

Tuesday 2nd August, 2016

Newsletter #6

Important dates for your calendar:

Term 3: Tuesday 19th July – Thursday 22nd September
Parent craft group- Friday mornings 9.30am
Parent Eurythmy- Wednesdays from 3:15pm
Parent Evening- Wednesday 17th August 7pm
Comedy Night- Saturday 3rd September
Grandparents Day- Thursday 8th September



Celebrating NAIDOC with Koori Kulcha

News from James

The importance of the playground

For the vast majority of primary school students, the highlight of their school day is playtime. As a staff, we have decided to make the playground a priority for our work this term. This work includes provision of infrastructure, activities, materials, safety and freedom. We are open to suggestions for improvements. We are keen to provide a playground that actively engages students, is dynamic and allows students to play creatively, experimentally and physically.

Music program

We are ready to go with the strings program for Years 3 and 4 students. Sarah Hindson will be teaching the strings group on Thursdays. The school has bought new $\frac{1}{2}$ size and $\frac{3}{4}$ size violins to start this project. Other classes will be doing recorder, singing and ensemble work with Vanessa.

Planning for growth

As the school is growing we have made some changes already to accommodate this growth with more changes to come in the next few months.

There is now a new venue, Room 8, for playgroup to accommodate a larger group. While Jenny is away travelling to Vietnam and England this term, Rochelle is leading playgroup.

We have advertised for a staff member to coordinate after school care. This position has not been filled yet. In the meantime, staff are filling in Tuesdays-Fridays.

We have advertised for a teaching position for next year. The plan is to have 4 classes next year; Kindergarten, Class 1/2, Class 3/4, Class 5/6. As yet it hasn't been finalised which teachers will teach which grades. This will become clearer as applications come in and class numbers are more accurately calculated. We hope to be able to finalise staffing and classes by the end of Term 3. There is a classroom on the Kazcare site earmarked for the new class.

Landscaping, building and maintenance at Aurora

There have been improvements made to Aurora lately including completing the library wall, more handmade bench-seats, new sandpit frame and cargo net for the cubby. Thank you to Rick Stanton, Phil Brierly and students for help with these projects.

You may have also noticed that there have been some projects in the playground that have been half finished or yet to be started. I would like to explain these and the process for building, landscaping and maintenance projects at the school.

A small committee of teachers and parents have been developing a master plan for our playground. You can see this plan on the noticeboard in the office. As well as long term projects there have been some others that have arisen out of necessity. Completion of projects are often slower than you would expect because: 1. we like the students to be involved, 2. there is the need for discussion and negotiation between Kazcare and the school about who will pay and ensuring there is alignment with the school's and Kazcare's plans; 3. the school's need to undergo a fair process of finding the right trades people for the work.

Over the next few weeks you will see work done on the following:

1. Completion of the new sandpit and replacement of sand in the old sandpit
2. Removal of soil in the courtyard and replacement with packed gravel, paving stones and suitable drainage
3. Replacement of the treated pine retaining wall near the ballcourt with hardwood sleepers.

Aurora's building fund will pay for the above projects with some help from Kazcare.

Future projects include: setting up the workshop area, more bench-seats, outdoor sink and bench in the courtyard, front entrance gateway and bush tucker garden and totem poles.

If you are able to help with landscaping, building or maintenance in the school, please let me know. If you are able to make a tax deductible contribution to the school's building fund, it will help us to further improve the physical environment for Aurora students.

Mapping the future for Aurora

6 pm, Wednesday 10th August

Koori Kulcha Café

For 6 months we have been steadily developing a business plan for Aurora. So far it has mainly involved the input of a working group including Steve Klipin (Business Management Consultant), Mel Savill (Business Manager), Jane Button (Board Chair), Chris Cloran (Treasurer) and me. During the winter break Steve, Mel, Jane and I worked on listing some key priorities for spending. We used the *Statement of Purpose*, developed last year, to inform us. During this business planning process, it became obvious that we were expanding our terms of reference to include strategic planning. With this in mind, we have renamed the process and product the 'Aurora Map' (I borrowed the 'map' idea from Orana Steiner School where we worked through a similar process).

After some discussion we have funnelled down to 3 main areas, in developing the *Aurora Map*, to guide our decision making over the next three years. They are: 1. Financial Sustainability, 2. Professionalism, 3. Child Focus.

Key stakeholders, including the board, staff, class coordinators and business partners have been invited to this event on the evening of Wednesday 10th August. They will have an opportunity to contribute ideas for priorities under the above three headings. They will come prepared with a wish list for Aurora with those key priorities in mind. If you are not one of the listed invitees but wish to come to the planning meeting and contribute, please contact me and I will add your name to the list.

