

Tuesday 21st April 2015

Newsletter #3

Important Dates for Term 2

- Tuesday 28th April - BOSTES registration inspection
- Thursday 30th April - Apple picking excursion
- Wednesday 2nd May - Parent Evening, Week 3, 6pm please bring food to share
- 25th May - Whitsun Festival
- Friday 5th June - Mansfield / World Environment Day excursion
- Friday 19th June - Mid Winter Festival

Dear Parents and Friends,

Welcome to Term 2.

“Our highest endeavour must be to develop free human beings who are able of themselves to impart purpose and direction to their lives. The need for imagination, a sense of truth, and a feeling of responsibility—these three forces are the very nerve of education.” - Rudolf Steiner

In these times of educational compliance to government regulations and mountains of paperwork it is easy to forget our real purpose – ultimately, to develop free human beings with purpose. At the end of Term 1 we submitted documentation to BOSTES (Board of Studies Teaching and Educational Standards NSW) to renew registration for Year 3 and apply for Year 4 registration for 2016. On Tuesday 28th April, two BOSTES inspectors will visit the school arriving at 9.30am and spending four hours examining our documentation and procedures in great detail. It is true that much energy and time has been, and continues to be, spent accommodating this registration process in our small school and it has been somewhat of a distraction from our real purpose. However, it has facilitated reflection and planning for the future. Hopefully, after the inspection we will be able to focus on student learning.

Communication and Processes

The staff and the Board at Aurora have been reflecting on our work in Term 1 to see if there are areas we can improve on in Term 2. There is always room for improvement in communication. We will continue to use the school newsletters as the main form of formal written communication between the staff and parents. These newsletters will go out every three weeks. We have also increased the staff levels so that there is greater opportunity for follow up and attention. We will continue to refine our approach to standard procedures for behaviour management, incident reporting and general organisation.



Staff and Student Changes

There have been some exciting developments since the last newsletter. In Term 2 we welcome Imogen Larmer to the Kindergarten. She and her parents, Rachel and Mark, have moved recently from Canberra so please give them a warm Aurora welcome. There will be some changes to staffing loads and timetables this term. Jeddah will be teaching the primary class from 10am to 1.30pm each day. Kate will be teaching in the morning session and after lunch. Between 10am and 11am, Kate and Jeddah will be able to work together or split into groups to meet students' individual needs and better develop their skills and their understanding for main lesson concepts. After much consideration by the College of Teachers we have decided to provide targeted teaching programs specific for early childhood and primary. This will mean that the two class groups will have greater separation in the learning programs and play times than in Term 1.

I will be increasing my time commitment in Term 2 from two days per week to three days per week to provide a level of school management and communication. I will continue to be on-site on Wednesdays and Thursdays and work one day per week off-site initially, eventually moving to another on-site day during the term.

During the Holidays...

During the holidays Kate and Annabel attended a week-long intensive course as part of their Advanced Diploma in Steiner Education that they will be doing over the next few years. Jenny also attended parts of the course. They found it inspirational and challenging.

The teachers have also been preparing their learning programs for Term 2 to make it even more targeted to students' needs and developmental stage.

The AGM took place on 1st April followed by another Board meeting on Wednesday 15th April in preparation for Term 2. New Board members include Terence Corbett, Chris Cloran, Inga Oates and Melissa Savill. Joanna has stepped down from her role on the Board. Thanks to Joanna for all the work she has done to lead the establishment of the school with skill, courage and grace. Francis Mougel remains on the Board but has stepped down from his role as Treasurer. Melissa will become Treasurer. Jane Button will remain as Chair and James Goodlet remains as a Board member. The Board are undertaking and completing AIS Learning Modules on governance to improve their skills in an increasingly complex educational governance environment. Thank you to those who offer their time voluntarily on the Board. We have a healthy mix of skills and interests. We are privileged to have a mix of parents, staff and community members on the Board.

New School Entrance

You may have noticed that there is a beautiful, solid new shelter near the carpark at the southeast corner of the playground. This will be the new entrance to the school. Thank you Rick, Josh (?) and Francis for your work on this structure. There will be further work done on the gateway and signage to make it more inviting. We will notify the school community when we are ready to officially open this entrance.

First Day of Term 2 Arrangements – Wednesday 22 May

I would like to welcome parents to into the school on Wednesday morning between 8.30am and 8.50am ready for an 8.55am start. As we will be welcoming Imogen's parents, Rachel and Mark, I would like to invite all parents (who have time) to come with us to the Milk Factory for a coffee once the children are settled into their morning verse.

We all look forward to a seeing you in Term 2 for another exciting stage in Aurora's development.

James and the Aurora staff