



GUILDFORD PUBLIC SCHOOL

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NEWS UPDATE

23 FEBRUARY 2012



MESSAGE FROM THE PRINCIPAL

Dear Parents and Guardians,

As we move towards the end of February, we may ask, "What happened to summer?" It definitely hasn't been like the usual start to the year, with traditional weeks of scorching heatwaves and long hot nights. We certainly have had our share of rain too! How green everything looks. I can almost see the grass growing in the playground. With milder temperatures we have had at least a more comfortable start to the school year. I am very pleased to say that students seem very settled in their 2012 classes, with teachers now actively engaging all students in explicit quality teaching daily. Class programs and initiatives are well underway and class routines are being reinforced.

SWIMMING CARNIVAL WETTER THAN EXPECTED

Students in Years 3-6 enjoyed their annual swimming carnival on Thursday 9 February at Guildford Swimming Centre. Despite the inclement weather, we managed to get through most of the events before the rains came at midday. Students had enjoyed the morning races barracking for their team mates. As mentioned last week at our Parent/Teacher Information evening, there is less than 10% of students who actually participate in the swimming races. Most children cannot swim the 25 metres. Parents should endeavour to send their son or daughter to the **Learn To Swim** program each year, however maintaining practice, at a swimming centre is the only way to really consolidate and improve one's swimming skills.

Unfortunately some parents signed the note indicating their son or daughter could swim 25 metres, when they clearly couldn't. This is a real

concern to all the teachers as student safety is our number one priority. These students had to be pulled from the pool. Although we had only a relative small number of competitors, they certainly made up for that by giving an amazing effort. Some students entered in nearly every category for their age. The photograph below shows a group of students who made an outstanding effort at the carnival by gaining first place in an event. Congratulations!



Champion and 1st place swimmers!

Back row: Sarah Kochergin, Angela Nguyen, Michael Asabre, Ricky Newell and Aidan Turner

Middle row: Mahmutjahn Olca, Jeyda Olca and Paul John Charbel

Front row: Farah Al Tamimi, Taylan Yag, Hassan Awick, Amir Awick and Shirif Awick



PARRAMATTA EELS CREATE A WAVE AT GPS.



On Tuesday students from Year 3-6 were entertained by two special visitors to our school. Parramatta Eels football Team First Grade players Ben Roberts and Taulima Tantai addressed an assembly of excited students. They spoke about their experiences growing up in South Western Sydney, the importance of reading and physical education. The footballers distributed prizes and the audience went wild as they joined them for a group photograph.



Above: Ben Roberts and Taulima Tantai, with a group of Parramatta Junior League players from Guildford Public School

PARENT/TEACHER INFORMATION EVENING

Thank you to the many parents who attended last weeks Parent/Teacher Information session in our hall. We had approximately 80 parents which roughly represents about 10% of our parent body.

Although after school hours, we had 96% of the teaching staff in attendance which clearly confirms their commitment to Public Education, your children and our school.

Topics presented by myself and staff included: Student Welfare, uniforms, punctuality, homework, home readers, curriculum with emphasis on Literacy and Numeracy, sport, Code of Conduct, Swimming Scheme, PSSA, breakfast, healthy eating, sleep, community participation, Parents in Partnership, PSP survey (coming up), excursions, library and equipment.

All students K-6 would have received an overview from their teachers this week of 'basic requirements'. I ask parents to support your son or daughter's education by assisting with these classroom items and procedures. If you are having difficulty obtaining these requests please let your teacher know in person or by sending a short note.

Student Leadership

Last Wednesday was a special day for us at Guildford. Our eight school leaders including captains, vice-captains and prefects were inducted into their leadership role for 2012. It was wonderful to see so many parents in attendance supporting. Parents participated in the assembly by coming to the stage to pin the badges on their son or daughter. The students then recited the pledge for 2012. We also recognised our class leaders who were given their Student Representative Council (SRC) badge before also reciting their pledge.



SRC members attend a weekly meeting with Mr Hanna (Assistant Principal) and Miss De Marco (ESL Support Teacher). They also run weekly class meeting gathering ideas and suggestions from their

fellow class members. The SRC leaders then report back at the combined meeting and discuss information gathered and possible future directions.



Student leaders ...from left to right

Ziyad Kassem, Aidan Turner, Ricky Newell,
Thomas Batistic, Jasmine Lepua, Angela Nguyen,
Ritika Garg and Kitty Jo

COMPOSITE CLASSES...DO YOU HAVE A QUESTION?

