Principal's Message

Congratulations to our amazing students who participated in the Small Schools Swimming Carnival at Glenbrook Pool last week. We are all very proud of your enthusiasm, commitment and sportsmanship throughout the day. Mr Winterton was very proud of our students and greatly appreciated the helpful and supportive parents throughout the day. The Penrith District Swimming Carnival will be held at Penrith Pool on Monday 29th February.

All parents and students are reminded that student supervision begins at 8:30am each morning. We have had an increasing number of students arriving at 8:00am each day. These students are unsupervised and are placing themselves in an unsafe situation. As you can all appreciate our teaching staff need this valuable student free time each morning to prepare and organise their teaching and learning activities for the day and will not provide supervision before 8:30am each day.

Our Crunch and Sip program continues to provide time for our students to crunch on fruit or vegetables and sip water around 10:00am each day. Thank you to the many parents who provide healthy choices for their children during this time. Healthy foods are crucial in helping our students focus and learn to the best of their ability and this quick break is appreciated by both students and teachers.

Last week our Captains and Vice Captains led the very first K-6 assembly for the year and performed admirably. Your ability to speak clearly with purpose throughout the assembly was an outstanding way to start the year. Congratulations K/1 for being awarded Best Class in Assembly.

Thank you to the Jobson and Osorio families for your hard work in our school vegetable garden and school gardens over the past few weeks. We all thank you for your time and energy in improving the image of our grounds. Special mention also to Mrs Chapple for her tireless efforts in the gardens last Thursday morning while Mrs Stove-Wilson looked after the office.

Karen Ellis
Learning and Support Teacher (LAST) News

Family life is so busy with work, school, study and extra activities e.g. sports and music tuition that it can be difficult to find the time to communicate effectively with our family members. Essential Kids (online site) has outlined the benefits of planned family meetings where younger members experience adult communication, help set family goals and most importantly be heard. Below are 10 steps for a positive family meeting.

1. Keep meetings light and short – aim for 20 mins – have someone scribe or record and take turns.
2. Have a meal before – otherwise boys in particular will get hungry
3. Start the meeting with exploring changes to the previous year/term/month – quickly! e.g. This year OXOXO will be doing Year 12 and Mum is starting a new job.
4. Then, what is the family mission statement for 2016? While 'Team Dent rocks' sounds great it is isn't all that bonding, insightful or helpful. A better statement would be something like "Team Dent is committed to everyone shining and growing in a positive, respectful caring home".
5. Next item is a chore roster – everyone has 1-2 chores per day... remind them if they are unable to do their chore they need to swap with someone. Technology guidelines also need to be sorted and possibly chat about extra-curricular possibilities for the upcoming term.
6. Complaints time – exploring things that aren't working – and family solution finding.
7. Worries time – bring up things that may be concerning or worrying. This is a great place to ask for help with anything that needs additional support.
8. Thank you time (or write them and put in a box) – this is for everyone to acknowledge one family member for things they do that are helpful, considerate or just plain awesome. Take turns meeting to meeting.
9. Remind everyone to check the message board on the fridge (or wherever you keep reminders) for day-to-day changes.
10. Close the meeting with some celebratory food, or family film night, or ritual like cooking popcorn.

Read more: http://www.essentialkids.com.au/development-advice/advice/10-tips-for-a-successful-family-meeting-20160214-gmu17c#ixzz40EQrOIZm
Follow us: @EssentialKids on Twitter | EssentialKids on Facebook

Lindy Johnson
Learning and Support Teacher

K-6 Assembly

The next K-6 Assembly will be held in Week 6,
Wednesday 2nd March at 2:20pm
Small Schools’ Swimming Carnival

On Tuesday 9th February, 10 students represented Luddenham P.S. at the Small Schools’ Swimming Carnival held at Glenbrook Pool. Students from Mulgoa, Wallacia and Orchard Hills Public Schools also participated on the day, and represented their schools. A great day was enjoyed by all, and our students performed very well. Congratulations to all students who entered events for trying their very best and displaying wonderful sportsmanship. Thankyou also to the parents who supported the students, and in particular to Narelle Wilson, Charmaine Tyler and Jo Fisk for their valuable assistance. 7 students qualified to represent our school at the PSSA District Swimming Carnival to be held at Penrith Pool on Monday 29th February, 2016. They are Elise Tyler, Abbey Wilson, Liam Perram, Monique Bower, Harrison Tyler, Luke Anderson and Naiobe Reid. Congratulations on their tremendous achievements, and all the very best of luck at the District Carnival.

