Principal’s Report

Dear Parents and Caregivers,

Thank you to everyone for such a wonderful start to 2017. The year has started with students organised, confident and ready to learn.

I would like to welcome our new students and their families – Clara, Aijiah, Leo, Archer and Isabelle. I would like to extend a big thank you to our returning families including Ellen.

We have 24 students enrolled this year.

It was wonderful to see everyone in correct uniform from day 1. Our dress code has been recently reviewed and will be tabled for endorsement at the first P&C meeting of the year. A copy is attached for your information.

This newsletter is only one of the ways in which we will communicate with you throughout the year. The newsletter will be published fortnightly and will be sent home with the eldest child in each family. Or alternatively we can email it to you. Please contact Julie Jackson via email admin@mutdapilss.eq.edu.au to arrange this. Shortly after, it will be available on our website. We also have a twitter account and email account. We will also send home notes if it is information that cannot wait until the next newsletter. Staff are also happy to speak with you by phone or in person. An appointment is appreciated when you wish to speak to staff.

Upcoming issues of our newsletter will include regular articles about our key priority areas for 2017 including reading comprehension, number sense and pedagogy (teaching strategies). Please find attached a copy of the annual implementation plan for 2017. This plan will be tabled at the first P&C meeting of the year.

Yours in the pursuit of excellence,

Jedda McNeill

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You may view or print our newsletters at www.mutdapilss.eq.edu.au
School Representative Sport

Fassifern District School Sport Association and Metropolitan West School Sport now have Facebook pages. Go to these pages to get information for upcoming trials. Many of the 2017 trials will be a little earlier than normal, due to Pacific School Games being held in Adelaide this year. So keep up-to-date with social media.

Metropolitan West School Sport also has a website. A lot of information can be retrieved from this site from event calendars to results.

For whole-school sports such as Cross Country and Track and Field, primary school students who turn 13 this year must firstly trial at a high school competition. (Contact your local high school for the date). If a qualifying standard is met they are invited to the high school district trials.

Students in high school (typically Year 7) that turn 12 this year, will compete at their high school competition and then be invited to the Fassifern District School Sport (Primary School) trials if they are of a qualifying standard.

The sport of Cross Country has a few date claimers:

- Mutdapilly State School Cross Country Carnival – Friday 28th of April.
- Fassifern District Sports Association Cross Country Trials (10-12 years) – Friday 12th of May.
- Metropolitan West School Sport Cross Country Trials (10-19 years) – Thursday 1st of June.

School Review

As mentioned last year, our school review has been scheduled for 23 and 24 February 2017. An information sheet has been attached for your information. The reviewers, who are experienced principals, will wish to speak to as many members of our school community as possible. Please expect to be contacted by them. There is no need to ‘brush up’ or feel nervous about this experience. The reviewers are here to help us become an even better school and are seeking your honest thoughts. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact Jedda McNeill.

School routines

A few changes have been made to school routines:

- Parade is now from 2.15pm on a Tuesday and is held in the library. You are encouraged to attend.
- Library borrowing is on Wednesdays.
- French for year 3-6 is on Mondays from 1.30-2.30pm and year 4-6 an additional half hour on Thursday morning 8.30 -9.00am. Year 3 receives an additional half hour on Thursday mornings from 9.00-9.30am.
- French for Prep to 2 is on Thursdays from 9.30-10.15am.
- PE remains on Friday afternoons.
- Library lessons remain on Thursdays.
- Music lessons are on Thursdays and involve a P-6 choir session (30 minutes) as well as specialist music lessons for P-2 and 3-6 of 30 minutes duration.
- Science for Prep to 2 will be on Thursdays from 8.30-9.30am and 3-6 from 9.30-10.30am.
- Religious Instruction lessons start this week on Fridays from 10.00-10.30am.
Staffing

Staffing for 2017 is as follows:

Jedda McNeill – Principal and Teacher P-2 (Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Friday)

Rebecca Finn – Year 3-6 teacher (full time)

Kathryn McGowan – Principal Release Teacher (Thursdays) additionally teaching science and music P-6

Janet McKenna – PE teacher (Friday)

Gayle Wilson – Teacher Librarian (currently on leave) (Thursday)

