FROM THE ACTING PRINCIPAL

Dear Parents/Caregivers,

Welcome back to the new school year. I hope everyone had a restful break and enjoyed spending time with their family this summer. In particular a very warm welcome to our new students and their families. I hope your time at JSA is positive and rewarding. Our staff are looking forward to building a strong partnership with you during this time.

This is our very first Jacana School for Autism newsletter. For our new families, our newsletter is published each fortnight and will provide you with important information about the school and events that may be of interest to you. I encourage you to read the newsletter that will be sent home with your child or on our school website: http://www.jacanaschoolforautism.vic.edu.au/

I have every confidence that the staff, students and families will continue to meet the challenges in a positive way and move the school forward to become a centre of excellence in the west of the northern region.

The two school communities (NSA & JSA) made a commitment to maintain a “Sister School” relationship in the future. Our core business is Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) and our shared motto is “Learning for Life”. The foundations of ASD are embedded strongly in both schools. This common bond will inevitably draw us back together from time to time so we can share our passion for ASD.

Both school communities are proudly displaying the “Sister School” plaque in a prominent place at the respective schools.

We have an enrolment of 184 students and a total of 23 classrooms (2 additional classrooms in 2013). There are four sub schools including: Early Years A, Early Years B, Middle Years and Later Years. I am really looking forward to leading the new school in to the new school year and in to the future.

Curriculum Days – 29th & 30th January

The staff were engaged in a half day professional development activity with a key focus on Building Resilience. Peta Sigley from Resilience Institute Australia presented a program that challenged staff to align and engage body, mind and spirit in the pursuit of an effective response to life. Life delivers challenges and opportunities to test and realise our potential. Resilience sharpens and focuses our ability to bounce back, steer through adversity and reach out to personal life and sense of meaning. Staff thoroughly enjoyed the session with Peta. As an organisation we will strive to pursue the high road rather than the low road in managing adversity. Staff also came away with a tool kit of strategies to assist themselves as individuals.

January Holiday Grounds Upgrade

Smartgrass were employed to resurface the Playground 3 surface. This project was commenced last year with an upgrade to the drainage in preparation for the new turf. It certainly has made a big difference to the area, making it much safer during periods of rain when it became a hazard due to the slippery surface.

New Staff Induction

Thank you to Sue Johnston, Annette McKee, Lauren Tippett, Elizabeth Smith, Kym Tonkin & Jenny Bishop for making themselves available for new staff on Friday 25th January. Also thank you to all the new staff that gave up their time to attend the important tour and information session.

Welcome to all the new staff – I wish you well in your new positions here at Jacana School for Autism and I’m sure you will love working with all our children and dedicated staff.
Staffing
A warm welcome to our new staff for 2013.

Teachers
Jasdeep Mahal
Jaimie-Lee Brown
Chia Ying Neo
Masa Curekovic
Jackie Walter
Billena Hales
Hayley Roberston
Emily Sauvarin
Sarah Ann Williams

Education Support Staff
Cheynie Hughes
Tanya Ascenzo
Janine White
Megan Marsh
Barry Piliner
Rachel Ferris
Cheynie Hughes
Michael Ward

We also welcome back Jess Okines from leave.

This makes 104 (94.1 Effective Full Time) staff at JSA.

Fundraising Committee
Our first JSA Fundraising Committee will meet in the PLC on Thursday, 7th February 2013 at 10.30am. All new parents are welcome.

Volunteer Register
If you would like to assist in a volunteer capacity at Jacana School for Autism, then we would love to have you. We will require all volunteers to complete the attached form so that we can establish a new volunteer register for the new entity. If you have previously completed a registration form for NSA we will require a new registration form for the new school records.

Contract Bus Services
The Department of Education and Early Childhood Development (DEECD) have very strict guidelines which Mee's Bus Company are bound by. The school liaises with the Department on behalf of families. If you have any questions related to the bus service, please contact Glynnis Lawson on 9309 6258. All pick up and drop off points are at central locations and there is no provision for home pick up/drop off.

Meet the Teacher Night
Meet the Teacher Night is scheduled for Wednesday 20th February 3.30 – 4.30. Parents/Carers will get the opportunity to meet their child’s teacher/s and will be provided with an overview of the classroom.

Unfortunately due to Australian Education Union (AEU) industrial action the family picnic/bbq has been postponed until term 4. Teachers and Education Support Staff that are members of the AEU have work bans that prevent working beyond the core hours, which will impact on this event.

School Council Elections
Please consider nominating for a position on Council as the Council has an active role in determining the school direction. Please refer to the attachments in relation to the 2013 School Council elections.

Corinne Pupillo
Acting Principal

Traffic Management:
Student Drop off and Pick Up
There are three discrete carparks plus street parking on Bamburgh St and Landy Rd.

Gates for classroom access open at 8.50 a.m. each morning and 2.50 p.m. in the afternoon.

Please consider your arrival times. Arriving too early in the morning can mean your child is sitting and waiting in the car and can cause distress or anxiety if they are not able to go straight to the classroom.

