FROM THE ACTING PRINCIPAL

Dear Parents/Carers,

It was great to see so many families attending the meet the teacher afternoon. Whilst we understand this time did not suit all our families we do appreciate that families juggled other family and work commitments to attend the meeting. I hope you found the opportunity both useful and informative. All our staff look forward to building a strong relationship with our families throughout the year.

School Council Elections – Nominations closed 28th February 2013

Thank you for all the nominations for the new Jacana School for Autism School Council. There were 7 parent vacancies, only 5 were filled at the close of nominations on Thursday 28th February. If you are interested in becoming a school council member, further nominations are open until Wednesday 6th March 4pm. Please contact Corinne Pupillo for more information.

Congratulations to the following parent representatives who have been successfully appointed to the Jacana School for Autism School Council.

Nicole Davis, Anna McGrice, Lisa Sette, Steve Shennan and Edward Stolinski.

At the close of nomination, there were 4 staff nominations and only 3 vacancies. Due to the number of nominations being greater than vacancies, there will be a vote conducted for staff.

As the School Council executive officer I look forward to working closely with the new school council to continue to support the community in moving the school forward and enhance the great work of the previous school council.

Our first role will be to appoint the community member and this will be completed at the first school council meeting of the new members on Thursday March 21st at 5.30pm.

Entry Students

On Monday the 18th of February our entry students commenced full time. At Jacana School for Autism we encourage children to move quickly into a full week as we have evidence that structure and routines work very well for all our students. I’m sure that our prep’s are very tired at the end of a busy school day but also love the structure and routines that the school environment provides.

Family Support Meeting

Our next family support meeting will be held on Thursday 14th March and families are invited to join us to meet the Early/Middle Years and Later Years Sub School Leaders – Elizabeth Smith and Kym Tonkin.

Elizabeth and Kym will present an overview of the programs and activities that currently run at JSA. Kym will also discuss the new ADVANCE Program that is being introduced this year for our later year students. Please drop in for an hour for a cuppa and opportunity to find out more about the school programs.

Policy Development

The interim JSA school council met for JSA on Thursday 21st February. In a bulk policies ratification that endorsed all the current NSA policies that were essentially rebadged for JSA.

The rationale for doing this was that NSA had already undergone significant organizational changes in the past 2 years and as a campus of NSA we wanted to continue both with the current policies and practices that fell in line with the Strategic Plan and Annual Implementation Plan. The leadership team have had a consistent message from staff that there needs to be time to consolidate after 6 years of significant growth in enrollments, staffing and addressing building and grounds needs. This is a positive move for staff and families as this means that many of our new processes have remained unchanged in the demerger.
Parent Care Payment Policy

Attached to the newsletter this fortnight is our 2013 Parent Carer Payment Policy. Please take the time to read through the policy, as family invoices have been posted directly to homes this week. The only significant change to the policy this year is that teachers will no longer collect cash from families for shopping and cooking. Families will be invoiced for this and monies collected from the administration team. Please contact Glynis Lawson if you have any questions.

Contacting Sub School Leaders

Parents are encouraged to contact the classroom teacher to discuss issues relating to their child. The sub school leaders are also available to discuss any concerns you might have in relation to your child’s progress. Email contacts are:

Early Years A: Annette McKee - mckee.annette1@edumail.vic.gov.au

Early Years B – Lauren Tippett – tippett.lauren.k@edumail.vic.gov.au

Early/Middle Years – Elizabeth Smith – smith.elizabeth.a@edumail.vic.gov.au

Middle/Later Years – Kym Tonkin – tonkin.kym.k@edumail.vic.gov.au

Cooking & food preparation in the classrooms

Due to strict food handling and health and safety regulations, cooking programs are always undertaken in the student’s kitchen area (Kids Kitchen and Healthy Living Kitchen). Staff can only use the toaster or sandwich maker in classrooms. Students are encouraged to bring food that needs to be eaten warm in a food thermos from home. Staff are required to undertake rigorous OH&S risk assessments when using electrical equipment at school. We do understand that some students can be very rigid with eating patterns, however it is extremely important that we have process and practices that reflect current DEECD health and safety practices. We appreciate your co-operation in regards to this.

Fundraising Committee

Please help support the work of the fundraising committee. We have some great events planned.

Our Easter Raffle is our first fundraising event and we heavily rely on parents’ generosity to donate to the hampers. Please keep the Easter goodies coming so we can make up some big hampers for our lucky winners. The raffle will be drawn during the last week of Term 1.

