For the fortnight ending Wednesday 25 March 2015 Week 9 Term 1

Principal Messages

Holiday safety
It’s hard to believe that this is the last newsletter of the term. A quarter of the year has almost gone already and I’m beginning to wonder where I put it! Perhaps I’m having a boy’s look again. Seriously though, the term has proven very successful for student improvement and I’d like to ensure parents our last two weeks of term will continue with focussed teaching and learning activities. 2015 is all about getting as much learning as we can into the 200 days of school, and whilst the final Friday of the term is a holiday, the next week or so will not be. Children will continue to take part in learning activities from their units of work. I asked teachers in January to plan their Term One units to finish on the final day of the term to maximise learning time for all.

When the learning ends, holidays do begin! On that note, on behalf of all the staff I’d like to please take care. Above all else, take some time to relax and enjoy yourself if you can and we look forward to seeing you all again in term two.

Reading To Learn
This week Mrs Farren-Price and Mrs Mullane are taking part in a professional development course called Reading To Learn. This is a writing, reading and grammar program that is highly regarded in education circles. The program was designed for multi-age schooling initially, and has a long history of significant student growth in writing and reading. The particular point of note for me is the substantial gain many students find in sentence construction and structure. This program fits perfectly with the Seven Steps to Writing our staff have been doing this year and the learnings from the course will be implemented into our English units for Term Two.

Parent Teacher Interviews
Tonight marks the beginning of the Parent Teacher Interviews for Semester One. These are important conversations about how your child has been progressing so far in 2015. I have asked each teacher to complete the Parent Teacher Feedback sheet for you to collect at this meeting. These sheets are in essence a mini-report card, with marks for most areas of the Curriculum. These are, of course, guides to where your child is at the moment.

Tonight’s conversations are about the growth and improvement in your child’s skills and abilities. If you have any concerns after these conversations, please contact your teacher for further discussion. The feedback sheets should be kept to use as comparison with their report at the end of Term Two and provide you with a good starting point for conversations with your child’s teacher.

Date Claimers:

- 25 March—Wednesday—Parent/Teacher Meetings
- 27 March—P&C Italian Moot. 6pm
- 31 March—P&C Meeting. 6:30pm Library
- 27 March—Friday—Fire Ant Talk & Presentation
- 1 April—Wednesday—Parent/Teacher Meetings
- 2 April—Thursday—Term 1 Ends
- 3 April—Friday—Good Friday Public Holiday
- 6 April—Monday—Easter Monday
- 20 April—Monday—Term 2 Resumes
St Patrick’s Day
Last week our resident Irish family, the Kents, prepared some traditional St Patrick’s Day fare and activities for the kids to enjoy. The object of the day was to celebrate a small piece of the diversity of the Upper Brookfield State School community .... and of course some stew! We thank the Kent family for their amazing cooking and hard work organising the events of the day. The gold coin donations raised a massive total of $114 for ACT for Kids. Dr Neil Carrington, their CEO, who I have the pleasure of spending a working weekend with last year, was delighted with our generosity.

I’d also like to thank Sensei Rowswell and the LOTE Club for their touching presentation on ‘harmony’ at UBSS on the day. This was an excellent opportunity for the whole school to see how UBSS students look after each other and welcome new students into our community and to see what harmony is all about. It gave us a timely opportunity to talk about ‘bullying’ and the ‘Say No To Bullying’ Campaign. The whole school sing-a-long; with Emily’s beautiful violin accompaniment, was a pleasure to hear. Well done Sensei and the kids of UBSS!

Cross Country Carnival
The annual cross country carnival date has been set for Monday the 4th of May. This gives you plenty of time to start running around to build up your fitness. Miss McIntyre is in the process of putting her stamp on the carnival day and more details will be sent next week across our various communication platforms (Facebook, Twitter, UBSS Website, Principal’s Blog and email). District cross country will be later in that same week for those who qualify from Years 5 and 6.

KAOS Success
In the previous newsletter I discussed the arrival of the KAOS teachers on the 18th March. The afternoon was a major success with the school grounds and buildings looking immaculate. I was pleased to communicate to Miss Annette some glowing praise from our former Principal Mr Chris Pye. When Chris arrived for the KAOS meeting he was stunned at how beautiful the grounds were looking and wanted me to personally let our amazing Grounds Officer and new cleaner know. He was (nearly) speechless. Well done Netty and Mal!

As for the business of the afternoon, our Year 4 and 5 visiting teachers each brought with them writing samples from their classes to have a moderation session. During this time we each marked the samples to validate the marking. It was pleasing to see that our work samples were not just up to the mark with our counterparts, but sat comfortably alongside quality work from any of the invited schools.

It was gratifying to know that at each KAOS meeting UBSS student work received similar plaudits. Well done UBSS staff and kids!

Homework Summit
The 18th was certainly a busy day. After the KAOS teachers left, the UBSS parents came in to take their place at the Homework Summit. I was very pleased with the turnout and subsequent email responses from those who could not attend on the evening. It was interesting to receive emails from as far as Perth and Sydney from parents who wanted their voice heard. Thank you all for your input into the evening.

I outlined at the evening, the next phase of the policy discussion and that will be with the four other significant stakeholders in our homework policy: the UBSS kids, EQ, Kenmore SHS and the UBSS staff. After these meetings I’ll create and release a draft document for consultation. I anticipate this will be before the end of Semester One. For those who enjoyed the evening, and Mrs Stanfield’s cakes, feel free to come again in term three when we discuss the uniform policy.

Ross Hill

Principal’s Award:
Emily—Amazing nest nurturing.

Student of the Week:
LMA MMA UMA Science P.E.
Rory Adam Millie Oliver N-B Nenah

Merit:
LMA MMA UMA Science P.E.
Amelie Lauren & Georgie Will Pria Darcy