What a caring community!

Last Friday one of our very own families experienced a tremendous tragedy when their house burnt down and destroyed all of their belongings. The caring and considerate way that we all came together to be of assistance has been remarkable. Thanks to all of you, the immediate needs of the family have now been met. I am sure you will all understand that the family now need some private time to work through this difficulty together.

Leanne Taylor, our school Counsellor, has attached an article to our newsletter for you. It is the guidelines for parents/caregivers on helping children who have been affected by trauma.

As always, please feel free to come and have a chat if there is anything we can do to assist you.

Celebrating Books

Our book week parade was a huge success last week with many great costumes!!

Staff and students dressed up as their favourite book character and proudly paraded in front of family and visitors. Can you guess which characters these children are?
**National Reconciliation Week 2015**

Next week from 27th May to 3rd June is National Reconciliation week. This week celebrates and builds on the respectful relationships shared by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and other Australians.

Framed by two significant anniversaries, the 1967 referendum and the 1992 Mabo decision, the week reminds us that great achievements take courage and persistence.
GRIP Leadership

Last Monday our 8 Student Leaders, Mr O’Dell and Mr King attended the GRIP Leadership conference in Newcastle. There were approximately 1,500 students and teachers from across our region. The GRIP Leadership team spoke to the students about how to be a better and effective leader within their school and community. Our students learnt the importance of good leadership and how they can support our school and community.

Here are some thoughts from our leaders who attended the conference:

“Being a leader is a lot more complicated than I thought”

“I learnt how to be a good leader and you need to plan what you are going to do for your school”

“It was pretty cool. They taught us about Leadership. I now know what other things I need to do!”

“I learnt how to deal with issues. It was fun”

“I enjoyed meeting new people. I learnt how to be a better leader”

“I learnt how to be a good Captain. We did all sorts of fun things.”

“I enjoyed the play about giving up your time and leisure”

Stewart House Day

A reminder that tomorrow (Friday 22nd May) is Stewart House Day. Students are allowed to come to school out of uniform on this day and bring a gold coin donation if they do. Remember to wear appropriate sun safe clothing – no thongs and a school hat must be worn.

Mr King will be selling High Bounce Handballs for $1 each and Torch/Key Rings for $3 each during lunchtime.

All money goes to Stewart House 2015 Donation Drive. Thank you.

Taking Responsibility

The colder weather is upon us and the Lost Property bin is overflowing once again. Please help your child to develop their organisational skills by ensuring that their name is on all school clothing. Remind your
children to take responsibility by putting belongings in their bags.

Thank you for your ongoing co-operation in this matter.

**P&C Info**

Hello everyone, I just want to say thanks for all the help that has been received over the last few weeks from the parents and caregivers of our school. New faces are showing up in canteen, reading, school events, working bees and assemblies – it is great to see!

While trying to accommodate most of our families the P&C Annual General Meeting date has been changed to Thursday 4th June at 6pm in the school library. I hope this time is more convenient for people as we would love to see lots of faces there! Everyone is welcome.

We also have a lot of events coming up. The Athletics Carnival, the AGM and Pancake Day, so check your calendar and stay tuned for all the notes and information.

Thank you all very much again and keep up the good work.

*Steve Ward, P&C President*

**REMINDER:** The P&C Annual General Meeting will be held on Thursday 4th June.

---

**FACEPAINTERS NEEDED!**

The P&C are looking for face painters for our end of year Family Fun Afternoon on the 4th December from 4 – 6pm. If you can facepaint or you know of anyone that can, we would love to hear from you. Please let the office or me know. Thank you.

*Kay Fernance*

---

**Head Lice**

Please check your child’s hair for nits/lice tonight using the methods recommended in information from NSW Health (http://www.health.nsw.gov.au/environment/h eadlice/Pages/treatment.aspx). If you find any eggs or lice please commence treatment as recommended.

Further information on head lice is also available through the Department’s website at http://www.schoo ls.nsw.edu.au/studentsupport/studenthealth/conditions/headlice/index.php

Thank you. Your co-operation is appreciated.

**Student’s Workbooks**

Thank you to all the families who have paid for these books. Unfortunately we still have some students from 1H, 2/3M and 5/6K who have not yet paid. Payment as soon as possible would be appreciated. Thank you.
Learning for Life

Congratulations to all the students who have worked hard to receive their Tool and Wheelbarrow licence. Those that have been away or have not completed will have a chance during the rest of the term to achieve the licences.

Wow! What a great week we have had in the garden. Kindergarten kicked off their first lesson in kitchen garden last week with a sensory delight - students used their senses to touch, taste and smell as we took a tour of our ever growing garden. They also planted their first seeds which will be planted in the garden in their next lesson.

2/3M started cooking this week with the help of Mrs Harridge. It is great to have parent helpers assist with the kitchen garden program, as it allows children to get more out of the program. This week students cooked bread rolls with sultanas or herbs fresh from the garden.

4/5O have begun working towards their knife licence. This week they cut fruit and vegetables to share for afternoon tea.