Abdirizak Sid-Ahmed – French (Monday and Thursday)

Le-Anne Whittred – Support Teacher Literacy and Numeracy (Friday) – currently on leave

Carolyn Feldhahn – Teacher Aide (full time)

Dina Balassa – Teacher Aide (full time)

Julie Jackson – Administration Officer (odd weeks Monday and Tuesday; even weeks Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday)

Josh Feldhahn – Cleaner

Tim Hines – Grounds Officer

Denelle Rosenberg – Chaplain (Wednesday)

Behaviour

Our behaviour management approach is contained in our Responsible Behaviour Plan for Students. A copy of this document is available on our website. If you would like a hard copy, please contact the school.

Our four school rules are Be Here, Be Safe, Be Responsible and Be Respectful. To reward students for demonstrating safe, responsible and respectful behaviour, we use ‘Bee Stings’. The Bee Stings are completed by the staff member and placed by the students into one of our bee baskets. At parade, a Bee Sting will be randomly drawn from the bee basket and that student will be our student of the week. There will be one student of the week for each of the four bees. Bee Stings can be awarded in the classroom and in the playground. They may also be awarded by any staff member. Students will receive the hard copy of the Bee Sting following the draw. In this way, you will be able to celebrate with your child even if they are not the student of the week. It also allows students to all start from the same point each week.

Our approach to infrequent and low-level behaviour will be discussed in the next newsletter.
Attendance

At Mutdapilly, we know that every day counts. Parents are reminded of the importance of sending children to school on every school day unless there is a reasonable excuse for the student to be away, such as illness. Research shows that students who have a good attendance record are more likely to achieve high results. Going shopping, visiting family, staying up late, being tired or extending school holidays are not acceptable reasons to be away from school.

We reward regular attendance through The Principal’s Award for Be Here. The names of all students who have full attendance for the week preceding parade are placed in a basket. A name is selected at random. That student then wins the privilege of using the principal’s chair or wheelie chair for a day. All names remain in the basket so that students improve their chances every week they have full attendance.

Set out below are charts showing the effect absence has on student achievement.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>If your child misses….</th>
<th>That equals….</th>
<th>Which is…..</th>
<th>and over 13 years of schooling that’s…</th>
<th>Which means the best your child might perform is ..</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 day per fortnight</td>
<td>20 Days per year</td>
<td>4 weeks per year</td>
<td>Nearly 1.5 years</td>
<td>Equal to finishing in grade 11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 day per week</td>
<td>40 Days per year</td>
<td>8 weeks per year</td>
<td>Over 2.5 years</td>
<td>Equal to finishing in grade 10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 days per week</td>
<td>80 Days per year</td>
<td>16 weeks per year</td>
<td>Over 5 years</td>
<td>Equal to finishing in grade 7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 days per week</td>
<td>120 Days per year</td>
<td>24 weeks per year</td>
<td>Nearly 8 years</td>
<td>Equal to finishing at grade 4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Please find attached our updated attendance policy. This policy will be tabled at the first meeting of the P&C for their endorsement.
P&C meeting

Our Annual General Meeting of the P&C will be held either in late February or early March. At this meeting all executive positions will become vacant and nominations will be called for the positions in 2017. Everyone is welcome to attend our P&C meetings. Further information will be provided in the next newsletter regarding the date of the AGM.

Conveyance Committee

The school is required to have a conveyance committee with members including Merv Gherke (bus driver) and parents of students who catch the bus. This committee usually meets once or twice per year. The Annual General Meeting will be held before the P&C AGM. The date will be advised in the next newsletter.

Homework

Following our discussions and surveys last year, homework will be reduced this year. Nightly reading and sight words are expected to be completed. Research assignments stretching over a few weeks will be the preferred homework for students in year 3-6. Occasionally additional items may be set as homework but this will be the exception rather than the rule.

Thank you to all families who responded on this issue.

Sporting Schools

The school was successful in securing a Sporting Schools Grant. Prep to 2 will be participating in a gymnastics program commencing on 15 February and ending on 8 March 2017 at 1.30pm for an hour. This program is being provided by a qualified coach attached to the YMCA.

We are also currently organising a tennis coach to provide lessons for students in years 3 to 6. More details will be provided when the program has been finalised.