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Principal's Report
Unfortunately, we have had a theft of a teacher’s bicycle and are seeking any information from the community that might assist in recovering the stolen property. Mr Strano was attending the P&C meeting last Thursday evening when his bike was stolen from the school. If anyone has any information regarding this matter then it would be greatly appreciated if they could make contact with the school or Police. Thank you

Digital Learning - Chromebooks
A reminder to year 7 parents and carers that the JB HiFi parent Chromebook Portal will be closing in a couple of weeks (16th March). Once the portal closes, JB HiFi will place an order with suppliers and then deliver the devices to Grafton High School. These devices will be secured and then commissioned onto the school WiFi network over the Easter school holidays. This means they will be ready to hand to students to start using from day 1 of next term.

Once a parent/carer purchases a Chromebook they will also need to pay $30 to the front office for the purpose of software licencing and connection. If a parent chooses to purchase a Chromebook outside of the JB HiFi portal then that is fine also. They simply need to pay the $30 fee and then take the receipt and their Chromebook computer to our technical support team (Nick and Brodie). Nick and Brodie will then connect the device to the school network, ensure software is licenced and then return the device to the student. To assist this process we ask that any newly purchase Chromebook computers are not opened and started up, prior to handing in for school setup. This makes the process of connecting the devices much easier.

If a parent purchases a device other than a Chromebook, then, so long as that device meets the minimum standards outlined, they can pay the $80 connection fee to the front office and then pass on the device to Nick and Brodie. Note that non-Chromebook devices may be more difficult and time consuming to connect to the network.

The school has now purchased around 174 Chromebook devices for staff and class sets. Teachers are well on their way to developing engaging digital units of work for students to utilise starting next term. I encourage all Year 7 students and their parents/carers to make the most of this exciting opportunity.

25 Year School Reunion
I have been contacted by Xanthe Brennan regarding the 25 year reunion for the class of 1988/1990. The reunion is being held on the 16th May 2015 at the Grafton District Services Club. Past students and teachers are invited to attend. Contact Xanthe for further information by phone: 0416015328 or by email: xantheleigh@gmail.com.

Important Attendance Information
I have included important information regarding Department of Education requirements and advice on student attendance, for the reference of parents. Please note that if a parent/carer replies via SMS to the school SMS notifying of a child’s absence, then this is an acceptable form for explaining an absence. A valid reason must still be specified in the body of the SMS. If a parent/carer replies via SMS or over the phone to explain absences then they do not need to supply a written note.

Peter South - Principal

Practical Support for Higher School Certificate Examinations
Included in this newsletter is a note to parents and students outlining the Board of Studies’ program of provisions which provides practical support for students, where required, in the HSC Examinations. This support assists students to read and respond to examination questions. These may be required because of learning, visual, hearing or medical difficulties.

Provisions are also made to assist students in their assessments and exams at school; these include Mid-Course, Yearly and Trial HSC Exams. If parents or students have any concerns about their child or themselves receiving this support; for either the HSC or school exams, please contact the Year Adviser, School Counsellor, class teacher or the Learning and Support Teachers.

Further information about provisions for the HSC can be found at the following site:

Mrs McLennan - Learning and Support Teacher

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Library Review

Book of the Week

FOR THE FOREST OF A BIRD
By Sue Saliba

Nella’s life had turned upside down when her similarly minded nature loving father had left the family home years earlier. But just as the swallows annually returned to their nest at a nearby creek, Nella was sure things could always return for the better. But then he has a heart-attack and when Nella visits his house on Phillip Island to await his return from hospital, she realises that things do change. They could change back to better times, but they do move on.

How will Nella be able to fit into his new life? Will she return to her depressed, pill filled mother and cold brother?

Whimsically written, this hope for the future, coming of age novel will be most appreciated by girls 12-15.

Again this year, we have the wonderful support of Grafton Shoppingworld! Grafton Shoppingworld were generous enough to donate prizes for the draws throughout the year, as well as a special prize for our HUGE end of year draw. Every SHARE token will be included in the end of year draw, so remember every token counts!