Staff carpark
Entry Landy Rd at the southern end
Exit Landy Road – existing driveway
Parents dropping off students to room 22-24 only may use this carpark
Administration & visitors carpark (facing Leitchfield Ave)
Entry Landy Rd at the northern end
Exit Leitchfield Ave
Parents dropping off students to rooms 1-6 may use this carpark.

Late arrivals after 9.10 a.m. and 3.10 pm and early pick-ups before 2.50 a.m. may use this carpark
Please park in the marked bays only – park on the street if carpark is full.
Double parking is not permitted as it presents a risk to all pedestrians.

Parents’ carpark – Bamburgh Street – Gate is opened at 8.50 a.m.
There is only one entry/exit gate for this carpark. Parents are requested to use 900 parking on both sides of the carpark.

Mee’s buses park along the buildings during the day. In the afternoon do not park in front of the buses. Buses will move into the bus loop about 2.55 PM. If this car park is full, park on the street and try again after buses have left the carpark usually by 3p.m.

Street parking (with pedestrian gate access) is available in
- Bamburgh Street – please observe parking signs as car illegally parked present a safety hazard to the school buses and to parents entering and exiting the carpark
- Landy Road – please observe parking signs
- Emu Parade - please observe parking signs

Denise Clarke | OHS & e learning
School Council Elections

All government schools in Victoria have a school council. They are legally formed bodies that are given powers to set directions of a school within centrally provided guidelines. In doing this, a school council is able to directly influence the quality of education that the school provides for its students. The Jacana School for Autism meets twice per term on Thursday evenings at 5.30pm.

There are 3 possible membership categories:

1. A mandated elected parent category – Because parents have such an important part to play in schools, there is an elected parent member category. Parent members must comprise more than one-third of council’s total membership. DEECD employees are eligible to be parent members at their child’s school, as long as they do not work at the particular school.

2. A mandated elected DEECD employee category – Members of this category may make up no more than one third of the total membership of school council. As the Executive Officer, the principal of the school is automatically one of these members.

3. An optional community member category – Its members are coopted by the decision of the council because of their special skills, interests or experience, for example parent club representative, student representatives, an accountant. DEECD employees are not eligible to be community members.

The term of office for all members is two years. Half the members must retire each year, creating vacancies for the annual school council elections.

If you decide to stand for election, you can arrange for someone to nominate you as a candidate or you can nominate yourself in the appropriate category:

a. if you are a parent, the parent category
b. if you are a DEECD employee working at the school, the DEECD category.

Why is parent membership so important?

Parents on school councils provide important viewpoints and have valuable skills that can help shape the direction of the school. Those parents who become active on school council find their involvement satisfying in itself and may also find their children feel a greater sense of belonging.

How can I become involved?

The most obvious way is to vote in the elections, which are held in term 1 each year. However, ballots are only held if more people nominate as candidates that there are positions vacant. In view of this, you might seriously consider, standing for election as a member of school council or encouraging another person to stand for election.

Do I need experience to be on school council?

No. What you do need is an interest in your child’s school and the desire to work in partnership with others to help shape the school’s future.

What do I need to do to stand for election?

The principal will issue a notice and call for nominations following the commencement of term 1 each year. All school council elections must be completed by the end of March.

If you decide to stand for election, you can arrange for someone to nominate you as a candidate or you can nominate yourself in the Parent category. DEECD employees whose child is enrolled in a school in which they are not employed are eligible to nominate as parents for the school council where their child is enrolled. Please contact Corinne Pupillo (Acting Principal) for a nomination form.
Once the nomination form is completed, return it to the principal within the time stated on the notice of election. You will receive a Nomination Form Receipt in the mail following the receipt of your completed nomination. If there are more nominations received than there are vacancies on council, a ballot will be conducted during the two weeks after the call of nominations has closed.

Remember:
- Ask the school for help if you would like to stand for election and not sure what to do
- Consider standing for election to council this year
- Be sure to vote in the elections

We currently have an interim school council and this year we are looking to fill all 12 vacancies for our new JSA School Council. The vacancies for 2013 are:
- Parent Member/s 7 (4 x 2 year and 3 x 1 years)
- DEECD Members/s 4 (2 x 2 year and 1 x 1 year)
- Community Member 1

I encourage parent/carers to consider standing for election.

**Nominations close on Thursday 28th February 2013 at 4pm.**

Please contact Corinne Pupillo for further information if you are interested in joining the school council.

Corinne Pupillo
Acting Principal
Schedule 3: Notice of Election and Call for Nominations
First School Council Election

An election is to be conducted for members of the school council of
Jacana School for Autism

Nomination forms may be obtained from the school and must be lodged by 4.00 pm on
☐ 28 / ☐ 02 / ☐ 2013. (insert date and year).

