

# **Stage 2 Newsletter**

29<sup>th</sup> April, 2009

Dear Parents,

Welcome back to school for second term. We hope that everyone had an enjoyable holiday. This newsletter will outline the program for Term Two and provide dates and other information relevant to Stage Two.

## **Teaching and Learning Program**

This term our major unit is 'State and National Parks' which provides students with the opportunity to explore the history, differences, environmental issues, uses, flora and fauna associated with these parks. This is an integrated unit, which means it incorporates H.S.I.E., science, art and English.

An excursion to Bouddi National Park during May is included. **Further details and a permission note for this excursion are included with this newsletter.**

In science, Mrs Fennell will cover environmental issues related to our H.S.I.E. unit.

In health, Ms Lawler will address health issues which link with the theme students will learn about when visiting The Life Education Van in May.

Reading groups will resume in week two.

Maths groups started today. A small number of students have changed maths groups this term after teachers have reviewed assessment results achieved during first term.

Text types (writing tasks) to be covered this term are to revise Narratives (in preparation for NAPLAN), explanations, poetry and procedures. Attached to this newsletter is an outline of the criteria used to teach and assess text types, plus some details regarding the punctuation taught in class. This has been added to provide parents with greater understanding of the content taught.

Gymnastics for sport will begin on Thursday of week two. This is an eight week program. Students need to wear the school sports uniform of shorts or black tracksuit pants. A reminder that payment of \$30 for this program is now due. If financial difficulties are experienced please see Mr Whelan or Mrs Vallis.

## **Homework**

The 'Homework Grid' will be used again this term. The type of tasks will differ and focus largely on English and research skills.

The dictation will be included on the fortnightly homework grid.

An assessment task related to the H.S.I.E unit will be set. More details regarding this will be available shortly.

Part of students' homework is always reading, and we are pleased to observe that the amount of home reading is increasing. In class, we will continue to emphasise comprehension **and we ask that parents also focus on this** by discussing the characters, themes, etc related to the book.

## **Important Information for Parents**

Stage Two children often require guidance with their homework. This guidance differs with every child. All parents are keen to help and children do benefit.

**For many, the assessment task related to our unit this term** will be the first task of this type attempted.

Listed below are some helpful hints.

- One of the criteria for assessment by teachers will be; “The information is written in the child’s own words.” This is a difficult skill for children to learn and can require years of practice.
- It is recommended that children read the information till they are very familiar with the content writing down key words.
- Using the key words, children then write the information in their own words. Some children will need assistance in verbalising their thoughts. With continued practice, children will gradually require less assistance.
- Year Three children will naturally find this more difficult than those in Year Four.
- An important question to ask is, “Does the information they have written answer the question and fit with the criteria of the assessment task?”
- Part of the assessment task will be presenting their information to the class. The criteria for the written and spoken tasks will be given to students so they fully understand the expectations.
- Children will benefit by rehearsing their talk at home, either to an audience and/or recording themselves and playing it back, so they can hear and make any adjustments.
- Writing assignments in one’s own words is a skill that is required throughout school and tertiary education. Our students are at the very beginning of acquiring this skill, and will continue to improve.
- The finished product your child brings to school may not appear to be to an adult standard, but the learning and life-long skills acquired by our students during this process is beneficial.

### **Classroom Requirements**

During first term, Stage Two teachers found many lessons were disrupted by students not having the necessary equipment. This impacts all students, as the flow of the lesson is interrupted as the required equipment is borrowed from another students or the teachers. We emphasise the importance of being prepared for class work with stationery needs listed below. Please take the time in the first week of term to ensure your child has the following:

- 2 lead pencils

- red pen
- blue pen for when a 'pen licence' is awarded
- a pair of scissors
- a gluestick
- an eraser
- a ruler
- a pencil sharpener
- coloured pencils or crayolas
- felt pens (Textas).

These items are best labelled and contained in two pencil cases.

### **Communication**

Teachers at this school are aware of the importance of maintaining effective and productive communication between home and school.

If issues arise that you wish to discuss with your child's teacher, please arrange a mutually convenient time by letter or telephone.

On 25<sup>th</sup> June a written report accompanied by a work folder displaying each child's assessment tasks will be sent home. Following this, parents who feel the need, will be able to arrange an interview to discuss the report.

If there are present issues you wish to discuss with your child's teacher, do not hesitate to arrange an interview before report time.

### **Parent Helpers**

Stage Two teachers appreciate the continued support by a large group of parents who assist regularly with reading groups and other activities. **Reading groups will begin in week two this term.**

### **Term 2 Dates To Remember**

1st May: Cross Country at Heazlett Oval

4<sup>th</sup> May: Stage 2 Reading Groups begin.

8<sup>th</sup> May: Stewart House Mufti Day

12<sup>th</sup>, 13<sup>th</sup> & 14<sup>th</sup> May: National Testing for Year 3

15<sup>th</sup> May: Excursion to Bouddi National Park for 3/4W & 3/4D.

18<sup>th</sup> May: Excursion to Bouddi National Park for 3/4M & 3/4V.

Life Education Van arrives.

MS Speaker.

25<sup>th</sup> to 29<sup>th</sup> May: Education Week.

26<sup>th</sup> May: University NSW Computer Competition.

27<sup>th</sup> May: Open Day.

1<sup>st</sup> June: "Going Green with Dr Deane" performance at school.

5<sup>th</sup> June: Mufti for Life Education.

10<sup>th</sup> June: University of NSW Science Competition.

23<sup>rd</sup> June: University of NSW Spelling & Writing Competition.

24<sup>th</sup> June: "Sadako". Live performance at school.

26<sup>th</sup> June: Athletics Carnival at Heazlett Oval.

29<sup>th</sup> June: School photos.

9<sup>th</sup> July: Last day of Term 2.

**Sue Walkerden**

**Louise Duck**

**Jane Miles**

**Wilma Vallis**