Welcome back!

Hopefully everyone has enjoyed a relaxing break in readiness for what promises to be an exciting year.

We have had some staff changes in 2013; Miss Jessica Stevens will commence on K / 1 as a permanent member of staff while Mrs Jane Fincher will be placed on year 4 for the full year on a temporary engagement. On behalf of our school community, I would like to welcome our new staff members, along with our new student enrolments, to our school.

In other staff news, Mr Tarrant will be on long service leave for term 1 before returning in term 2 on a job share engagement with Miss Webster. Mr Hamilton, who will teach our year 6 class this year, will be on leave for the first two weeks of term 1 and will be replaced by Mr Cornick.

Our Kinder students will be undertaking their Best Start assessments today and tomorrow and will officially start ‘big school’ on Friday.

Classes for 2013

K – Mrs Hanks
K / 1 - Miss Stevens
Year 1 – Mrs Carpenter (K-2 supervisor)
Year 1 / 2 – Miss Webster (Mon – Tues – Wed)
and for term 1 Ms Neilson (Thurs – Fri) for terms 2,3 and 4 Mr Tarrant (Thurs – Fri)
Year 2 / 3 – Mrs Petersen
Year 4 – Mrs Fincher
Year 5 – Mr Scanlan (3-6 supervisor)
Year 6 – Mr Hamilton

In the coming weeks we will arrange a parent and teacher meeting afternoon. This will provide an opportunity for you to meet your child’s teacher and to discuss class routines, requirements and important class and school events.

We have also purchased Reading Eggs, an excellent software program available to all families, that students can access at school and home to support all aspects of literacy. Reading Eggs will complement Mathletics which was used successfully in the school last year. We will offer parent workshops / information sessions to allow parents to better understand the programs. I believe it is essential that parents / care givers are familiar with the programs in order to support their child’s learning, so hopefully the sessions will be well-attended.

We will also be offering guitar and drum tuition again this year. Our tutors, Col Hatchman (drums) and Jeremy Minett (guitar) are highly talented and well known musicians who provide excellent lessons for our students. We were highly impressed by the performance of the drum group during last year’s end of year concert and we look forward to our guitarists performing during the year. Please see note on page 2 of the newsletter for information.

Active After School Sports will also return this year. During term 1 we will be offering Taekwondo (Mondays) and Netball (Wednesdays). The sports will begin in week 3 and conclude in week 9.

Mrs Tuyl (music) and Mrs Krempin (creative and performing arts) will again provide excellent learning programs for all students in their respective fields.

Enjoy the week and please speak to me about any ideas or concerns you may have - Peter
Follow our school on the Morpeth PS Twitter Account
http://www.twitter.com/morpethps

GUITAR & DRUM LESSONS WILL BE RUNNING AGAIN THIS YEAR
PLEASE SEE THE OFFICE FOR A PARTICIPATION NOTE

Canteen News

** Food items that are unavailable this week will be substituted where possible **

Week 1 - Term 1, 2013
Wed 30.01.13 Petah McGaw, Louise Vercoe
Thurs 31.1.13 Maiva Metcalf, Mel Anderson
Friday 1.2.13 Tanya Piggott, Fiona Emmett

Week 2 - Term 1, 2013
Monday 4.2.13 Sally Godwin, Gaby Whelan
Tuesday 5.2.13 Lainie Hopkins, Helen Sinclair
Wed 6.2.13 Natalie Hutton, Jodi Lovell
Thurs 7.2.13 Sallyann Rumbel, Sam Cook
Friday 8.2.13 Nicole Greedy, Kath Formosa

HOME READING PROGRAM

Commencing Week 4, Term 1, the children from K-6 will be participating in a Home Reading Program.

The school is seeking donations of books new or old (as long as they are in good order). Books can be left with your classroom teacher.

We also require parent volunteers to help ensure this scheme is an ongoing success. Please complete the note below and return to your class teacher to indicate your interest in assisting in this program. Once I can finalise all details including rosters etc I will forward the relevant information back to you.

