FROM THE PRINCIPAL

Thank You
Thanks to Sue Johnston who is Acting Campus Principal at the Jacana Campus while Corinne takes three weeks leave. Sue is doing a wonderful job supporting the Jacana community – thank you Sue.

Jacana School for Autism
While Corinne is on leave she is still working hard finalising a number of matters for the pending separation of the school. There is only a matter of weeks to go before Jacana Campus becomes their own autonomous school – Jacana School for Autism.

Bus Tour
Thanks to Lisa Sette for organising the shopping tour for Sunday Oct 28th and to the community who went along to support the school. Lisa did a great job rallying her family and friends to come along and participate and has raised a significant amount of money for NSA. On behalf of the whole school – thanks Lisa.

Conveyance Allowance
Recently the Student Transport Unit of the DEECD made changes to the criteria for payment of the conveyance allowance. There are several families at NSA in receipt of the allowance. Please note that the new criteria does not affect students attending specialist schools. There are no changes to the payment of the allowance for NSA families. Please contact the school if you require further information.

Industrial Action
Thanks to the community for supporting school staff who are AEU members who are participating in the current rounds of industrial action. Bans so far have included/will include:
- Stop work (full and half days)
- Ban on working outside core hours
- Ban on attending more than 1 hour of meetings a week
- Ban on using the Ultranet
- Ban on implementation of AusVELS
- Ban on comment writing in reports
- Ban on participating in the staff and parent opinion surveys’

The ban on comment writing in reports will affect some families – all teachers will mark student progress, however, teachers participating in the action will not provide comments in the reports. Letters will be sent home to inform families about which classes are affected. The ban on working outside core hours also means the school is unable to run SSG week in the usual manner, however, teachers will be available for telephone conferences during school hours. Letters in regard to arrangements will also be sent home. The community understands that the bans are disruptive and thanks the community for their ongoing support. The school is hopeful of a resolution in the near future so we are unable to return to business as usual.

Healthy Food
NSA has a Healthy Food policy which is in-line with the Department’s Go For Your Life policies. The school is working very hard to ensure that students access healthy food while they are at school. Please think about providing healthy food choices for your child in their lunch box. The school is working on a Food Service Policy which will also make clear the manner in which the school ensures food is prepared in an OHS friendly and hygienically safe manner.

Anna Rigoni
Principal
Northern School for Autism Newsletter

CAMPUS NEWS

Jacana Campus

Later Years Garden Project
I would like to thank Bernadette from Hume Council and her gang of volunteers for coming to our school last Thursday the 1st of November and installing six new garden beds, with soil and mulch. This was done free of charge and took no time with the 15 volunteers who came to help with this task. To show our gratitude, Rosalie, Deb Munt and I provided the volunteers with afternoon tea in the Healthy Living Kitchen and Sue Johnston (Acting Principal) presented the volunteers with certificates of appreciation. The Later Years students now have more planting space to grow vegetables, herbs and fruit and use these products in their cooking classes. I would also like to thank Rosalie Scclari (teacher rm 19 - Later Years) for coordinating with Hume Council and organising this whole project. I would like to thank Rob Marsh for being the onsite supervisor on the day and assisting volunteers with equipment and where to locate the garden beds. I would like to thank Deb Munt for assisting with the afternoon tea and Sue J for organising and presenting the certificates. This project is a great example of involving the community in our school and raising awareness of our school, who we are and what we do in the community where both parties benefit greatly.

Angela Mancini (Later Years Sub School Leader)

2013 School Council for Jacana School for Autism
Next year Jacana School for Autism will need to form its own School Council.
We have received approval for the composition to be 7 parents, 4 DEECD members and 1 community member. We will need more parent members from the Jacana community than are currently on the Northern School for Autism School Council. We will be calling for nominations for the new school council early next year and we would like our families to consider nominating for school council. It is a great opportunity to gain insight into the operation of the school. School Councils play a key role in Victorian government schools. The school council develops a vision for the school in collaboration with all members of the school community and is actively involved in the development of and endorses the school’s strategic plan.

Parents who would like to know more about the School Council and its role should call 9309 6258 or email Corinne Pupillo (pupillo.corinne.c@edumail.vic.gov.au).

