FROM THE FRONT DESK

Principal’s Report
We are at the halfway point of the Term and what a big 2 weeks it has been. Firstly we had an unwanted visitor in the form of a baby brown snake. This is the first snake I have seen at the school in 8 years. The students were fantastic and listened to the instructions of the teachers. We had the Fire Brigade come out on the Wednesday but we could not find the snake. Then at about lunchtime Thursday the snake reappeared at the front of the school. The snake then took residence in a visiting High School Teacher’s car. The Fire Brigade snake handlers came out again and searched the car thoroughly and yet again couldn’t find it. By the end of the day WIRES came and caught the snake. The snake was released in bushland far away from the school. Thank you to Blacktown Fire Brigade and WIRES for making the school safe.

PSSA started in week 4 and the students did well for their first games. Just a reminder that PSSA is about students enjoying playing against other schools, and learning sportsmanship and fair play. Our students demonstrate this well on the fields. All students and their parents would have signed a Code of Conduct and these need to be adhered to at all times.

The artwork for the playground has been completed in the Primary area and the students are already utilising it. We hope that the Infants area is completed soon but it all depends on the wet weather.
The Tell Them From Me Student Feedback Survey

I am delighted that this term, our school, like many others in the state, will participate in a Department of Education and Communities initiative: the Tell Them From Me student feedback survey. The survey aims to help improve student learning outcomes and measures factors that are known to affect academic achievement and other student outcomes. The focus of the NSW-wide survey is on student wellbeing, engagement and effective teaching practices. More information about the survey is available at: http://surveys.cese.nsw.gov.au/information-for-parents

The survey is a great opportunity for our students to provide our school with valuable and quick feedback on what they think about school life, how engaged they are with school and the different ways that teachers interact with them. Schools in Australia and around the world have used the Tell Them From Me survey to help improve how they do things at school.

I want to assure you that the survey is confidential and school staff will not be able to identify individual students from their responses. The survey is conducted online and will typically take less than 30 minutes to complete. It will be administered during school hours between 9 March and 2 April. Participating in the survey is entirely voluntary.

A consent form and FAQs for parents/carers about the survey is being sent home with students. If you do not want your child or children to participate, please return the form to school by Friday 6 March. Copies of the form and FAQs are available from the website above.

Richard Ford
Principal

Vision Screening

Vision Screening will take place on Tuesday 3rd March for students in Kindergarten and Year 1. If your child has not had vision screening please see your child’s teacher.

Attendance

Education is very important as we all know. We know that you want your children to do well at school so that they can make good choices in life. However, if they are missing days at school and/or arriving late and leaving early, their chances of success are hindered. Please make sure your child attends every day and is here on time.

Obviously, there may be times when attendance is not possible so we ask you to make sure you send a note or medical certificate to his/her teacher about this. If you need to take your child out of school, even for one day, you must inform the office. Any prolonged unexplained absences will be followed up with phone calls and unfortunately have to be reported if considered too many. Some may have noticed notes being sent out for days when your child is absent, please return these back to school explaining why your child has been absent or attach a medical certificate.

This Thursday 5th March will be a Footy Colours Mufti Day to raise money for Year 6. Students will be allowed to wear their favourite team jersey or any mufti that they have if they don’t have footy jerseys. Students will need to bring a gold coin donation to participate. Stage 3 will also be running footy colours nail polish, a footy toss for prizes and selling cupcakes all for 50 cents.

High School forms will go out next week. It is important that they are filled out correctly and brought back on time. Every year we are chasing forms up and issues happen when students miss out on High School placement. If you need any help please contact the school to arrange a time to fill out the forms.

The Support Excursion to Austinmer is on Thursday 5th March. This is a great time for the classes to get to know each other and their teachers. The students have a great time building sand castles and playing games near the beach.

The Athletics Carnival will be held on Monday 16th March at Blacktown International Sports Park. All students are expected to attend. Infants have novelty races and sprint races while primary students all compete in the track and field events. A note will go home shortly about the details of the carnival.

Last Monday we had a visit from the Penrith Panthers. Matt Moylan, Jeremy Latimore and upcoming player, Robert Jennings. They came and talked about healthy eating and healthy lifestyle choices. The students loved hearing about the players healthy habits and what they did growing up. Thank you to Panthers for supporting our school.
Staff Car Park and School Gates
Our Staff Car Park is only to be used by Staff and Special Transport. It can become an extremely dangerous area when children are running through to get picked up. The walk in, back and shop gates will now be locked between 9.00am - 9.30am. They will remain locked for the entire day and opened at 2.45pm. The front walk in gate will be the only access for parents to enter the school. Please be mindful of the times. The gates have been closed for the safety of the students in the school grounds. We appreciate your support.

