FROM THE PRINCIPAL

SCHOOL VALUES
EMPATHY ~ RESPECT ~ RESPONSIBILITY

Dear Parents, Carers and friends of the school community,

Welcome back to the 2015 school year. I trust that you and your families have enjoyed some quality time together and that you are all rested and revived for the upcoming school year.

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. We currently have an enrolment of 209 students occupying 24 classrooms. Class sizes vary from 5 – 14.

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, emailed to you if you provide an email address or alternatively it is on the school website http://www.jacanaschoolforautism.vic.edu.au/

JSA also has a Facebook Page administered by the leadership team. Please like us on Facebook https://www.facebook.com/JacanaSchoolforAutism

Our core business is Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) and our school motto is “Learning for Life”. The foundations of ASD are embedded strongly at JSA and students will be supported to reach their full potential.

Our School Strategic Plan has a significant focus on developing curriculum across the school. JSA implements the Australian Curriculum incorporating Levels A – D and Foundation up to 10. If you would like a copy of the School Strategic Plan (2014-18) please contact reception and we will send you a copy. Alternatively you can access the plan from the school website.

School Attendance Guidelines – EVERY DAY COUNTS!

On March 1st 2014, new school attendance guidelines came into effect and will apply to all government and non government schools in Victoria.

The importance of full time attendance at school

Schooling is compulsory for children and young people aged from 6 – 17 years unless an exemption from attendance has been granted. Daily school attendance is important for all children and young people to succeed in education and to ensure they don’t fall behind both socially and developmentally. Children and young people who regularly attend school and complete Year 12 or an equivalent qualification have better health outcomes, better employment outcomes and higher incomes across their lives. It is important that children develop habits of regular attendance at an early age. School participation is important as it maximises life opportunities for children and young people by providing them with education and support networks. School helps people to develop important skills, knowledge and values which set them up for further learning and participation in their community.

Jacana School for Autism’s Attendance Policy was ratified by school council last year. Please speak to Deb Munt, Student Transition and Wellbeing Co-ordinator if you have any questions in relation to the guidelines and responsibilities or check out the DET web link.

2014 TERM DATES:
* Term 1: 30 January – 4 April  
* Term 2: 22 April – 27 June  
* Term 3: 14 July – 19 September  
* Term 4: 6 October – 19 December

I would like to sincerely thank all our presenters over the past 4 days as well as Denise and Sue Johnston for organising these highly valuable experiences for the staff.

**January Holiday Grounds Upgrade – Bike/Walking Track**

Mark Gabell & Associates have been busy over the December and January holidays working on the new bike/walking track. This area has been designed to provide a less structured recreational area where there will be a more leisurely feel to the learning spaces. A beautiful bike/walking track will surround 2 lush playing areas. The playing areas will be separated with a large Rotanet designed to meet the needs of the students who like to climb and spin.

The bus/bike storage shed will be installed during the next 3 weeks. After this time we anticipate the area will be ready to use from the beginning of week 4.

Check out our Facebook Page for progress pictures of the works.

**Staffing**

A very warm welcome to the following teachers. I wish them well in their role here at JSA and we hope to build on their professional knowledge and skills.

- Jessica Alexander (Room 2)
- Lachlan Berryman (Room 23)
- Peta Clarke (Room 7)
- Daryl Deller (Room 16)
- Hannah Diebolt (Room 6)
- Stephanie Di Salvo (Room 16)
- Ganas (Pat) Govender (Room 1)
- Michael Monroe (Room 14)
- Rachel Peck (Room 12)
- Madeline Russo (Room 5)
- Manju (Mandy) Sharma (Room 10)
- Julie Stevenson – Home Crafts / Food Tech
- Maria Varvakis (Room 9)

We also welcome Anastasia Hueston (Senior Speech Pathologist) to our Therapy Team. Anastasia previously worked for NSA and we are really thrilled to be working closely with her again.
JSA will also introduce an additional specialist class for students this year. We will be using the Kids Kitchen and Healthy Living Kitchen to expand our life skills programs and have appointed a Home Crafts teacher and Food Tech teacher to commence this year also. Congratulations Julie Stevenson for being the successful Home Crafts / Food tech teacher. We are still recruiting for a Home Crafts teacher for 2 days.

