Principal’s Report

Hello Again

As we tear off another page from the calendar; as the eleventh month and milestones like the cent auction and the Melbourne Cup draw nearer then fade into our memory I continue to marvel at how some of our students have grown and developed during my tenure at NVSS. Indeed, some individuals take longer to arrive at a particular point needing to work harder and longer before they are comfortable with where they are, while others nonchalantly meander through life relatively nonplussed by it all and still manage to achieve some level of notoriety or fame. Just this week we have had the privilege of welcoming Kerrie Fields into our school to support the continued development of our reading framework and literacy program. One of her first tasks was to benchmark all our students to ascertain individual reading levels in order to establish the program around student’s ability levels. This task has demonstrated great progress but there is still plenty to do.

Since the introduction of the Australian Curriculum student expectations have increased as never before. These expectations are more defined and accompanied by a range of achievement standards and content descriptors. For example, students in year three are expected in numeracy to learn about numbers to 10 000. In addition, it is important for their continued improvement and engagement with the curriculum that they read at PM level 30 by the completion of that year. It is critical that while decoding the text students are more importantly able to comprehend and understand what they are reading about and articulate details from the text. We are regularly encouraging students to read every evening as part of their homework to support individual improvement.

The regular, sustained daily reading is a vital component of a child’s reading success. It is becoming increasingly evident that very few students disappointingly are actually reading on a nightly basis. Naturally I am aware that we lead busy lives with work commitments, family issues, volunteer work in various capacities and a range of other responsibilities that impact on the time available each evening. Reading, as research indicates, will always be one of the main contributors to a student’s success at school and how they progress through their academic life. It is our role, both school and importantly parents to support, encourage and allocate time and space every day to provide opportunities for reading.

School Access

The school is a government facility and access to the school on the weekend or school holidays is not permitted. Children accompanied by responsible adults using the tennis court has been acceptable for many years, however children on the premises without an adult is not. As a community we need to be vigilant when monitoring our school and suspected unlawful entry or activity that may generate some suspicion. Please don’t hesitate in calling the School Watch number on 131788.
Homework
We are presently witnessing some pleasing effort with regard to neat, organised and well-presented homework. We have worked hard to encourage students to provide additional effort to produce their very best work and for them to aim higher and demonstrate a pride in their work. Every child in the school including preps has been provided with homework material to be completed each week. Therefore in order to monitor the process it is necessary for us every morning to sight student’s signed reading, dictionary meanings, sentences and number facts along with answering any queries they may have about final completion to be submitted each Friday. I would like parent’s assistance in encouraging students to submit only their best work and aim to produce their very best effort each week rather than aiming at mediocrity and achieving only a barely satisfactory standard. Each fortnight as part of homework, students are required to prepare an oral presentation. The topics are usually negotiated with the students and they are provided with ample time to prepare and practice. These presentations are an integral component of their literacy and language strands of English. The presentations are required to span two and a half minutes in duration and the student is marked on preparation, practice, topic knowledge (where applicable), the presentation itself and timing. Again I want to request parent’s support and encouragement around putting these together. By providing students a fortnight to prepare I believe they all have sufficient opportunity to prepare and organise an interesting presentation. They may use power-point and iPads to present, it is up to them.

Attendance / Contact Details
It is becoming somewhat frustrating that parents tend to neglect advising the school when there child is going to be absent for one reason or another. Consistent, regular school attendance is vitally important in maintaining a student’s momentum and keeping them in touch with all curriculum content. I acknowledge that children have sick days and it is necessary for them to remain at home but we need to be notified. When a child is absent for 3 and 4 days without any contact with the school the student’s education is being compromised and they fall behind, lose interest and struggle in areas where prior to the absences they were achieving positive progress. I encourage parents to let us know when and why your child is absent as it needs to be recorded. Regular absences without explanation will necessitate me contacting the regional office where other specific community agencies will be informed. Furthermore, it is often necessary to update your contact details so we are able to contact you should the need arise. It is imperative that you notify the school if your contact information changes so we have current contact numbers and can locate you in the event of an emergency.

Garden
Our students, with Jodie’s assistance have managed to establish a flourishing garden. This week some of the harvested produce will be put to good use to prepare some healthy dishes and snacks. Jodie has done a wonderful job in in the garden in both organising the students, sourcing plants and material as well as liaising with staff and parents to support the project. Thanks again Jodie.

