



Agnes Water News

2 February 2018

What's happening at AWSS

Wed 7 Feb	Parent Information Night 6:00pm - School Direction (hall) 6:30pm - Prep to 2/3 classes 7:00pm - 3/4 to 5/6 classes
Thurs 8 Feb	Swimming Commences for Year 1 - 3
Fri 9 Feb	Sport Electives Commence for Year 4 - 6
Fri 16 Feb	Crazy Hair Day
Mon 19 Feb	P&C Meeting 3:00 - 4:00pm
Thurs 22 Feb	CPR Awareness Year 5 & 6
Fri 2 Mar	Principal Conference
Mon 12 Mar	Academic Triathlon - Mathematics
Tues 13 Mar	Twilight PD Session Teachers
Thurs 15 Mar	Year 5/6 Art Excursion - Bundaberg
Fri 16 Mar	Mozzie's Monster Music Mix - School Performance Tours
Fri 16 Mar	Trivia Night (Proposed Date)
Mon 19 - Fri 23 Mar	Parent Teacher Meetings
Wed 21 Mar	AFL District Boys Competition
Thurs 22 Mar	Final day of swimming for Year 1 - 3
Fri 23 Mar	Final day of swimming for Year 4 - 6
Thurs 29 Mar	Cross Country (Morning)
Thurs 29 Mar	Easter Bonnet Parade (afternoon)
Fri 30 Mar - Mon 16 Apr	Easter Vacation
Tues 17 Apr	Term 2 commences

From the Principal Mr Trevor Buchanan

A very warm welcome back to school for 2018. We start this year, similar to most with an air of excitement for the many new and returning opportunities for our students. However, this year we are also excited about the new opportunities for our teachers to enhance their skills and share the practices at Agnes Water State School as we continue working towards our school mission;

To develop highly numerate, literate, confident and independent learners who are resilient and prepared for an ever-changing future.

For returning families, you will notice a few changes across our school. A few very obvious changes are the inclusion of a science room within our school with the dedication of Mr Hancock as our Science teacher for all classes. This room is also in our newly air-conditioned block (thank you P&C Association). Mrs Leigh Tankey and I, are teaching together in Year 5/6 providing some much needed reduction in class sizes in the upper school. We also started our school year, with the rollout of change in uniform.

A few, not so obvious changes include the development of a Professional Learning Room for teachers, where they will participate in weekly research and collaborate around curriculum practices. We have also begun the next stage of our school improvement agenda, shifting from the idea of CREATE which we have worked towards over the last three years, to a focus on refining our practices with a focus on three key concepts; Intentional, Justifiable and Consistent. At our parent information evening on Wednesday 7 February, I will share how this will influence the planning process and priorities of our school, along with the practices of our teachers.

The information sessions on Wednesday night are also an important opportunity for parents to find out about curriculum programs and routines in each class. A general information session about the school's direction for 2018 will be held in the school's hall at 6:00pm. This will be followed by information sessions in Prep, Year 1 and Year 2/3 classes at 6:30pm. Year 3/4, Year 4 and Year 5/6 classes will be held at 7:00pm. Class information sessions will be held in each classroom. I look forward to seeing many parents on Wednesday.

SCHOOL BANKING IS EVERY TUESDAY

From the Head of Curriculum

Mrs Leigh Tankey

Welcome back to our new school year – where many fabulous learning opportunities await your children. I would also like to extend a warm welcome to our new parents – becoming part of our Agnes Water State School community will enrich your child's education in so many ways.

In my role as Head of Curriculum I am looking forward to continuing to work with the staff of our lovely school to create a rigorous, interesting and relevant curriculum that will enable all children to thrive. This year we will strengthen our focus on having the wellbeing of your children in our sights at all times and continue on our journey of weaving mindfulness into our daily routines. I will work with parents in continuing our strong partnership through sharing our practices and seeking your feedback about the wonderful education we will provide for your children. As parents, you are your child's first teacher. You know them better than anyone, so if you establish a strong, open line of communication with your child's teachers, together you will work to give them their very best chance. Our door is always open.

Australian Curriculum at Agnes Water State School

The wonderful thing about the Australian Curriculum is that as teachers we have the freedom to use the context of our town and school to create units of work that engage and extend students. As our students settle into their new classrooms, teachers have taken time to teach the school values, outline expectations (the way we set up books, where we line up, how we move through the school etc.), learn about multiple intelligences and learning styles, and decide what our school motto LEARN & GROW means to them as a learner.

Our whole school approaches to the delivery of our school programs also encompasses the way we administer homework in our school. Three years ago we underwent consultation as a community and school about how we could make homework more meaningful to families and students. Below is an excerpt from our Homework Policy...

One of the most hotly discussed topics in schools is homework – many people are divided about the relevance, amount and difference homework makes, not to mention time following up and marking.

