Issue 12
19th July, 2013

Jacana School for Autism

FROM THE ACTING PRINCIPAL

Dear Parents, Carers and friends of the school community,

Welcome back to everyone. I hope you all had a relaxing break with family and friends and are now looking forward to the term ahead. We are also looking forward to the opportunity to share your child’s learning journey with you at the Student Support Group meetings, scheduled for week 3 of this term. Your child’s teacher will be sending home more information with your child in regard to the SSG’s. SSG’s will be held between 10.30am and 6.30pm on your child’s designated day. In order to conduct the meetings, we ask that you keep your child home on this day but welcome them to attend the SSG meeting with you. Mid year reports will be sent home with your child on Friday 26th July. If your child does not attend on this day, please make arrangements with the class teacher so the report can be sent home earlier.

Staffing

The principal vacancy for JSA is currently being advertised on the DEECD recruitment website. The successful substantive principal will commence on Monday 7th October. The principal selection is one of the many roles of the school councillors. The panel has now been established and the process is underway with applications closing on the 26th July 2013.

Congratulations to Maureen Pianta who will be working at JSA as our new Educational Psychologist. Maureen will work with our current Psychologist, Lydia Wilson and will complement the team by adding an additional level of skill and experience. Welcome to Maureen, we hope you enjoy working closely with the school and the families.

We have farewelled Stuart Walton (room 22) and Barry Pilliner (room 13) this week. Stuart was successful in gaining a position at another specialist school and Barry will be travelling with his partner for the remainder of the year. Best wishes to both Stuart and Barry in their new adventures.

We also thank them for their contributions to JSA.

Christine Joy will be employed for 4 weeks to replace Stuart while the recruitment process is being completed.

2013 Victorian Government Schools Agreement

In the DEECD Ballot last term, 81% of staff voted for the new 2013 agreement. The next step in the process is that the agreement will be lodged with the Fair Work Commission for endorsement. Once this is complete the school will adopt the new agreement. Work with the consultative committee is underway to establish working arrangements for the remainder of 2013 and 2014 as there are changes to teacher and education support staff working conditions.

Reminder: Curriculum Day

Tomorrow, Friday 19th July is a staff curriculum day. Students are not required at school on this day.

Staff will have a full day workshop on Building Positive Relationships – facilitated by Peter Cronin.

Relationships with parents/carers will be the main focus for the day as we acknowledge the important contributions that our parents/carers provide in the educational program here at JSA. Peter will also hold a follow up workshop with teachers and therapists on Managing Successful Meetings. Both these sessions are vital to the work we do here at Jacana and underpin all the work that we do within our teams and with families.

2013 TERM DATES:
- Term 1: 31 January—28 March
- Term 2: 15 April—28 June
- Term 3: 15 July—20 September
- Term 4: 7 October—20 December
Reminder: Student Family Occupation Data

Last term each family received a letter requesting information about family occupation. This information is important to the school as a component of our government funding is based on parent occupation. A stamped, self-addressed envelope has been provided for this information to be returned to school by 26th July. Thank you for your assistance in providing this information.

Family Support Meeting

Next Meeting: Thursday 1st August 9.15 am – 10.30 Presenter Heather Kirkhope (ASPECT)

Fundraising Committee

Next Meeting: Thursday 1st August 10.30am – 11.30am. New members welcome.

Calendar of Events

Father’s Day Stall: 20th—23rd August.

Book Fair: 26th – 28th August

Shopping Tour: 13th October

Special Footy Day Lunch: 19th September.

Corinne Pupillo

Acting 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
Room 8 at Werribee Zoo

In Term 2, room 8 went on an excursion to Werribee Zoo. The children enjoyed the bus ride and looking at the animals.
Room 3

Students are enjoying some daily classroom activities!
Girls group has been a huge success and the girls (staff included!) look forward to our weekly sessions. This term, we have some new resources to explore and play with, and the girls are having a wonderful time learning to share and play together.

