Dear Parents / Carers,

Welcome back to Mawarra for Term 2. Although this is a short term, we certainly have a lot on our calendar over the next 9 weeks.

Anzac Day March
Thank you to the 83 children who attended Camden’s Annual ANZAC Day March, representing Mawarra Public School. Mawarra formed a very noticeable contingent in what has become a real tradition. It is through encouraging children to participate in meaningful ANZAC activities that this day will remain as a special event on the Australian calendar. We also this year had representatives from our school leaders at the dawn service. Many thanks as well to Mrs Cronshaw, Mrs Drieman and Mrs Hordern who attended the march representing the staff, and to Mrs Took who attended and played music for the dawn service.

School Development Day
On Monday the staff returned to school to revise a number of the Department’s smaller compliance policies, as well as working on a number of new initiatives. A major focus of the day was looking at the updated school report format that will be used this year and beyond. Staff also undertook training on the Disability Discrimination Act and its implications for education.

Uniforms
At the beginning of second term it is time for students to transition into wearing winter uniform. It is a time of year where weather is quite changeable, and during these next few weeks, we encourage you to choose the most appropriate uniform for the weather of the day. By Week 3 we hope the weather will cool down to allow full transition to winter uniforms. It might be time to check winter uniforms and plan a possible visit to the uniform shop.

Improvements Around the School
Over the holidays, a number of improvements have been made to make Mawarra an even more pleasant place. In addition to the major building works that have almost been completed, the outside of the Kindergarten block has been painted. The girls and boys toilets have also been completely internally painted. Outside, there has been some turf laid, and as a result of the playground committee’s consultation with our students, four soccer fields have been permanently measured and marked out. Thanks to Mr Eagles and Mr Wildman for completing this project, which will make lunchtime games much easier. The vegetable gardens have also been rebuilt and improved. Year 3 and 4 will be planting these gardens out shortly and maintaining them as a class project. The playground committee is meeting again this week to plan further improvements in the playground.

Opportunity Class Applications
Notes went home yesterday to Year 4 students, who will be able to apply to complete the Opportunity Class placement tests for Gifted and Talented Students to gain a possible placement in a local opportunity class for Year 5 in 2015. If you have any questions regarding this process, feel free to contact me soon, as applications need to be completed over the next two weeks.

NAPLAN - Week 3
During Week 3, students in Years 3 and 5 will complete the NAPLAN tests, along with every other primary school in Australia.

- The Language Conventions and Writing Tests will be completed on Tuesday 13th May, 2014
- Reading will be done on Wednesday 14th May, 2014
- Numeracy will be on Thursday 15th May, 2014

Students who are absent on one of these days will complete the test/s on Friday 16th May, 2014 which has been set down as a ‘make-up day’. Absences during this week should be kept to a minimum where possible.

NAPLAN assesses skills in literacy and numeracy that are developed over time, through the school curriculum. NAPLAN is not a pass or fail type test, but rather shows how individual students are progressing in numeracy and literacy skills against national standards for all Australian children. We will have completed preparation at school and made all attempts to make students comfortable with the process, but if your child is anxious about completing the tests, reassure them that it is only one measure to see how they are progressing and that they should just try to do their best. Attached to this newsletter is a great “Parenting Tips” brochure on preparing your child for this event.

As you can see lots to be done over the next nine weeks.

Mr Paul Mallia
Principal
School Banking
This year’s rewards program is themed the ‘Deep Sea Savers’, packages explaining the new program were given out at the beginning of term one. One silver dollarmite token will be issued for every school banking deposit made (maximum of one per week). You must include your reward coupon with your 10 silver dollarmites tokens to redeem your reward. Those students that have earned 10 tokens this year will be notified with a note in their bankbook to redeem their reward. Students that have not redeemed a reward from last year will need to bring in their tokens so they can pick from last years’ rewards.
For more information to be able to participate in the school banking program, all your child needs is a Commonwealth Youthsaver account.

Student Welfare

Club Zero
What a wonderful way to end the term with 96% of students qualifying to attend the celebration! The children had a great time learning drumming with Mrs Took. It has been an outstanding effort by students to follow the Mawarra Movers principles.
At the start of this term, as with every term, all children are on Level Zero. We hope to see the same number of children, if not more, who are able to participate in our celebration at the end of this term.

For the next fortnight our Mawarra Movers focus will be on “Looking after our playground”. This will include putting all rubbish in the bin, taking care of the trees and plants and using equipment in the correct areas. Please discuss this with your child at home.

Live Life Well @ School

Building Healthy Habits
Children are learning habits that will often last them a lifetime. Consider the following:

- Breakfast is important. Children who eat breakfast have better concentration. Eating breakfast can reduce snacking on high-energy foods in the afternoon in both adults and children.
- Be realistic about the size of the serve you offer children. Forcing children to finish what is on their plate when they are not hungry may lead to overeating and/or strong food dislikes.
- Avoid giving children processed snack foods high in sugar. Encourage brushing teeth in the morning and before bed to develop good dental habits.