Parent evening Wednesday 17th August 7pm

This term, our parent evening will continue with the *Truth, Beauty, Goodness* theme and Lisa Devine will be our main speaker. After the great success of last term's meeting it would be great to see each family represented at this meeting.

Yours with heart,

James

From the Kindergarten

It's been a wonderful start to the term in the Kindergarten, and as the days grow longer it seems there's a special energy of joy and renewal among the group.

Over the Winter holidays I attended The Vital Years, the bi-annual conference of the Steiner Early Childhood Association of Australia, held this time at Tarremah School in Hobart. Along with around two hundred other Steiner early childhood educators, I spent a week exploring the theme of 'the cradle of a healthy life'. We sang, explored hand gesture games, studied the drawings of the growing child, looked at literacy in the early years, and drank in the wisdom of elders in the Steiner early childhood community. It was a rich week, full of inspiration and impetus to continually deepen our work.

Here is a poem that grew out of that time...

To the Child

Who are you, who are you today?

Let me wonder thus

Not to shine a light too bright

But that my pure wondering may feed you

As you weave an inner space that is not mine.

So peep out please, and throw me clues, and riddles too!

Yet stay there, do,

In the you of you

That you may know what is yours to take up

In your becoming

And what is not.

About the Aurora College of Teachers

I'm drawn to share a little about the College of Teachers, as some of you may not be aware of this important aspect of school life. The College is often a key feature of Steiner schools, and though its forms vary from school to school, a common thread is that this group has a special role in tending to the heart and soul of the school itself.

At Aurora, all staff are invited to be part of the College, and we meet each week and before each term. Though our meetings serve many practical functions, they are far more than the usual staff or faculty meetings. Rather, they are a time for coming together as colleagues to attune to and serve the impulse of this education. We study texts related to Steiner education, explore artistic activities and exercises together, engage in professional reflection, consult one another on challenges, and share thoughts and dreams on the direction of the school.

So if you've ever wondered how it is that we find ourselves in a school community that's so alive, with such a deep level of collegial respect that flows through to the children, know that this structure of the College is part of the answer! It's a precious jewel, and as I contemplate how effectively it works, I'm often reminded of this quote from Meg Wheatley:

'All this time, the wisdom has been waiting for us, waiting for us to enter into meaningful conversations and deeper connections, waiting for us to realise that we can be wise only together.'

Blessings,

Annabel

From Class 1/2

Welcome to term 3!

Our class continues to grow so beautifully. This term we welcome our new student Soraya into Class 2. Soraya is sister to Amity in Kindergarten.

Amid this joyful start we have had some winter coughs and colds and sore throats. Thank you for sending your children well rugged up, and a gentle reminder to send a water bottle to school with your child. Hydration is so important for health and learning.

In class 1/2 we have just completed a literacy main lesson based on the Celtic Dragon myth stories. This main lesson was called 'The Three Ways', a story of three brothers. The children really enjoyed the brothers' adventures and were fascinated by all things Celtic; the winds, the oceans, mermaids, dragons, knights, kings, maidens and giants. All these elements added magic and challenge to the journey taken by the brothers. The story is full of wonderful words and imagery.

The children were able to orally retell each day's chapter of the story and capture it through illustration and writing. They were also able to continue to practice upper and lower case letters. Here the children's letters walk along the golden path, some reaching down into the earth and some reaching up into the sky as they practice the letters form.

Last week we began our next math's main lesson. We will be solving lots of mathematical questions through a story about a family of pioneers settling in a new land. How many logs to build their cabin? How many chickens lay how many eggs? How many fruit trees? ... And so on. Needless to say the class was excited to start another math's main lesson.

The children can be so confident, enthusiast and inquisitive. Last week the class spent time with Uncle Larry as he shared his knowledge of Aboriginal culture. They sang, danced and played music. He taught them how to be emus, brolgas and kangaroos. It warmed my heart to see them engaging so beautifully with him.

As our class continues to blossom and grow, spring is just around the corner. Our wonderful journey continues.

Kate Koch

From the Middle Primary

Firstly, a big Welcome to Merryn and her family. It is so great to have you as part of our growing community. Welcome to the Southern Highlands!

This term we will be completing a geography main lesson throughout the term. As part of this we will be doing a few excursions in the local area.

At the time of writing, we have just returned from our excursion to the Bowral Train Station, Main Street, Bowral Library and Corbett Gardens. What a great day we had. We documented features of the different areas and who uses the areas. It was great to see the students searching the train station to find its many features including the disabled access ramps, help point and even a heated waiting room! The children's librarian, Trudi, gave us a tour of the library pointing out its many features. We were even given a tour of the local studies room saw the Mt Gibraltar moth collection and old newspapers from the 1800's. The students were remarkably well mannered during the day and were great advocates for the school. They should all feel proud of themselves! Many thanks to Jodie Steward who was the parent able to accompany our class on the day.

