Dear Parents and Carers

Many thanks to all of you who have responded to our surveys about our future directions for the next three years. A special big thank you to the parents and carers who came and talked about their hopes and dreams for their children these past few weeks.

Survey ideas
Your responses to our questions regarding our school were so positive and supportive. It was good to hear that more people want to be involved at school and we need to find ways to make this happen. Most parents/carers mentioned communication, independence, behaviour and safety as their priorities, along with skills in using technology and preparing for life after school. And do you know what? Parent/carer wishes are just the same as teacher goals too! No wonder everyone reported that they were really happy with the school, even if there was a strong desire to have more communication about the day’s activities from the school.

Next meeting
Next week I will send out a brief questionnaire to try to find the best time for everyone to meet again to discuss the school plan. I understand that it is impossible to find a time that suits everyone, so I will suggest days and times of the day and let you know when the majority of people can come into the school to discuss the future of learning here at Passfield Park School.

Parents supporting learning
Parents/carers who attended the meeting also expressed a wish to help out more at school. All staff will be involved in PECS (Picture Exchange Communication System) training at the end of the year and we’d like to train parents/carers to help across the school. There will be more opportunities to become involved as we finalise our planning. In the meantime, please remember that our students find interruptions to their learning difficult, and I would like to remind parents/carers to bring students to the office rather than taking students directly to the classroom. Thanks for your understanding.

Swimming carnival
A staff member was out in the community at the weekend and was told about a friend of a friend who had seen a school at a pool, and was impressed with the students’ behaviour, the interactions between the students, staff and parents, and what a fun day they all seemed to have. The friend of a friend then identified that the carnival was at Eagle Vale Pool on 31st October and the staff member said – ‘That was us!’ How lovely to be recognised and enjoyed as a fantastic community – congratulations to all.

Stepping Stones Positive Parenting Program
We ran this program at the school a number of years ago and the parents who attended found it very useful. The program is being refreshed and parents are welcome to answer a questionnaire (online) about it. This is the link at www.mysay.org.au.

Classes for next year
I have heard that parents/carers are asking who/where/who with questions about classes for 2015. We have not looked at classes yet as we are very busy with reports and planning, and we have yet to receive information about our new students for next year. We will let you know once we know – but I do not anticipate talking about classes until week 9 or 10. The teachers are being honest – they have no idea about next year either and they’d like to know too!

Unused iPhones and iPods
As I am sure many of you know, many of our students are digital natives and making great progress in using technology including communicating. Sarah, our ICT coordinator, is now using unwanted iPhones and iPod Touches across the school with some students. If you have an outdated iPhone/iPod touch just gathering dust at home, we would really welcome it as a donation to school. All such items will be disabled so that they do not work as a telephone, all content will be wiped (Sarah is very good with technology) so you do not have to be concerned about privacy issues on the sim cards. If the charger is still available with the phone, please also send that in. Thank you.

Christmas Raffle
Our Parents and Friends group would like to organise a Christmas raffle. Please send in Christmas items or Christmas food items by November 28 so that hampers can be made. A note will be sent out next week with further details.

Presentation Day
Just a reminder about Presentation Day on December 9, 2014 at 10:30am in the hall at Sarah Redfern PS – please join us to celebrate 2014’s achievements.

Kind regards

Julie

Diary Dates

November 7 - High school formal
December 9 - Presentation Day
December 17 - Last day of Term 4
December 18&19 - Staff Development Days

November 5, 2014
**Pink Class**

After working very hard to complete their individual morning work schedules each day, Pink Class students enjoy some relaxing free choice time. Relaxing in the hammock or swing are favourite choices during this time.

Students have been progressing so well at their morning work schedules, that this term they are now also completing individual work schedules at the beginning of middle session. For Sport this term, we are continuing to do bike riding to consolidate and improve skills gained last term. We are also enjoying a variety of other gross motor activities. One of the most popular activities is loading a ball into the spout of a special air cushion and then jumping on the cushion to fire the ball into the air. Recently during Science, we planted some nasturtium seeds which we are watering regularly and waiting eagerly for them to grow. In Cooking students have been improving their spreading skills by spreading margarine and a variety of toppings onto saos, saladas, cruskits and rice cakes and making choices of other toppings, such as, cheese or meat. They have also been using a milkshake maker to make milkshakes. Out of the choice of strawberry, vanilla, chocolate or banana flavouring, chocolate is the definite favourite.