The PBL team are hard at work completing PBL information to go onto the school website for parent and community access. This will include our expected behaviour matrix and our fortnightly focus. The focus for this fortnight is the use of school language! Students and parents will be updated with our focus each week.

Let us all look forward to an exciting and positive year!

Mr Townley

Week 9
23/03/04 HSC Mid-Course Exams
26/03 Year 7 Immunisations

Week 10
23/03/04 HSC Mid-Course Exams
02/04 Last Day Term 1
03/04 Good Friday

Term 2
Week 1
20/04 Staff Development Day
21/04 All student Return

Week 2
27/04-01/05 Work Placement VET Metal

Week 3
6/05 Cyber Space Presentation

Week 4
12-15/05 NAPLAN Yr 7 & 9

Week 5
18-22/05 Year 7-10 Mid-Course Exams
19/05 ICAS Digital Technology

Week 6
28/05 Police Talks Year 8
29/05 Athletics Carnival

Week 7
2-5/6 Year 9 Camp
3/06 ICAS Science Assessment
4/06 Year 7 Immunisation
5/06 Year 11 & 12 Immunisations

Week 8
8/06 Queens Birthday Holiday
11/06 Police Talks Year 8

Week 9

Week 10
22/6 NAIDOC Flag Raising
22-26/6 NAIDOC Week
26/06 NAIDOC Touch Football & BBQ
26/06 Last Day Term 2

TERM 3
13/7 Staff Development Day
14/7 School resumes all students.

Upcoming Events:

TERM 1
Week 6
04/03 Musical Performance – Sounds Like Rock Period 1 & 2 MPC

Week 7
12/03 Selective Class Test MPC

Week 8
18/03 Wizard Excursion to Brisbane

Week 6
5/06 Year 11 & 12 Immunisations

Week 7
8/06 Queens Birthday Holiday
11/06 Police Talks Year 8

PBL Update:
The Positive Behaviours for Learning Team has kicked off an exciting year with a bang! We have unveiled our new PBL Mural on the wall of P6 and already had a mass of entries into the SHARE draw. Our first winner for the year was Leilani Diskon of Year 7. Leilani was the winner of a $20 city beach voucher.

Practical Support for Higher School Certificate Examinations

Information for Students and Parents

The Board of Studies has a program to help students with practical support in their Higher School Certificate examinations. This practical support, known as provisions, assists students to meet examination tasks and to write their answers. Provisions include not breaks and extra time. The use of any provisions is not within the student’s results.

Students may need provisions for:
- a permanent condition, such as a disability or reading difficulty
- a temporary condition, such as a broken arm, or
- an intermittent condition, such as bed-poor vision lasting for long periods.

It is our responsibility to apply for or use provisions. More than 60% of students apply for provisions each year. Provisions help students to show the teachers what they know and can do.

To apply for provisions, the school submits an online application to the Board of Studies. This application includes information on the student’s situation and includes relevant evidence. Evidence may include medical reports, reading results, spelling results, writing samples and teacher comments.

Each of these documents can be collected by the school, but the parents’ role is welcome and needed. Parents help by talking with the school, describing the student’s needs, and providing the school with additional or other reports.

Applications for provisions should be submitted by the Board of Studies by the end of Term 1. Late applications are accepted only for an emergency, such as a broken arm, until the time of the examination.

Once the Board of Studies has made a decision about which provisions are approved or declined, a decision letter is provided to the school. The school will provide the student with a copy of the letter.

If you or the school are not satisfied with the Board’s decision, it is possible for the school to appeal the decision. Appellate procedures vary, and the school must provide you with the appropriate information.

If you think that you or your child may require support in completing the Higher School Certificate examinations, please discuss the matter with your Year Adviser, School Counselor or teacher.

