Dear Parents, Carers and Guardians, Namaste, Hola, Sawasdee, Kon’nichiwa, Mahlab

Welcome to this edition of the bulletin.

We look to have a very busy last term of school but also a special term as we reflect on the students’ achievements. It is exciting how often we hear our teachers comment on how far their students have progressed, each in their own way. As our campus principals, Michelle and Liz have noted we are discussing plans for 2017 and discussing end of year reports for our students. The transition reports for those students leaving us in 2016 will be a bit different this year, as they will include ABLES Readiness Reports. The Abilities Based Learning and Education Support (ABLES) program is a Department of Education program that all school when supporting the teaching and learning of students with disabilities and additional needs.

Victorian Parliamentary Committee Inquiry into Services for People with Autism Spectrum Disorder

The Autism Teaching Institute and WAS will attend a hearing of the Family and Community Development Committee enquiry into services for people with ASD later this month.

At the hearing the ATI/WAS will respond specifically to the inquiry into the education for people with ASD. The issues we will speak to will include the accessibility to, quality of the education services provided to people with ASD, how inclusive the school education sector is to people with ASD, and the limitations of the current education services and how these can be addressed.

Our appearance will also provide an opportunity for us to present the unique practice-based model of ASD teacher training offered through the Autism Teaching Institute.

Parents can access the transcripts of submissions from people living with autism, researchers and peak body representatives to the enquiry at http://www.parliament.vic.gov.au/fcdc/inquiry/400.

Dress Up Day

On Friday the 28th of October, we will be having a ‘FANCY DRESS FUN DAY’. The children can wear costumes to school and there will be lots of games and fun activities planned. Your child can come in any costume, bring one along in their bag or not dress up at all. If you have any queries please feel free to contact your child’s classroom team.

Playground Refresh

Over the holidays we refreshed the line marking on our bike paths for the students & created a rounders diamond. The students have been inspired to fine tune their steering when riding their bikes and scooters, in order to negotiate the many new bends and turns.

The reporting date for this inquiry is 30 June 2017. Once the final report is tabled in the Parliament, an electronic copy will be available at the link above.

I look forward to seeing families and friends at school events this term.

Kind regards,

Mary Thomson

19 October 2016  Niddrie
Fire Truck Visit at Niddrie
On Tuesday 11 October a group of firefighters from the MFB visited WAS to talk to the children about fire safety & demonstrate the features of their fire trucks. While one of the fire trucks had to rush off to an emergency part way through the morning, the second truck was able to remain and students had a wonderful time exploring the fire engine & using the fire hose.

Students from 3A and 5A had a terrific time with the fire fighters and did a range of activities linked to the fire truck visit when they returned to their classrooms.

Curriculum Day this term
On Monday the 31st of October staff have a full day of professional development for curriculum day. There will be no school for the children on this day.

Sausage Sizzle
Bunnings Hoppers Crossing on Old Geelong Road is generously hosting a sausage sizzle for Western Autistic School on Monday October 31st.
If you are out and about please drop by for a sausage or just to say hello.

Parent Activities and Events

Current Research Projects
At one time or another, many families at Western Autistic School have participated in Victorian research projects. A list of research projects which are current and looking for participants can be found on the Amaze website at http://www.amaze.org.au/get-involved/autismresearch/autismresearch-currentprojects.

Current projects include topics such as ‘The effect of pet ownership on the social skills and empathy of people with ASD’ and ‘Are girls less likely to be diagnosed than boys with Autism Spectrum Disorder?’ If you are interested in participating or learning more, please check out the website for opportunities to get involved.

 ATI Update
To date there have been 300 graduates from the certificate course. Of these, 201 graduates also went on to complete the diploma course. This means that there are over 400 teachers in schools in Victoria with ASD specialist training to support our children, which is an impressive result and for which the ATI staff are to be congratulated.

Free Tickets to World Festival of Magic
Thanks to our 2016 sponsors, the Lions International Club is proud to present “World Festival of Magic”. This sponsored event is for the entertainment of Special Needs and Disadvantaged Children and their Carers/Families throughout Melbourne. There will be a limit of 6 tickets per family.
Where: The Melbourne Convention Centre
Date: Saturday 19th November, 2016
Time: 11.00am and 2.00pm
RSVP: 26th October, 2016 to western.autistic.sch@edumail.vic.gov.au or call 9097 2000 or write a note in your child’s communication book.
Information required: child full name, class details, contact number, contact person, session preference and number of tickets.