If you would like to help out during kitchen garden class (Monday - Thursday 2-3pm) please contact the office or Mrs Miller. We need parent volunteers for week 7 cooking classes and we also need donations of plates, knives, forks, glasses and water jugs. During Week 7 we need donations of plain flour, olive oil, fresh fruit and veg

Enrolments for 2016

Enrolments are now open for Kindergarten 2016. This will ensure parents receive all the necessary information before the start of our transition program next term. Some families have already enrolled. If you know of any children who are needing to enrol, please pass this information on to them. Thank you.

Athletics Carnival

A reminder that our Athletics Carnival will be held next Wednesday 27th May. All permission notes should be in by now, if not please send them in with payment as soon as possible.

The 26-Storey Treehouse

It is not long now until our younger students go to the Civic Theatre to see this live performance. Please note the third and final payment for this excursion is due on the 18th June.

Thank you so much to all the families who are sending in canned food each week. Our donations are growing fast so keep them coming! Next week is canned fruit week.

Week 6: (25/5/15) - Canned fruit
Week 7: (1/6/15) - Canned soup
**Important dates for Term 2**

- **22nd May**  Stewart House Day
- **22nd May**  Soccer Knockout game - Wyee
- **27th May**  Athletics Carnival
- **28th May**  Morisset HS open day info night
- **29th May**  Boys Cricket match at school
- **1st June**  Debating team training
- **3rd June**  Life saving skills for students
- **4th June**  P&C AGM at 6pm
- **5th June**  Financial Literacy K-3
- **5th June**  Community forum for individualised learning plans
- **8th June**  Queen’s Birthday holiday
- **17th June**  Pancake Day
- **26th June**  Last day of Term 2

---

**Parent Tips**

**Food Allergy Week 17-23 May** - Did you know that 1 in 10 babies born in Australia will develop a food allergy? The Food Allergy Week website has lots of great information, ideas and resources to help you be more allergy aware. Find out more: [http://www.foodallergyaware.com.au](http://www.foodallergyaware.com.au)

**Is your child making friends at school?**

Kids who get on at school tend to be more engaged in learning. Here are some ideas on how to help your child with social skills: [http://www.schoolatoz.nsw.edu.au/wellbeing/](http://www.schoolatoz.nsw.edu.au/wellbeing/)

---

**Apple for the Teacher**

Don’t forget there is still time to vote for Mr King in Newfm’s “Apple for the Teacher” competition. Follow this link to vote and when you have voted, vote again…and again…and again! 👍

Helping children affected by traumatic events - Guidelines for parents and caregivers

Impact of trauma on children
People cope with trauma in different ways and there is no one 'standard' pattern of reaction to the stress of traumatic experiences. Children are not always able to express complex feelings in the same direct way that adults do and therefore do not often show the same reactions to stress as adults. It is therefore very important to look out for changes in children’s behaviour that suggest they are unsettled or distressed.

Reactions to traumatic events may result in changes to children’s normal behaviour such as:
- Changes in their play, drawing, dreams or spontaneous conversations
- Regressive behaviour – children behaving younger than they normally do
- Nightmares
- Anxiety about sleeping alone
- Trouble getting to sleep
- Irritability or anger
- Tantrums
- Fussy eating
- Withdrawing
- Wanting to stay close to a parent
- Problems concentrating at school

Children are usually very resilient and for most children these reactions will gradually reduce over time with the support of families.

How you can help your children recover
- After a traumatic event, children need comfort, reassurance and support, and to know that they are safe and are being looked after.
- Try to spend more time with your children and provide them with plenty of affection through cuddles and hugs.
- Sometimes children can better express their feelings through play than through words, so make time to play with them.
- Let them be more dependent on you for a while and try to re-establish daily routines, for example routines around mealtimes, bedtimes or returning to school where possible.
- Find out what your children know in case they have mistaken ideas or facts about the incident(s), and correct any misconceptions.
- Keep your responses appropriate to the age of your child and also appropriate to the child’s level of understanding and emotional maturity.
- Young children often need reassurance more than facts.
- Listen to your children's concerns. Listen closely to what they are asking or saying, and think about whether they are looking for factual information, or if the questions are expressing anxiety about the incident.
- Try to keep your own feelings to yourself when talking about their feelings. Let them know that you understand how they feel.
- Be aware of how you talk. Adults need to be conscious of the presence of children when discussing the incident(s). It is a good idea not to let children overhear adult conversations about worrying things if they cannot join in at their own age or stage of development.
- And most importantly, look after yourself as it is likely that you have also experienced the trauma. When parents are feeling cared for themselves they are better able to respond to the needs of their children.

Seeking further help
While most children will bounce back after a trauma, some children may show prolonged distress and could benefit from professional assistance. Children are more at risk of developing more lasting problems when they have lost family and friends, have been seriously injured, or witnessed horrific scenes and those who develop problems in response to past traumas.

Warning signs of more significant and lasting distress in children include:
- Continual and aggressive emotional outbursts
- Serious problems at school
- Preoccupation with the traumatic incident
- Intense anxiety or emotional difficulties

A qualified mental health professional such as a psychologist can help such children and their parents or caregivers to understand and deal with the thoughts, feelings and behaviours associated with the traumatic incident. Speak to your GP about a referral to a psychologist. Alternatively, you can locate a psychologist in your area by visiting the APS Find a Psychologist website – www.findapsychologist.org.au.

Please also let the school know if your child is experiencing ongoing trauma as a result of any of the recent incidents in the community.