We are also taking pre-orders for T-shirts for our very first Jacanarama Fun Run/Walk. We are celebrating Autism Awareness by encouraging our families to join in a walk/run on Thursday April 18th at the school. We would love to see as many people as possible in the inaugural yellow T-shirt on the day. There may be limited T-shirts available to purchase on the day so we are encouraging our staff and families to pre-purchase them to avoid disappointment.

The order for T-shirts and wrist bands went home last week. Please ask Carlee at the office if you did not receive one.

Special thank you to Bonnie Goddard for donating her time and skills in designing the graphics on the T shirt. Much appreciated.

Our next meeting is on Thursday March 14th. New members welcome.

School Photos

The school photos will be in Term 2 on Wednesday 15th May 2013.

OHS lockdown drill

Each year the school has at least one safety drill each term. On Thursday we had our first "lock down" practice. Lockdowns are signalled by playing a quiet piece of music continuously. Students who are outside move inside. Staff lock all doors, close all blinds, turn off lights and move students out of line of sight of any window.

Staff and Students stay locked in their rooms until we have checked all classrooms are safe, or in a real situation the danger has passed. Classrooms may also practice lockdowns and evacuations at other times to prepare students in case of an adverse event.

Students coped very well with the drill thanks to the preparedness of the teachers.

Corinne Pupillo
Acting Principal

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Fax 9309 6426
jacana.school@edumail.vic.gov.au
www.jacanaschoolforautism.vic.edu.au

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Dear Parents,

As we start the year as the new Jacana School for Autism we are fortunate to have an experienced and dedicated team of therapists providing support across the school. The service delivery model must ensure that we are able to deliver supports in a way which is fair, equitable and flexible. A referral model for therapy services provides a way for the school to deliver support across the school where it is most needed. This can vary depending on the experience and knowledge of the classroom teacher and the needs of the individual students.

Jacana School for Autism provides therapy support in the form of consultancy services to classrooms. The aim of the consultancy service is to provide the opportunity for teaching staff to collaborate with therapists when needed to accurately assess student needs, plan effective individual learning programs and implement successful teaching strategies.

Speech pathologists are able to provide consultancy support to teachers in relation to the communication aspects of a classroom program. This includes considering how we present information to students so they understand what is said and what is happening, as well as putting strategies and systems in place to support students with their expressive communication. Classroom teachers may request assistance from Speech Pathologists in areas such as:

- using a group schedule effectively
- planning opportunities for students to initiate requests in activities
- reducing levels of verbal prompting in a program
- teaching students to follow visual directions independently
- supporting a student to increase their range of picture exchange requests
- using a voice output device with a student in a classroom

Occupational therapists are able to provide consultancy support to teachers in relation to the classroom program in areas of fine motor skills, gross motor skills and sensory needs. Importantly, Occupational therapists can assist teachers to look at these areas in relation to developing independence in everyday living activities. Classroom teachers may request assistance from Occupational Therapists in areas such as:

- assessing the sensory needs of a student
- planning a program to develop independent dressing skills for a student
- implementing a sensory diet program with a student
- accessing adaptive equipment to assist a student with mealtimes
- incorporating a sensory diet program for students across the day
- teaching motor planning skills to students learning to use playground equipment

Referrals will vary in the number of consultancy sessions needed and a maximum of eight weeks may be allocated for each request. A review time may be made with the classroom teacher if required. A referral to both the Speech Pathology and Occupational Therapy team is made by the School Welfare Coordinator for each entry or transfer student upon their arrival. Classroom teachers may at times request a Speech Pathologist or Occupational Therapist to attend an SSG if there is a complex issue or team decision required for the student. All students turning 12 years of age are formally assessed by a Speech Pathologist for their Programs for Students with Disabilities funding review.

Jacana School for Autism has worked to ensure that consultancy therapy support is available across the school. This model of service ensures that teachers and therapists can work together, sharing skills and knowledge to build capacity for successful, effective and exciting classroom teaching and learning programs. If you have any queries, please do not hesitate to contact the school,

Jenny Bishop,
Senior Speech Pathologist,
Jacana Therapy Team Leader.
Early Years A

Room 9

The students in room 9 have been engaging in a variety of activities in their first full week at school. They enjoy water play, the playground, sensory activities and they especially love music and stories.
Early Years B

Room 5

The students in room 5 engage in a number of group activities throughout the day. This encourages social interaction, sharing, turn taking and waiting.
Middle Years