Parenting Ideas
Mawarra Public School has become a school member of parenting ideas. Through funding from the school P&C we now have access to the Michael Grose Parenting Ideas program. An introductory letter and explanation is attached at the back of this school newsletter along with the first Insight article. In each school newsletter a Parenting Ideas article will be attached to provide all parents with practical and topical information on parenting. A noticeboard outside the canteen area will also be devoted to displaying Parenting Ideas information. There will be information on additional features of this program in coming newsletters.

Sharon Kynaston
Parenting Ideas Coordinator

Library News
Classes have resumed for term 2 and library days have remained the same except for 2B & 3H who now have library on a Tuesday. All children K – 4 need a library bag to borrow. If you have any spare plastic bags, donations would be greatly appreciated.

Premier’s Reading Challenge
It’s not too late for children in yrs 3-6 to register for the Premier’s Reading Challenge. Students must go online to register and log in the books they have read. Please go to the following website:
www.premiersreadingchallenge.nsw.edu.au
Students use their school username and password to log into the site and enter the details of the books they have read. Premier’s Reading Challenge books are kept in special containers in the library making it easier for children to find and borrow these books, however many lexile books and other books in the library are also Premier’s Reading Challenge books. If you have any difficulty logging in or entering books please see me in the library.

Students in Kindergarten – Year 2 will participate in the Premier’s Reading Challenge with their class teacher. Parents need to ensure they have returned the permission note to their child’s teacher in order for your child to receive a participation certificate at the end of the year.

Mrs Dianne Cronshaw
Teacher/Librarian

Sport News

School Cross Country
The School Cross Country will be held tomorrow Friday 2nd May, 2014
11 & 12 yrs – 11.15am-12.45pm
8, 9 & 10 yrs – 1.45pm-2.55pm
Parents/Carers are welcome to attend.

Razorback Trials
The following children recently attended Razorback trials and were selected in the Razorback team and will attend the Sydney South West carnival in the coming weeks.
Rugby League - Charlie Redman & Riley Curnoe
Netball - Chenoa Bramble & Lucy Wood

We would like to congratulate these students and wish them luck at the regional carnivals.

Gala Days
The first gala day will now be held on Friday 6th June, 2014 (Week 6). Unfortunately Onslow has received some damage after the Camden Show & we are unable to use it. The dates of the other gala days will be confirmed after the next PSSA meeting.

Narelle Scott
Sports Organiser

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P&C News

P&C Mowing Roster
Thank you to the following parents, who worked the mowing roster on Saturday 12th April, 2014. Craig Moir, Greg Burton, Greg Mottram, Craig Cunnion, Phil Critcher & Dennis Eagles (Coordinator). A wonderful job done by all. Also a big thank you to Adam Wildman for soccer field line marking.

Community News

Local Women’s Health Clinic
A women’s health nurse is available at Narellan Community Health Centre. Services available are pap tests, post-natal checks, breast checks, and Women’s health information on menopause, contraception and healthy living. Free and confidential service. For more information please call 4640 3500.

Narelle Scott
Sports Organiser

2013-2014
Family Energy Rebate

$125 TOWARDS ENERGY BILLS
APPLY ONLINE NOW!
2 MINUTES TO FILL IN A FORM

Upcoming Events

Thursday 1/5/14
*Belgenny Farm Excursion 3B & 4SR

Friday 2/5/14
*School Cross Country

Monday 5/5/14
*Belgenny Farm Excursion 3H & 4KN

Wednesday 7/5/14
*Camden Art Prize Excursion 3H & 4SR
Mother’s day is just around the corner & so is the famous Mawarra Mothers Day Stall.

All the gifts have arrived and will be priced at $1.50, $3.00, $5.00 & $7.00.

We once again will be having a Mother’s Day Raffle. Instead of sending raffle ticket books home, all you need to do is complete the bottom of this form as your entry into the draw and return it to the school office. The ticket price is $1.00 per entry (extra entries available, if required).

To help with the smooth running of the Mother’s Day Stall, we are asking for help from our Mawarra Community to help wrap and sell the gifts on the day from 9.00am in the School Hall.

Thank you.

Deb and Michelle
Fundraising

☐ I am available to help at the Mother’s Day Stall on Thursday 8 May at 9.00am
Name: ___________________________ Phone Number: _______________________

☐ Enclosed is $1.00 for my entry into the Mother’s Day Raffle
Name: ___________________________ Phone Number: _______________________

Childs Name: ___________________________ Childs Class: ______________________
Dear Parent,

Your child’s school has just joined over 1,000 other Australian schools and become a Parentingideas School Member. That means you will be receiving regular parenting articles on topical and practical issues in your school’s newsletter, and maybe on your school’s website. Your school’s teachers also have access to parenting tips sheets and other strategies to help them support you.

