Issue 15
12th September, 2014

FROM THE PRINCIPAL

Dear Parents, Carers and friends of the school community,

School Performance

The JSA concert is always a very well attended community event and this year was no exception. There was a fabulous turn out to all four sub school performances where all our students had the opportunity to perform in front of their proud family members. Emily Chow, our Performance Co-ordinator has done a great job to make sure everything ran smoothly behind the scenes on both days. Congratulations to students and staff for their contributions to the day. We certainly have some budding performing artists. I would also like to thank Lisa Sette for stepping in and overseeing the choir this year in Catherine Schmidt’s absence. Our music teacher Catherine is currently on leave and returning in 2015. In the meantime, Lisa is volunteering her time and talents for the school choir.

The fundraising BBQ was also a huge success and a great opportunity for families to get together before or after the performance. Thank you to Lisa Sette, Marissa Griffiths, Michelle Owen, Katie Powell, Rosa Figliola, Rob Marsh, Carlee Toniolo, Sue Johnston and Denise Clarke for assisting with the BBQ.

Father’s Day Stall

Students across the school thoroughly enjoyed visiting the Father’s Day Stall last week. I hope all our special dads and grandfathers enjoyed unwrapping the special gift that was carefully selected for them. Members of the fundraising committee hope that all our dads, grandads and uncles had an enjoyable day with the family.

A special thank you to the following mums for their assistance with the stall last week:

Lisa Sette, Lisa Stewart, Rosa Figliola, Michelle Owen, Marissa Griffiths, Danni Smith and Katie Powell. Both Lisa Sette and Carlee Toniolo do a great deal of work behind the scene for the fundraising committee and I would like to acknowledge Lisa and Carlee for their support with the fundraising activities.

End of term finish times

Students finish school one hour earlier on Friday 19th September. Your child will finish at 2pm and arrive home one hour earlier than usual.

Playground 4 shed

A big thank you to Ben McMahon who kindly donated his talents and time to re-constructing the playground 4 shed for us. The shed initially was constructed by the Bunnings team from Broadmeadows a few years ago, but was blown away last term after days of high winds. After high winds this week, I can safely say the shed is much more robust with all the additional pot rivets and reinforcing. We really appreciate the effort Ben and thank you for your time and expertise.
School Council Meeting 11th September 2014

Policy Development & Review

In line with our regular cycle of policy review, school council endorsed a number of policies at the September meeting. If you would like to be sent any copies of the JSA school policies please contact Carlee or Julie at reception and they can forward you a copy.

Policies that were endorsed by school council at the September meeting included:

- Onsite Supervision Policy
- Student Illness & Headache Policy
- Bullying & Harassment Policy and Procedures Policy
- Mandatory Reporting Policy
- Staff Leave Policy

Peer Review

School Councillors endorsed the **Peer Review Report** developed after the Peer Review was conducted on Tuesday 5th August 2014. Please contact the general office if you would like a copy of the full report.

Some of the many highlights included:

- **School Structure**
  - Strong distributive leadership structure
  - Integrated Therapy approach
  - Shared vision and goals - JSA new entity

**Accountability & Achievement**

- Target improvement of 20% was met in literacy domains of reading and writing, interpersonal and cognition domain of personal learning. The target for the communication domain speaking and listening was nearly achieved.
- Increase in the percentages of students independently using their Augmentative and Alternative Communication (AAC) device
- The establishment of SMART (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic and Time framed) goals in ILP’s
- Expansion of purposeful learning – Career Action Plans, Professional Learning Teams, Student Council, Advance and VCAL (Foundation) programs.
- Focus on Teaching and Learning – Professional Learning opportunities for staff leading to improvements in communication and literacy data.

**Environment**

- Regular opportunities for staff to provide feedback on organisational health
- School Wide Positive Behaviour Support embedded across school
- Improvement in building and grounds
- Increase in resources eg: ICT

**Learning Community**

- Strong partnerships with families through SSG’s, information sessions, professional learning activities, and fundraising activities.
- Increasing community partnerships. SYN FM, Brite Industries, Kangan TAFE

**Recommendations for future:**

**Achievement**

- Curriculum - Develop scope and sequence for each of the AusVELS four domains
- Continue the work of Professional Learning Teams (PLT’s) and use data to track growth and ensure differentiated curriculum.
- Embed a structured Augmentative and Alternative Communication (AAC) process that collates benchmark data and strategies to improve the capacity of students to communicate.

**Engagement**

- Expand the integration of e-learning within an ASD environment as a tool to improve communication and literacy skills, personal development and improved pathways.
- Develop a Transition action plan to inform teachers and further assist students’ resilience and coping skills.
- Prioritise professional development on social skills.

