Issue 13
15th August, 2014

FROM THE PRINCIPAL

Dear Parents, Carers and friends of the school community,

School Accountability - Peer Review

In line with school accountability requirements, JSA participated in a Peer Review on Tuesday 5th August. The day was facilitated by Jan Lovett from Ed Solutions. Members of the Peer Review panel included:

Julie Robertson – Acting Senior Advisor /NWVR & Principal of Craigeburn Secondary College
Jeff Innes – Principal / Southern Autistic School
Joe Corbett – Consultant
Lisa Sette – School Council President
JSA Leadership Team (Corinne Pupillo, Sue Johnston, Denise Clarke, Annette McKee, Elizabeth Smith, Kristie Giannakis, Deb Munt, Martina Beggs and Sonja Ressugan)
Annie Susanto – Classroom Teacher / JSA
Ben Crosby – Education Support Staff (Teacher Aide) / JSA

The focus of the day was to reflect on the 2010 – 2014 School Strategic Plan and to assess the school’s compliance against Victorian Registration Quality Authority (VRQA). The final report written by the external reviewer will be provided to JSA and this will inform the new school direction for the new strategic plan phase (2015 – 2017). This is a critical step in the forward planning process for the school community.

I would like to thank everyone who agreed to participate in the Peer Review and made contributions that will inform future direction for the school.

School Improvement - Amaze Certification

JSA was fortunate to be successful in obtaining a one off grant to support the process of certification against the Autism Spectrum Disorder Standards: Education

Kate Day (Amaze support staff) visited JSA today and spent time engaging in some of the classroom activities and getting to know students and staff. Our Quality Action Group is meeting each Friday and this group will be collecting evidence to reference against the Standards. The task of collecting the evidence is quite detailed and with our team of enthusiastic members we aim to finish this process in the allocated 6 months.

The Quality Action Group membership includes:

Early Years A: Jacinta Patten (TA)
Early Years B: Lesleigh McCloy (TCH)
Middle Years: Anne Cameron (TCH)
Later Years: Billena Hales (TCH)
Transition & Wellbeing: Deb Munt (LT)
Education Support: Lyn Salter (TA)
Leadership: Martina Beggs (ES) / Sue Johnston/ Denise Clarke / Corinne Pupillo (Principal Class)
Admin: Julie Doylesak (ES)
Therapy: Merryn Horsfall (ES)
Parent: TBC
Student Rep: TBC

The Leadership Team is excited to be entering into a partnership with Amaze with the vision to strengthen our ASD practices across the school.

Students are at the forefront of all our work and we look forward to ensuring continuous improvement here at JSA.

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

School Council Meeting 7th August 2014

Casual Vacancy on School Council - DEECD Representative

A casual vacancy for a DEECD representative on School Council has become available. At the meeting last Thursday, School Council endorsed Kristie Giannakis to be co-opted to the vacancy. Kristie will take up the vacancy created by Rosalie Scolarri.

Policies for review

In line with the Victorian Registration Qualifications Authority the following policies were ratified by School Council:

- Distribution of Medicine Policy
- Extreme Weather Policy
- External Providers Policy
- Duty of Care Policy
- Consultative Policy
- Enrolment Policy
- Professional Learning Policy
- 2015 Parent Carer Payment Policy (attached to the newsletter)

The 2015 Parent Carer Payment Policy is attached to this edition of the newsletter for your advanced notice. Please note the fee structure increase for Essential Education Items and revised arrangements for Education Maintenance Allowance (EMA) advised from DEECD. All Of JSA policies are available from the general office on request. Please contact Carlee if you would like a copy to be sent home.

Traffic Management

Due to increasing congestion around the JSA site, especially at drop off and pick up times, the Hume City Council are currently undertaking a traffic management assessment to determine the best course of action to reduce congestion and ensure effective traffic flow. Thank you to Steve Shennan who has been liaising with the Traffic Management Division to ensure that we can minimise the congestion and provide a safe traffic flow for local residents, parents/carers, buses and private vehicles. We will keep you informed with the outcome and I urge all drivers to adhere to the 40km speed signs and be patient during these peak times.

Future Building and Grounds Projects

After consultation with staff and students, Councillors have approved the allocation of funds to re-develop the administration and oval area. Attached to the newsletter are the exciting concept plans for you to look over. There is still a great deal of planning to take place; however, we are excited to announce the major projects that will proceed to the next stage of planning for 2015.

Oval re-development – Allocated funds $220,000
Administration re-development – Allocated funds $330,000

The investment will increase outdoor recreational and learning spaces for students as well as increase much needed security and office space for the school.