Sometimes parents are concerned that their son or daughter has been placed in a Composite Class. Basically there are two reasons why composite classes will be formed instead of, or in addition to, parallel/straight classes:

- Administrative - the NSW Department of Education's state-wide school staffing formula is applied to a school's enrolment data, informing a school as to how many staff will be appointed to that school. Students in Years K-2 attract a higher "staffing allocation" than Years 3- 6 classes. This enables schools to **keep classes smaller** in the K-2 classes. According to the number of students in each Year group, classes will be formed to maintain the smaller class sizes whilst also meeting, not exceeding, the staffing allocation provided by the Department of Education.
- Educational - classes are formed on the basis of educational rationale which include social and academic needs of students, teaching styles which best suit each child and the types of programs available within a school for different learning needs.



You may like to read the following article on the topic which I sent home a couple of years ago. As some new parents have asked for information, I thought it timely to include it again in our newsletter:

An article about composite classes:

Composites - Stages not Ages

At the beginning of a new school year, many parents might suddenly find their child in a composite class. Naturally, questions arise: for the older group - will my child be held back? For the younger group - will my child be able to keep up?



Composite classes have been the source of much controversy over the years, with parents often believing that their offspring is being disadvantaged in some way by being in one. The key to understanding composites is realising that growth is determined in stages and not magically by ages.

Composite classes teach children who are at compatible stages - not ages. It doesn't mean your child is dumb or a genius, it just means that they are going through a stage either sooner or later than others.



It would be ludicrous to presume that all toddlers, once they reach the age of two, are toilet trained and talk in sentences - some will, some won't but they all will in the end. Stages of all sorts continue throughout childhood and into the teenage years - puberty catches up to everyone at some point.

Although a child might be chronologically older - their maturity, social needs, academic needs and behaviour may be akin to a Year 3/4 balance rather than a straight Year 4 or a Year 4/5. Alternatively, a child may be quite mature and requires the stimulation of a Year 4 or Year 4/5 group. They all get there, the path may be different but the destination is the same.

Children have always been in multi-aged classes anyway. The ages of kindergarten students range from four and nine months to six and six months, an 18 month difference! Some children start school barely toilet trained where others are quite mature and are already reading at an advanced level.

Same class but different stages.

It makes sense then to group children who are going through the similar stage so they can relate, help and experience together. Even within the same class, children will be at different levels. Teachers recognise this and usually extend the work of those who learn more quickly and give more attention to those who are slower. The class then becomes outcome based rather than competition based - this method of teaching also applies to straight classes.

The good thing about composite classes is that it draws attention to individual needs and development and facilitates individualised learning.

Managing composite classes requires experienced teachers. Most teachers these days are well-versed and experienced in conducting programs in composite classes. They gain this knowledge through their understanding of syllabus stages of development (imbedded in teacher training) and through practical experience.



Older students are not held back in composite classes. Separate programs are used, in most curriculum areas, for the different groups of students according to their level of development. There will be some joint activities; such as in art and drama.

Composite classes can provide significant benefits to both the younger and older students in the class. Older students can benefit from helping younger students in co-operative learning situations. The younger students have the opportunity of enhanced learning experiences where they are ready for it.

The Department of Education says that overseas research has shown children in composite classes do no better or worse academically than their peers in straight grade class, but that, socially, their development is enhanced. They are more confident, can operate better as part of a group, are more assertive, become more independent learners and better problem-solvers. They also make friends outside of their standard age-groups.

Composite classes have always existed. Traditionally smaller schools have had to use composite classes to place all their students in classes - this is still relevant in many country schools.

Composite classes, also known as multi-age, multilevel, fluid or vertical groups, are here to stay. If you have a child in a composite class and are concerned, talk to the teacher and the principal. Ask why your child has been placed in a composite class and ask how you can help enhance your child's development within the class. Schools usually respond sympathetically in responding to parental concerns about composite classes and will make changes where students are not coping.

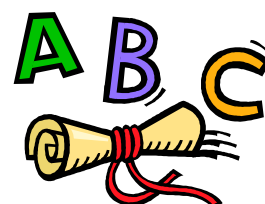
The greatest impact on student learning is the quality of the teacher not class composition.

Have a great fortnight!

Mr Peter Lawless.

Principal.

**SPECIAL STUDENTS sent
to SHOW GOOD WORK
to the PRINCIPAL
THIS FORTNIGHT**



KK Ayra Rivera, Talya Kanj
1D Zac Singca, Sueda Aslan
1/2P Ayat Imran, Jessica Triek Phu
SKY Lepua
2/3W Mayset Elhaj, Anna Chung
3ED Maxdi Qanber Ali
3C Jomana Ayouch, Dylan Perera
4/5N Imran Chakari
5/6P Michael Asabre
5/6Q Kayra Bozdagci, Natalia Wang

CONGRATULATIONS!