JSA also welcomes back Kym Tonkin, Nelly Valdivia and Catherine Schmidt from leave. It will be great to see them back in their teaching roles.

Student Support Group Meeting / Meet the Teacher

Student Support Group meetings will be conducted after school this year to ensure students are maximizing opportunities in educational programs. Parents/carers will be given the opportunity to meet from 3.30 - 4.30 in weeks 3 and 4 (Monday 9th Feb – Thursday 19th Feb)

It will be great to see families during this time as it allows time to not only meet the teacher but to discuss learning goals and priorities for the year. Staff are looking forward to developing relationships with families in order to best meet the needs of your child/ren.

Family Support Meetings

Family Support Meetings are held twice termly (Thursday’s at 9.15am—10.30am) and the invitation is extended to all family members. Our next Family Support Meeting will be held in the Professional Learning Centre on Thursday 5th February where we will hear all about Curriculum at JSA.

The following meeting will be held on Thursday 12th March. A presentation by the Primary — Sub School Leader.

Please contact Deb Munt for more information about the Family Support Meetings.

Fundraising Committee

Our first fundraising committee will meet on Thursday 5th February at 10.30 am in the Professional Learning Centre. We welcome any new members to the committee.

Our first Fundraising events for term 1, 2015 include Entertainment Books, Hot Cross Bun Drive, Easter Raffle, Jacararama Fun Run/Walk.

Lisa Sette is our Fundraising Co-ordinator and can be contacted via the school office or sette.lisa.1@edumail.vic.gov.au

Family members and community members bring their own highly valued professional experience to the role of a volunteer and together we can make a difference to the quality of program delivery. If you are interested in becoming a volunteer, fill out the attached Volunteer Registration Form and return it to the office.

Bush Fire & Grass Fire Emergencies

DET works closely with CFA to manage emergencies related to fire incidents that impact on schools, early childhood centres and school bus routes. With the beginning of the school year, schools are asked to remind families to review their fire plans to ensure the plans take into account that students are now attending school or early childhood facilities.

Emergency Management Victoria (EMV) has produced a flyer for schools to educate their students about its system of emergency alerts to mobile phones. Students will receive these alerts on their personal mobile phones. A copy is attached to this newsletter.

Reminder: Cars and young children in the summer months

Melbourne and greater Victoria will experience extremely high temperatures for the back to school period. Parents and/or guardians are reminded that on hot days it is important never to leave children alone in a car. Temperatures inside a parked car during summer can be around 20 to 30 degrees hotter than the outside temperature. Leaving children in hot cars, even for a moment, can result in serious injury or death. Young children’s smaller body size and underdeveloped nervous system places them at a much greater risk of life-threatening heatstroke, dehydration and other serious health risks. If a parent or guardian is travelling with a child, never leave them alone in a parked car, not even for one moment.
2014/15 School Councillors

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>MEMBER</th>
<th>POSITION</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Corinne Pupillo</td>
<td>Executive Officer (Principal)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lisa Sette</td>
<td>President</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Steve Shennan</td>
<td>Vice President</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dianna Lauria</td>
<td>Treasurer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anna McGrice</td>
<td>Parent Representative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Danielle Smith</td>
<td>Parent Representative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Edward Stolinski</td>
<td>Parent Representative</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mary Thomson</td>
<td>Parent Representative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Virginia Smedley</td>
<td>Community Representative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Denise Clarke</td>
<td>DET Representative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kristie Giannakis</td>
<td>DET Representative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sue Johnston</td>
<td>DET Representative</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**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 School Council 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. Department of Education and Training (DET) 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 DET 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 co-opted by the decision of the council because of their special skills, interests or experience, for example parent club representative, student representatives, an accountant. DET 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:
- if you are a parent, the parent category
- if you are a DET employee working at the school, the DET 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 than 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. DET 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 the general office 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 are not sure what to do
- Consider standing for election to council this year
- Be sure to vote in the elections

The vacancies for 2015 include:
- 4 Parent Members 4 x 2 years
- 1 DET Member 2 x 1 year
- 1 Community Member 1

I encourage parent/carers to consider standing for election.