Our next excursion is to Mt Gibraltar which should be exciting as well!

Jogging Group

Needing an energy boost to start your day? Kids got the love of jogging? You can be at school by 8.25am on a Friday?

Parents and students are invited to participate in a Friday morning jogging session. Arrive at 8.25 for a prompt 8.30 start, late-comers will not be able to join in once the group has started. We will jog around the field adjoining the school till 8.50. Regular school supervision starts at 8.30 for any parents wanting to attend who need their children looked after. A commitment to regular attendance is best. We will start on Friday the 5th August. Hope to see you bright and early on Fridays!

Sincerely, Jeddah.

Note from our nutritionist

Gut flora: health or disease?

The gut flora, or gut microbiota, is the complex community of microorganisms that live in your digestive tract. Those little bugs should be considered an organ in their own right as their functions are numerous. They:

- * aid in digestion and the absorption of nutrients;
- * create a physical barrier against bad bacteria, viruses and parasites;
- * act as a detoxification machine;
- * influence your immune system's response;
- * produce and release enzymes, chemicals for the brain, vitamins and neurotransmitters;
- * help you handle stress through the flora's effect on the hormonal system;
- * assists in a good night's sleep;
- * help control the body's inflammatory pathways.

Bad flora is related to a diversity of diseases such as obesity, depression, anxiety, autism, ADHD and a whole lot more. Basically, as Hippocrates already stated, 'All disease begins in the gut'. So, if all disease starts in the gut, we can probably say that good health also starts in the gut!

Following are just a few simple ways to improve your gut health.

- * Leave all processed foods in the supermarket shelves; instead choose whole, organic foods and cook everything from scratch.
- * Ditch processed sugar.
- * Eat probiotic foods such as yoghurt, sauerkraut, kimchi, kefir and kombucha tea.
- * Include lots of raw and cooked vegetables in your diet.
- * Choose low sugar fruits such as berries.
- * Drink filtered water if possible.
- * Include healthy fats such as avocados nuts and seeds.
- * Please don't use vegetable oils other than extra virgin olive oil, linseed oil or avocado oil for salads. Cook with coconut oil or butter.

Pascalie Nelemans, happily cooking in Kindy!

From Rochelle

Welcome to Term 3!

Just wanted to let you all know that this term the Parent Craft Sessions will be at my place in Berrima (just 9min drive from school). Fridays 9:30-12. The purpose of this group (apart from bonding, learning new skills and drinking tea) is to create simple handmade crafts to sell at the end of term festival. This term we will be focussing on "Spring" and I have a few ideas up my sleeve.

Address is Lavender Lodge, 54 Greenhills Rd Berrima (off the Old Hume Hwy). Children are welcome to hang out in our playroom.

The Aurora Cabaret: Tales tall and true of life in a school like no other!

Saturday September 3rd, 7.30pm in the Kazcare Hall

It's time for an adults' social get together for our Aurora community! So book your babysitters and get set for a warming night of reflection, laughter and merriment in celebration of the journey of our school so far.

Picture skits, music and an abundance of Steiner-inspired silliness, no holds barred.

Bring along a contribution to a potluck dinner, drinks also welcome.

Entry: \$5 to cover hall hire

Dresscode: Fabulous!

Story Circle

A group of teachers and parents are planning a Storytelling and Associated Crafts Exchange afternoon 1.30 -4.30 on Friday the 24th June (the day after school breaks up.) If you are interested in contributing towards a larger community workshop and/or joining an ongoing working group.... please feel welcome to come and join us.

Community Announcements

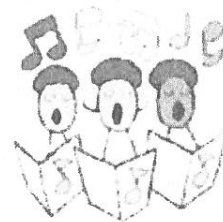
BERRIMA SINGER'S CONCERT

to raise money for Father Riley's Youth Off the Streets

on Sunday 14th August, 2016 at 2.30pm

St Thomas Aquinas Hall, Bundaroo Street, Bowral.

- ♦ ***Entry by Donation.***
- ♦ ***Enjoy a delicious afternoon tea.***
- ♦ ***Hamper Raffle and other prizes.***
- ♦ ***Hope you can come along.***



Dear parents and friends,

Kylie and Solomon, a former family of the school, are looking for a place to stay from 29th October until 10th of December due to work commitments.

Does anyone of you have a spare room or granny flat available to them?

Please let Mel in the office know and she will pass it on.

Student Work Gallery - Class 1/2

the mermaid
promised to give fish
to the fisherman but
there was a price.
FISH
fish



The eldest brother
now has all of the
treasure.



There was no one in the
castle. The brother saw a floating
candle. The brother turned
into an ant. He saw the giant.

The Fisher's three sons went three
They overcame giants, a witch, an army and
sea dragon. Each won a princess and
heir to a kingdom.