Room 14

Staffs: Nelly, Lyn and Kim

Students: Bianca, Christian, Miko, Khaled Han, John, Ryan and Zahraa

Beginning of Term 1 has been very busy and exciting!
All students are participating in many wonderful programs which have created fantastic learning experiences for each student.
Welcome! With another great year ahead of us we have started the year by doing lots of activities to explore our new learning environment up in the Early/Middle years. Our teacher Sarah is new to JSA and we are showing her all the wonderful learning we can do.
In Room 18 we are learning about Road safety and fitness through the bike education program. In class we have been playing numeracy and literacy games.
SLEEP STRATEGIES

As you may know children with Autism may have difficulty sleeping or may have an inconsistent sleep pattern.

Below are some strategies that may assist you to manage your child’s sleep patterns and behaviours:

- Set consistent and regular bedtime and wake-up time.
- Ensure your child has plenty of time to engage in active outdoor play during their day.
- Avoid large meals before bed and limit food/drinks containing caffeine at least 4-6 hours before bed.
- Incorporate calming activities into your child’s bedtime routine such as:
  - Having a warm bath prior to bed
  - Use of firm deep touch e.g. a firm towel rub after bathing, giving them a massage, cuddles, pillow squishes etc
  - Use of slow rhythmmical movement e.g. rocking – use caution as movement can affect children differently
  - Use of calming or familiar music
  - Dim lighting
  - Use of weighted items e.g. weighted blanket – this should be done under the guidance of an community Occupational Therapist

- Create a consistent sleep routine to prepare your child for bed.
- Use of visual timetables to assist comprehension of the routine e.g.

![Paul’s Bedtime Routine](image)

- Use of positive behaviour supports to encourage your child to sleep and stay in bed e.g.

![Stay in bed](image) → ![7 o’clock](image) → ![Wiggles](image) → ![Get up](image)

- Seek advice from an Occupational Therapist who can suggest a specific sensory diet plan to assist your child’s sleeping patterns.
Autism Spectrum Australia (Aspect)
Positive Behaviour Support Workshop

ASPECT POSITIVE BEHAVIOUR SUPPORT WORKSHOP
For Parents and Carers of Children and Young Adults with Autism Spectrum Disorder
(see eligibility criteria below)

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. 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 29th, Tuesday 30th April & Wednesday 1st May 2013
Where: Northern School for Autism
19 - 39 Landy Road, Jacana, VIC 3047
Time: 9:30am-2:30pm (9:15am for Registration)
Cost: FREE (Morning tea included~ participants to bring own lunch)
Register: Online registration at www.autismspectrum.org.au
Contact: For enquiries contact Amber Day or Heather Kirkepole:
Phone: 03 9377 6600 or email aday@autismspectrum.org.au

Eligibility to participate in this Workshop:
- Parents or carers of children and young adults aged between 6 and 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

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."

"Best information session on Autism I have been to. So much clarity about getting to the core behaviour, unpeeling the onion. Enjoyed all the visuals. Thank you so much."

Autism Spectrum Australia (Aspect) is Australia's largest not for profit autism specific service provider. Established in 1996, Aspect provides a wide range of services and support. In 2010 Aspect commenced operation in Victoria. Aspect has been funded by the Department of Human Services to provide a range of positive behaviour support programs across Victoria.
Support Group for Parents of kids with Autism

POKITS
PARENTS OF KIDS IN THE SPECTRUM

When: First Monday of every month
Where: Mother Teresa Catholic Primary School
Windrock Ave, Craigieburn
Time: 7:30pm-9:00pm
Cost: Gold coin donation

For more information Contact Susie 0402 245 086
The Dads to Dads Program offers fathers (and other significant male carers) of people with a disability or chronic illness the opportunity to meet other dads and to develop the confidence, skills and networks they need to take an active role in the support of their son or daughter.

The focus of Dads to Dads is not on the disability or chronic illness; but the strengths and capacity of men and the whole family.

Dads to Dads Events Feb-Jun 2013

A $50.00 Booking Fee is required for Dads to attend our weekends away. This fee is non-refundable or transferable and can be made through TryBooking.


03-05 May 2013: Dads to Dads (Bright). A weekend of Autumn Splendour in Bright, Victoria. To book http://www.trybooking.com/CGVC


For further details please contact:
Kylie Cleever (Administration Assistant) Dads to Dads Inc.
Email: perrin-dads@biapond.com
Phone: 03 5435 3158