Professional Learning Opportunities

In continuing the culture of continuous improvement, JSA have undertaken and plan to undertake several professional learning opportunities for staff across the school.

Leading Ethically: Principal Class Team – Sunday 10th – Wed 13th August 2014

This Bastow course provides leaders in schools with the framework to support an ethical culture in the school community. This includes understanding stakeholder perspectives, consultation and communication strategies and decision making processes that support the school with dealing with ethically sensitive issues. The course requires 54 hours of professional commitment including residential workshops, pre reading and development of a school based project.

Amaze Forums: Supporting Transitions and Behaviour will be attended by 6 teaching staff over the next 2 terms.

Creating a Coaching Culture: Elizabeth Smith attended a Bastow Education Leadership course on coaching.

Amaze Conference: Martina Beggs, Cara Zenner and Anne Cameron attended the conference and represented JSA.

Occupational Health and Safety

On Thursday 7th August JSA held its first Missing Student Drill. This practice drill is now built in to the OHS calendar of events and is an important aspect of our safety practices. It was an extremely beneficial experience and we identified that our processes were well thought out. It did take quite some time to locate our missing student “Izzy Missing” (staff member incognito) and as a result we will continue to review our practices and processes so that we can improve them.
Staffing

Welcome back to Elizabeth Smith. Elizabeth Smith has returned from maternity leave and will return to the Middle Years in the Sub School Leader role. Julie La Bouchardiere is the Sub School Leader for Early Years A in Lauren’s absence. Thank you to Cara Zenner for her support in the Sub School Leader role during the transition period.

Family Support Meetings

Our next Family Support Meeting will be held on Thursday 28th August. Please join us from 9.15 - 10.30 in the Professional Learning Centre. Melbourne City Mission will be talking to families about the services they offer. The meetings are open for all family members – please join us.

School Performance

Classrooms are in the process of organising their concert item in preparation for the 2014 performance. Please mark these dates in your diary. Please book via the JSA website - Try Bookings.

A BBQ lunch will be available for students, staff and families. $2.00 for sausages and $2.00 for drinks.

Order forms will be sent home soon.

Wednesday 10th Sept 2014

9:30am – Early Years A / Rooms 7 to 12
1:00pm – Early Years B / Rooms 1 to 6

Thursday 11th Sept 2014

9:30am – Middle Years / Rooms 13 to 17, 19
1:00pm – Later Years / Rooms 18, 20 to 25

Fundraising

Our next Fundraising meeting will be held on Thursday 28th August at 10.30am in the PLC. We always welcome new members to the committee. Please feel free to join us.

- Literacy Week/Book Fair: 28th - 29th August in the PLC
- Father’s Day Stall: 3rd - 4th September
- School Performance & BBQ: 10th & 11th September
- Special Lunch Order Day: Thursday 18th September
- Shopping Tour: Saturday 25th October

Bullying Education at JSA

Here at Jacana School for Autism we are committed towards educating our students and the school community on the serious issue of bullying.

Bullying can occur anywhere and anytime. This could be through online games at home. Therefore, increasing the school’s community awareness and understanding of the different forms of bullying behaviour and the consequences it has on our students is paramount.

As we know our students on the autism spectrum have a deficit in social interactions, therefore at times what the students may perceive as bullying behaviour could just be our student’s lack of understanding around social norms and responses to difficult situations. An example of this is how our students with autism spectrum disorder may misinterpret an unintentional bump in line as purposeful physical aggression. Consequently staff in the later years sub-school have implemented some valuable teaching tools in order to educate the school community on bullying such as:

Health and human relations sessions targeting bullying in the classroom on a weekly basis. Ie – students are learning how to recognize bullying and how to develop strategies to stay safe if they are confronted with it.

Discussing bullying during SynFM radio station sessions on a weekly basis

Providing further structure during playground sessions, where by students have a plan on what activities they are participating in during these times

Providing parents with cyber bullying information.

I have already had the pleasure of observing some fantastic lessons on bullying in later years this term. It’s been great to see the students so engaged in these sessions and to see them developing valuable knowledge on bullying and a bank of strategies to use if they find themselves in a difficult situation.

Kristie Giannakis
Later Years Sub School Leader.

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
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Parent/Carer Payments (2015)

General Statement
This policy provides information regarding parent/carer payments in government schools. The policy covers payments for essential education items, optional extras and voluntary financial contributions that schools may request, and the parameters, terms and conditions within which these requests may be made.

Rationale
The Education and Training Reform Act 2006 ensures the provision of free instruction in the standard curriculum program and empowers School Councils to charge for goods and services used in the course of instruction and to raise funds.

