Preschool:
Observational Drawing

It is hard to believe that the children in the preschool have only been at school a few weeks. The children have quickly settled into the preschool routine and are eagerly accessing their own learning from our designated curriculum learning centres. The children have access to self-selection of activities from our science, mathematics, blocks, literacy, fine-motor/construction, art, sensory, dramatic play and our library which contains quality children's literature.

Early on, the children began helping with tidying up our garden, which meant removing the dead sunflowers we had planted in spring last year. Using this as a teaching opportunity, we observed the various parts of the dried sunflower and discussed their function. We looked at the roots and saw how they spread out underground. We worked out that the roots ‘suck up’ the rainwater from the ground and they also help to keep the sunflower standing up, without roots the sunflower would just fall over. We looked at the seeds on the sunflower itself and discussed how the sunflower had grown from one of these tiny seeds. We looked at the stem of the sunflower and worked out that the stem holds the flower up and helps the water get from the roots to the other parts of the flower like the leaves and flower ‘head’. Together we also discussed the shapes that we could see in the dried sunflower. The children identified a circle, triangles, zig zag lines, straight lines and curved lines.

Julie demonstrated carefully observing the sunflower and drawing the shapes she could see step by step starting with the large circle. Many of the children then had their own attempt at carefully observing the sunflower, discussing the shapes they could see and then drawing the shapes they had identified. Take a look at some of the photos to see the great work they are doing.

Look for our Term 1 preschool newsletter on the school’s website under the news section.  

P & C Meeting AGM

The next P & C Meeting will be held on Monday 11th March at 7.15pm in the Staff Room. Everyone is welcome.
Reports & Interviews

The Department of Education and Communities policy states that there should be two reports and one interview. Traditionally the school has held its interviews at the end of term 2 when the semester reports are sent home.

However, with the personalised learning plans and individual education plans for students it is timely to change the timing of the interviews. Instead of using the interviews to report upon student achievement, we are changing our focus to use the interviews in collaborating with parents to better inform your child’s teaching by having parents share information at a Term 1 parent/teacher session.

Interviews will be held the last week of Term 1 on Mon 8 –Wednesday 10 April

Vision Screen Kinder

The Statewide Eyesight Preschooler Screening (StEPS) program is an initiative of the NSW Ministry of Health and offers all 4 year old children a free vision screening assessment. Each year they offer a catch up screening for Kindergarten children who may have missed out or who had a borderline result which required follow-up in one year. They will be visiting our school on Tuesday 12th & Wednesday 13th March.

Assembly

Last Friday, Mitre 10 gave out jumpers that promoted a TV show. All K-3 students and the Friday preschool children received this clothing. Thank you to Mitre 10 for yet another donation to the school.
Clean Up
Thanks Miss Westcott for organising our small contribution to Clean Up Australia! Sophia, Yasmin and Grey took the job seriously using gloves, a keen eye and care for the school yard. Thanks to all students.

ACMF & Choir News
This weekend the school is involved in two promotions through our partnership with the Australian Children’s Music Foundation (ACMF).

Saturday 1pm. Gene Simmons from the Rock band KISS will be launching at the Hard Rock Café at Darling Harbour a new burger called the ACMF Burger. The funds raised from the sale of this menu item will go towards ACMF music programs. Student leaders and two choir members will represent the school.

Sunday 12.30pm. At ‘The Spot’ in Randwick thirty members of the choir will perform our version of Advance Australia Fair. Thank you to the parents for organising your child in the middle of the day to make this appearance. It is a great publicity opportunity for the school.

We are currently in negotiations to record this version at a music studio for the ACMF. More details to follow.

Tuesday 26 March: The Navy Band returns for a 4th year to perform for our students and community. The students and band members always have a great concert.

Tuesday 9 April: A quartet from the Australian Chamber Orchestra visits the school for a concert and workshops with classes and our violin and cello group. Once again this is a great privilege for our students.

Medication at school
We ask that parents please assist staff when a student needs to take medication at school by sending a signed note with the time and dosage to be taken. If medication is in liquid form please place the correct dosage in a plastic syringe to be given to the student. You are able to purchase a syringe from the chemist.

Photos
A reminder that student photos will be held on Tuesday 9th April. Information packs will be sent home at a later date.

Attendance
The local area has an attendance rate of 95%. This is an excellent result. The past results show:

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Congratulations to the students in Year 2, 3 and 4 from 2012. Your attendance was excellent, assisting the school to get very close to the area average.

Letters were sent home to some students this week whose attendance has slipped to below 90%. As the school year is still in its early stages this may mean only a few days. However, for a student to be attending below 90% (or having one in every ten days absent) it can interfere with their learning program.

Related to this is the rule that student absence notes that are not received at school within 7 days cause the record to be permanently marked as ‘Declared’. A note received after this time can be recorded although we legally must record the absence as having not received a note within the legal 7 days.

It is of concern when there are student absences of more than half a term per year.

Debating
Sammy-Lee Cesario, Isabel Chung Kai To, Brandon Houghton and Ihi Jamieson have been teacher nominated to take part in a debating workshop on 20 March.

Working Bee
Despite two attempts at getting a working bee off the ground we have been hampered by rain. A new date will be set in coming weeks.
Uniform Shop

Will be open this week on:
Monday, Wednesday, Friday 9.00 – 9.30am
Fully stocked for all your uniform needs!

Please note that there are no eftpos facilities at our school if parents could please assist the uniform shop and office by paying by cash or cheque.

Selective High School

Government schools use a range of strategies to meet the educational needs of gifted and talented students. One strategy is selective high school placement which provides intellectual stimulation and an educationally enriched environment for gifted and talented students. The Selective High School Placement Test for Year 7 students in 2014 will be held on Thursday 14th March, 2013.

Reading Volunteer Program

A great big Thank You to all of the wonderful helpers who have come along to the school to help the students with their reading.

Classroom reading is going well and the teachers and students are really enjoying the extra time the children have to read to a volunteer.

The Special Volunteer Reading Program started in the Library on Monday where 6 students have been selected for a more specific reading program involving explicit instruction in sight words and reading. Thank you to Mrs Isaac, Mrs Highfield, Ms Moen and Mrs Pribadi for your wonderful support on Monday. I am looking forward to welcoming Mrs Cessario, Mrs McKay and Margie Summers as well on Tuesday and Wednesday.

Do you have a spare 30 minutes from 9-9.30 to work with one child in the library on Wednesday? I have two places to fill for this time so if you could manage to help it would be greatly appreciated. Please just come to the Library and you will be welcomed with open arms!

Vicki Jones