Cent Auction
I want to take this opportunity to thank firstly thank our local and regional businesses who contributed prizes. Without these kind donations the event would be a ‘non-event’. Equally important are those who contacted these businesses initially to encourage their valued support. The volunteers on the night who gave of their time to ensure the event continues to be a successful occasion and adds some fun and enjoyment to the lives of those who attend and supports our school. Those businesses I want to acknowledge and sincerely thank for their wonderful support are:

Starshots Photos
Bunnings Nerang
Andrew Eggleston
Nerang Equine Vet Practice
Ruah Rainforest Retreat
Aqua Duck Tours
Numinbah Trail Rides
Elektra
Coles Mudgeeraba
Fudge Shop Springbrook
IGA Express Broadbeach
Greencross Vets Nerang
VIP Pet Food
Darryl Lea Chocolate
Old Time Photos
Nerang Stockfeed
Ai’s Convenience Nerang

2015
We are already preparing for next year with ordering and organising resources, texts, exercise books, stationery and reviewing numbers and enrolment details. We are looking at making some changes to the types and variety of text books we use around sourcing more appropriate products that suit our mostly one teacher context. At the commencement of 2013 we had 10 students enrolled and school didn’t commence until day three due to no power at the school created by heavy rain, wind and to a lesser extent flooding. Next year, after losing six students at the end of this year we look like we’ll be starting with about 14 students. The school looks reasonable viable for several years to come with quite a few young ones in the valley already while remaining positive for one or two additional families into future.

Discipline Audit
Last Tuesday our school was audited by the school improvement unit. This audit is designed to monitor how our school is moving forward while maintaining a sound improvement agenda. The process involves interviews, with staff, parents and students including rigorous discussion around our current practice and procedures now and into the future. The audit is conducted around 5 main drivers of domains. Principal Leadership, Parent and community engagement, Data informed decision making, Clear consistent expectations for behaviour and explicit teaching of behaviour to all students. On completion we are provided with an initial summary based on achieving one of four levels or standards in each domain ranging from low – medium – high to outstanding which is considered to be best practice. The auditor was suitably impressed with little school scoring us high on four of the domains and medium high on one. Indeed we still have work to do and we all acknowledge that. In a fortnight we will receive the executive summary which will outline the recommendations of the various steps we can take to continue our journey of improvement.

Until Next Time
Take care
Regards
Warren

Science News
We have been studying Physical Sciences this term. The Seniors have been exploring the properties of light, how it travels and the refraction and reflection of light. The Juniors have been learning about sound, how it is made and how sound waves move. Both senior and junior technology classes are involving making slow motion videos by using the iMotion app on their iPads and plasticine models.
Geography News
The seniors are studying natural disasters and the effect they have on communities. We are discussing the need for evacuation/ survival plans for areas prone to bush fires or floods.

Christmas Tree Concert
We are hard at work rehearsing for the concert. Please assist your child, where possible, to learn their lines.

Costumes are fairly simple:
Junior boys, Emma and Kelsey, will need dark (preferably black) pants and shirts/T-shirts.
Evan and Tom require trousers, shirts and ties.
Eithne will require a dark skirt/ trousers and jacket with shirt and tie, plus trench coat, or coat could replace jacket.
Tajska will need black or dark blue tights and top.
Chloe will need to be neatly dressed in a dress or jeans and shirt, Harry and Matt in jeans and shirt.

We are also requiring a butterfly net, several toy revolvers/pistols and a clown suit of adult size. If anyone can assist with these items please let me know.

I would also appreciate some help setting up the props, so any parent who has an hour or two to spare and enjoys messing around with paints, preferably on a Wednesday or Thursday, please send me a text. 0434 578 944 Thank you.
Heather Simon

THINK WELL BE WELL FESTIVAL

Here’s a FREE concert and festival event that’s not to be missed! Aiming to raise awareness of the role of psychology in positive mental health, Think Well Be Well Festival has something for everyone.
Hot young bands Electrik Lemonade and Mayan Fox join Jahkaya, The Genes, and talented newcomers Jackson James Smith and Scott Dalton for the festival concert, with award-winning, highly danceable music that’s sure to please.
The ‘don’t miss’ free community event of the year. Think Well Be Well Festival will be held at Broadwater Parklands Southport on Saturday 15 November. Join us for a great time that will help you dance back into your life with more pleasure and awareness than ever!

A Message from The Child Health Department

Hearing Test
Free hearing tests are available to all students from P-7, for more information please call – 56879183.

Bed Wetting
If your child is struggling with bed wetting assistance is available, please call Annie Hackett (Child Health Nurse) on 0402035908.