Nominations close on Thursday 27th February 2015 at 4pm.

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

Traffic in Bamburgh Street

To reduce the traffic congestion in Bamburgh Street, we are asking parents to treat Bamburgh Street as ONE WAY from North to South.

I am also requesting parents do not do U turns nor use the neighbour’s driveway in Bamburgh Street. U turns add to the congestion in the street at a busy time.

The parking in Emu parade is expected to change to time-limited parking shortly.

Traffic Management:
Student Drop Off and Pick Up

There are three discrete carparks plus street parking on Bamburgh Street and Landy Road.

Gates for Classroom access opens at 8:50am until 9:10am each morning and opens at 2:50pm until 3:10pm 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 cause distress or anxiety if they are not able to go straight to the classroom.

Rooms 1-6—Admin & Visitors Car Park, entry via Landy Road.

Rooms 7-12—Parent Car Park, entry via Bamburgh Street.

Rooms 14-21—off street parking,

Rooms 22-25—Staff Car Park, entry through Landy Road, (after negotiation with the class room teacher).

Reminder: 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, emailed to you or on the school website.


JSA also has a Facebook Page administered by the leadership team.  https://www.facebook.com/JacanaSchoolforAutism

Corinne Pupillo
Principal
19 - 39 Landy Road, Jacana VIC 3047
Phone 9309 6258
Fax 9309 6426
jacana.school@edumail.vic.gov.au
www.jacanaschoolforautism.vic.edu.au
In primary school, some students miss on average 3 weeks of school per year. That's half a year of school by the end of year 6.

Going to school every day is the single most important part of your child’s education. Students learn new things at school every day – missing school puts them behind.

Why it's important
We all want our students to get a great education, and the building blocks for a great education begin with students coming to school each and every day.

If students miss school regularly, they miss out on learning the fundamental skills that will set them up for success in the later years of school.

There is no safe number of days for missing school – each day a student misses puts them behind, and can affect their educational outcomes.

Each missed day is associated with progressively lower achievement in numeracy, writing and reading.

Getting in early
Attendance patterns are established early – a child regularly missing days in kindergarten or in the early years of school will often continue to miss classes in the later years, and receive lower test scores than their classmates. It’s vital that students go to school every day – even in the early years of primary school.

What we can do
The main reasons for absence are:

**Sickness** – There are always times when students need to miss school, such as when they’re ill. It’s vital that they’re only away on the days they are genuinely sick, and setting good sleep patterns, eating well and exercising regularly can make a big difference.

It’s vital that holidays are planned during school holidays where possible, and not during the term if it can be avoided.

**“Day off”** – Think twice before letting your child have a “day off” as they could fall behind their classmates – every day counts.

**Truancy** – This is when students choose not to go to school without their parent’s permission. There can be many reasons for truancy. The best way to address this is for schools and parents to work together.

If for any reason your child must miss school, there are things you can do with your school to ensure they don’t fall behind:

- Speak with your classroom teacher and find out what work your child needs to do to keep up.
- Develop an absence learning plan with your teacher and ensure your child completes the plan.

Remember, every day counts. If your child must miss school, speak with your classroom teacher as early as possible.

Openly communicating with your child’s school about all absences is a good way to prevent attendance issues being escalated to a School Attendance Officer. A School Attendance Officer is a Department of Education and Early Childhood Development Regional Director who has authority to follow up attendance issues. Attendance issues that are escalated can lead to an Infringement Notice.