**Wellbeing**

- Embed the principles of positive psychology across the school.
- Regularly review and embed the Teaching and Learning Protocols to assist with communication.
- Nurture the use of multi-disciplinary teams so the therapy input and knowledge of learning is shared and consistent.
- Implement whole school community attendance strategies by further building relationships and educating parents of the importance of attendance.

**Productivity**

- Reconfigure the leadership team—school coaching for intervention and extension of curriculum and delivery.
- Plan a staged e-learning resourcing plan.
- Investigate facility improvement to meet school needs including maintenance and expenditure that will enhance teaching and learning.
- Explore community links for possible employment services for school based apprenticeships/traineeships.
New School Structure – 2015

After consultation with staff, the new school structure has been endorsed for the implementation in 2015. In line with the school review report recommendations – a focus on reconfiguring the leadership team has occurred over the last term. In collaboration with the existing sub school leaders we have negotiated a change in role for 2 of our sub school leaders. Developing 2 new coaching roles in 2015 - Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) Coach and Positive Behaviour Support (PBS) Coach. There will be 2 sub school leaders – Primary and Secondary.

We have also streamlined the teaching teams and there will be 3 classrooms of 14 students with 2 teachers. These classrooms will essentially be a combination of students on dual placements (attending 2 schools) and students with potential to attend mainstream schools. There will also be a senior secondary VCAL class with 14 students and 2 teachers. I have attached the overview of the new school structure for your reference. Please speak to a member of the leadership team if you have any questions about the new structure.

Attendance Policy

Please note the change to requesting extended period of absence. Previously this was for 5 days or more, School Council approved the change to 3 days or more. Please see Attendance Policy attached to the newsletter.

Changes to free Student Vaccination program - 2015

Next year all students whose age is equivalent for years 7, 8, 9 and 10 will be offered the vaccine that protects against diphtheria, tetanus and whooping cough. This is provided free by the state government and delivered through Hume Council. From 2016 it will only be offered to year 7 equivalent students.

Additional immunisation will be available for chicken pox and human papillomavirus (HPV) vaccine for year 7 students only.

There is a concern in the community that immunisation rates have gone down and that there is a rise in diseases which were almost eradicated. To learn more about the changes, the diseases, the vaccines, or how you can prepare your child for vaccination go to [http://immunecare.health.vic.gov.au/](http://immunecare.health.vic.gov.au/)

Some of our students need significant preparation to understand vaccination. You may be able to use the above web site in helping your child to understand the concept and what will happen.

Schools will be asked to supply parental contact details to Hume Council for the relevant students in 2015 unless parents notify the school otherwise. Details will be sent to you in February.

Family Support Meeting

Our next Family Support Meeting will be held on Thursday 23rd October. Please join us from 9.15am - 10.30am in the Professional Learning Centre. Imogen Rose from Attuned Music Therapy Centre in Preston will be talking to families about Music therapy for students with ASD. The presentation is open for all family members – please join us.

Fundraising

Thank you for supporting the school and purchasing sausages and drinks from the BBQ over the 2 school performance days. A special thanks to Lisa Sete, Rosa Figliola, Michelle Owen Marissa Griffiths and Katie Powell, for assisting with the BBQ over the 2 days.

All funds raised from the events will go towards the bike education program in 2015.

Fundraising events coming up

**Special Lunch Order Day:** Thursday 18th September

**Shopping Tour:** Saturday 25th October

Our next Fundraising meeting will be held on Thursday 23rd October at 10.30am in the PLC. We always welcome new members to the committee. Please feel free to join us.

Art Department

The Art Department would welcome donations of shoe boxes and old shoes for our next artistic creations.

Thanks Rosie Lugg—Art Teacher

Staffing

Corrie Wishart will be leaving today to return home. We thank Corrie for her contributions to JSA and wish her well back in Canada.

We are currently recruiting for this classroom and will advise families as soon as possible when we appoint a suitable applicant.
Recruitment for teachers for 2015 is underway as well as the Assistant Principal position. The outcome of these panels will be finalised during the school holidays.

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

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www.jacanaschoolforautism.vic.edu.au
Room 4 have had an enjoyable term 2 and 3. We have been bowling and to the Melbourne Museum, and having a lot of fun and learning lots. We had a great time at swimming and loved pyjama day!
Early Years B held a dress up day for Literacy Week on Thursday 28th August. There was a wide variety of costumes and all the children had a fun and very exciting day. Dress up day is a great way of getting children to realise its ok to wear something different to school, just for fun as well as helping with their imaginary play skills.
Room 16 on excursions...

Getting up close with the horses at "The Living Legends"

We love horses!

Inside the Ant cave @ Melbourne Museum

Wow... Dinosaurs!

