Hello Folks

Autumn has brought with it some easing rain and, while the summer temperatures still persist the morning air appears to be cooling down before the sun's rays send the temperature skyward. This recent weather has certainly had a major impact on the plant growth around our school. You can almost watch our flourishing lawn and awesome veggie garden grow, however I'm sure Barry, our mower man, is looking forward to the more subdued growth of winter.

Students have recently experienced a pleasant day at Currumbin Sanctuary and from all accounts it was an informative and enjoyable break from the normal school day. This week our 3-6 students are off to Somerset College for the literature festival combining with the students and staff from Springbrook. Our students will be supported by Miss Stacey, our welfare officer.

Professional Development

Last week I took part in a school review as a peer reviewer. I have participated in this process once before as part of firstly, my own professional learning and secondly to utilise that learning to improve our school. The department regularly reviews the performance of Queensland state schools to ensure they're achieving great outcomes for students. All Queensland state schools have a review at least every 4 years. This ensures every school community benefits from the same opportunity for feedback and reflection. Community feedback is an essential part of the reviews, with parents, students and the community invited to have their say. I have found this to be an extremely beneficial process whereby I work for two days in a school that is very similar in size to our own. They experience similar issues relating to operation including curriculum and data, compliance, finance and human resources and isolation from main centres. Needless to say in a completely different region in Queensland.

Numinbah Valley State School is due for our review in 2017. This will commence the four year cycle. The findings of the review will generate agreed strategies to be written into a 4 year strategic plan that guides the yearly annual improvement plans and the implementation of those agreed strategies for the duration of that period. I have added this link if you should care to peruse the SIU site: https://schoolreviews.eq.edu.au/Pages/default.aspx
Improvement Agenda 2016
Each year, every school across Queensland is required to complete an annual improvement plan that outlines the school’s direction for that year. At Numinbah Valley State School our annual improvement plan during 2016 has three main elements. As we work toward achieving these elements careful planning of resources is necessary to ensure we arrive at a purposeful and effective outcome.

Our main overarching improvement element this year is improving student’s creative writing. We have commenced this process by collaborating with the Scenic Rim head of curriculum, Vicki Diefenbach who is lending invaluable expertise and support in developing a whole school writing program, which will lead into the review and implementation of a new curriculum plan and assessment schedule. These documents are vital in delivering a balanced, systematic curriculum that can be mapped into the future and is sustainable. That is, retains the capacity to be picked up and used by new teachers and principals at any time.

While writing is our major focus we are also focussing on improving students’ reading especially those students who are considered good readers. To undertake this action requires the timetabling of additional teacher hours and a more narrow focus within our daily reading group work. To facilitate this support for our students Mrs Barrie will be here as normal every Tuesday along with an additional day per week on Thursday in a support role. We will be reviewing individual student data, planning for intervention and allocating resources to ensure the time is spent purposefully and effectively.

Each year Queensland schools are provided with funding to support improvement. This funding ‘Great Results Guarantee’ as it was called previously is still in place but is now labelled ‘Investment for Success’. Last year’s funding can be viewed on our website and when finally approved 2016’s I4S will be uploaded for your perusal. The actions included in the I4S are partially supported by the annual improvement plan (AIP).

Attendance / Arrival
It is important that students are attending school every day. Every day counts and students attending 85% of the time will miss approximately 3 days for every 4 weeks of school. Occasionally our school conducts trips, excursions and camps. These days are essentially just as important as a day spent in the classroom and therefore play a major role in providing a diverse educational experience for our students.

The attendance award each term will continue and at the moment it is looking very hotly contested with only a few absences or late arrivals. Students, parents and carers should be very proud with our attendance currently at a very pleasing 97%. Well done everyone. Arrival times are something that I have mentioned before. If you need to drop your child off before 0830 any morning of the week it is important that you notify us prior to the day. On arrival students need to touch base with us in the office to ensure we are aware of their presence. Thank you for your support around this policy.
Music / Gardening / Cooking
Mr Shelton has really settled in well for Friday afternoon music and the children really look forward to his lessons. He is providing a link between the counting and numeracy knowledge required in music and the creative, artistic balance that music is all about. This environment that Mr Shelton generates ensures our students are engaged and attentive throughout the afternoon as they develop a more creative perspective.

