Dear Parents and Guardians,

Welcome to another edition of the Parent Bulletin.

This week we’d like to share the story of a WAS family featured in the Two of Us in The Age.

Mark and Leanne Hogan are well known members of the WAS community. Their son Ben attended WAS last year. Leanne has been a member of School Council and together they have given talks at WAS parent nights and discussed the impact of autism on both Ben and Mark.

Mark and Leanne were featured in The Age Good Weekend last week in the Two of Us column. The Age column tells a story of their warm relationship, and how they have worked to find ways of getting around the difficulties presented by Mark’s autism.

We hope that Mark and Leanne will return to WAS to share their experiences with other parent groups this year.

Find their story at:

They’re back…

It has come to my attention that some students in the school may have head lice and I seek your cooperation in checking your child’s hair this week 18/3/2015 – 25/3/2015.

Head lice do not transmit infectious diseases – they are transmitted by having head to head contact with someone who has head lice. You may be reassured to know that head lice are commonly found in places other than at Western Autistic School. Head lice are common in school-aged children and are the most adaptable of creatures. They have survived living solely on humans for 10,000 years!!!!

For more information on the detection and treatment of head lice visit:

News from Students and Groups

Food Theme – 2.6

In 2.6 this term we have had a focus on food. Many students in the room have narrow diets, and to help develop their confidence with a wider variety of foods we have been doing lots of tasty, messy activities.

We are having regular cooking sessions starting with familiar recipes and flavours to build student confidence. This term we have made pancakes, porridge, banana bread and honey joys.

In our sensory and art sessions we have been experimenting with food to build our tolerance of different textures and ingredients. So far we have painted with coloured porridge, made glittery rainbow spaghetti and even made messy baked bean paintings.

We are also building multiple opportunities for tasting into our week with regular tasting circles. During these we take turns to try a new food, and decide whether we like or don’t like it. Watching classmates try new foods seems to encourage everyone to be a bit braver with their tastes.
**Parent Activities and Events**

**Parent Group Sessions** hosted by Margaret and Jacqueline will explore anger. These sessions are being run at Niddrie and will be commencing on the 23rd March 2015. Once again the group will meet from 10.30 till 1pm, there is no charge and childcare is available.

If you require any further information please contact Margaret Itsines or Jacqueline Nixon on 9097 2000 or itsines.margaret.e@edumail.vic.gov.au

**Parent Information Evening**

“Transitioning to Mainstream School”

This evening is presented by the Campus Principals and will focus on transition to mainstream schools.

At this evening the process for the transition from WAS to a mainstream school is explained. The session intends to provide information for parents who are considering a mainstream school as the next school for their child/ren. The session also provides a forum for questions about transition to mainstream school.

- Laverton – 5th May, 2015. 6:00pm – 7:30pm
- Niddrie – 6th May, 2015. 6:00pm – 7:30pm

We will also hold another session later in relation to transition to specialist schools.

**Term 1 Fundraiser**

A reminder that the closing date for the hot cross bun orders is this Friday, 20th March. Your orders will be delivered on the 25th of March.

**Harmony Day**

Harmony day is 21st March celebrating Australia's cultural diversity. Harmony day is a community celebration.

Morning teas, national costume days, are among the different events that have been staged to showcase cultures, traditions and backgrounds. Last year our staff arranged celebration morning teas of foods from around the world (it was delicious!). Watch this space for information on events happening at school to celebrate Harmony Day.

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**Events and Services of possible interest for families**

**The Victorian Premiers’ Reading Challenge** is now open!

This is the eleventh year of this Challenge and since 2005 it has helped inspire nearly two million students to read an incredible 34 million books. In addition the Challenge has encouraged families and parents to support children’s literacy development.

For children from birth to Prep the challenge is to read or ‘experience’ at least 40 books with their family, guardian or teacher. For students from Prep to Year 2 the challenge is to read or ‘experience’ 30 books, and for students in Years 3 to 10 the challenge is to read 15 books.


**Irabina**

Irabina provides family-centered Early Intervention programs and services to children and families affected by Autism Spectrum Disorder.

Follow this link for more information on their programs and services [www.irabina.com](http://www.irabina.com)

**BusyFeet** is an established activity designed to create a special place for children with intellectual and physical disabilities through dance and music. Conducted in a fun and safe environment, it’s a place where everyone feels special and is respected for their individual ability.

- A dance activity with one on one support, with qualified dance teachers
- For children 6-16 years
- Saturday morning 10.30 – 11.50am
- Cost is gold coin

Register at [www.rotaryclubofmeltonvalley.org.au](http://www.rotaryclubofmeltonvalley.org.au) or email: BusyFeetMelton@hotmail.com or call Annette on 0401 031 917