We have a booklet entitled Making the Partnership Work, which gives an overview of the School Council for prospective councillors. The Department of Education and Early childhood Development has a website if you prefer visit

Fundraising
A big Thank you to all the mums and their family and friends that supported the shopping tour this year. A really big Thank you goes to Lisa Sette for her organisation of the event. We raised $1,718.30.
Next year the fundraising committee is looking at holding a walkathon to celebrate Autism Month. We would like to get T-shirts made up for people to purchase. We are calling on anyone who may have a family member or friend that is in the screen printing business that may be able to assist us with this project to contact the office.

AEU ½ day strike action
There will be a half day stop work action for members of the AEU for the Jacana Campus on Friday the 30th November. Letters will be sent home regarding how this action will affect you and your child. Please read these notices carefully.

‘Count Us In’ music program
Last Thursday, many students and staff joined together in the PLC to watch a live stream from Canberra of the “Count Us In” music program. In the weeks leading up to the event, the students had been learning the new song “Different People” with its actions, plus singing the songs from the previous two years. They were also learning to tolerate larger groups and noise levels. It was great to see so many students singing, dancing and making the actions to the songs.
A big thank you to Catherine Schmidt for coordinating the day.

Sue Johnston
Acting Campus Principal

PHOTOS

Music Count Us In & Shopping Spree Bus Tour
Room 7 went on an exciting excursion to Living Legends. They were able to see and pat the horses who are all former racehorses. The boys had a wonderful time.
Room 4 making Green Eggs and Ham – Dr Seuss style!
On the 1st of November at 12:30pm the Middle Years joined the Early Years and students right across Australia to sing a song simultaneously! Maybe you heard someone singing near you. It was a great occasion to be a part of something bigger than our own community, and to sing and share this experience together. Thanks Catherine for teaching us our song in our music class and organising this great event for us to be a part of. We look forward to next year's national singing event.
As the year draws to a close we remember some of the achievements of our students.

Han has made excellent progress in following instructions.

John has learnt to greet staff by waving and smiling.

Adam has learnt to add with counters.

Zahraa has made excellent progress with her colouring.

Ryan is showing us his construction skills.

Tobi is making sentences independently.

Declan is working to complete his task independently.

Khaled has made excellent progress with his speech.
Our last week at Victoria Uni was great. We played lots of great games. Some games involved sports. At the end, we each got our own certificate and ribbon. I also did a speech and thanked Rachel, Mitch, Prahnee, Nathan, Tyrone and Jess, my sports teachers for helping me. We played Pirate’s Treasure, Line Tiggy, Zombie Tiggy, Duck Duck Goose and Scarecrow Tiggy. I’ll never forget that day.

Liam Ball Room 18
Later Years-
Garden Project
Education Maintenance Allowance - information for parents currently receiving EMA

Changes to the Education Maintenance Allowance (EMA) for 2013:

The EMA continues to help families on lower incomes with financial assistance to cover the cost of educational expenses including textbooks, stationery, uniforms and excursions for their child up until the age of 16.

From 2013, the Victorian Government is restructuring the EMA to better target financial support to families on lower incomes. Payments made direct to parents will be increased for eligible recipients at all year levels up to age 16, with an additional increase for parents with students in Years Prep and 7 in recognition of the additional costs at these transition points.

In 2013 the annual EMA payment for families with children in primary school (years 1-6) will receive a payment of $150. Families with children in secondary school (Year 8 up until the age of 16) will receive an annual payment of $250.

The School Start Bonus which was previously received by EMA families has been discontinued as a separate payment from 2013. However, additional funding has been incorporated into the EMA meaning that parents of children in Prep and Year 7 will receive boosted EMA payments of $200 and $300 respectively in those years.

From 2013, the EMA will no longer be paid 50/50 between the parent and the school. The 50% school portion of the EMA will no longer be paid to schools on behalf of parents. However, $62 million over four years will be redirected to the State’s most needy schools to assist families on lower incomes. These funds will form part of the school Student Resource Packages to be allocated at the local level.

New EMA payment option

From 2013, on the EMA application form you can choose to have your EMA payment;

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

The introduction of the new payment option to have the EMA payment directed to the school provides parents with extra flexibility to assist with budgeting towards education expenses.

Eligibility:

To be eligible for the EMA in 2013, you must:

- be either a parent or guardian of a primary or secondary school student up to the age of sixteen; and
- be an eligible beneficiary of a Centrelink pension, allowance or benefit within the meaning of the State Concessions Act 2004* or be a Veterans Affairs (TPI) pensioner or be a temporary foster parent.