Currently, on Monday afternoons, two ladies volunteer their time to support the diversity of music by engaging our students in areas where the ladies feel comfortable to share their skills and knowledge around gardening and cooking.

Rachel Hardy has volunteered her time to provide our students with insights into maintaining the veggie garden. A worm farm is presently being established along with our compost tumbler to make available natural healthy compost and fertiliser to give our garden a solid chance of a good yield. Currently a variety of products are being nurtured ranging from; strawberries, spinach, potatoes, tomatoes and an assortment of herbs.

Siran Taylor has also volunteered her time to liaise with Rachel in providing a cooking session with the students. The ladies will plan ahead and strive to align what is being grown with what may be the next recipe for the kitchen. These Monday afternoons have been successful continuing to engage our students in a greater range of educational opportunities and building community relationships. I want to take this opportunity to publicly thank Rachel and Siran for their devotion to making out student's experience at school a more diverse and varied offering. Thankyou.

Harley Owners Club
This Sunday our P&C are hosting a Harley Owners Club morning tea as a fundraiser at the Numinbah Hall. Sam has put a substantial effort into pulling this event together and it would be great if we could show our support for an hour or so on Sunday morning. For those who are able to assist please contact Sam. The Harley owners are scheduled to arrive at around 0930.

Cross Country – Friday 18th March
Next Friday Numinbah Valley State School will be hosting our annual cross country with Springbrook State School.

As in 2014 the actual cross country races will be conducted on Yaun’s property approximately 500 metres south of the school along Nerang Murwillumbah road. The day will be spread between there for the races and back at the school for lunch and the second half of the program. It is important to be aware that there are NO TOILET facilities at the track where the races will be conducted. Therefore attending students and parents are advised to ensure they prepare accordingly by stopping at the NVSS to make use of amenities.

Staff
This year we are fortunate to have the funding continued to employ a welfare officer. Several meetings were necessary initially to establish the exact funding allocation, the requirements of the role, suitability and qualifications of candidates and most importantly the context of our school. Finally the procedure arrived at an interview process in which Sam Collitt, our P&C president kindly agreed to participate. We were both in agreeance that Stacey was the ideal choice.
Introducing: Stacey Charbachi
Hello Parents.

My name is Stacey and I am delighted to be your Welfare Officer for 2016. I have studied and worked in the areas of Education Support, Pastoral Care, Career Development and Counselling for the last 8 years. I have 2 children of my own, therefore, I fully understand the many challenges of parenting in an ever changing world.

I have met the students at NVSS and I am both honoured and excited to be working alongside them this year to support them academically, emotionally and socially. I am available Monday and Thursday mornings from 0900 – 0930 for parents who would like to meet with me.

I have discussed with Mr Greinke that developing “Resilience” is one of the qualities students of NVSS would most benefit from. I am dedicated to training the students in this area as well as offering some information and effective strategies to both parents and students to hopefully assist with boosting each and every child’s level of resilience. Please don't hesitate to come say hi, or make a time to meet with me.

Stacey Charbachi

Facilities
At the moment Barry is focussing some of his hours clearing the river bank where students used to eat morning tea. Our goal is to attempt to maintain that space for us to use not only for morning tea but also for some curriculum learning areas. Barry has worked extremely hard to ensure that it will be easier to maintain into the future. Thank you Barry for your hard work in very warm, trying conditions.

The principal’s residence has been vacant since October last year, however a new tenant will be moving in during the school holidays. The gentleman moving in, Mr Ben Kober is an employee of the department and is employed at the environmental education centre. It is important that the parents and community members are aware of a new tenant considering the house’s proximity to the school.

I am currently sourcing prices to install a product ‘winterlite’ along the rails for the library veranda. We already have this product installed in the amenities block and in the southern wall near the art room under the building. This process will basically close in the veranda making it more private area or teaching space and providing us with another option.

My School Website
Parents and carers may be aware that the My School website has been upgraded to provide a more user friendly platform. Changes have been made to ensure ease of navigation. Additional information that can be manipulated to provide a greater range of information has also been added and feedback has been generally very positive. For those people seeking details about secondary institutions for the future, this is a great starting point. [https://www.myschool.edu.au/](https://www.myschool.edu.au/)

Until Next Time
Have a happy and healthy fortnight.
Regards

Warren
Exemptions from compulsory schooling & compulsory participation

Every parent of a child of compulsory school age or a young person in the compulsory participation phase has a legal obligation to ensure their child is enrolled and attending school or participating in an eligible option.