Vegetable Garden

Our vegetable garden is looking great thanks to Shea Jobson and her family. The garden is almost ready for planting but we need some garden soil to top it up. If anyone can recommend a company who might be able to supply us with a good quality garden soil, please see Mrs Chapple in the office.

Bathurst Goldfields

Years 5 and 6 have been invited to attend an excursion to the Bathurst Goldfields at Mount Panorama for a day trip on Thursday 19th May. The bus will leave at 7:15am and return at 6pm that evening.

If you would like to secure a place for your child, a non-refundable deposit of $20 needs to be paid by Friday 26th February. The cost of the excursion will be approximately $55 (maximum).

P&C News

Canteen

The canteen is open every Friday for lunch order. Please write your child’s order on a paper bag and hand in to the office before school.

P&C Meeting

The next P&C Meeting will be held in the library on Friday 11th March immediately after the morning assembly. Attending P&C meetings is the best way to find out what’s happening in our school, so come along.

Everyone is welcome
What’s Happening at Luddenham PS

February
19th  Sport in Schools Program
26th  Sport in Schools Program
29th  District Swimming Carnival

March
1st    School Photos
2nd    K-6 Assembly at 2:20pm
4th    Sport in Schools Program
4th    Clean Up Australia Day
11th   Sport in Schools Program
11th   P&C Meeting
16th   Graffiti Education Program for Years 5 and 6
18th   Sport in Schools Program
23rd   K-6 Assembly at 2:20pm
27th   Schools in Sport Program

April
8th    Last day of Term 1
26th   Staff return to school—Staff Development Day

Reminders

- Book Club orders need to be in by tomorrow
- Years 5 and 6—Expression of Interest and deposit for Bathurst Goldfields excursion due by Friday 26th February
- School Banking day is Thursday. If you would like to open an account for your child, please contact Mrs Wilson in the office.
- Please label all your child’s belongings, including clothing, hats, lunch boxes, drink bottles etc.

Student Absence Note

Student Name .............................................................................................................. Class .........................
Date of absence ............................................................................................................
Reason for absence ....................................................................................................... 

......................................................................................................................................
......................................................................................................................................
......................................................................................................................................

Parent/ Caregiver signature ........................................................................................................ Date
Compulsory School Attendance

Information for parents

Education for your child is important and regular attendance at school is essential for your child to achieve their educational best and increase their career and life options. NSW public schools work in partnership with parents to encourage and support regular attendance of children and young people. When your child attends school every day, learning becomes easier and your child will build and maintain friendships with other children.

What are my legal responsibilities?

Education in New South Wales is compulsory for all children between the ages of six years and below the minimum school leaving age. The Education Act 1990 requires that parents ensure their children of compulsory school age are enrolled at, and regularly attend school, or, are registered with the Board of Studies, Teaching and Educational Standards for homeschooling.

Once enrolled, children are required to attend school each day it is open for students.

The importance of arriving on time

Arriving at school and class on time:

- Ensures that students do not miss out on important learning activities scheduled early in the day
- Helps students learn the importance of punctuality and routine
- Give students time to greet their friends before class
- Reduces classroom disruption

Lateness is recorded as a partial absence and must be explained by parents.

What if my child has to be away from school?

On occasion, your child may need to be absent from school. Justified reasons for student absences may include:

- being sick, or having an infectious disease
- having an unavoidable medical appointment
- being required to attend a recognised religious holiday
- exceptional or urgent family circumstance (e.g. attending a funeral)

Following an absence from school you must ensure that within 7 days you provide your child's school with a verbal or written explanation for the absence. However, if the school has not received an explanation from you within 2 days, the school may contact you to discuss the absence.

Principals may decline to accept an explanation that you have provided if they do not believe the absence is in the best interest of your child. In these circumstances your child's absence would be recorded as unjustified. When this happens the principal will discuss their decision with you and the reasons why.

Principals may request medical certificates or other documentation when frequent or long term absences are explained as being due to illness. Principals may also seek parental permission to speak with medical specialists to obtain information to collaboratively develop a health care plan to support your child. If the request is denied, the principal can record the absences as unjustified.

Travel

Families are encouraged to travel during school holidays. If travel during school term is necessary, discuss this with your child's school principal. An Application for Extended Leave may need to be completed. Absences relating to travel will be marked as leave on the roll and therefore contribute to your child's total absences for the year.

In some circumstances students may be eligible to enrol in distance education for travel periods over 50 school days. This should be discussed with your child's school principal.
My child won’t go to school. What should I do?

You should contact the principal as soon as possible to discuss the issue and ask for help. Strategies to help improve attendance may include a referral to the school’s learning and support team or linking your child with appropriate support networks. The principal may seek further support from the Home School Liaison Program to develop an Attendance Improvement Plan.

