Our School Vision: “That everyone is treated with respect and dignity, allowing them to participate in an environment where they feel safe, supported and valued.”

2016 School Priorities: Improvement in Reading with particular focus on comprehension and Numeracy Skills

2016 School Improvement Focus: Reading Comprehension & Numeracy skills

Strive to Achieve
At McIlwraith we aim to achieve high standards. It is very pleasing to see our students upholding our school motto of “Strive to Achieve.” I have been most impressed with the way students have stepped up to the expectations of their new grade level and taken on board suggestions for improvement from teachers and staff. At McIlwraith we have the expectation that all students will follow and uphold the values of RESPECT. These life- long values have been taken on board by all of the schools in the Gin Gin Cluster including the High School.

Values of Respect:
- Respect for Self
- Respect for Others
- Respect for Environment

These three values are our mantra at school and encompass the school rules. It is pleasing to see students applying these values of respect to their everyday learning.

School Leaders
I would like to take this opportunity to congratulate Tallon Booth and Elim Moore, who are our school leaders for 2016. It has been a pleasure to watch both boys mature and grow in their learning and confidence since they joined us at McIlwraith. I look forward to working with both the boys throughout the year as they take on their leadership duties.

Congratulations to Olivia Anderson who receives Student of the Week for putting in 100% effort and ensuring work is completed!

Well Done Olivia!

Weekly Homework Award
Congratulations to Elim Moore who receives the homework award this week for exceptional neatness and presentation and only one punctuation error!
Well done Elim on the effort that you put in.

Gotcha Awards!
It was very pleasing to see so many cards in the "Gotcha Box". Congratulations to the following students who were drawn out this week.

Tallon Booth: Trying your hardest in Maths.
Richard Dean: Fantastic effort in Science.
Hannah Johnson: Beautiful letter 't' writing.
Summer KEvill: Trying your hardest in Maths.
Lukas Milburn: Using manners.

Remember to keep these important dates on your calendar!!

February
- Thurs 11th: Voluntary Levy Agreement Due (Note Only)
- Thurs 11th: Prep News-Mail Permission Form Due
- Fri 12th: Student Leader Voting
- Sun 14th: Valentine’s Day ❤️
- Wed 17th: Harmony Day Celebrations – Wear Orange
- Thurs 18th: Prep News-Mail Photographs Taken
- Fri 19th: Student Leader Induction Ceremony
- Sat 21st: Harmony Day
Student Council Representatives
On Friday I spoke with students in grade 5 and 6 and invited them to nominate for the student council positions of President, Secretary and Treasurer. Students who want to nominate for a position are required to present a speech on Friday. Students and staff will then vote for these representatives. Good luck to all students nominating.

Staffing
Last week I spoke about the possibility of Miss Hillyard transferring to another school due to our enrolment numbers. Sadly, circumstances beyond our control have come into effect and this week will be our last week with Miss Hillyard. I know that I speak for everyone when I say that Miss Hillyard is leaving very big shoes to fill and will be missed greatly by the students, staff and parents. For many years now Miss Hillyard has been part of our school community and a most valued staff member. We certainly hope that in the future we get the opportunity to have her back on staff and working with us again. Until then, we wish Miss Hillyard all the very best at her new school, (yet to be advised) and look forward to catching up with her at community events throughout the year. Thank you Miss Hillyard, we will miss you!

School Internal Audit Review
Next week I will be off class on Wednesday and Thursday as I undertake our School Improvement Review. Reviews for Queensland state schools are an important part of the Department of Education and Training’s school improvement agenda, with every state school, including independent public schools, to have a review at least every four years. The reviews build on the teaching and learning audits and are tailored to the needs and context of schools. Over the two days the review team will look at our school’s performance data and other relevant information. They will also talk to staff, students, parents and other members of our school community. At the completion of the review, the team will present its findings to the leadership team and a written report will follow with more detailed information to support our school’s improvement agenda. Our assistant regional director, Mr Steve Case, will also be given a copy of the report. The findings of the review will be presented at a P&C meeting where they will be discussed in detail.

Voluntary School Levy
Last week the Student Resource Scheme Agreements were issued. Parents are asked to sign the agreement form and return to school by tomorrow, Thursday 11th February 2016. Payment is $70.00 per child which is not due until the end of Term 2, Friday 24th June 2016. Thank you to the families who have already sent in their agreements.

Reading
Improving reading skills and comprehension is our main priority for 2016. One way of meeting this goal is through our home reading program. All students (except Prep) have a home reader which they are expected to read to an adult each night. We then ask that you ask your child to retell the story to ensure that they can include text specific vocabulary and that they can correctly sequence the story. Please sign the log. If the log is not signed we presume is was not read and the book will be sent home again that night. These books are changed daily. Please note that students are not permitted to take home the next reader until the book is returned. Older students are encouraged to read out loud and aim to improve their fluency.
Parent Reading Helpers
Thank you to parents who have indicated that they may be available for an hour or so to listen to children read. This can be done first thing when you arrive at school or at 2:00pm before the end of the school day. Our students love having someone listen to them read, which is great for improving their fluency and it is very quick and easy to explain and skill you on what is involved. Generally the adult discusses with the child the title and cover, asks the child to make predictions about the story, listens to the child read,(usually the whole book or approximately ten minutes reading if it is a novel), asks the child to retell the story and then ask a few questions to check understanding). Younger students have sight words that they also view every day. We would love it and certainly appreciate any time you can.

