

Wednesday 31st August, 2016

Newsletter #7

Important dates for your calendar:

Term 3: Tuesday 19th July – Thursday 22nd September

Term 4: Tuesday 11th October – Wednesday 7th December

Parent craft group- Friday mornings 9.30am

Parent Eurythmy- Wednesdays from 3:15pm

Social Comedy Night- Saturday 3rd September

Grandparents Day- Thursday 8th September



News from James

‘Educators ... will become observers of life and seek to learn, by listening to life, what it is they have to implement.’ R. Steiner, *The Renewal of the Social Organism*.

It has been increasingly evident to me that the staff at Aurora are acutely aware of the power of observation and the importance of the freedom to adapt our programs according to the needs of the students under our care. This has been foremost in our minds in the implementation of new programs.

Mapping Aurora’s Future

The meeting on Wednesday 10th August to develop a business plan and strategic plan, (*Mapping Aurora’s Future*) was a great success. The large gathering included Aurora staff, parents and Koori Kulcha representatives contributing priorities under the headings: financial sustainability, professionalism and child focus.

There were many thoughtful and imaginative suggestions, discussions and questions. One common theme that arose was accommodating growth in student numbers. In the next three years it looks like we need two more classroom spaces. The question arose about whether the school should stop at Year 6 or Year 8. If the school does decide to go to Year 8 in 2018, it would need yet another classroom space. At the moment Kazcare have guaranteed one extra space ready for the start of

2017 (Room 3 –near the train carriage). This would make an excellent Kindergarten space with a beautiful fenced playground. Another space for next year would be desirable but at this stage this is not being offered in 2017 as Kazcare have all other rooms, other than Room 3, booked for community groups. The good news is, we will be suitably accommodated in 2017.

In the next couple of weeks, I will be putting together a draft copy of the Aurora Map and, in consultation with others, will be developing a final copy in November.

Wiritjiribin Aboriginal School Program and AOOSHC

I am very happy to announce that we have found a teacher as our Aboriginal language and culture teacher. Her name is Rachel Buckley, a Wiradjuri woman with a Bachelor of Indigenous Studies and Advanced Diploma of Education. Rachel has been working with Koori Kulcha. Aunty Marie will be mentoring and supporting Rachel in her work with Aurora. Rachel started on Monday 29th August with sessions with Class 1/2 and the Middle Primary class. Rachel will also be our new out of school hours care coordinator. To start with, Rachel will be working Tuesday to Friday afternoons starting on Tuesday 30th August. If a need arises to expand to Monday afternoons and/or before school care and holiday care, we will do so. I will be supporting Rachel to get started with AOOSHC. Our hope is to incorporate Aboriginal cultural activities in our AOOSHC program.

Grandparents' Day Thursday 8th September 10am-12pm

We would like to warmly invite grandparents to next week's grandparents' day. Parents, guardians and friends are also welcome.

Schedule:

10am- visit your grandchild's classroom

10.30am- morning tea in the café and talk with James

11.10am- mingle in the playground

11.30am- Upper Primary class play rehearsal

12pm- goodbye

Literacy Review update

This year we are examining literacy practice in the school, recognising strengths and seeing if there are ways we can improve. There are strong features of our program including the oral and aural work in the Kindergarten, as well as the rich, imaginative, story-based learning in the primary school. We are looking at ways we can accurately and effectively assess students. This assessment needs to be done without impinging on their learning and attitude to learning. After this assessment process, we would like to provide enriching, targeted programs for students based on assessments.

One development from our literacy review has been the implementation of a more structured reading program in the primary classes. Buddy reading will occur twice each week and there will be opportunities for oral and independent reading each day. Please contact Jeddah or Kate if you would like more details or if you would like to volunteer as a reading helper.

Yours with heart,

James

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!

From Class 1/2

Hello dear families. Spring is in the air! The buds on the trees are starting to bloom and this week will bring the official start to Spring.

The warmer weather to come will bring the opportunity and joy of outdoor activities. Of course at Aurora we try as much as possible to experience the outdoors in all weather. The bracing fresh air of winter has brought many a healthy rosy cheek. The children love it. In fact, it was a very chilly day last Friday when Class 1&2 and the Kindergarten walked to the "Bamboo Forest". It was lovely to see how this place in nature ignited the children's' imaginations.

A quote from Richard Louve's article in the Guardian is poignant here:

"Spending more time outdoors nurtures our "nature neurons" and our natural creativity. [At the University of Michigan](#), researchers demonstrated that, after just an hour interacting with nature, memory performance and attention spans improved by 20%."

Louve goes on to say that: "Many people today support the notion that every person, especially every young person, has a right to access the internet. How much more should every person have a right to access the natural world, because that connection is part of our humanity?"

A child's creativity and resourcefulness is stimulated when playing and exploring in nature. In the coming weeks the children's love of and respect for nature will be doubly enriched by our new main lesson; "Aboriginal Stories". This main lesson coincides with the starting of our new Aboriginal language and culture classes brought to us by Aunty Rachel from Koori Kulcha. We all feel privileged to be deepening our understanding and relationship with Aboriginal culture with Aunty Rachel. She will be in our class between morning tea and lunch (middle lesson) every Monday this term.

Kate Koch

From the Middle Primary

Excursions, excursions, more excursions and then a camp!

We continue to explore the geography and history of our local area and have just returned from exploring the changing terrain of the other side of Mt Gibraltar. We have been exploring the adventures of Hamilton Hume tracing his life from his young teenage years, until the modern day where his legacy lives on most famously in the Hume highway, the road that will take us to camp at the end of the term. Students have written some amazing articles and stories, using different text types. Some examples can be found in the 'Student Gallery' at the end of the newsletter.

The early settlers and their need to divide the land into private holdings is also the lead in for our new Main Lesson entitled 'Measurement and Area'. We have been looking intently at square centimetres and exploring questions such as 'How many unique shapes can be created using 3cm^2 ?' This was heavily debated in class and was only solved by drawing up the shapes, cutting them out and seeing if they matched! Needless to say we are looking forward to determining how many shapes we can create with 4cm^2 , 5cm^2 , 6cm^2 , 7cm^2 ... and so on. We will then move on to square metres and beyond.

Students have also been working hard on our class play about Moses, carrying on from our Hebrew Stories from last term. This is coming together quite nicely with most students knowing their lines already. Please help your children to learn these lines at home - it's great reading practice as well. We'll be working on props at school soon.

Have a lovely week!

Jeddah Teasdale

From Rochelle

Just wanted to remind everyone that during the term the Parent Craft Sessions are being held 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.

Student Work Gallery – Middle Primary