Jacana School for Autism School Council may request payments or contributions for education items and services from the parents/carers of students in Victorian government schools in the three categories – essential education items, optional education items and voluntary financial contributions.

Implementation

Parent/carer Payment Categories

1. **Essential education items** are those items or services that are essential to support the course of instruction in the standard curriculum program that parents and guardians are responsible for and may choose to either provide or pay the school to provide. These items include:
   - materials that the student takes possession of, including text books and student stationery;
   - materials for learning and teaching where the student consumes or takes possession of the finished articles (e.g. cooking and visual arts program); and
   - transport and entrance for camps, excursions and incursions.

2. **Optional education items** (or non-essential materials and services) are those that are provided in addition to the standard curriculum program, and which are offered to all students. These optional extras are provided on a user-pays basis and if parents and guardians choose to access them for students, they will be required to pay for them. These items include:
   - student computer printing for personal use, internet access for recreational or non-school use;
   - extra-curricular programs or activities e.g. instrumental music, dance classes, swimming;
   - school-based performances, productions and events; and
   - school magazines, newsletters, class photographs.

3. **Voluntary financial contributions** are for those items and services that parents and guardians are invited to make a donation to the school, for example for grounds maintenance, a library or building trust.

Support Options
The school appreciates that families may sometimes experience financial difficulties in meeting requests for payments and contributions. A range of support options are available to assist parents.

Education Maintenance Allowance (EMA)
The EMA program will cease at the end of 2014. From 2015, funds previously used for the EMA will be distributed directly to schools.

19 - 39 Landy Road, Jacana VIC 3047
Phone 9309 6258  Fax 9309 6426
jacana.school@edumail.vic.gov.au
Payment Arrangements
Parents/carers will be provided with early notice of payment requests for essential education items, optional extras and voluntary financial contributions (a minimum of six weeks notice prior to the end of the previous school year).

Payment requests will be kept to a minimum. Payment requests and letters will be fair and reasonable. To further assist parents with payments, several payment options are available:
- Full amount
- Half yearly payment (beginning of Terms 1 & 3)
- Payment at the beginning of each term
- Other payment arrangements by negotiation

Alternative payment options are available through the school. Parents/carers are encouraged to make an appointment with the school to discuss their individual circumstances and available options.

- Payments may be requested but not required prior to the commencement of the year in which the materials and services are to be used.
- Payment requests or letters to parents/carers will be itemised and the category each item falls under will be clearly identified as an essential education item, optional education item or voluntary financial contribution.
- Receipts will be issued to parents/carers immediately upon making payment.
- Reminders for unpaid essential education items or optional items will be generated and distributed on a regular basis to parents, but not more than once a month.
- Only the initial invitation for voluntary financial contributions and one reminder notice will be issued to parents/carers.
- All records of payments or contributions and any outstanding payments by parents/carers are kept confidential.

References: School Policy and Advisory Guide


Review: this policy is reviewed annually in Term 3 each year.

Ratified By JSA School Council:
7th August 2014
Parent/carer payments - processes, protocols and implementation

Parent/carer payments 2015
The total cost for essential educational items per term will be $100 - $400 per year. This is an increase of $24.00/ $6.00 per term. An estimate of the breakdown of the cost of these items are:

Essential Education Items
Parents/carers will be invoiced $100 per child per term for items which may include:

- Bike Education – helmets, repairs, new bikes
- eLearning - iPads, computers, educational software & licenses
- JSA Bus Fee – petrol, maintenance, registration, insurance (school owned buses)
- Curriculum – English, Maths, Personal Learning, Interpersonal Learning, The Arts, PE & Science, including consumables (stationery, laminating, sensory materials, reinforcers, schedules, PECs folders, visuals, personalised readers communication temptations, therapeutic resource etc)
- Excursion/Incursion Fee
- Homecrafts /Healthy Living Program – breakfast, toast/sandwich making, afternoon tea, tasting different foods, making simple meals, equipment
- Communication – Student Diary & JSA Year Book

Discount on Essential Educational Items:
Parents/carers who make the full annual payment of $400 for essential educational items by the end of term 1 will be provided with a 10% discount of $40.00.

Optional Education Items
The swimming program costs approximately $80 to $100 per term depending upon the number of sessions offered. Parents/carers will be invoiced the end of the term prior to swimming being offered. Swimming is an optional program. If parents/carers elect for their child not to participate in swimming then they do not have to pay the fee. For students in the Later Years Sub-school, TAFE, Adaptive PE (RMIT) and Travel Education programs are optional programs which require payment if/when students participate in these activities.