Book Covering
We have a large volume of library books that require covering. If you are free to volunteer your time we would love the help. Alternatively we can send some contact and books home with you.

Homework
Homework is due on Fridays. Students are welcome to complete homework during the lunch hour if they wish to and are encouraged to manage their time to ensure that it is completed. Homework is outlined below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade 1</th>
<th>Grade 2 - 6</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Spelling words every night</td>
<td>Learning Spelling and tables every night</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spelling sheet</td>
<td>Reading Comprehension activity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sight words</td>
<td>Sight words (if required)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Home reader</td>
<td>Choose 5 spelling words and write these neatly into sentences. (10 sentences for Year 2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Home reading every night</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Soundwaves (if not completed during allocated class time)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Phonic Focus
The sound that be have been consolidating this week is ‘c’ as in cat, ‘k’ as in kitten, ‘ck’ as in duck, ‘ch’ as in school and ‘q’ as in queen.

Prep Letter Focus
This week our Prep students will be learning the letter ‘tT’ and ‘ss’. Helping students recognise these letters at home will provide support for their education.

Hats
If you wish to purchase a hat please come in and try them on for size. Hats are $12.00 each.

Chair Bags
Student chair bags are also still available for purchase. Most of our students have these already but any new enrolments are welcome to purchase a chair bag for $12.00

Student Council Update
Icy Poles: Student Council is selling Zooper Dooper Icy Poles at lunch from Monday – Thursday for $0.50c each.
Easter Raffle: Our student council have decided to kick start their fundraising with an Easter Raffle. Last year was a major success. We are currently seeking donations to make an Easter hamper for first prize. Please do not send in perishable items. Items such as Easter books, plush bunnies, mugs, stickers, decorations, eggs cups, chocolate moulds etc. Please see tickets attached. All tickets sold or unsold must be returned by Tuesday 22nd March 2016. Raffle drawn on Wednesday 23rd March 2016. More tickets can be collected from the office if needed.

Easter Bonnet Parade: The Easter Bonnet Parade is on again this year. Students are asked to make a gold coin donation if they participate in this event. Prizes will be awarded. This event will take place on the last day of Term 1, Thursday 24th March 2016. We will provide different ideas on each week’s newsletter. With plenty of notice we anticipate most students will take part in this event.
**P&C Update**

**Meeting:** A warm invitation is extended to all parents to join our P&C. Our first meeting is **Thursday 25th February 2016, 6:00pm** in the library.

We would love to see lots of new faces. It’s a great way to become involved in our school and support your child’s education. Everyone welcome! Hope to see you there.

**Tuckshop Volunteers:** We would like to get our Tuckshop up and running for the year and require more volunteers to complete our roster. Volunteering for the School Tuckshop is a great way to get an insight into day to day life at McIlwraith School. It usually works out at only one day per term and the day finishes by 2:00pm. With only a small number of students and orders, our Tuckshop generally only requires one volunteer to organise the orders. However, if you are new to the school we are happy to roster you with another parent who will show you what to do and help make your first time that bit easier. Working in the Tuckshop is a great way to contribute, meet other parents, the teachers and understand the school community. We love our tuck shop and are extremely appreciative of our volunteers. We hope that you will be able to spare one Friday a term to assist. Thank you to all our volunteers who currently donate their time.

**CyberSafety Presentation**

What does it mean to be Cybersafe?

Parents and community members are invited to attend a presentation on cybersafety at Gin Gin SHS on **Tuesday 01st March 2016** from **5.30pm to 6.30pm**, as part of our goal to support students and the community in becoming cybersafe and cyberaware.

A presenter from Education Queensland will run an interactive session, covering the following topics (and any others you wish to discuss):

- proactive, positive uses and benefits of social media
- current and upcoming strategies and trends in social technologies
- digital citizenship and understanding your digital footprint
- responding to and reporting negative online content
- legal and real world consequences of online behaviours
- key issues relating to online privacy, security and reputation management

Questions and discussion are encouraged.

This is a session for **adults only**.

If you are intending to attend, please RSVP to cybersafe@ginginshs.eq.edu.au

You can also just turn up on the night.

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**Gin Gin Swimming Pool Family Fun Day**

The Gin Gin Swimming Pool will be having a family fun day with a jumping castle (not in the water) on **Sunday the 28th February 2016**, opening at **10:00am**.

Entry is as per usual, so no extra for the castle. There will also be a sausage sizzle at $2.00 for a sausage on bread.

In finishing this newsletter I remind us all of our improvement priorities for the year, which also reflect the regional priorities:

- Attendance
- Literacy (Reading, Writing)
- Numeracy

Yours in Education

Felicity Wallace