The ballot will close at 4.00 pm on
☐ 14 / ☐ 03 / ☐ 2013. (insert date and year)

Following the closing of nominations a list of the nominations received will be posted at the school. The terms of office, membership
categories and number of positions in each membership category open for election are as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>MEMBERSHIP CATEGORY</th>
<th>TERM OF OFFICE</th>
<th>NUMBER OF POSITIONS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Parent member</td>
<td>From the day after the date of the declaration of the poll in 20.13...........</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>to and inclusive of the date of the declaration of the poll in 20.15...........</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parent member</td>
<td>From the day after the date of the declaration of the poll in 20.13...........</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>to and inclusive of the date of the declaration of the poll in 20.14...........</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DEECD employee member</td>
<td>From the day after the date of the declaration of the poll in 20.13...........</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>to and inclusive of the date of the declaration of the poll in 20.16...........</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DEECD employee member</td>
<td>From the day after the date of the declaration of the poll in 20.13...........</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>to and inclusive of the date of the declaration of the poll in 20.14...........</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

If the number of nominations is less than the number of vacancies, a notice to that effect and calling for further nominations will be
posted in a prominent position at the school.

Principal
# VOLUNTEER REGISTRATION FORM

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name:</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Home phone number:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mobile phone number:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Child's Name:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Sub-school you would like to support? | Please circle:  
- Early Years  
- Middle Years  
- Later Years |
| I want to volunteer in my child's room? | Please circle: YES / NO |
| I want to assist with: | Please circle:  
- Fundraising  
- Excursions  
- Classroom help  
- Swimming program  
- Other: |
| Days available: | Please circle day and am or pm or both:  
- MON am/pm/ TUES am:pm / WED am:pm  
- THU am:pm/FRI am:pm |
| I have a Working with Children Check card? | Please circle: YES / NO |

*Please return this form to the assistant principal at your earliest convenience*
Financial Assistance - Information for New Parents

Financial assistance available to parents with children commencing school in 2013

Education Maintenance Allowance (EMA):
The Education Maintenance Allowance (EMA) is provided by the Victorian Government to lower-income families to help with education-related costs.

If you have a child under 16, and hold a valid Health Care Card, Pension Card, or are a temporary foster parent, you may be eligible to receive the EMA. The allowance is paid in two instalments, one in March and one in August.

The payment is intended to assist with education-related costs such as; uniforms, excursions, textbooks, and stationery. You can elect to have your EMA paid in one of the following ways:

- Paid by direct deposit (Electronic Funds Transfer) into your own nominated bank account; or
- Paid to the school to be held as credit which you can use towards education expenses; or
- Paid by cheque which will be posted to the school for collection.

In 2013, the annual EMA amount is:

- $200 for prep students
- $150 for students in years 1 – 6.
- $300 for year 7 students
- $250 for students in year 8 – until age 18.

How to Apply: Contact the school office to complete an application form for the EMA.

Closing Date: Parents/guardians need to lodge an EMA application form by 28 February 2013.

For more information about the EMA, visit www.education.vic.gov.au/aboutschool/financial/ema.htm

Schoolkids Bonus:
From January 2013, a new payment called the 'Schoolkids Bonus' will be introduced by the Commonwealth Government. The Schoolkids Bonus will be paid by Centrelink in January and July each year to help families with school costs.

Families receiving Family Tax Benefit Part A will receive:

- up to $410 for each child in primary school
- up to $820 for each child in secondary school.

For more information about the Schoolkids Bonus, visit www.humanservices.gov.au/customer/information/schoolkids-bonus
BACK TO SCHOOL CHECKLIST
FOR PARENTS & CARERS

Welcome to another school year. With term one approaching it is time to get your children ready for their return to school or attendance at a children’s service. While their asthma is just one of the many things to get ready, this checklist will hopefully make the process easier.

Throughout the year there are significant increases, or ‘spikes’, in asthma presentations to hospitals and emergency departments. Approximately 1 in 10 children and adolescents in Australia have asthma, and for children and adolescents with asthma these ‘spikes’ usually occur towards the end of holiday periods as they return to school or preschool. A significant ‘spike’ in asthma presentations and admissions to hospital, of children and adolescents experiencing severe asthma exacerbations, occurs throughout the first few weeks of February. For this reason, we have compiled a quick checklist for parents and carers to go through to prepare their child for the school year.

Is your child ready for new school year?

☐ My child has had an annual asthma management review with their doctor and has had their Asthma Action Plan reviewed

☐ My child has up to date ambulance membership

☐ My child knows how to recognise early symptoms of asthma and knows when to seek help from staff if they experience asthma symptoms

☐ My child understands the importance of taking reliever medication when necessary and knows how to use their puffer and spacer, either independently or with assistance

☐ An updated Asthma Action Plan has been provided to my child’s school/children’s service. Even if their Asthma Action Plan has not changed from last year it is important that a letter is provided to the school/children’s service informing staff of this. It is vital that staff know what to do for your child in an asthma emergency

☐ A reliever puffer and spacer (and mask for children under 5 years old) has been provided to the school/children’s service for my child. With the change in infection control guidelines, spacers can no longer be shared between children and it is vital that each child has their own equipment

☐ I have read and understood the school/children’s services asthma policy

For more information, resources or assistance completing this checklist please contact The Asthma Foundation of Victoria on 1800 ASTHMA (278 462) or visit www.asthma.org.au