Parents can apply for an exemption from this obligation when their child cannot attend or it would be unreasonable in all the circumstances for their child to attend school or participate in an eligible option for a period of more than 10 consecutive school days.

Situations where an application for an exemption may be made include:

- Illness
- Family reasons
- Cultural or religious reasons

If your child is exempted from compulsory schooling, you are excused from your obligation in relation to compulsory schooling or compulsory participation.

The school principal is not responsible for providing an educational program to your child, however they may provide advice on other educational options available.

Quote of the week

Every child is gifted. They just unwrap their packages at different times.

www.dailyparent.com
School brings different types of learning, including social interactions and how to make friends. Parents can lay the foundations at home by teaching their kids these 7 important social skills.

Children who are able to form friendships when they start school are happier at school and also learn better.

More significantly, positive friendships have long-term implications for social and indirectly academic success.

Friendships skills are generally developmental, but they don’t develop in isolation. Kids acquire these skills when they play with their siblings and interact with children and adults outside their family.

Today’s children grow up with fewer siblings, fewer opportunities for unstructured play and less freedom to explore friendships than children of even ten years ago.

Parents can help kids develop important social competencies by teaching them sociable behaviours at home, being good role models and providing opportunities for kids to play with each other in a variety of situations.

Here are 7 important social skills to help children to develop:

1. Ask for what you want
   Help children ask for what they want. It means they don’t throw tantrums, whinge, and sulk or expect parents to guess what’s on their minds. While we need to be patient with toddlers, we need also to give older children the chance and opportunity to ask for what they want. Sometimes we need to ignore shrugs and grunts and expect them to articulate their wishes. This is the basis of civil behaviour, as well as a basic human skill.

2. Good manners
   Teach kids good manners, in particular the three ‘power words’. These words are very persuasive because they have a way of breaking down barriers and people’s defences. These three words are: your name; please; thanks. These terms are the basis of good manners, and, when used, will increase the likelihood of getting what you want.

3. Sharing
   Sharing is a basic social skill. Developmentally, very young children like to keep their possessions themselves. As they get older and move into Pre School and beyond the notion of sharing becomes a pre-requisite for playing with and forming relationships with others. Other children like to play and be with those who share their time, possessions and space with them. Sharing is the start of empathy as it shows sensitivity to other people’s feelings.

4. Holding a conversation
   Holding conversations with others is a lifetime friendship skill. Conversations require self-disclosure, which can be challenging for some children. Good conversationalists give of themselves, but also take an interest in the person they are talking to. Many children forget that good conversations are two-way events, and tend to focus solely on themselves.

   Children within conversations need to learn to ask good or interesting questions; to take turns when speaking and to show you are listening by making eye contact and not interrupting.
Social skills for children—continued

5. Winning and losing well
Kids need to learn to win without rubbing others noses in it, and lose gracefully without throwing tantrums and making excuses. Wanting to win is natural, but they need to do so in a way that they maintain a relationship with other players so they will play again. Losing may make kids feel bad, but kids need to control their negative feelings so that others will play with them again.

6. Approaching and joining a group
The ability to approach strangers in social situations is valuable skill that opens up many doors, both friendship–wise and business–wise. These skills can be learned and practised during childhood, so that it becomes second nature in adulthood.

7. Handling fights and disagreements
Disagreements happen in families and among friends. The key is to make sure disagreements don’t lead to the breakdown of friendships. It’s important to get across to kids that having an argument or disagreement doesn’t mean that a friendship is over. Strong friendships, like strong family relationships, withstand disagreements. In fact, they only serve to strengthen friendships.

The results of a number of studies indicate that children can be taught friendships skills. The strategies are simple and revolve around teaching children a range of friendly behaviours such as: talking with others while playing, showing an interest in others, smiling, offering help and encouragement when needed, a willingness to share and learning how to enter a game or social situation.

As parents we often focus on the development of children’s academic skills and quite easily neglect the development of important social skills, which contribute so much to children’s happiness and wellbeing.