Week 7
2-5/6 Year 9 Camp
3/06 ICAS Science Assessment
4/06 Year 7 Immunisation
5/06 Year 11 & 12 Immunisations

Week 8
8/06 Queens Birthday Holiday
11/06 Police Talks Year 8

Week 9

Week 10
22/6 NAIDOC Flag Raising
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TERM 3
13/7 Staff Development Day
14/7 School resumes all students.
Compulsory School Attendance

Information for parents

Education for your child is important and regular attendance at school is essential for your child to achieve their educational best and increase their career and life options. NSW public schools work in partnership with parents to encourage and support regular attendance of children and young people. When your child attends school every day, learning becomes easier and your child will build and maintain friendships with other children.

What are my legal responsibilities?

Education in New South Wales is compulsory for all children between the ages of six years and below the minimum school leaving age. The Education Act 1990 requires that parents ensure their children of compulsory school age are enrolled at, and regularly attend school, or, are registered with the Board of Studies, Teaching and Educational Standards for homeschooling.

Once enrolled, children are required to attend school each day it is open for students.

The importance of arriving on time

Arriving at school and class on time:

- Ensures that students do not miss out on important learning activities scheduled early in the day.
- Helps students learn the importance of punctuality and routine.
- Gives students time to greet their friends before class.
- Reduces classroom disruption.

Lateness is recorded as a partial absence and must be explained by parents.

What if my child has to be away from school?

On occasion, your child may need to be absent from school. Justified reasons for student absences may include:

- being sick, or having an infectious disease
- having an unavoidable medical appointment
- being required to attend a recognised religious holiday
- exceptional or urgent family circumstance (e.g. attending a funeral)

Following an absence from school you must ensure that within 7 days you provide your child’s school with a verbal or written explanation for the absence. However, if the school has not received an explanation from you within 2 days, the school may contact you to discuss the absence.

Principals may decline to accept an explanation that you have provided if they do not believe the absence is in the best interest of your child. In these circumstances your child’s absence would be recorded as unjustified. When this happens the principal will discuss their decision with you and the reasons why.

Travel

Families are encouraged to travel during school holidays. If travel during school term is necessary, discuss this with your child’s school principal. An Application for Extended Leave may need to be completed. Absences relating to travel will be marked as leave on the roll and therefore contribute to your child’s total absences for the year.

In some circumstances students may be eligible to enrol in distance education for travel periods over 50 school days. This should be discussed with your child’s school principal.
My child won’t go to school. What should I do?

You should contact the principal as soon as possible to discuss the issue and ask for help. Strategies to help improve attendance may include a referral to the school’s learning and support team or linking your child with appropriate support networks. The principal may seek further support from the Home School Liaison Program to develop an Attendance Improvement Plan.

What might happen if my child continues to have unacceptable absences?

It is important to understand that the Department of Education and Communities may be required to take further action where children of compulsory school age have recurring numbers of unexplained or unjustified absences from school.

Some of the following actions may be undertaken:
- Compulsory Schooling Conferences

You may be asked, along with your child, to attend a Compulsory Schooling Conference. The conference will help to identify the supports your child may need to have in place so they attend school regularly. The school, parents and agencies will work together to develop an agreed plan (known as Undertakings) to support your child’s attendance at school.
- Application to the Children’s Court – Compulsory Schooling Order

If your child’s attendance at school remains unsatisfactory the Department may apply to the Children’s Court for a Compulsory Schooling Order. The Children’s Court magistrate may order a Compulsory Schooling Conference to be convened.

- Prosecution in the Local Court

School and Department staff remain committed to working in partnership with you to address the issues which are preventing your child’s full participation at school. In circumstances where a breach of compulsory schooling orders occurs further action may be taken against a parent in the Local Court. The result of court action can be the imposition of a community service order or a fine.

What age can my child leave school?

All New South Wales students must complete Year 10 or its equivalent. After Year 10, and up until they reach 17 years of age, there are a range of flexible options for students to complete their schooling.

Working in Partnership

The Department of Education and Communities recognises that working collaboratively with students and their families is the best way to support the regular attendance of students at school.

We look forward to working in partnership with you to support your child to fulfil their life opportunities.