23rd February 2016

Dear Parents and Carers,
Hello, 你好, Al salaam a’alaykum, Xin Chao
Welcome to this edition of the Parent Bulletin.
Students and staff are to be congratulated on the smooth start to the school year. Already the students are starting to show that they feel comfortable at school and enjoying their time with their teachers and classmates.

Parent Teacher Interview – SSG meetings
This is an extremely important and valuable opportunity to have input into your child/ren’s learning programs and to discuss the teaching program at WAS. I encourage all families to meet with their child/ren’s teachers for meetings at school. Also as noted previously, if parents have a clear view about which setting they would like their children to move to from Western mainstream school or special school – then could you please let your child’s teacher know or notify a Campus Principal. There are Parent Information sessions on the topic of Transitions this term, the first of which is this week (details below).

Staff 2016
We welcome new and returning staff members and look forward to their contribution to the children’s learning this year.

Laverton
Michelle Sanders continues as Campus Principal at Laverton, supported by Sam Hindes, Assistant Principal. Leading Teachers at Laverton are, Simon Williamson and Adele Jones in Red Pod, Michelle Mann and Gabriella Vacotto in Yellow Pod, and Erika Lynch in Blue Pod, who is supported by Laura Ibic and Mandy Carlin, both deputy leaders. Michael Gay is a Leading Teacher in the Wattle Program.

Niddrie
Elizabeth Richardson continues as Campus Principal at Niddrie supported by Leading Teachers, Helen Manning, Glenis Williams and Julie Halls, and Renea Thompson, Deputy Leader.

Admin
Sarah Testa, Business Manager leads the Admin team at WAS ably supported by Nicole Smith, Charlene Hobbs and Ebony Lacey at Laverton, and Sandra Dellevergin and Noreen Findling at Niddrie.

Allied and therapy staff
The work of teaching teams is supported by our team of Speech and Occupational Therapists, and School Psychologist. Our welfare team, in conjunction with regional allied health personnel, assist the school community in accessing available resources. Introductions to therapy and allied health staff will appear in upcoming bulletins.

Bus transport
As you will appreciate, the logistics of transporting a large number of children safely to and from school are very complicated. We thank all parents/carers for their patience and understanding as the bus runs and times are sorted out. If parents experience difficulty with the bus schedule or any other issue with bus transport, please contact Sarah at the Laverton school, or Elizabeth at the Niddrie campus who will work with the bus company to resolve the issues within the limits of the policy of the Student Transport Unit. Thank you all for your patience and understanding.

Harmony Day
Harmony Day, 21 March, celebrates Australia’s cultural diversity. It’s about inclusiveness, respect and a sense of belonging for everyone. WAS invites all our parents and families to help celebrate Harmony Day on the 21 March. More information on this event to follow.

Mary Thomson

Transitions to Special Schools - Information Night
Laverton Parent Information Evening -
Topic: Transition to Specialist Education Settings
Date: Thursday 25th February 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

This evening will provide parents with more information about the process of transition to a Specialist Setting, including question time. All parents are invited to attend, not just parents involved in the process in 2016.
Prep Students
A reminder to all Prep families that the children start full time school, 5 days per week on Monday 7th of March. All students will be attending school every day, not including public holidays, from the 7th March onwards.

Public Holiday
Please be aware there is a Public Holiday coming up on Monday 14th of March 2016. On this day Western Autistic School will be closed.

Morning Tea
On Tuesday 16th of February a Morning Tea was held to welcome new families to Western Autistic School and welcome back returning families. Thank you to all the parents who came along and staff who joined in, it was a great success.

School Council Elections
School Council Election nominations are currently in progress with nominations closing Monday 22nd February 2016 at 4:00pm. There are currently 2 vacant positions for parents and 2 vacant positions for staff. More information on School Council Election results will be published in the next parent bulletins.

SMS Notifications of Events
Western Autistic School has recently activated SMS notifications to be able to send text messages to families when there are events of interest, bus delays or emergency situations. Please ensure all your mobile contact details are accurate to get information. Contact your campus office if you do not wish to receive these text messages.

Term Dates 2016
- Term 1: 27 January to 24 March
- Term 2: 11 April to 24 June
- Term 3: 11 July to 16 September
- Term 4: 3 October to 20 December

Book Launch
Mark and Leanne Hogan are proud to invite WAS parents to the launch of Mark's latest book "My Point of View". In this book Mark shares his personal journey growing up with Autism Spectrum Disorder. He provides invaluable insight into what is going on inside the mind of a child with ASD, and how he views the world.

Leanne and Mark have two children, Ben and Claire. Ben completed three years at Western Autistic School, before transitioning to a mainstream school.

Where: Darebin Arts & Entertainment Centre (Grevillea Room) Cnr Bell St & St Georges Rd Preston.
When: Tuesday 08/03/2016
Time: 7:00pm - 8:30pm
Cost: $50 per person (Non Refundable)
All attendees will receive a copy of "My Point of View" and "The Key That Unlocked A Mystery" both signed by the author. Book early to avoid disappointment as tickets are selling fast. To register online go to www.markandleannehogan.com or 0449 676769

CSEF Applications
The Camp, Sports and Excursion Fund helps ensure that no student will miss out on the opportunity to join their classmates for important, education and fun activities. It is part of making Victoria the Education State and the Government’s commitment to breaking the link between a student's background and their outcomes. The annual CSEF Amount is $125 for primary school students and $225 for secondary school students.

HOW TO APPLY: Please fill in the CSEF form and present a copy of your (parent/guardian) Centrelink pensioner concession or healthcare card by Friday 26/02/2016.