SRC
The Student Representative Council (SRC) is made up of students who were elected by their class to represent their voice in school decision making. Examples of things that the SRC have started include the new playground art, football posts, equipment to play with at lunch and things that need to be fixed in the school. Elections are held every 6 months to give more students an opportunity to hold leadership positions in the school. They meet a few times each term and discuss what has been said in their classrooms about what they would like to see in the school. We discuss what we might need to happen to get some things eg Fundraising, and why some things we can’t have eg. Swimming Pool. The representative then returns to class and reports to their classmates what they have agreed on.

The Representatives for this semester are:
Stage 3: Tahleisha Pugh, Jake Gregory, Jamie Cuellar-Montalvo, Cameron Gregory, Tevita Tai, Chenoa Haining, Sione Afu & Katherine Ate.
Support: Rochelle Shields & Lochlain Baikie.

P&C
The next P&C Meeting will be the AGM which will be held on Tuesday 17th March. This is the meeting where all office bearers step down and then voting is cast for the Executive of the P&C. Only financial members, who had paid by the end of the last meeting, can vote or be nominated.

Lost Property
Lost property is now kept in the classroom to the right of the primary girls toilets and will be open every morning and afternoon.

Barbara Petchenik Children’s 2015 Map Competition
Competition’s theme is “My place in today’s world”. Entries can be nominated in four age groups: under 6 years, 6-8 years, 9-12 years and 13-15 years. The deadline for participation in the contest is Thursday 2nd April 2015. For more detailed information about the competition, please visit the MSIA website http://mappingsciences.org.au.

All About Apostrophes
Not knowing where to place apostrophes can haunt people for their entire lives. Here’s an easy guide to help your child understand what they mean, how to use them and get them right, now. Find out more: http://www.schoolatoz.nsw.edu.au/homework-and-study/english/english-a-to-z/-/english_glossary/555/apostrophe+denoting+ownership

When Older Kids Struggle With Reading
Should you let your reluctant teen reader choose magazines over books? If your child is still struggling to read and write, and they’re heading into high school, there are ways to get them on the right page. Find out more: http://www.schoolatoz.nsw.edu.au/homework-and-study/english/english-tips/when-older-kids-struggle-with-reading

Multiplication Times Tables

Sorting Fact From Fiction
Help your child develop their “dodgy website” antennae when doing homework. Here are ways your child can tell a good website - or any document - from a bad one. Find out more: http://www.schoolatoz.nsw.edu.au/homework-and-study/homework-tips/sorting-fact-from-fiction

Awards
Congratulations to the following students who have earned Awards in the last 2 weeks:

Principal Awards
Stage 1:
Joshua Carson, Tanika Terkildsen & Dennis Morgan
Stage 3:
Jayden Nichol
Support:
Jack Mullarvey

Meal Deal 1 - $4.50
Egg & Lettuce Sandwich, Juice Popper & Frozen Juice Cup

Meal Deal 2 - $4.50
8 Chicken Fingers, Juice Popper & Zooper Dooper
**Show Don’t Tell**

"Wayne was devastated when he received the news that his lovely mother had passed away. He put his head in his hands. It was like he had nothing in this world anymore. Wayne began sobbing and his face and eyes turned as red as a chilli. He was extremely sad."

By Tahleisha Pugh

"Bill was invited to a girl named Suzie’s sweet sixteen party. He was not good when attending parties because he could not dance. Bill drove his car to the party but he was feeling extremely shy. He had a red blushing face and stood so still like a block of ice. Bill continually hung his head low every time anyone came near him."

By Elijah Mataale

Sad

The boy’s lip was quivering and he had tears rolling down his cheek. He had a frown on his face as he dragged his feet along the ground. His body was slouched and his voice shaky. He walked with his hands in his pocket and face down.

By Charlee Neville

Afraid

As the man walked through the dark house, he shivers like water turning into ice. He opens the door. His voice dropped like the Titanic sinking in the sea. Dark voices call out to him, his heart thumps as he is fear. He was terrified, so he ran but all the doors closed. He screams as loud as he could. His mouth trembling in fear. He becomes stiff like a hard rock tumbling down. He bashes the door open and goes through all the doors. It was a maze so he cries in fear of the dark.

By Tanvir Zaman

Tell: I woke up so early, I was tired.

Show: Early on a Monday morning mum shook me trying to get me up for school. Shaking didn't work so she swiped the blanket off me. Suddenly she heard me moan. She said "Come on Son, get up for school". I slowly forced myself to get out of bed, dragging my legs along the carpet and walking like a zombie to the bathroom to wash my face.

By Kelvin Whitney