Thanks in anticipation.

Anne Coyle : Learning and Support Teacher (L.A.S.T)

HOME READING PROGRAM

I am interested in assisting in the Home Reading Program being run at the school.

Name: _______________________________ Contact No : _______________________________
Child's Name: _______________________________ Child's Class: _______________________________
I am available on the following day/s: Mon Tues Wed Thurs {Please Circle}
The following times best suit me: 9am to 11.20am Noon to 2pm 2pm to 3pm
Welcome back to all our returning families and a warm welcome to our new families ... I hope you all enjoyed a restful break.

Just a few ‘housekeeping’ items to get us on track for the beginning of another school year.

Textbook Payments - are now being receipted by the Office. Payment can be made via cash, cheque or credit card (please note that Eftpos is not available). These payments are to be made by the end of Week 2 (Friday 8th February). Lessons from these texts will begin in Week 3 (Monday 11th February 2013)

Notes and Payments - all notes and payments should be returned to school via the Class Teacher. Items will then be sent each morning from the classroom to the Office for processing and the receipt returned to your child in class bags the following morning. If you are concerned about sending large amounts of money to school with your child we are happy to accept payment directly at the Office however please note that while we will endeavour to receipt it on the spot sometimes front counter work load does not allow this and your child will be sent the receipt via the classroom bag the next morning. This system is in place as part of our Cash Handling Policy and also teaches students responsibility and good money handling skills.

Notes and the weekly newsletter will be sent home each Monday to enable parents to easily locate all relevant information from school. We will continue to email families these items if you have previously nominated to receive them in electronic form.

Absences - Students who are absent from school for sickness or other reasons are required to present an absence note upon their return to school. If students are absent for more than 2 days parents are required to contact the school prior to their return. A generic absence note is included in each newsletter or a hand written note is also acceptable. Each note should contain Students Name, Class, date of absence, reason for absence, parent name, parent signature and date note written. This is a departmental requirement and is checked periodically by the DEC Home School Liaison Officer. In the event that families know of future absences (holidays etc) students are eligible to apply for “Exemption” which means that these are recorded but not included in the absence totals for reports and school statistics.

Late Arrivals and Early Leavers - students who arrive at school after the 9am morning bell are to present to the Office before attending class so that they can be “signed in” and receive a Late Arrivals note which is to be presented to the Class Teacher. Students who present without a parent will be recorded as an “Unexplained” absence (as per DEC Guidelines) and will require explanation from a parent. Parents who wish to take students from school earlier than 3pm are required to first attend the office to receive an Early Leavers pass. Please complete this step prior to collecting your child from their classroom.

Website and Twitter - This year the school will be streamlining communication between school and home. While all notes will be sent home in paper form, families can also locate an electronic version on the school’s website. These will be uploaded to the website each Monday (the same day as the paper note is sent home). This is also the case for the newsletter. Reminders or urgent short messages will be posted on the school’s Twitter account. Access details for both the website and Twitter accounts are located in the newsletter weekly.

Term Calendar - A copy of the term calendar will be sent home with the newsletter in Week 1 and Week 2. Each item has been entered on the website calendar and if you hover your mouse over the item (on the date) it will allow you to see specific information about that event along with a PDF copy of the corresponding note. Hard copies of all notes are also kept in the hopper hanging on the office door for those families who do not have internet access.

School Info Booklet - A school information booklet is currently being collated to help families with everyday information about the school. This booklet will be sent home to each family early this term.

Office Hours - The school Office is manned from 8.30am to 3.15pm each school day. It is not uncommon for staff to be present outside of these times. Please note that Office and Teaching Staff attend a weekly communication meeting each Tuesday morning from 8.30am to 9am. We ask that you minimise your enquiry to the Office during this time.

Please feel free to contact us for any information that has not been included here. Mrs Touzell and Mrs Manning
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