KEEP UP THE GOOD WORK.

Mr Lawless

I HOPE to see YOU next week!

TERM 1	DATES TO REMEMBER
23/2/12 – 2/3/12	Life Education. Healthy Harold
27/2/12	Parramatta Eels Skills Session 1
5/3/12	Parramatta Eels Skills Session 2
26/3/12	Parramatta Eels Gala Day K-6
5/4/12	Last Day of School Term 1
23/4/12	Staff Development Day Term 2
24/4/12	All students return to school Term 2

FEATURE CLASS 2012

FEATURE CLASS COMMENCING WEEK 7

ASSEMBLY
STARS

Website of the Week

www.starfall.com



A free website to teach children to read with phonics. For preschool, kindergarten, year 1 and year 2 children. Exciting phonics games and online interactive books.

SCHOOL CAR PARK

Parents are again reminded that there is NO PARKING permitted on school premises under any circumstances. This includes the excuse "There is no parking outside", "I have to order my child's lunch", "I have to pick my child up early." Unfortunately, with school parking, all parents are in the same circumstances, and fortunately most do the right thing. There are no excuses when parents put student's lives at risk when they drive into or reverse out of the car park.



Cindy Alterio SAO

Parents in Partnership

Come and join in with Parents in Partnership and help cover books, make play-dough and meet community members and have fun helping with student resources.

D Hemming Parents in Partnership Coordinator.



Whispers From The Library

Library Days.

Library Days are as follows:



Monday: 3 Tasmanian Devils, 5/6 Quokka, 1 Dugong and 1 Bandicoot.

Tuesday: 3 Cuscus, 4/5 Numbat, ALL Kindergarten classes, and K/1 Echidna.

Wednesday: 4 Wallaby, 5/6 Possum and 2 Koala

Thursday: 2/3 Wombat, 5/6 Ding and 1/2 Platypus



What are we doing in library lessons?



This term in library we are covering many exciting and interesting things.

Early Stage 1 (Kindergarten) will be learning about how to use a book, parts of a book, where to find books to borrow, and having many new and wonderful books read to them.

Stage 1 will be following the unit, "About me", which will include books and activities about self understanding and the importance of being yourself.

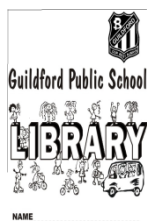
Stage 2 is learning strategies in researching. During this time they'll discover some of Australia's finest explorers and pioneers. They'll be researching about Charles Sturt, Burke & Wills, Caroline Chisholm, Charles Kingsford Smith, Truganini and other important people who have shaped our history.



Stage 3 are going to participate in a very interesting, high order thinking project which help them learn skills in negotiation, discussion, research, summarising and inquiry learning. This project involves students to think in the 100 years future and decide what to do with the dilemma of gold being discovered on the Moon. Of course, it's not going to just be as easy as saying yes or no, there are lots of things that have happened between 2012 and 2112.

Library Bags

Please remember that library bags are available for sale at the library. Please feel free to see me between 830am and 850am Mondays or Wednesday or after 3pm Monday, Tuesday and Thursdays.



Mrs Cullen (Library Assistant) should be in the office all day Wednesday to assist you.

A big "Thank you!"



Mrs Rees and Mrs Thorne have kindly been helpful in the library covering new dictionaries and thesauruses for me. It was a big job and they did it well. THANK YOU!

Thank you for your support.

Mr Norambuena. Teacher Librarian

Life Education

All students K-6 will be visiting the Life Education Van between 23 February and 2 March. Please return the permission note and \$10 to the office as soon as possible. Healthy Harold's visit will promote a healthy lifestyle and positive living.



Miss Smith. (Coordinator Life Education)

Learn Music on Keyboard at Guildford Public School



- * Music theory
- * Instrument not required initially
- * Instrument playing
- * Fun music games
- * Ensemble practice
- * Music material included
- * 45 mins lesson weekly, small group



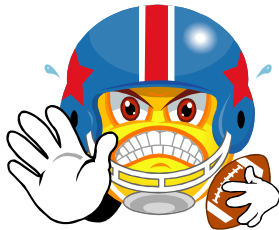
Smart Kids Love Music!

Call to enrol: 9411 3122 (VIP Music est. 1984)



www.learnmusicatschool.com.au

FOOTY FUN AT GPS





SWIMMING
CARNIVAL
9/2/12