What might happen if my child continues to have unacceptable absences?

It is important to understand that the Department of Education and Communities may be required to take further action where children of compulsory school age have recurring numbers of unexplained or unjustified absences from school.

Some of the following actions may be undertaken:

- Compulsory Schooling Conferences

You may be asked, along with your child, to attend a Compulsory Schooling Conference. The conference will help to identify the supports your child may need to have in place so they attend school regularly. The school, parents and agencies will work together to develop an agreed plan (known as Undertakings) to support your child’s attendance at school.

- Application to the Children’s Court – Compulsory Schooling Order

If your child’s attendance at school remains unsatisfactory the Department may apply to the Children’s Court for a Compulsory Schooling Order. The Children’s Court magistrate may order a Compulsory Schooling Conference to be convened.

- Prosecution in the Local Court

School and Department staff remain committed to working in partnership with you to address the issues which are preventing your child’s full participation at school. In circumstances where a breach of compulsory schooling orders occurs further action may be taken against a parent in the Local Court. The result of court action can be the imposition of a community service order or a fine.

What age can my child leave school?

All New South Wales students must complete Year 10 or its equivalent. After Year 10, and up until they reach 17 years of age, there are a range of flexible options for students to complete their schooling.

Working in Partnership

The Department of Education and Communities recognises that working collaboratively with students and their families is the best way to support the regular attendance of students at school.

We look forward to working in partnership with you to support your child to fulfil their life opportunities.
School Communities Working Together
Fact Sheet for Parents and Carers

Introduction

The role of schools is to work in partnership with parents to provide an environment that encourages students to connect with each other and their community, so they can succeed and thrive. Parents, teachers and the community all play a role in fostering this environment.

Schools have well established systems which support student wellbeing and address instances of anti-social behaviour such as bullying, threats of physical violence and other offensive behaviours.

Your role in supporting your child

- Be involved in your child’s life – dedicate time to really understand your child. Know where they are, who they are with and what they are doing.
- Be cyber-aware:
  - regularly monitor what they are looking at on the internet and on social media sites and do what you can to reduce their exposure to inappropriate content;
  - place the computer or device in a common area of the house, so your child is less likely to try and access inappropriate web sites or use social media sites inappropriately; and
  - consider using content filters to help control what your child can access.
- Encourage open and honest discussion at home – encouraging your child to learn about and understand other points of view is a valuable life skill. If you stop discussion about topics that you are uncomfortable with, for example religion, politics, racism, drugs, extremism or terrorism, your child may find it even more interesting and may try to find information without you knowing. This could lead them to inaccurate information.
- Encourage positive outlets for your child’s energies – sports, performing arts, hobbies and organised clubs, all provide a sense of belonging and somewhere to focus their interests, though it may take a few attempts to find the right interest for your child.
- Be a role model – modelling positive, respectful relationships, positive ways to show emotions and how to apply objective thinking skills are valuable life skills for your child.

How you can help your child

You know your child better than anyone else and are in a good position to notice any changes in their behaviour. If their behaviour changes significantly, try to find out what is happening in their lives. There are many reasons for a change in behaviour, so don’t jump to conclusions.

The best way to support your child is to maintain open, non-judgemental communication with them. By keeping a positive relationship you may be in a position to help them if they want to talk about their problems. Listen to their concerns and try to understand their perspective.

Even if you disagree with what they are saying, it is important to find some way to let them know they are accepted and that you are there to help them.

What to do if you are concerned for your child

If you do have concerns that your child is involved in or supporting extremist behaviour there are a number of options for seeking advice. You may like to talk to someone from your child’s school such as the Principal, your child’s Year Advisor, a teacher, or a trusted staff member.

You may wish to talk to your child yourself, or ask a close friend or family member to do so. Alternatively, there are government assistance and advice lines and websites. Some are listed below.
Remember
As your child grows, they will be exploring their own values and beliefs. They may search for and push the boundaries of acceptable, responsible behaviour during this process.

Cyber Safety

If you are concerned that a person in your community is showing possible signs of terrorism, you should call the National Security Hotline - 1800 123 400 or email hotline@nationalsecurity.gov.au

Resources
- 000 (triple zero) if you feel unsafe or in danger
- 1800 RESPECT – http://www.1800respect.org.au
- Domestic violence line (24h) 1800 65 64 63
- Black Dog Institute – http://www.blackdoginstitute.org.au

If you are concerned that a person in your community is showing possible signs of terrorism, you should call the National Security Hotline – 1800 123 400 or email hotline@nationalsecurity.gov.au