Let me tell you a little about Parentingideas and myself...

Parentingideas is Australia’s leading provider of parenting education resources to schools. We offer an extensive range of learning resources for parents, articles and up-to-date content for school newsletters and websites, as well as professional development for teachers and parents. You can find out more by visiting us at parentingideas.com.au.

As a former primary teacher with fifteen years classroom experience I know first-hand the importance of developing a strong parent-teacher partnership. Over two decades I’ve worked full-time as a parenting educator supporting parents with all aspects of child-rearing. In that time I’ve authored eight books for parents including Why first borns rule the world and last borns want to change it. My latest title, Thriving! which is soon to be released into China, has been described as ‘the new roadmap for raising 3-12 year olds with confidence, character and resilience.’

Some of you may have read my recent parenting columns in News Ltd newspapers that reached over 6 million Australians every Sunday. You may even see me from time to time in my regular spot as a parenting commentator on Channel’s 9 Today Show. Victorians can hear me on radio 774 every second Saturday as I present my regular parenting segment that fits snugly between finance and pet care!

Perhaps, my best credentials are the fact that I’m a parent of three delightful yet diverse twenty-somethings so I understand how frustrating, worrying but potentially joyous raising kids can be.

Staying One Step Ahead

I believe that parents need to stay one step ahead of their kids in this fast-changing world, which means we need to stay informed about the latest trends and issues facing children and young people today. I look forward to working with your school offering you information, wisdom and plenty of encouragement to help you bring out the best in your kids.

Happy Parenting,

Michael Grose
Helping students get ready for the NAPLAN tests

The most resilient children and young people are those who rise to meet rather than retreat from the challenges presented to them. Perhaps it’s best to view the NAPLAN tests as good learning experiences rather than dreaded pressure tests.

During the second week of May Australian children in Years 3, 5, 7 and 9 will take part in the National Assessment Program – Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN). The stated purpose of this testing program is to gain an overall picture of educational attainment levels to assist education policy and decision-making.

The program first implemented in 2008 has drawn some criticism from a number of different quarters, particularly in regard to the use of the information gained through the NAPLAN tests. You’ve probably heard a number of different viewpoints expressed in the media over the last few weeks.

One view commonly put forward is that the NAPLAN tests put undue pressure on children to perform in test situations. If so, then perhaps the best approach for parents and teachers is to help them handle the pressure rather than avoid it. The most resilient children and young people are those who rise to meet rather than retreat from the challenges presented to them. Perhaps it’s best to view the NAPLAN tests as good learning experiences rather than dreaded pressure tests.

During his research into children’s thinking styles, how closely a child’s explanatory style mimics that of the parent they spend most time around. Optimistic parents beget optimistic kids, just as anxious parents can beget anxious kids. The impact of a parent’s explanatory style seems to be magnified somehow in small families where there are fewer voices to be heard.

As a parent it helps your child, if you take a positive view of the NAPLAN tests. It’s better to see them as learning opportunities for kids as well as opportunities to overcome any anxieties or nerves that these tests may bring on. It’s also worth remembering that many children don’t stress over these tests. The vast majority take them in their stride, wondering what all the fuss is about.

Whether your child stresses or takes them in his stride here are some tips to help prepare for the NAPLAN tests:

1. **Take your cues from your child:**
   If your child doesn’t worry about them then neither should you. Be careful not to create a problem that doesn’t exist by incessantly talking about, or worse, worrying about the test.

2. **Focus on doing their best and trying hard:**
   Choose your words carefully when you speak with your kids. As with all their learning activities place your focus squarely on effort rather than results.

3. **Listen to any concerns they have:**
   If your child confesses to some nerves then validate their feelings, rather than shut them down with a ‘get over it’ response. “Yes, sometimes tests can be a little scary, but they get easier every time you take them.” Use this as an opportunity to develop some emotional smarts, which starts with recognising how kids feel.

4. **Give them some relaxation ideas:**
   Anxious or nervous kids will benefit from some simple relaxation strategies. Taking some deep breaths, changing their thinking and exercising the morning of the test are some simple ways to help kids get some feeling of control.

5. **Help them retain their perspective:**
   One way to help children who become excessively anxious about an event is to ask what’s the worst thing that could happen? Okay, they may not do as well as they would like but the sun will still rise tomorrow, regardless of how well they do. Keeping perspective is a life skill that we all need to practise.

A positive, caring parent attitude is one of the best gifts you can give a child when they are apprehensive or nervous about approaching any different situation whether it’s going on school camp, joining a new club or sitting a NAPLAN test.