Principal’s Message

Thank you to all the parents who attended the parent/teacher meetings last week. It was lovely to see those who attended - but disappointing to not see more of you. I will talk to the parent meeting on Tuesday about better ways of connecting with you, as for some, this was obviously not to the way that worked. Please give me feedback if you did attend the meetings - were they useful, did you learn anything, did you get to know your child's teacher a bit? We want to work with you - educating your children is a partnership. On that note, please come along to our first Parents and Citizens meeting tomorrow - Tuesday February 17th in the hall. We will be talking about plans for the year, so we need your input. Thank you.

School arrival time

Children should arrive at school between 8.30 and 8.55. Until then there is no teacher on playground duty. If they arrive after 8.55 they are late, and should go to the front office for a late note. School starts at 8.55 - not 9.00. This is due to the bus timetable, and we have to finish at 2.55. If children arrive later in the day for some reason, the gates will be closed and they will not be able to get in unless they are with an adult. This happened last week. An adult must bring the child to the office to sign them in if they arrive late. Thank you.

Parents have a legal obligation to send children to school every day unless they are sick. If your child is away from school they must bring an explanation note when they return. These can also be sent in using the new school app. The home school liaison officer regularly checks attendance, but it is in your child's best interest to be at school regularly - so let's make 2015 our best year of school attendance yet!

Investiture Assembly

This afternoon we celebrated our school leaders for 2015. We have many students, from Year 2 - Year 6, who take on leadership roles in our school. From year 2 they are learning to be a voice on the student representation council (SRC), and by Year 6 they are organising activities and events within the school. I congratulate the children for being selected, and wish them well with their responsibilities this year.

Lower Playground

Parents will be pleased to hear that our lower playground, where Kindergarten play each day, is about to undergo a transformation. We have had to wait until the new demountable buildings were placed late last year, but now the planning is underway. Last week the SRC children met with the designer and took part in a workshop. They learnt about the design process and gave their ideas. Some possible inclusions are displayed in the front office. The playground will be designed to promote creative play, it is not going to be a climbing gym type of playground with limited space for the number of children we have, but one that encourages imagination. Once it is created, by the start of term 2, we will have a timetable that allows the older children to use it as well as Kindergarten.

Play

Last week during the parent teacher meetings I spent some time chatting with children in the playground, and made a sad discovery - many of our children don't play any more. I followed this up with other children and discovered it was true. Many children appear to think that playing is for "little kids", and once you reach the age of about 7, you are too old for toys. What a sad state of affairs. I have also been visiting the playgroup and talking to parents there about the importance of play - sadly many parents are so set on their children "doing well" at school that they want to start "formal teaching" earlier and earlier. Many children are so busy with organized activities that they don't have time to just play. Parents have the best of intentions, I know, and play is rapidly becoming technological, so children play on screens. Now I don't want to get into a discussion about how much time children spend on tablets and computers playing games - it is at least more interactive than time spent watching TV, but I do want to encourage children to play games that involve their imagination and other people! Children learn all sorts of skills playing with toys and games. They are communicating, imagining and solving problems (both social ones and technical ones). Depending on the toy or game, they are learning maths, physics, developing their hand-eye coordination, strengthening their hands and fingers (important for handwriting - yes, they still need to learn to write legibly, not everything is typed!). They are learning to question, to create, to wonder… PLEASE, give your children time to play - and give yourself time to join in - it's fun, and you are doing your job as a parent. Play doesn't have to be with expensive toys either, but children who have forgotten how to play may need some help. On a positive note, many children do get out and play in the park, kick a ball around and ride their bikes. This is good too, and I encourage that to continue. I will end with a few quotes: "Play is our brain's favourite way of learning." Diane Ackerman
"Do not keep children to their studies by compulsion but by play." Plato
"Children learn as they play. More importantly, in play children learn how to learn." O. Fred Donaldson. (no relation!)
Put aside some time this week to play with your children!

Anthea Donaldson  
Principal

Class Awards

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Class News

Kindergarten

It has been a great start to the year with our Kindergarten students settled into 'big school' routines. Parents play a big part in helping our students settle. Your cooperation and partnership is most valued and it is evident in the ways in which your children come to school ready for learning.

Here are a few housekeeping items to remind you:

* Library borrowing starts tomorrow, bring a bag.
* Home readers have started, please read every night and ensure you sign the reading log so your child can get a new book. I encourage dads to read with your child if you haven’t already done so.
* Gym fun times have changed just for this week. We would love to have parent helpers for these sessions.

11:15 KB & KD (same time)  
12:10 Krisha  
2:00 KA & KS  

Thanh Ta

Year 1 and Year 2

Thank you to all of the parents and guardians that were able to attend our ‘Meet the teacher’ evening last week. It was a great opportunity to speak with you and inform you about the exciting year ahead.