Voluntary Contributions
The voluntary contribution payment will be $50 per year. This is comprised of:

$50.00 Playground Levy – Structural Engineer Audit, maintenance & repairs
Term three inquiry unit is all about Transport. We are writing about planes, making trains, singing songs and dancing along to all our favourite songs.
Room 2 Adventures

Room 2 have been very busy this term.

We have been having fun out of the school as well as in the classroom.

We are proud of the work we do.
Room 14 has had a great Term 2 and a busy start to Term 3! We have been enjoying swimming, library, cooking, art and learning to play nicely with our peers!
In Room 24 we enjoy weekly cooking sessions in the Healthy Living Kitchen. We have cooked a variety of dishes including pizza muffins, French toast, toasted sandwiches rice pudding, fruit salad and the very occasional cupcake treat.
A Big Thank You to Glenroy Lions Auxiliary for their generous contribution towards purchasing some dressing boards for our students. Our students from early years have been learning to dress independently including manipulating fasteners on clothes. Dressing boards are great resources for students to learn to manipulate various fasteners on their clothes.
Promoting Good Sleep Habits for Children with Autism Spectrum Disorder

By Lydia Wilson & Maureen Pianta – Psychologists at JSA

Insufficient sleep can trigger unwanted or negative behaviours which interfere with a child’s learning process at school as well as impact on general functioning and mood during the day. Sleep disturbances among children with autism can be common. Such disturbances may include: going to sleep, staying asleep, or during the sleep phase (the hours the child is asleep). Children with autism may experience anxiety which can make it more difficult for them to get to sleep or to get back to sleep if they wake in the night.

As with all children, sleep for children with autism can be improved by focusing on: regular sleep cycles (patterns of sleeping and waking), positive bedtime routines, and appropriate bedtimes. Regular bedtimes and wake times can help reduce sleep problems considerably.

In order to choose an appropriate bedtime, consider your child’s age and sleep needs. In addition, observe when your child is usually alert or sleepy as well as ascertaining what time the child needs to be awake in the morning in order to prepare for school. If your child is not sleepy at the time you have set for bedtime, start moving your child’s sleep time towards the set bedtime by giving him or her cues every 5-10 minutes earlier every couple of days. This process may take a couple of weeks but eventually you will be able to match your selected bedtime with the child’s sleepy time.

It is a good idea to prepare for bedtime in advance by avoiding giving children high-sugar drinks and Coke with the evening meal due to likely stimulation effects.

Some tips for a better night’s sleep for children with autism

1. It may be useful to use a chart with pictures or a visual schedule showing the bedtime routine, so your child understands the steps to be undertaken.
2. Initially provide praise for your child for following each step in the routine.
3. As your child becomes competent in following each step in the routine, praise can be phased out.
4. Ensure a wind-down time about half an hour prior to the child’s bedtime by engaging the child in a quiet activity. Avoid all excessive stimulation before bed such as energetic play or electronic games. It may be necessary to turn wi-fi off in the household.
5. Once you have worked out the best time for your child to go to bed, give your child plenty of warning that bedtime is approaching. You could use a cue such as a clock or a picture to indicate that bedtime will be soon. Whichever cue you use, needs to be one you can readily use if on holidays.
6. It is preferable to use one location for the child to fall asleep, that is, the child’s bed and bedroom.
7. If your child feels anxious about going to bed or sleeping alone, it may be an idea to wrap him or her in a blanket, use a nightlight in the bedroom, and/or play music in the room once the child is in bed.

For more information, refer to the Raising Children Network website: http://raisingchildren.net.au
Joint Attention

Joint attention refers to the ability to coordinate one's attention between people and objects.

Joint attention can be both an expressive and receptive communicative skill.

Receptive

Responding to joint attention

This typically develops prior to initiating joint attention. It refers to understanding and responding to another person's point or gaze towards an object or activity.

Response to joint attention (RJA) is a predictor of later language performance.

Expressive

Initiating joint attention

Initiating joint attention refers to the ability to draw another person's attention to an object or activity of interest through eye gaze or pointing.

Teaching Response to Joint Attention (RJA)

As RJA is a predictor of language development it is an important skill to teach. Here are some strategies to help you.

1. Use motivating items

Ensure you use toys or objects that your child is interested in. You can also use favourite food items. Think about items that are essential to your child's routine, for example if your child drinks from a particular cup use this to teach RJA.
2. Get your child’s attention

Ensure you get close to your child by getting down to their level. You may need to playfully intrude in what they are doing to get into their space.

Say their name and point to the object of interest as you name it. For example; 'Billy look, car.'

