they forget their joggers on training day **no phone calls home will be made**.

**Life Education Visits**
Kindergarten to Year 4 will be visiting the Hunter Life Education Centre next Monday 23rd March and Tuesday 24th March. Your child’s class will be visiting on:

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Just a reminder that the **final date for payment** is **this Wednesday 18th March**. Unfortunately we are unable to **take any late payments**. Please pay promptly to avoid your child missing out on this great learning experience.

**New Visual Arts Group**
On Wednesday last week, the Visual Arts group met for the very first time. They had lots of fun experimenting with charcoal, and found that they could create light and dark shades by using various types of charcoal and applying different amounts of pressure. Check out some of our masterpieces!
Responsible Pet Education
Yesterday we had a visit from Roslyn Blair and her dog Jett, from the responsible Pet Ownership Education Program. Roslyn came to chat to students in K-2 about responsible pet ownership. The students came away with a great deal of helpful information on keeping safe around dogs. Below are two short recounts of what Mackenzie and Madeleine from 2L learnt in the session.

Mackenzie W
If you see a dog without an owner, don’t pet it. When you see an angry dog stop and stand still, hands by sides, look down, wait till the dog goes away then keep doing what you were doing. If the dog does have an owner, ask the owner if you can pet it, tuck your fingers in and let the dog sniff your hand then pet from the collar to the tail. If you are playing with a toy and it goes over the fence, don’t jump the fence to get it if your neighbour has a dog, it’s best to go and ask your neighbour to get your toy instead.

Maddison D
Monday 16th March, 2015 a dog named Jett and his owner Roslyn came to the school. Roslyn taught us rules for when we get close to an angry dog:
1. stand still; 2. Put your hands down; 3. Be as quiet as a mouse; 4. Look at the ground.
They are four rules that you should always follow! Thank you Roslyn and Jett for coming.
Skoolbo App
‘Skoolbo-Go Aussie Kids Go!’ is an Australian website designed to help children with their reading and maths. Students in Years 1-6 have an account which gives them free use of the program at home. There is no advertising on Skoolbo or in-app purchases. Children are not able to communicate on Skoolbo and there is no possibility of unsafe interactions. It is your choice if you would like to access this software or not but it is produced by a reputable company and we felt it was a worthwhile resource to make available to all our students.

How to get going at home:
1. Visit www.skoolbo.com.au/downloads and download the software. Skoolbo works on tablets (ipads and androids) and computers (PCs and Macs).
2. Open the software and select home use
3. Insert your child’s username (sent home recently). The password is by default the colour BLACK and the animal BEE, although your child might have changed this at school.

Please do not hesitate to contact me on fay.downes@det.nsw.edu.au if you need help with logging in. If you are having problems downloading please contact Skoolbo at info@skoolbo.com.au or phone (02) 6112 8508.

Earth Hour
Earth Hour begins 8.30 on Saturday 28th March. This is when we are asked to not use devices like computers TV’s and lights. By ‘switching off’ for one hour we are showing our support towards initiatives to reduce global warming whilst getting people to talk about how we can reduce our environmental footprint.
During ‘Earth Hour’ you may wish to hold a candle-light dinner, play board games, charades or camp outside and use torches. I am sure the whole family will have fun while supporting a world-wide campaign. Now is the time to start planning what you will do to support Earth Hour.

Healthy Lunch Box Session
On Monday 23rd March, parents and carers are invited to a Healthy Lunch Box Session. The session will be presented by The Cancer Council as part of the Eat It To Beat It program. This is a great opportunity to gather some great, fresh ideas for the dreaded task of packing lunches. The session will be held in the school hall from 9:15am. Numbers are needed, please contact the office if you are intending on coming.

Hunter Sports High – Application open
Hunter Sports high at Gateshead has finalised its Talented Sports Program for 2016. If your child is interested in attending HSH in 2016, you are encouraged to go to their website www.huntersports.com.au for a detailed schedule of trial dates and times for each sport offered. Applications close Friday 1st May
ICAS
This is the last week to register for the UNSW assessments – ICAS (International Competitions and Assessments for Schools). These assessments are conducted externally by the UNSW for students who enjoy being challenged and are held at school. They are not compulsory.
Below is a list of the tests available to students, if you wish for your son/daughter to participate in one or more of these tests, please ask your child to collect a note from the office or you can download one from the app or website. Notes and payment MUST BE IN BY THIS FRIDAY MORNING, 20TH MARCH.

Digital Technologies $8 Tuesday 19th May
Science $8 Wednesday 3rd June
Writing $17 Monday 15th June – Friday 19th June
Spelling $11 Tuesday 16th June
English $8 Tuesday 28th July
Maths $8 Tuesday 11th August

Canteen

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<tr>
<th>Wednesday 18</th>
<th>Friday 20</th>
<th>Monday 23</th>
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<tr>
<td>K. Gordon</td>
<td>K.Carroll</td>
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<td>P.Thompson</td>
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<td>K.Sumner</td>
<td>M.Davies</td>
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2015 Netball Registration
We are seeking 7 to 11 year olds to fill our junior teams. Please contact Katie in 0412 781 739 for more information
New and experienced players welcomed.