Sport started last week and unfortunately there were many students without a hat. If students do not bring their hat to sport, they will not be able to participate. Make sure all hats and water bottles are labelled please. Scripture begins this week on Wednesday.

Have a fantastic week!  
Miss Langhans

Year 3

Thank you to the Year 2/3 parents and families who attended our ‘Meet the Teacher Night’. It was great to see you all there and we hope you feel well informed about the extensive learning and extra curricula activities that happen at PWPS. A massive thank you to Mrs Harris and Mr Budden, who gave up their valuable time to be there for the evening.

Hopefully students now have all of their equipment; homework book covered; and started their class homework. Don’t forget ALL homework for 2/3J, 3B and 3H is due every Friday. This includes their spelling, maths, reading log and challenge program (which is optional).

Some essential information went home last week about Enrichment Money for 2015. The note outlines what the money covers this year and how payments can be made. Thank you to those parents and families who have already paid in full or paid an instalment.

PSSA teams have been announced for t-ball, cricket and softball. The first game will be held this Friday. All students in 3-6 (including 2/3J) must have a water bottle and a school hat every Friday for sport.

We hope you have a fabulous week 4!  
Mrs Heifetz

Year 4 and Year 5

A huge thank you to all the parents who attended the ‘Meet the Teacher’ evening last Wednesday and we hope it was beneficial. If you were unable to attend you can find a copy of my PowerPoint presentation on your child's class blog.

On the topic of 'Blogs', have you seen the reading blog? All students will need to read at least 3 or 4 books from the reading list and provide response in the comment box. Please take a few minutes to familiarise yourself with the reading blog as this is a crucial aspect of your child's reading program this year.

Class fitness activities will begin this Wednesday morning and PSSA begins this Friday. Children need to wear the PWPS sports uniform, including the school hat, when representing our school.

Enjoy the week,  
Mr Clarke

Year 6

It is overwhelming and very exciting to see how many of our Year 6 students are using Edmodo to discuss their learning. Each week Mrs Donaldson will be posting a message to promote quality thinking about effort, motivation, practice, developing a learning mindset and other powerful messages. It is vital that all students have the chance to read these messages and respond.

Have a fantastic week!
Excellent academic and support programs

Homework began last week and it was an impressive start. Homework challenges are open ended to allow students to demonstrate initiative, time management and creativity. Homework will be handed out each Monday but will also be attached to Edmodo. Homework is due Thursday to enable quality feedback to be given on Friday.

Congratulations to our school leaders who were celebrated at the Investiture Assembly this afternoon. We are proud of your leadership and wish you luck in your endeavours this year.

A reminder that the Parramatta High School Enrichment note was sent home on Friday. The first 10 students from each Year 6 class will be accepted as a part of this program.

Our school captains and leaders will receive a note this week regarding the Grip Leadership Conference to be held on March 4th at Sydney Olympic Park. Mrs Donaldson will attend with the students, however we need 2 more parents to help transport the children to and from the venue.

Don't forget to ask your child how many books they have read so far? The target is 40 novels within the year! Please help your child to reach this target. It is POSSIBLE!!!

Mrs Rhodes

**Library News**

Please do not repair Books at home - return them and I will repair them.

Please be prompt in returning books. Regular borrowing is important.

**P & C News**

P & C meeting 9am tomorrow in the Hall. Uniform shop / Home Reading room shut until the meeting is over.

School Banking tomorrow. Please see you local Commonwealth Bank to open an account to start your child saving.

**Address and Telephone numbers**

Please make sure the office has current phone numbers (mobile, work and home) and address details.

**Tae Kwon Do**

Classes are held in our school hall on Monday and Thursday starting at 5.30pm.
Contact Michael 0409 928 534

**Sports News**

Sport got off to a good start last week! K-2 had a great time at Gym Fun and fundamental skills, their sounds of delight echoed across the playground and sounded inviting. Check with your child's teacher for times that parents can help with skill groups. Don't forget to dress your child in their sports uniform on these days as it allows for free participation, and send them a water bottle and hat.

Unfortunately Friday dawned with poor weather conditions and 3-6 sport was cancelled. But on the bright side all classes got out later in the day, sharing our hall and cola areas for some skill development and games. Hopefully this week's weather will be kinder and all will go as planned.

Our PSSA Cricket, T-Ball and Softball teams have been chosen, congratulations to those students and training commences this week for our first competition match in week 4. Make sure you have your safety equipment, school hat and water bottle organised and with you on match days.

Congratulations to our house captains on their investiture to their position this afternoon. They have already begun their duties by giving up some lunchtime play to organise, loan and collect the lunchtime playground kits and equipment.

Attention all swimmers! As you participate in Club Night races and squad training you need to be collecting your times from your coaches for your 50m and distance events in Freestyle, Backstroke, Breaststroke and Butterfly. A separate note will be coming in the following weeks with specific details about entering the zone swimming carnival if you have the qualifying times, so be prepared.