3. Start with objects that are close.

Place the object of interest into their space, say your child’s name, point to the object and name it. As you child begins to respond to your point with objects that are close by, you can introduce objects that are further away. For example, you may place toys or food items on the bench out of reach.

4. Use a variety of prompts to help your child to respond and fade these over time.

Draw your child’s attention to a motivating item by:
- Looking at the object
- Turning your head and body to the object
- Pointing to the object
- Labelling the object
- Physically prompting your child towards the object.

References:
Broadmeadows MP Frank McGuire invites you, family & friends to hear about Lifelong Learning, Jobs & Saving Footy in its Backyard.

Join us for a community Sausage Sizzle

Saturday 16 August 2014 at 12.30pm
followed by Jacana FC seniors game at 2.15pm
Jacana Football Club—Lorraine Crescent, Jacana
RSVP essential by Monday 11 August and dietary requirements:
Lloyd McDonald 9300 3851 or lloyd.mcdonald@parliament.vic.gov.au
Positive Behaviour Support Workshop

For Parents and Carers of Children and Young Adults with Autism Spectrum Disorder

Aspect Victoria is pleased to offer our highly successful, contemporary, evidence-based three (3) day Autism specific Positive Behaviour Support Workshop in the Northern Region of Victoria.

More than 1200 families have participated in Aspect's Positive Behaviour Support workshops across Australia. Post workshop evaluations showed an effectiveness of the workshops, with participants reporting decreases in challenging behaviours and increases in confidence and capacity to support their children and young adults.

When: Monday 25th – Wednesday 27th August 2014
Where: Jacana School for Autism, 19-39 Landy Road, Jacana VIC
Time: 9:30am-2:30pm (9:15am for registration)
Cost: FREE (Tea, coffee & biscuits provided – participants to bring own lunch)
Registration: Register online at www.autismspectrum.org.au/registration

Eligibility to participate in this Workshop:
» Parents or carers of children and young adults aged between 6 - 25 years, diagnosed with an Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD)
» The individual with ASD must be living at home
» Participating families are encouraged to invite professionals or service providers working with them to attend the workshop

Families participating in this workshop will:
» Develop an understanding of autism and how an ASD impacts upon learning and behaviour
» Learn how to be proactive by creating an autism friendly environment at home
» Learn how to write an autism specific behaviour support plan for one of their child's behaviours
» Learn how to write a plan to respond confidently when challenging behaviour occurs
» Learn how to teach new skills to promote their child’s independence and quality of life

Enquiries:
Contact Amber Day – Workshop Administrator or Heather Kirkhope - Service Coordinator
Phone: 03 9377 6600 or email: aday@autismspectrum.org.au

What participants say about Aspect Positive Behaviour Support Workshops:

"Brilliant information and concrete strategies to use, thank you. I have learnt very important self-reflection, being able to step back and really look at and examine behaviour, so valuable. I really value the focus on being positive and improving my child's, my own and my family's quality of life. Great workshop – I will highly recommend it to others."

"Fantastic presentation. Very interactive, affirming & capacity building. Ideas not just discussed but taught how to follow through on."
Jacana School for Autism
Shopping Spree Bus Tour 2014!

Are you needing some ‘you time’ that you never seem to have? Some retail therapy? The Shopping Spree Bus Tour is just for you!

Please join the fundraising team on a fun-filled FRENZY spending day! We will be visiting great outlets where you can SAVE UP TO 70% OFF RETAIL PRICES! Our profit will be 10% of the commission on our total sales for the entire day which will go towards our fundraising goal of 2014 - new bikes for the bike education program.

TOUR INCLUDES: 11 outlets and a 2 course lunch at The Croxton Park Hotel with soft drink and tea/coffee. Alcohol will be at bar prices. Also throughout the day on the bus there will be raffles, prizes, giveaways, refreshments and nibblies too!!!

The outlets will be;
Candy Stripes, Siricco, Natio, Tony Bianco, Toy Worx, Raglan Fashion House, Beaches, Bonds, Bambis and Linen Factory

DATE: Saturday 25th October 2014   PICK UP TIME: 7.45am
PICK-UP ADDRESS: Kmart Campbellfield, Hume hwy (across from Hungry Jacks)
DROP-OFF: approx. 6.00pm        PRICE: $55 per person

***PLEASE EXPRESS YOUR INTEREST BY CONTACTING CARLEE OR JULIE ON 9309 6258 OR COME INTO SEE US AT RECEPTION BY August 22nd 2014

FULL PAYMENT IS DUE BY: October 10th 2014

The tour also includes the following: *Luxury coach transport
*A friendly and informative hostess
SO DON’T MISS OUT!