Happy Birthday

Abbie G 2L 19/3
Jacob P 5E 20/3
Riley W 2L 21/3
Malibu T 6J 23/3
Madeleine H 6C 23/3
Sophie M 1D 24/3
FINALLY - House Sport Shirts
We are pleased to inform you that the new house sport shirts have arrived. The Uniform Shop is open each Wednesday morning from 8:30am – 9:30am. If you are unable to make it within these hours, you are welcome to leave your order with the office. Please be aware that as there has been some wait for these shirts, the Uniform Shop may be a little congested for a couple of weeks, so taking the option of leaving your order at the office may suit you better. We think you will agree, the shirts look great with our new logo on them.

We’re Searching for Volunteers

It’s that time once again. The NSW State Election will be held on Saturday 28th March. Our school will be a polling station and the P&C will be running a BBQ on the day to raise funds for the school.

If you are willing and able to either:

- Help on the stall on the day, or
- Bake cakes, scones etc that we can sell on the day

Then please contact Kevin Sinclair on 0405724906 or kevinsinclair@mac.com
Help your kids build their own firewall against online Nasties

The online world provides endless access to inappropriate content for our kids. Filters can play a part, but as Catherine Gerhardt describes, it’s much better to have a fully rounded approach to tackling the issue.

**Fiction vs. reality.** One of the biggest concerns I have as a parent at the moment is the relative ease with which children can have access to online pornography. Recent studies revealed that children as young as eight years old have seen it, and most kids have witnessed it before parents have even considered discussing it. For me, it’s about considering what the long-term effects are going to be on our children’s future relationships. With wide access to the internet, including mobile devices and gaming systems, it is too easy for even young children to reach inappropriate content.

Most kids who have seen pornography know immediately that it feels wrong. They can feel ‘strange’ and their personal instincts kick in like an alarm system telling them something is not quite right. They may feel sick, embarrassed, confused. Some kids stumble across it (many porn sites know popular key strokes kids use), and others are exposed to it by friends or family.

Is pornography really that big of a deal for our kids? The simple answer is yes. Pornography damages their brains by tricking them into releasing the same pleasure chemicals that drugs do. “A child’s brain is more vulnerable as it is rapidly forming neural connections. Viewing pornography can reprogram a child’s brain and initiate an addiction that is often harder to overcome than drugs or alcohol,” says Kristen Jenson, author of Good Pictures, Bad Pictures.

**Pornography harms relationships.** Youth are being exposed to pornography even before they have had the opportunity to experience a relationship. Teens tell researchers that they don’t like pornography but they feel pressured to watch it, and they even acknowledge that it provides a model for them to follow. When we start to think about kids getting sex education from pornography, we can start to understand why we should be worried about their future relationships. Viewing pornography is setting up unrealistic expectations and desensitizing sexual expectations. Pornography can distort a person’s view of what a healthy relationship should be, and devalues the principles of mutual respect, trust and love we expect our children to experience in the future.

**What can parents do to build their child’s firewall?**

Be proactive, be preventative. Like most things it’s helpful for parents to begin the conversation before their child becomes interested in porn. Younger kids are more likely to see the parent as a dependable source of information; by the time they are teenagers peers become the reliable source and peer pressure and curiosity can lead them down a path of unrealistic expectations and perhaps, even addiction.

Be open. Most kids won’t tell their parents because they know they shouldn’t be looking at that stuff and, worst of all, you might take the technology away from them. Be honest, for many of us that might be our first reaction. But in hindsight it only prevents kids from telling us about their online experiences later on. It’s okay to say, “Thanks for telling me, I’ve had that happen too”, or “Let’s look into that together.”

more on page 2
Help your kids build their own firewall against online Nasties...

Start by asking your child. Ask whether they have ever seen inappropriate photos online. Let them know that if it happens you expect they will come and tell you, assuring them they will not get into trouble and will not have the device taken away from them. You can suggest your child leaves a note for you if they see something online that makes them feel uncomfortable. This lets you know when they are ready to discuss it and gives you the chance to have a chat with them on the subject when you are ready.

Internet filters and porn blockers. These are important, but they are not a one-stop shop on protecting our kids. They can certainly help by minimising the risk of ‘random’ porn attacks, but they won’t safeguard them either. Even if we feel we have placed adequate measures within our own homes, children must, and do, go out into the wider world where they will have exposure that is beyond our control.

Developing internal filters is about getting kids to understand what pornography is, how it affects their brain, and coming up with strategies they can use when they are exposed to it. Children need to be able to make safer choices when they are in situations where content filters or adults are not monitoring their behaviour. It is normal for kids to be curious and as they head into the teenage years that curiosity peaks. As children grow they spend more time online and get exposed to more of the online world, with parents having less control over their viewing habits.

Parenting responsibility. Websites and governments are taking the minimum responsibility on these issues, so it has to become primarily a parenting responsibility. Children can be protected and harm can be minimised by taking some common-sense approaches. Parents need to establish their expectations about children’s viewing; make sure communication devices are used in public places; install net nannies and firewalls where appropriate and don’t be afraid to keep a check on website histories. Investigate how you can protect your children and minimise their exposure by installing a porn site blocker onto your internet connected devices. A quick Google search will provide some options which best suit your family.

Discussions about pornography need to be part of an ongoing conversation within the family. Talking won’t put your kids at increased risk; in fact, it increases their awareness and empowers them to make safer decisions when the time comes. Short, frequent discussions will help your child remember information – rather than one big long lecture. As bestselling author Steve Maraboli advised: “Take action! An inch of movement will bring you closer to your goals than a mile of intention.”

Catherine Gerhardt