Thank you to parents who have made donations to our girls group resources, we are always happy to receive them.

Elizabeth Smith
Early / Middle Years Sub School Leader

Above: Playing with dolls, my little pony, tea party play, face painting and making some girly inspired pink biscuits with sprinkles!

Below: We are working together as geologists to uncover dinosaur bones in a fossilised egg. They are really hard to dig out and took a long time to uncover!
During term 2, room 16 enjoyed going on excursions. We went to the Melbourne Zoo, practised shopping at Broadmeadows Shopping centre, and read books at the Age Library. We are looking forward to an exciting third term!!
Room 24

We have enjoyed practicing our travel training skills as well as shopping.
Social impairment is a common feature of ASD, and there is a common misperception that our children lack interest in relating to others. Kids with ASD do not choose to alienate themselves – they are simply missing skills that are essential for developing meaningful peer relationships. You may have noticed some of these common social deficits:

- Opening and closing a conversation
- Initiating peer interaction and joining play
- Decoding facial expressions and body language
- Observing and mimicking appropriate social behaviour for specific situations
- Predicting and understanding the emotions and reactions of others
- Taking turns and sharing
- Making appropriate greetings to people (being able to identify the relationship you have with someone influences how you greet them e.g. seeing Mum or Dad, a kiss/cuddle is appropriate, but it is not an appropriate greeting for a teacher or the local shop keeper)
- Appropriate and polite ways to make requests and express gratitude (thanks)
- Cooperating in a group situation (rules of the games)
- Understanding and difficulty managing one’s own emotional state, in response to frustration (often leading to meltdowns and tantrums)

If you stop and think about it, these are not easy concepts.

Children with ASD do not acquire social skills naturally as we do. In order to learn social skills, our children must be taught explicitly, and have the opportunity to practice them again and again and again.

So! What do we teach here at JSA?

Eye contact
- A teacher may hold a favourite toy up near their eyes which draws the child’s eye to where they need to attend
- Others may be taught to orientate to the person speaking by looking at their nose/chin
**Initiating interaction**
- Going up to someone and tapping them on the arm
- Taking their sentence strip up to another person and placing it in their hand

**Turn taking**
- with an adult
- with another child
- in small groups
- as part of a whole class

Some of the visual tools to support the students in their learning of turn taking are

![Visual tool](image)

We start using this simple visual which has the student's photo or name placed on it to indicate who is having a turn.

![Images](image)

These images go back to back. The students learn the language ("Your Turn") as they flip them.

**Waiting**

![Image](image)

**Attending to others**
Greetings/ farewells
- hello/goodbyes are built in to the morning and afternoon

Using other people’s names

Listening

Appropriate tone of voice

We need to teach our students that there are different volume levels depending on the situation. To do this we may use a visual with inside and outside voice on it. The arrow moves depending on the appropriate level and the adult or the student can move the arrow to indicate that you are speaking to loudly and it needs to go to a whisper or a quiet talking voice.

Specific language to use in social situations
- conversation starters

Receptive language
- get, give to..., my turn, your turn, can I have....

Expressive language
- names, can i have, manners (please, thank you)

Understanding emotions, own and others or Ending interactions.

Every day our students are learning ways to socially interact with their peers and other people they may come across. Teachers will use a variety of tools and methods to support them.

Currently in our later years many students have been working with one of our speech therapists – Amy with the program Model me Kids. Model me Kids is a computer program with video footage of other students their age practicing a range of social skills.

Sue Johnston
Assistant Principal – Teaching & Learning
The Northern ASD Network are proud to present an evening with keynote speaker Mark Hogan and his wife Leanne.

Together they share Mark’s personal journey of growing up with ASD and his adult life. Mark provides us with invaluable insight into what is going on inside the mind of a child with ASD and how he looks at the world.

Mark explains reasons for many feelings and emotions and odd behaviours your child goes through, and talks about strategies that have worked for him. He also reveals personal experiences about parallel play, stimming, bullying, depression, school life, visual learning, parenting, and strategies to overcome struggles associated with ASD.