Learning about animals past and now...
EXCURSION TO AIRBORN

Students from room 18 and room 20 went on a combined excursion to Airborn Trampoline Centre. We had lots of fun!
Reading: Importance in Literacy Development

It’s a good idea to read with your child often – you can start from birth onwards. Children who have had experiences with language and print from an early age are more likely to develop a solid literacy foundation.

Reading with your child:
- gives you enjoyable time with him as you share an activity, looking at pictures and playing with words
- helps him start to appreciate what books have to offer, and shows him that books can give both pleasure and information
- helps him learn the sounds of letters in spoken language
- helps him understand that stories aren’t coming from you, but from the words on the page – this teaches him about how the printed word works
- helps him develop a larger vocabulary, which increases his understanding, pleasure and interest in reading (this is because books offer more unusual words than are used in everyday language or on television)
- improves his thinking and problem-solving skills
- can start a conversation about a new concept, an event or something that interests your child.

What you can do
- Read with your child. You can start from birth, but it’s never too late to begin.
- When your child is old enough, encourage her to hold the book and turn the pages. This will help her start to understand that the book should be a certain way up, and that pages are always turned in the same direction.
- Slide your finger along underneath the words as you read them, pointing out each word. This indicates to your child that we always start on the left and move to the right when reading English, helping him start to understand the rules of reading.
- Point out pictures and talk about the pictures your child points to.
- Make the sounds of animals or other objects in the book – have fun!

For some suggestions of great new books for children of all ages, please visit:

Information obtained from: http://raisingchildren.net.au/articles/developing_literacy.html
Jacana School for Autism
New School Structure
~ 2015 ~

Principal

Assistant Principal (AP2)
Teaching & Learning

Assistant Principal (AP2) eLearning & Operations

Student Transitions & Wellbeing

Teaching and Learning Coach
SW-PBS

Teaching and Learning Coach
ASD Practice

Rooms 1-12
2 x 2 tch classrooms

Primary Sub School Leader

Rooms 13-25
2 x 2 tch classrooms

Secondary Sub School Leader

12.09.14
ATTENDANCE POLICY

Rationale
Regular school attendance enables students to maximise their full educational potential and to actively participate and engage in their learning. It is important that students maintain habits of regular attendance to maximise their educational and social development.

Jacana School for Autism Attendance Requirements
JSA requires all students attend no less than 90% of the school program without a medical certificate.

Who is responsible for attendance?
All of the learning community at Jacana School for Autism is responsible for attendance: Leadership; Teachers; Students; Education Support Staff; Parents/Carers.

Expectations of Principal Class
- Provide leadership and direction to the Leadership Team in regard to Curriculum development and student engagement/wellbeing issues.
- Provide leadership and support to Team Leaders, Team Co-ordinators and Student Services Teams to develop, implement and evaluate programs and policies that contribute to the academic and social development of students.
- Monitor attendance through collection, analysis and evaluation of data against set goals and targets.

Expectations of Teachers
- Mark the roll accurately for Class Group daily (am/pm)
- Contact parents when the student is absent from school or classes without an explanation.
- Provide programs that engage and support students to learn.
- Informally advise parents of their obligations in regards to school attendance where appropriate.
- Refer students to Student Transition and Wellbeing Co-ordinator, when needed.
- If applicable, provide appropriate work when a student is unable to attend.

Expectations of Student Transition and Wellbeing Co-ordinator
- Formally advise parents of their obligations in regards to school attendance where appropriate.
- Refer students to internal and external support services when needed.
Expectations of Students
- Attend daily and all classes (no less than 90%) without medical certificate
- Arrive on time to school to learn.

Expectations of Parents/Carers
- Ensure their child attends school at all times (see Education and Training Reform Act 2006, Section 2.1.1)
- Ensure that their child is on time for school each day.
- Notify the school of their child’s absence as soon as possible on the first day of the child’s absence.
- Notify the school in advance if an absence is planned.
- Support their child’s learning during continued or prolonged absences through the implementation of an agreed student Absence Learning Plan.
- Work co-operatively and collaboratively with the school and their child to develop and implement improvement strategies when attendance has been inconsistent due to reasons deemed unsatisfactory by the school.
- Work co-operatively with the school in supporting the child to return to school.
- Ensure that contact details for their child are correct and up-to-date.