* i.e. the parent/guardian must be the holder of a valid Health Care Card or valid Pension Card.

The eligibility criteria must be met as at 29 January 2013 (Instalment One) and 15 July 2013 (Instalment Two).
Payment Amounts - 2013:

<table>
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<th></th>
<th>Prep</th>
<th>Years 1 - 6</th>
<th>Year 7</th>
<th>Year 8 – Age 16</th>
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<tr>
<td>Instalment One</td>
<td>$140</td>
<td>$105</td>
<td>$210</td>
<td>$175</td>
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<tr>
<td>Instalment Two</td>
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<td>$45</td>
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<td>$75</td>
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<tr>
<td>Annual Total</td>
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<td>$150</td>
<td>$300</td>
<td>$250</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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*Student year level (or age for ungraded and special school students) will determine the amount payable. Parents of students turning 16 years in 2013 are paid on a pro rata basis.

**Contact:** School Office for an EMA application form and to lodge your application. The closing date for EMA application forms to be submitted to the school is **28 February 2013**.
Aspect Positive Behaviour Support Program

Aspect Victoria

The Aspect Positive Behaviour Support Program is funded through the Department of Human Services and offered FREE to parents/carers of children and young adults diagnosed with an Autism Spectrum Disorder aged 6 – 25 years of age.

The program is a tiered system offering three different levels of support:

1. **Positive Behaviour Support Workshops** (Group training and information)

2. **Post Workshop Consultation** (Short term additional assistance for families needing support with their individual behaviour support plan)

3. **Individual Behaviour Support Coordination** ('Wrap around' team approach to provide support to a small number of families with a child or young person with complex needs or enduring challenges. Individuals requiring this level of support may be of significant risk of family breakdown).

**Eligibility:**

Primary eligibility for the services is determined where the young person:

- lives at home with their family AND
- is aged between 6 and 25 years of age
- has a diagnosis of an Autism Spectrum Disorder (Autistic disorder; Aspergers syndrome; PDD-NOS)

**Referrals:**

Accepted from families, service providers and Aspect staff with parent consent.

**Contact details:**

Heather Kirkhope
Service Coordinator, Positive Behaviour Support Program. Aspect Victoria
Email: h.kirkhope@autismspectrum.org.au  Ph:- 9377 6628
Tier 1: Workshops

Objective: for the participating parents/carers and their accompanying professionals to create an ASD friendly environment, an individualised profile and to develop and implement a behaviour support plan for a specific identified behaviour.

- Run for 3 consecutive days
- Regular workshops in the Northern, Western, Southern and Eastern Divisions of Victoria
- Eligibility for attendance
  - Parent/Carer of a child or young adult 6-25 years old with a diagnosis of Autism Spectrum Disorder and living at home.
  - Professional working specifically invited by a participating family
- Referral Process – self referral
  - Registration – online www.autismspectrum.org.au ‘workshops’ Search ‘victoria’

Tier 2: Post Workshop Consultation

Objective: Consultancy with family to develop, implement or review behaviour management plans and/or resources based on the workshop materials and content. Assist the family to generalise plans to other settings and/or link to regional services.

- Short term Individualised consultancy for parents/carers - Post workshop*
  - Contact may include one or more of the following: phone appointments, home visits, school or other service visits with the family and dependent on family need.
  - Goals will be based on family need(s) and discussed during the initial contact and/or visits and reviewed regularly. Families requiring more intensive support will be referred to the Advisory and Support panel (Individualised Behaviour Support Coordination).

- Eligibility:
  - Parent/Carer of a child or young adult 6-25 years old with a diagnosis of Autism Spectrum Disorder and living at home.
  - Attendance at an Aspect Victoria ‘Positive Behaviour Support’ or ‘Recipe for Success’ Workshop

- Referral Process – Self referral; Service Provider referral with parent consent; ASD regional support/referral panel
  - Referral Package from Service Coordinator or Regional representative Aspect Victoria.

* One-off Pre-workshop consultancy may be offered to families awaiting workshops in their region. This will be dependent on staff availability as priority will be given to post-workshop clients.
Tier 3: Individual Support Coordination

Objective: To coordinate and/or support coordination to develop a team ‘wrap around’ approach to supporting the child or young person with Autism Spectrum Disorder. The team is made up of family members and regional service providers working with the family.