According to the David Gillespie (author of *Free Schools*), "the research reveals that when homework involves the parents as more than just disciplinarians, work done at home can have a powerful effect on student outcomes. If parents have high academic expectations for the child and have the skills to help attain those goals, then the child will perform much better than if they don't. Of course this does not mean the parents do the work for the child, just that they are an informed resource for a student doing the work themselves. But parents have to be motivated to help, know how to help and be able to help. When researchers have looked at learning to read, for example, they've found that when parents know what's being taught at school (and understand the 'edu-speak' being used to teach it) they end up with very effective readers who race ahead of their peers in leaps and bounds. Indeed, the children of those parents do twice as well as the children of parents who spend the same amount of time just listening to their child read. And the parents who instead spend the time just reading to the child have no effect on reading performance at all. Parents who know and understand what skill was being taught today or this week at school can very effectively reinforce that learning at home."

Ian Lillico (former principal and now international education consultant) outlines the need to reassess the way we deliver homework. Any work that children do at home needs to be counted, and he gives a strong rationale for teachers and parents to work together. "*The issue of homework is finally being reassessed in our modern society. Too much repetitive needless homework is given and the wrong type. This has mainly been the result of parents wanting to prepare their children for future study.* The reality is, however, that homework has now been a major contributor to childhood obesity and is an impediment to quality family life. At all levels of the education system, homework is being reconsidered. There is a need for some practice of concepts learnt at school, but the need to broaden the definition of Homework. Any work that children do at home needs to be counted, and teachers and parents need to work together to ensure that children do some work at home, but not a lot of sedentary work.

The Boys Forward website shows a solution to the problem of getting kids to do something at home and not opt out of family life. It will enable parents to get children to do their share of work in the home including housework, shopping, physical activity such as sport training and engaging in family outings such as walking, fishing and exploring their world - activities which enhance family life. It also covers areas such as reading, being read to, playing a game with parents, research on the computer, music practice and many others."

Homework activities at Agnes Water State School will be set in context of the class using the homework matrix as a template to ensure continuity within the school. This template has been constructed to set clear guidelines about what is valued for homework, yet allowing for individual class and student needs to be catered for. The following key headings will be covered – Spelling/Sight words, DAILY Reading, Physical Activity, Problem Solving/Numeracy, and Work in the Home. Teachers are able to work with students to explicitly teach organisation and planning of the activities to be completed each week. In the lower years the teacher may also decide to nominate certain days that activities are to be completed. Completion of homework will be monitored weekly and feedback will be provided to the students. Please feel free to email me at ltank1@eq.edu.au if you would like further information about the research behind our policy. Agnes Water State School is committed to working in partnership with families to ensure that all learning experiences, including homework, are providing students with opportunities to develop life-long learning habits beyond the classroom.

"Celebrate what you want to see more of." Tom Peters

What wonderful things can you see happening in our school? Once we start looking for the positives in a place it is amazing what we can find. This week I would like to celebrate the dedication and enthusiasm of our science teacher Mr Hancock. He has created a learning space that children love – it is filled with ant lines, and caterpillar eggs and sprouting seeds. Mr Hancock has a real knack for making science relevant to our lives and always seizes opportunity for teachable moments. Tanks Mr Hancock, we appreciate you!

Please share what you see...email me at ltank1@eq.edu.au so we can all benefit from the dedication of our educators. I look forward to continuing to be a part of this very professional, caring and inspiring team.

General News

Day 8

Day 8 is our annual audit of student enrolments and informs our school funding for the year. This year we have an enrolment of 218 students. This entitles us to 9 classroom teachers. We will be continuing to fund the Head of Curriculum position and funding the new science role in our school. There will be no changes to class structure this year with Mrs Tankey and Mrs Buchanan taking on the 10th class.

Code of Dress

Our school has a Code of Dress that all enrolments are expected to comply with. The Code of Dress is a set of uniform expectations developed by our P&C Association. As a school we enforce the expectations of the Code of Dress through reminders to parents, and consequences for students when deliberate breaches of the Code of Dress occur. There are couple of reminders for parents and students;

Hair: Hair that is shoulder length or longer, or interfering with a student's ability to concentrate (constantly in the eyes) must be tied back. This also assists in reducing the spread of headlice and during summer months will keep students cooler.

House Shirts: House shirts are only to be worn on Friday. These are not our primary uniform.

Shoes: Shoes must be suitable for daily sport activities. All students are involved in some form of daily physical activity. Slip on shoes are not suitable for physical activity and are not to be worn to school.

Crazy Hair Day

Hi my name is Seth Piers-Blundell and I am a Year 6 student at Agnes Water State School. I am shaving my hair off on parade, Friday 16 February for Brain Cancer. My family was touched two years ago when a close family friend's father passed away from Brain Cancer. His family went through pain and heart ache watching their loved one slowly taken by this horrible disease. Please dig deep and support me in raising awareness for Brain Cancer.

Our school is supporting Seth and his father who is also having his beard shaved on parade on Friday 16 February with a crazy hair day. Students are encouraged to come to school on Friday with crazy hair. This could be coloured, tied up or worn in a wacky way or wear a wig. Students are asked to bring a gold coin donation which will be provided to Seth as part of his fundraising for fubraincancer.org

Headlice

During hotter months of the year, headlice are a prolific problem and require constant vigilance by all families to minimise the spread of headlice. It is a reminder that students identified with headlice must be treated prior to return to school. Due to the life cycle of lice, it can take several weeks to get on top of headlice and requires weekly checks of your child's hair.