Leanne also talks about living with her ASD husband and some of the strategies they use to make their life easier and maintain a happy relationship. Leanne and Mark have two beautiful children, Ben and Claire. Ben was diagnosed with Autism at the age of two and currently attends Western Autistic School.

Mark Hogan is a published author of his book “The Key That Unlocked A Mystery.” This will be available for purchase on the night.

When: Monday 26th August 2013
Time: 6.30 pm to 8.30 pm
Where: Concert Hall
City of Moreland
90 Bell Street, Coburg

Cost: Free to families and professionals in the Northern ASD Network

Bookings: By email only to “jennyorso@kalparrin.com.au”
Email to include name, day time phone number, and your early intervention centre details. There are limited numbers, therefore it is imperative that all booking requests are received with this information to validate your booking.

Please book early to avoid disappointment as attendance is via booking only!
GRAND OPENING

8TH AUGUST 2013

59 Craigieburn Rd, Craigieburn
(Old Craigieburn Library building)

10:30am to 12:00pm

- Ribbon cutting
- Performances by local groups
- Morning tea

You are invited to celebrate the opening of the first multi-agency service centre in the City of Hume enabling access to a range of services that strengthen the growing Craigieburn community.

Onsite parking available. For alternative parking entrance next door to Craigieburn Leisure Centre.

RSVP by 6th August 2013 to Jacinta - jjohns@bsl.org.au or phone 9483 2401
Do your children have asthma or allergies?

Are you a part of the local footy team, scouts club or netball club?

Do you worry about your children’s asthma when they are not at home?

Learn practical strategies for helping your children to live well with asthma each day from people who know. Join The Asthma Foundation of Victoria’s online forum. Ask a question, share your story, meet with others in your area. Call (03) 9326 7088 for more information or follow the link below.

forum.asthma.org.au

Asthma tips for Parents and Carers this Winter

Winter can be a hard time for people with asthma as could weather, coughs, colds and the flu can bring on more symptoms and attacks.

- The common cold is caused by a virus and it is important to try not to cough and sneeze near other people, and to wash hands properly to prevent passing on the infection. The flu is different to the common cold and can be a much more serious viral infection.
- People with asthma are recommended to have an annual influenza vaccination (the flu shot). Preventing the flu protects people with asthma, as those with asthma are often unwell for longer and have a much harder time recovering from the flu.
- Make sure your child’s asthma is well-controlled; this will help them to bounce back quicker from a cough or cold and will help prevent asthma attacks when they are unwell.
- Some medications and herbal remedies that we use for colds and flu can make asthma worse. Speak to your doctor or pharmacist about any concerns you may have.
- Antibiotics are not normally prescribed for the common cold, or influenza, as these medications will not help a cold get better. Effective medications may include paracetamol and decongestants; however seek advice from your doctor or pharmacist before purchasing them for your child.
- Suggested remedies for the flu and the common cold are: rest, staying hydrated by drinking plenty of water, staying away from cigarette smoke, using steam inhalation, gargling with salty water for a sore throat and seeking medical advice if concerned at any time.

For more information on the common cold, medications and references used in this article please see the Better Health Channel (State Government of Victoria) - www.betterhealth.vic.gov.au and the NPS website - www.nps.org.au.

Contact The Asthma Foundation of Victoria on 1800 ASTHMA (1800 278 462) or www.asthma.org.au.
Looking for Work in Hume?

Craigungburn Jobs Fair

Date: Wednesday 28 August 2013
Time: 12pm – 8pm
Venue: Hume Global Learning Centre – Craigieburn,
75-59 Central Park Drive
Cost: Free

Don't miss this exciting opportunity to find out about job opportunities in Hume, including the new Craigieburn Central shopping centre. Meet Employers face to face, talk to them about their vacancies and apply direct.

For more information please visit www.hume.vic.gov.au/jobsfair or call 9205 2200