

FOCUS NEWSLETTER

Wisdom, Respect, Courage



Issue # 52

Welcome to Freshwater Bay FOCUS Newsletter

'If you think you are too small to a make a difference, you have obviously never been in bed with a mosquito.'

Lauren Burns

The first two weeks have been very smooth and I believe it is a reflection of how well the staff and students have commenced the year. It is always wonderful to see the children renewing friendships, settling into new classrooms, getting to know their new teachers and participating in learning activities that are capturing and holding their attention. I commend the teachers for the learning tasks they have planned and delivered, the children are really engaged. All the teachers spent time here at school during the holidays to make sure they were well organised for the start of the year and their work has paid off.

The new Kindy Learning Area is completed and the staff are preparing it to for the children to begin there on Monday. I am very thankful for the patience of all parents who have Kindy children and children in Cowan classrooms. I am also grateful for all my staff who have adapted and to ensure the students have had have a great start to the year.

I extend a special welcome to the 84 new students and their families to our school community, 69 Kindy and 15 across the school. We look forward to working with you to help your child/ren grow into fine young men and women.

FOOD FOR THOUGHT!

LIFELONG LEARNER

Teaching children to be 'Lifelong Learners' has been a narrative in the educational landscape for some time. I have had time to think about this statement over the last six months. Our aspiration as the significant adults in our children's lives is to model the love of learning now and every day through being open to the wonders of the world and showing natural curiosity. Our children will model what they see us do and our attitudes to our learning.

IMPORTANCE OF SECURE ATTACHMENT FOR CHILDREN

One of the most important things that I have learnt, if there is one thing that we can do as parents that has the most powerful impact on our children's lives, it is ensuring our children are '**securely attached**'. The secret is simple, it is in our ability to listen and respond to our child's needs.

A secure attachment is an advantage for a whole life time. Secure attachment is not to be confused with being clingy, shy or always seeking attention, it is the total opposite. Children who are securely attached use their special adult as their base of security. When children feel secure, they can move away from their dependable adult to explore, knowing they can always go back to that adult as needed. It's through exploring that children learn.

It is very important for children to develop a relationship with their parents that make them feel safe and gives them a sense of security and confidence. The parent's sensitivity to the needs of the child is a major determinant in whether a secure or insecure attachment will develop. The more secure your child is in their relationship with their parent, the more likely they will see their future as an exciting mystery to discover not a problem to be endured.

The gift of 'secure attachment' is proven to create:

- positive self-esteem
- positive performance in school
- positive relationships with others now and all through life
- the ability to handle stress and
- some day raise her own healthy, happy children,

Our role is to be in tune with our child/ren and to let them set the pace for exploring. Your child needs to be able to trust that you will be there when they need security and comfort.

JUST NEED TO KNOW

The newsletter this week contains a lot of information about important policies and procedures. Please take the time to read this and if you have any questions do not hesitate to contact me.

PROTECTIVE BEHAVIOURS

Developing personal safety skills in our children to keep them safe is a very important role for parents and the school. Every class is teaching students ways to have an increased awareness of all aspects of their safety. It is important that families do not take for granted that if it's been taught at school and taught at home, that the habits of safe behaviour have been set. It requires constant reminders and practise before the behaviour become ingrained and spontaneous when required to act.

A good starting point is:

- Teach children they have a right to say "no" to unwanted touch.
- Teach about privacy and help them identify the private parts of the body.
- Talk about the difference between 'safe' and 'unsafe' secrets.
- Encourage them to tell someone if they are confused, upset or if they have concerns or questions.
- Discuss the difference between 'private' and 'public' topics of conversation.

KEEPING UP TO DATE

A dynamic school of this size has a lot of things happening. Good communication is critical to ensuring positive and effective school experiences for you and your children. Our primary tool of whole school communication is through our SkoolBag App. The other form of communication is the weekly FOCUS Bites and our monthly school newsletter. This is published in the third week of each month on a Thursday. It is sent out on the SkoolBag app and a link is also put on our school Facebook page.

To receive Facebook notifications, all you need to do is search for Freshwater Bay Primary School on Facebook and 'Like' one of the posts. This should ensure that our posts appear on your Facebook 'feed'. (Please read and familiarise yourself with our school Facebook Code of Conduct that can be found on our website under the 'Policies' tab.)