**Red Class**

The students of Red Class have made significant gains as they have explored their musical abilities in the music therapy sessions. Rebecca, Cassandra, Mahib, Ben and Joshua always enjoy practicing their drumming skills, while Nusayba prefers the xylophone and Dipta the tambourine.

A fun and dynamic day was had by all, as the students of Red Class participated in the many events presented at the school swimming carnival last Friday. With the strong emphasis on participation, the carnival was a real triumph with everyone having a go. In this magnificent atmosphere of positivity and fun, the students in Red Class certainly relished the day.

Cheryl H, Sharon, Di Beers
Green Class

Green Class has been very busy this term visiting Featherdale Wildlife Park where we saw lots of animals with our favourite being Archie the koala. We were able to pat him and learn about koalas in the wild. We also liked the crocodile but didn’t get too close. We have also been bowling which we enjoyed. We are going swimming for sport this term with Blue Class. Last week was the school swimming carnival which was lots of fun. Everyone participated in the different races with the ball scramble being the most popular. Mr Fleming was very busy with the water pistol saturating all the staff members! Green Class won lots of ribbons and had a great day.

Green Class

White Class

White Class is participating in ten pin bowling this term. Students perform familiar movement skills and show good use of equipment such as grip and stance. We are increasing our gross motor skills, posture control, balance, coordination, strength, flexibility and stamina in a fun and safe environment at Campbelltown City Bowl. Socially, bowling is improving our ability to focus, follow directions, take turns and self-regulate. We enjoy all aspects of bowling and are always improving our bowling skills. We are practising holding the ball the correct way, bowling independently or with minimal support, down the middle of the lane, without touching the raised bumper-bars. We watch the ball roll and strike then check the scoreboard to see how many pins our peer has knocked down. Most of us are supportive and encouraging of our peers’ efforts at scoring a strike. We always enjoy hot chips after a great session at bowling. Welcome back to sports Jayden!

White Class demonstrated their competitive skills and sportsman-spirit at the swimming carnival on Friday at Eagle Vale Pool. Ronnan and Kurt won many races to become our class champions. Keep up the good work boys!

That doesn’t mean it is all play and no work for White Class. We are working hard in our reading skills by pairing up to read our favourite books to each other and are always keen to engage in online interactive learning through Skoolbo, Reading Eggs and Choose It Maker 3. We are also learning and practising our skills using a fork and a knife to eat during our cooking sessions on Thursdays.

Sukhraj and Mandy

Green Class

White Class
Orange Class
Orange Class students are enjoying Music Therapy each Wednesday and love exploring and playing the variety of musical instruments available. All of the students particularly like the djembe which they beat very loudly and enthusiastically. Students and staff from Orange Class had a wonderful time at the school swimming carnival last week. They all swam and were very well behaved which was commented on by other school staff. To see the smiles on their faces while in the water was terrific. They truly enjoyed themselves. Our drives in the bus now occur four times a week and the students are doing really well listening to instructions and are getting much better at waiting. Class teachers are busy writing reports at the moment and it is in the writing of these that we can see just how far the students of Orange Class have come to meeting their goals and achieving great things. We look forward to seeing you on Presentation Day when we will celebrate their achievements.

Purple Class
Purple Class is thoroughly enjoying their weekly Music Therapy sessions on Wednesdays. The aim of the sessions is to allow the students to express themselves through music. Students have been listening to music, singing, playing instruments and moving to music. Logan and Jackson particularly liked playing the djembe drum, Darren strumming the guitar and Kaley showed a keen interest in the xylophone. Emily, Tia and Jamie happily sing their greeting and sing to tell the teacher that they are ready to sing. It is wonderful to see all our students relaxed and enjoying themselves and responding to music in their own way. Last week’s swimming carnival was a great day. Students enjoyed freestyle and backstroke races; kickboard and noodle races; as well as splashing around and having lots of fun with the beach balls and noodles during free time. Thank you Mr Fleming for organising such a wonderful day!

Belinda, Kris, Jenny and Mal

Di, Diane and Narelle

The Right Start Foundation, under the provisions of its Constitution, will provide a grant up to $5000 per annum to families who have a child with Down syndrome and who are suffering financial hardship, to assist that child with therapy and related expenses and/or equipment. For application form, please contact Cheryl in the office at Passfield Park School on 9820 1700.

Check out our school website
www.passfield-s.schools.nsw.edu.au