Dear Parents and Carers,
Namaste, Hola, Kia Ora, Mahlabá,

Welcome back to term two. We hope you had a good break and got to enjoy the sunny Easter days. It is great to see the children happily return to school, and no doubt you too are happy to be back into the school routine!

New School Council for 2016
The first meeting of the new School Council was held on the 22nd March. We welcome our new council members for 2016. The office bearers for 2016 were elected at the first meeting.
Sinead Bradley, parent at Laverton campus, was elected President. Sinead takes over from Phil Burgoine. Many of you will know Phil as President of School Council for many years. Phil remains on Council as a Community Member.
Pla Garratta, ex 2015 parent at Laverton campus, was re-elected as Treasurer.
Matt Symmonds, parent at Laverton, was elected as Secretary.
Council welcomed Alisha Spargo, Parent Member at Niddrie campus, and our new DET member elected representatives Jack Rothenbuehler and Tamara Leitch.
In future bulletins we will feature aspects of the new Strategic Plan for the next four years 2016- 2019. As noted previously our new Strategic Plan for school improvement is a result of the School Review and School Self Evaluation conducted in 2015.

Spotlight on Staff at WAS
In this bulletin we put the spotlight on our Principal Class team.
In the following bulletins our Leading Teachers will introduce themselves to the parent community.

World Autism Awareness Day
The department ran a story on Western Autistic School for WAAD. Thanks to all the parents, children and staff involved. Here is the link to the video clip and the Tweet from DET.
https://vimeo.com/dpcmultimedia/review/161022872/3d90c3f3ec

Best Regards,
Mary Thomson

Transition to Mainstream Schools – Information Night

Parent Information Evening
Topic: Transition to Mainstream Schools
Date: Tuesday 19th April 2016
Time: 5.45-6.45 pm
Where: Laverton Campus, Burnley Street – Multi Purpose room, please use this entrance.
Presenters: Laverton Campus Assistant Principals - Michelle Sanders and Sam Hindes

Parent Information Evening
Topic: Transition to Mainstream Schools
Date: Thursday 28th April 2016
Time: 5.45-6.45 pm
Where: Niddrie Campus, Garnet & Teague St – Multi Purpose room, enter via Teague Street
Presenters: Niddrie Campus Assistant Principal – Liz Richardson
Parents from each campus can attend their own or an alternate campus evening and it will provide parents with information about the process of transition to a Mainstream School, including question time. All parents are invited to attend, not just parents involved in the process in 2016.
School Photos
2016 School photos for Western Autistic School will be taken at each campus on the dates shown below by Arthur Reed Photos. Payment envelopes with more information will be sent home 2 weeks before school photos.

Easter Parade
On the last day of Term 1, Block B at the Niddrie Campus held an Easter Hat Parade. The parade was a great success and enjoyed by all.

Public Holiday
Please be aware there is the ANZAC Day Public Holiday coming up on Monday 29th of April 2016. On this day Western Autistic School will be closed.

Parent Information

Spotlight on Principal Class Staff
MARY THOMSON
I have the honour of being College Principal. I have come into this role after many years at Western – 26 years in fact - first as a classroom teacher, then as a Head Teacher, and Assistant Principal. Before becoming Principal I worked with the team at the Autism Teaching Institute developing teacher-training courses in autism education. WAS has a state, national and international reputation as a premier school for autism. My main role is to provide the environment in which teachers can help- our students and their families receive a great education.

MICHELLE SANDERS
My role is Campus Principal at Laverton, I work alongside Mary and Sam at Laverton overseeing the day to day running of the school and supporting teachers to implement the student’s educational class programs across the campus. My other area of responsibility is student transitions. I oversee the transitions process when families are seeking to enrol their child here and also managing the transition process of students when they leave WAS and move on to their next educational setting.

ELIZABETH RICHARDSON
My role is Campus Principal at Niddrie. I work with Mary and school staff to ensure the smooth running of the Niddrie Campus. I guide staff with their provision of teaching programs to all students and my main area of responsibility in the new School Strategic Plan is the implementation of the Victorian Curriculum and learning programs that meet the needs of our students.

SAM HINDES
My role is Assistant Principal at Laverton where I work to support teachers with their classroom teaching and professional development. I am responsible for running much of the professional learning at the school, and working to ensure that teachers have access to up to date strategies and information about ASD teaching. My other area of responsibility is supporting students to develop their functional behaviour. I am currently working with the school staff on our behaviour support policies and practice.

STEPHEN AHERN
I’m currently the Director of the Autism Teaching Institute which offers post-grad qualifications to teachers and professional development to allied professionals. I’ve recently taken on the challenge to build and grow the Institute to ensure a sustainable neuro-diverse future and enable systemic change in education. My main area of responsibility is to build the capacity of the Autism Teaching Institute as a self-sustaining entity of WAS and within the school’s new Strategic Plan, I cover Parent Engagement and the Parent’s as Co-Educators Program.