If you’re having attendance issues with your child, please let your classroom teacher know so we can work together to get your child to school every day.

For more information and resources to help address attendance issues, visit: www.education.vic.gov.au/school/parents/behaviour/Pages/studentattendance.aspx

Department of Education and Early Childhood Development
## VOLUNTEER REGISTRATION FORM

| Name: | 
| Home phone number: | 
| Mobile phone number: | 
| Child’s Name: | 
| Sub-school you would like to support? | Please circle:  
| Primary |  
| Secondary | 
| 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 |  
| Library |  
| 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  
| If YES please provide a copy. If no please go to your local post office, collect a form and complete the process. The WWCC is free for volunteers. |  

*Please return this form to the assistant principal at your earliest convenience.*
Schedule 4: Notice of Election and Call for Nominations

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

27 /02/2015

The ballot will close at 4.00 pm on

13 /03/2015

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 2015 to and inclusive of the date of the declaration of the poll in 2017</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DEECD employee member</td>
<td>From the day after the date of the declaration of the poll in 2014 to and inclusive of the date of the declaration of the poll in 2016</td>
<td>2</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
EMERGENCY ALERT. BE WARNED. BE INFORMED.

If there is a bushfire, flood, severe storm or other major emergency near you, the emergency services may choose to warn you by text to your mobile or a voice message to your home phone.

Emergency Alert is the national telephone warning system. It uses the address where your phone is registered and the actual location of your mobile to reach you:

- when your home or school is near an emergency
- when you are travelling with your mobile near an emergency.

When the emergency services use the telephone warning system:

- a home phone within the warning area may receive a recorded voice message that begins with “Emergency, Emergency”, and/or
- a mobile phone that is switched on and in an area of mobile coverage may receive a text message.

The service is free and you do not need to register.

The warning message will tell you:

- which emergency service sent the message: eg CFA
- about the emergency and where it is
- what you should do to stay safe
- where you can get more information.

All telephone warnings come from the official number: +61 444 444 444

Example Text Alert

From: +61 444 444 444
EMERGENCY WARNING FROM CFA
Fire in Pohlners Road area. Visitors to Grampians National Park should leave now.
Check local radio or visit emergency.vic.gov.au

Talk to your child about the Emergency Alert system.
If they receive a warning message on the home phone or a warning text on their personal mobile, encourage them to stay calm and show or repeat the message to a responsible adult they know, such as a relative or teacher.

If adults are not around, encourage them to follow the action given in the alert.

For more information about the system, visit emergencyalert.gov.au and watch the video (it’s in 30 languages).

In an emergency, do not rely just on your telephone for a warning.
- Stay aware of your surroundings
- Listen to local radio
- Visit emergency.vic.gov.au
- Download the FireReady app
- Go to facebook.com/cfavic
- Follow @CFA_Updates on Twitter
Grants and Scholarships

2015 AGOSCI Conference Scholarships Applications Now Open!

Limited funding will be available for scholarships to support people with complex communication needs to attend the AGOSCI 2015 conference.

What is the scholarship for?

This scholarship is to enable individuals to increase their knowledge, understanding and/or skills in the area of complex communication needs by attending the AGOSCI 2015 National Conference.

Who can apply?

1. People with complex communication needs
2. Parents/guardians of a person with complex communication needs

Priority will be given to applicants who have:

- raised awareness or advocated on behalf of people with complex communication needs (e.g. support groups, government liaison);
- not previously received AGOSCI scholarships or grants.

What expenses can the scholarship cover?

The 2015 scholarships will cover conference registration only. No pre-conference workshops, social event or any other expenses will be covered.

Forms

Scholarship Guidelines and Information

Scholarship Application Form for printing - pdf

Scholarship Application Form - Word

The closing date for applications is Monday 9th February 2015.
Scholarship Guidelines and Information

Please read these guidelines before completing the application form

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Priority will be given to applicants who have:
• raised awareness or advocated on behalf of people with complex communication needs (e.g. support groups, government liaison);
• not previously received AGOSCI scholarships or grants.