To receive notifications directly to your smartphone we use the app SkoolBag. To access this, you need to install the app on your phone or tablet, search for Freshwater Bay Primary School and then register the appropriate year level that your child/ren are in this year so that any year level specific messages can be sent directly to you. Our Freshwater Bay Facebook page is where we upload student pictures and activities in school. In addition, there is the Community Freshwater Bay Facebook page which connects our community on a social level.

Please note, registered members of SkoolBag, your child will not be automatically rolled over into their class for this year. You need to update the year level for your child/ren this year.

COLLECTION OF STUDENTS FROM SCHOOL DURING SCHOOL HOURS

The Western Australian Department of Education (DET) has policies and guidelines for the collection of children during school hours from government schools. Students must only be collected by their parents (subject to any specific court orders) or by a person who has been authorised by the parents to pick up their child. An authorised person is anyone who has been identified by the parents on the enrolment form such as Adult A or Adult B or anyone listed as an Emergency Contact. If the authorised person signing the child out early is not known to the office staff, they can expect to be asked for photo identification. If you have any questions about these procedures please do not hesitate to speak to a member of the Principal team, (myself or assistant principals Hilaire Lyon and Lisa Mitchell), or any of the office staff. On a related topic, if there are or have been any family court orders in place that are relevant to your children, please ensure that we have the latest copy on our files so we are aware of any custody or access restrictions that are in place.

STUDENT ACCIDENT INSURANCE AND PRIVATE PROPERTY BROUGHT TO SCHOOL

Parents and guardians are reminded that the Department of Education (DET) does not hold accident insurance and parents/guardians are responsible for paying the cost of medical treatment for injured students including the cost of ambulance attendance or transport. There are student accident insurance policies available for parents from commercial insurers. We do not make any recommendations on these policies and parents are encouraged to find a suitable personal accident insurer themselves if they so desire. Similarly, the DET does not hold insurance for personal property brought to schools and it has no capacity to pay for any loss or damage to such property. Please be assured that we will take all care should a child bring a particularly valuable item to school however, we cannot be held responsible. If a child has to bring a valuable item to school, we ask them to hand them to the teacher or the office for safer keeping rather than just in the child's school bag. It is preferable that students leave the items they really value at home.

PARKING, TRAFFIC MANAGEMENT & ACTIVE TRAVEL

A source of great frustration to drivers is the congestion and challenges that go with trying to drop - off or pick-up children directly in front of our school in Bay View Tce. This is a designated kiss and drop zone, please be mindful of this and keep the traffic moving. The car park off Princess Rd is not a kiss and drop zone. Please park your car and then pick up your child/ren. Parking in the Kiss and Drop and leaving your car cannot happen as it creates congestion and this causes frustration and annoyance for other community members.

Please try to use active travel methods so that you and your children are not caught up in the congestion in front of the school between 8:15am and 8.30am or 2.45pm and 3:15pm. We have Traffic Wardens who have quickly become part of our community. Active travel is now a real option for our children. I encourage you and your children to walk to school. The children will definitely benefit from some daily exercise and the more children and families we have on the streets the safer our community is. It is always safer when children are in groups or in pairs. Children who use some form of active travel to get to school each day arrive exercised, socialised and much more ready to learn.

PARENT / TEACHER MEETINGS

Please keep a watch out for the Parent Information Session. Each teacher will be holding a meeting for the parents in their class. This is an opportunity for the teacher to meet with you collectively. The aim of the meeting is for the teacher to outline their focus for the year, how they will support you and your child, how you can support them and your child, and answer questions you might have. The meetings are a general meeting not a parent/teacher interview. If you have any particular matters you wish to discuss with the teacher about your child, please make an appointment at another time. Thank you for your understanding.

WEBSITE

Our website is our place where you will find everything that you will need to know about the school. The website is intended to be a fluid space, that will change to meet the needs of our community. We appreciate any feedback as our aim is to ensure that information is easy to find.

SCHOOL SUNDOWNER MARCH 6

Please put Friday 6 March into your calendar. It is our annual P & C Sundowner. It is a fabulous event to welcome all our new families to our school and celebrate the beginning of the school year. It is always a great night.

RIDE2SCHOOL DAY FRIDAY 13TH OF MARCH

I would like to encourage everyone to get on their bike and ride to school on Friday 13th of March. There are more than 350,000 students across the nation who will be participating.