- Collaboration with family and service providers for a consistent and intensive approach* to create and implement individual profiles, ASD friendly environment and behaviour management plans for an individual with ASD based on workshop materials and resources.
- Goals of service will be based on family need and determined during the initial contact and/or visits. Service provision will be reviewed regularly (approximately 6-8 weeks).
- Eligibility:-
  - Child or young person with emerging or enduring behaviours that may lead to a significant risk of family breakdown.
  - Priority will be given to clients and families with complex needs including but not limited to: severity of behaviour, family levels of stress and quality of life, dual diagnosis.
  - Parent/Carer of a child or young adult 6-25 years old with a diagnosis of Autism Spectrum Disorder and living at home.
  - Attendance at an Aspect Victoria ‘Positive Behaviour Support’ or ‘Recipe for Success’ Workshop and Post Workshop Consultation.

Referral process:-
  - Referrals will be presented to the Advisory and Support panel via Aspect Service Coordinator or Regional Representative or Service Provider.

* Intensity is based on family need and can relate to the frequency, length of support and/or the number of services working collaboratively.

Additional Supports:

Aspect may be able to provide Professional development sessions on Positive Behaviour Support for staff at schools, respite and accommodation services on a ‘fee for Service’ dependent on requirements and staff availability. Please contact Beth Sutcliffe on (03) 9377 6600 for further information.

Contact details: Aspect Positive Behaviour Support Program

Email: hikirkhope@autismspectrum.org.au  Ph:- 9377 6628
Interchange North West

Interchange North West provides recreational activities for children and young people with disabilities.

Respite
Interchange North West programs are intended to provide the young person in the program with a valuable and positive experience at the same time as providing their carer with respite. Respite can reduce the stress of caring and assist carers to look after their own health and wellbeing. It provides carers with time out to attend to other matters, other family members and above all, to have time for themselves.

Services and Recreational Programs
Activities are designed to assist participants to make new friends, have fun and feel valued within the community. Emphasis is on social interaction, fun learning of new skills such as independent travelling and participation in the types of activities other children and young people of the same age enjoy.

Recreation Program
• Fun, community based activities for children and young people with disabilities
• Activities are run in a group setting where group members share similar interests, hobbies and are of a similar age
• Outings include visits to sporting and community events, using public transport, shopping, discos
• In-house activities can include cooking, karaoke, game tournaments, art and craft

Other activities
• School holiday programs
• Camps for children and young people with disabilities

Who can use these services?
• Families with children and young adults with disabilities aged 5 to 17 years who live in the Melbourne municipalities of Moreland and Hume

How much does it cost?
• Interchange North West program fees for individuals are generally between $15 and $20 per session. There are additional fees for camps.

For further information:
• Phone Commonwealth Respite and Carelink Centre / CarerLinks North a service of Merri Community Health Services on: 1800 052 222 or (03) 9495 2500

Merri Community Health Services

Published September, 2012
Author: Deborah McCallum, Team Leader - Activity Programs
For more information, or if you require an appointment, contact Merri Community Health Services today.
You’re invited to visit Victoria’s favourite attractions for free!

Accessibility Weekend 2012

17-18 November

Victoria’s favourite attractions are celebrating the importance of accessibility and inclusion by opening their doors for free to those in a wheelchair and their carers during Accessibility Weekend.

For more information about what’s on and visiting times visit www.independenceaustralia.com/sciaw
Join in the festivities and get along to any of the below venues over the weekend November 17-18.

**Participating Venues**

Art Gallery of Ballarat • Australian Centre for Contemporary Art • Bendigo Tramways • Central Deborah Goldmine • Cooks Cottage • Darnum Musical Village • Discovery Science and Technology Centre Bendigo • Eureka Sky Deck • Golden Dragon Museum • Gum San Chinese Heritage Centre • Gumbuya Park • IMAX Theatre Melbourne • Immigration Museum • Living Legends • Melbourne Aquarium • Melbourne Museum • National Gallery of Victoria • National Sports Museum • National Wool Museum • Maru Koala World • Old Gippstown • Old Treasury Building • Phillip Island - Churchill Island Heritage Farm • Phillip Island – Koala Conservation Centre • Phillip Island Penguin Parade • Scienceworks • Sovereign Hill • Surfworld Torquay **plus more**

**About Accessibility Weekend**

Accessibility Weekend is an annual event held as part of Spinal Cord Injury Awareness Week. This initiative aims to raise awareness of spinal cord injury and promotes importance of inclusion and accessibility for people living with a disability.