The Scholarships and Grants Committee will select applicants based on merit. The committee’s decision will be final and no discussion will be entered into or appeal heard.

What expenses can the scholarship cover?
The 2015 scholarships will cover conference registration only. No pre-conference workshops, social event or any other expenses will be covered.

Notification
Your application will be confirmed (usually via email) when received.

Applicants will be notified in writing of the outcome of their application by email (if available) or mail by 23 February 2015.

Successful applicants will be required to complete and submit a conference registration form to confirm their attendance at the conference.
Travel and Accommodation

AGOSCI advises that you wait until notification of scholarships before you book travel and accommodation, unless you plan to attend the conference anyway. Contact All Occasions Group (details below) for information on accessible accommodation to suit your needs.

Note: If successful, this scholarship will cover conference registration only. If you need assistance with other expenses to attend the conference you may contact your AGOSCI state/territory representative (http://wwwagosciorg.au/contacts.htm) to discuss what other funding opportunities may exist in your state/territory.

Cancellation policy

If scholarship/grant recipients are not able to attend the event, they should notify All Occasions Group as soon as possible so that funds can be reallocated.

All Occasions Group

☎ Phone 08 8125 2200
✉ Fax 08 8125 2233
✉ Email jenna@aomevents.com

Submission of Applications

Application forms are available on the AGOSCI website wwwagosciorg.au or from your local AGOSCI representative.

To complete the application electronically use the application form in Word format. You may need to “enable macros” to add your details. Open the document, type your details directly onto the form, save a copy of your completed form. Submit the completed form by sending it as an email attachment, or print the form and mail or fax it to the details below.

There is also a copy of the application form in PDF format if you prefer to print the form.

Applications close Monday 9th February 2015.

Send your application by any of the following methods:

✉ Email agoscitas@agosci.org.au
✉ Mail Diane Symons
   Disability and Community Services
   39 Frankland Street
   Launceston TAS 7250
✉ Fax 03 6336 4131 (Att: Diane Symons)

Applications will be considered confidential and information will be treated in compliance with Privacy Act 1988.
A mother’s journey of raising an autistic child
Ages 15+
Dianne Winbanks will give you an insight into her amazing journey with her daughter Lauren as detailed in her book, Lauren’s Creed: Wings to Fly. Her story shares the frustrations and joys of raising an autistic child and shows how, with love and determination, a parent can shape their child’s life and happiness. Dianne’s book will be available to purchase.

The Age Library B
Sun 1 Feb, 2–3.30pm

Sunbury Library B
Thu 26 Feb, 6.30–7.45pm

The Age Library is situated at 1093 Pascoe Vale Road, Broadmeadows
(Opposite the Broadmeadows railway station and also opposite Broadmeadows shopping centre)
Tuning into Teens

Tuning in to Teens is a 6 week program that teaches you how to help your teen develop emotional intelligence.

- Would you like to learn how to:
  - Be better at talking with your teen?
  - Be better at understanding your teen?
  - Help your teen learn to manage their emotions?
  - Help to prevent behaviour problems in your teen?
  - Teach your teen to deal with conflict?

**Who**
Parents and carers

**When**
Wednesday 18th February 2015
Wednesday 25th February 2015
Wednesday 4th March 2015
Wednesday 11th March 2015
Wednesday 18th March 2015
Wednesday 25th March 2015

**Time**
10am to 12pm

**Where**
headspace Craigieburn
Level 1, Central Suites,
Craigieburn Central

**Contact**
The Community Awareness Officer on 03 8338 0919 to register

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**FAMILY RELATIONSHIP CENTRE**
HELPING FAMILIES BUILD BETTER RELATIONSHIPS

**headspace**
Craigieburn