Please Note:
Department of Education and Early Childhood Development Expectations

- Where the family are undertaking an extended family holiday of more than 3 school days, recommendations and approval must be sought from the sub-school leader and the principal.
- Where school refusal and re-engagement processes are in place, the school will work with the family and student to increase student attendance.
- Clear written/verbal statements are made regularly to parents/carers/students about school and community attendance expectations.
- Ongoing unexplained absences/lateness, or lack of cooperation regarding student attendance will be referred to the Student Transition and Wellbeing Co-ordinator and attendance issues may be reported by the Principal to the Department of Human Services, where it is believed to be impacting on the student’s educational progress.
- Where a student has been absent from school on at least 5 full days in the previous 12 months, the parent has not provided a reasonable excuse for these absences, and measures to improve the student’s attendance have been undertaken and been unsuccessful, or are inappropriate in the circumstances, principals can exercise their discretion to refer the matter to a School Attendance Officer for further action.
- School Attendance Officers can then issue a School Attendance Notice to the parent giving the opportunity to provide a reasonable excuse for the absences or, where necessary, nominate the parent responsible for the absences. Failure to comply with this Notice may result in the issue of an Infringement Notice, which carries with it a penalty of approximately $70.00.

Review: This policy will be reviewed as part of the school’s two-year policy review cycle.

Ratified at School Council: 20th March 2014 (updated 5.09.14)
The *Education and Training Reform Act 2006, Ministerial Order 625, December 2013* describes a reasonable excuse for a student not attending school, among other factors as:

- The school recognises illness as a reasonable ground for an absence, including medical and dental appointments.
- The school recognises cultural observance as a reasonable ground for an absence.
- The school recognises bereavement of a significant person in the student’s life as a reasonable ground for an absence.
- There is no Government school within a prescribed distance of the child’s residence and the child is receiving a distance education program through a registered school.
- The child is undertaking an educational program provided by a registered education and training organisation.
- The child has been suspended or expelled and is undertaking other educational programs provided by the Department or another registered school.
- The absence from school or instruction was because of the child’s disobedience and was not due to any fault of the parent/carer.
- The child is exempted from attendance at school by the Minister.
- Social and leisure activities are NOT a reasonable ground for an absence.
EXTENDED PERIOD OF ABSENCE
APPLICATION FORM
(3 school days or more)

Date: _____/_____/__________  Dates requested: _____/_____/__________

Name: __________________________________________

Home Phone Number:________________________________

Mobile Number:____________________________________

E-mail Address:_____________________________________

TYPE OF REQUEST

☐ Family Holiday  ☐ Medical  ☐ Overseas Business

☐ Sporting Trip  ☐ Other: ____________________________

Please describe nature of the extended leave requested:

________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________

All applications for extended absences will be reviewed by the Sub School Leader and Principal.
This will be followed with direct communication with a parent or guardian.

Parent Signature:________________________________________ Date: _____/_____/_______

For Administrative Use Only: Date Received: _____/_____/_______

Action taken by Sub School Leader:

________________________________________________________________________

Recommendation: __________________________ Date: _____/_____/_______

Action taken by Principal:

________________________________________________________________________

Recommendation: __________________________ Date: _____/_____/_______
Do you need assistance in finding the right support service?

Come to an AMCS information session:

- if you would like to find out how free community and aged care services could help you
- if you are 65+ years old, or you are a carer or a person with disabilities
- if you are a carer needing support in your caring role

When: Wednesday 8 October 2014
Where: Dallas Neighbourhood House
180 - 182 Widford Street
Broadmeadows, VIC 3047
Time: 2:00pm
Cost: Free
No need to book. Just come along!

The Australian Multicultural Community Services is a community based organisation, providing advice and services to people and communities from diverse backgrounds.

AMCS, Suite 111, 44-56 Hampstead Road, Maidstone, VIC 3012
T: 03 9689 9170  www.amcservices.org.au
**Accessible Music Program for Families**

**Siblings in Sync** is a unique and innovative school holiday program for children with additional needs and their siblings.

**It aims to:**
- Foster relationships between siblings
- Provide positive shared experiences
- Give children the opportunity to express themselves
- Communicate with their sibling through creative music-making

The session is run by two Registered Music Therapists and will be tailored to suit the individual needs of participants within a small group.

Participants will have the opportunity to:
- Create music together
- Use music technology (including The Special Access Kit)

A music therapist will be in contact with you prior to your session commencing to obtain relevant information in order to plan for individual needs.

All participants must be accompanied by an adult for the duration of the session.

**Venue:** Arts Centre Melbourne. Digital Learning Hub
**Times:** 11am
**Dates:** Tuesday 23 September or Thursday 25 September
**Duration:** 60 mins
**Cost:** $25 per family

**Bookings:**
For more information or to book, phone (03) 9281 8194, or email snap@artscentremelbourne.com.au

Music Therapy is the planned and creative use of music to attain and maintain health and wellness. It may address physical, psychological, emotional, cognitive and social needs of individuals within a therapeutic relationship.

Music Therapy is a registered allied health profession.

Thank you to the generous donors who support our programs.
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 Croxtom 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 SEPTEMBER 19TH 2014

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