Swimming

Our Year 1, Year 2 & Year 3 students will commence swimming this Thursday 8 February from 9:00am to 11:30am. Year 1 and Year 3 from Mrs Heenan's class are to come to school dressed ready for swimming, remembering to bring their uniforms to change into once back at school. All other Year 2 and 3 students will come in uniform and change prior to departing for their lesson.

It is a reminder that no swimming cap, no swimming. This is a requirement of Sandcastles Pool. We are also seeking one or two parent helpers to assist with our swimming groups. You need to be available Thursdays for the three groups and be prepared to be in the water with students. Please see Mr Buchanan if you are available to assist.

Swimming can be paid for each week. Non-participating students will be supervised in another class at school while their class is at swimming.

Sport

Friday sports commence this Friday 9 February for Year 4 to Year 6. Sport fees must be paid in full by Friday 9 February.

CPR Awareness

Year 5 and Year 6 students will be involved in a CPR awareness program with Queensland Ambulance on Thursday 22 February. This annual program provides Year 5 and Year 6 students with basic skills in what to do for the provision of CPR and seeking medical assistance. This program will be held at school.

QParents

Last week, new families to our school were provided information on QParents. This included an invitational email as well as two cards with general information and personal information for their child. QParents is a great resource for parents to be able to pay school invoices, monitor and communicate student absences and access individual student reports. If you believe you should have received an email and information card, or an existing parent that hasn't joined QParents, please contact Mrs Helen Young in our office.

Parents and Citizens Association

Our Parents and Citizens Association is an awesome way to be involved in our school and contribute to ideas, school direction and fundraising for our students. The P&C Association meets on the third Monday of each month in our staffroom from 3:00pm to 4:00pm. Our next meeting will be on Monday 19 February.

Car Parking

We are continuing to work with the State Government and Gladstone Regional Council to provide additional and safer car parking for families, however this is a very long process. At the beginning of 2017, the staff carpark was moved further into the school, to allow parents to park on the dirt area beside our tennis court. This area is not an official car park and remains an out of bounds area for students unless accompanied by an adult. Parents choosing to park in this area, do so at their own risk and must escort children in this area. This area is not a stop drop and go zone and parents are not permitted to park or drop off children further in the school. Misuse of this area, may result in this area returning to staff car parking only.

There is no parking on the footpaths and the grass area on Donohue Drive beside the small gate, is also not a parking zone. These areas are monitored at times by council and police. Parking infringements may be issued.

Please consider the safety of all children around our school when parking and driving. It is a 40km zone from Bryant Street.

School Routines

Students are not to arrive at school prior to 8:00am and must be collected at the end of the day prior to 3:00pm. Our school does not offer before or after school care, however parents seeking this assistance, can make contact with the Agnes Water Childcare who offer some spaces.

Students arriving between 8:00am and 8:30am are to come to the Undercover Area behind the office. At 8:30am students may go to their classes to prepare for the day. Our school day commences at 8:40am and it is expected that all students are in class ready for learning at this time. Students arriving after 8:40am must report to the office and be signed in as a late arrival.

The playground and rainforest area outside of Prep is not to be used in the mornings before school. Often this area is set up with activities for the morning and is not supervised. The Prep playground can be used by students who are supervised by their parents after school. Students are not to be in this area unless their parent is in attendance. Supervision in this area after school is not provided by the school. It is reminded that school rules still apply in this area and students are not to be in the trees.

Students waiting for pick up from parents in the afternoon are to be at the Waiting Tree at the front of the school. Students must not be collected from the cul-de-sac.

The Prep playground can be used by students who are supervised by their parents after school. Students are not to be in this area unless their parent is in attendance. Supervision in this area after school is not provided by the school. It is reminded that school rules still apply in this area and students are not to be in the trees.

Students must be collected by no later than 3:00pm. Gate duties cease once the final bus for the day departs. This is at approximately 2:55pm. Any students still at school at this time awaiting collection, must be collected from the office.

Volunteering in the Classroom

We are always looking for parents to assist in our classrooms. If you have some spare time on a regular or irregular basis, please see your child's classroom teacher to find out how you can help in your child's classroom. Parents assisting in the classroom are reminded to sign in at the office and ensure they have a visitor pass.

2018 Teachers

Principal – Trevor Buchanan	Head of Curriculum – Leigh Tankey	Master Teacher – Nyree Buchanan
Prep W – Marilyn Window	Prep T – Danielle Tooker	Year 1HL – Cathy Hancock & Vicki Ladlow
Year 2/3MS – Dawn Morton & Donna Smith	Year 2/3L – Kate Lucas	Year 3/4H – Keryn Heenan
Year 4G – Mr Gourlay	Year 5/6BT – Trevor Buchanan & Leigh Tankey	Year 5/6H – Karen Hartley
Year 5/6LR – Stuart Lane & Kylie Rupp	Science – John Hancock	Indonesian – Peta Swan
HPE – Stuart Lane	Music/Drama – Vicki Ladlow	SWD – Allison Harris