

NEWSLETTER



Wembley Downs Primary School

From the Principal

7 NOVEMBER, 2017

All Parents

This note, amongst many other things, is to inform all parents that I will be taking long service leave from 10 November 2017 through until the commencement of the 2018 school year.

The timing of long service leave is always a difficult decision for any staff member and particularly for principals. There is no 'perfect' time.

My partner and I have recently completed building our new family home in Swanbourne. This has been a project that has taken 3 years to realise. We are both going to take time away from work to attend to moving house and settling into our new home with our two sons.

Over the preceding nine months we have conducted a thorough 'self-review' of all aspects of school operations.

In May this year the staff used the *National School Improvement Tool* (NSIT) as the basis for this 'self-reflection' process. The conclusions that we have reached from the review have highlighted the need for significant change across a number of areas of school operations.

As a result of our review and subsequent deliberations, I am happy to share some of the changes with parents.

Curriculum Delivery

The delivery of curriculum is now being directed by an agreed 'whole of school' plan. All teachers are required to teach according to the requirements of the school curriculum plan.

Numeracy

In 2018 students in Years 3 to 6 will be in maths classes that are focused on their point of need.

Students will be placed in either an extension class or, an 'at level' class.

Essentially we are establishing a *flexible grouping* arrangement based on student need and not just their age. It is more commonly referred to as "setting".

As an example, a Year 3 student who has demonstrated the ability to work above their year level will be undertaking a Year 4 maths curriculum in 2018. This might mean moving to a Year 4 class for their numeracy lessons.

It will be the same process for Year 4 students, Year 5 students and Year 6 students.

DATES TO REMEMBER

Tuesday 7 November
Year 4 Zoo Camp

**Weds—Friday
8-10 November**
Year 5 Point Peron Camp

Friday 10 November
Year 1 Rottnest Excursion

Wednesday 15 November
Starlight Concert
6.30-8.00pm

Friday 17 November
Room 6/7 Assembly

Wednesday 29 November
2018 Kindy Information
Session

Friday 1 December
Year 6 Drama Performance

Tuesday 5 December
P&C Meeting

Wednesday 13 December
Year 6 Graduation



Principal News cont...

The decision about the placement of students into an extension class is based, in part, on results obtained from our PAT testing regime. The PAT tests are being conducted this term.

Teacher judgments about student capabilities and their demonstrated learning behaviours will also inform the placement for numeracy.

In 2018 the following texts / programs will be used for all numeracy lessons.

- i) Pre Primary : Envision Maths
- ii) Year 1 : Envision Maths 1
- iii) Year 2 : Envision Maths 2
- iv) Year 3 : Envision maths (year 3 extension student will use the En-Vision 4)
- v) Year 4 : Envision Maths (year 4 extension students will use the ICE-EM 5 text)
- vi) Year 5 : ICE-EM 5 (year 5 extension will use ICE-EM 6 text)
- vii) Year 6 : ICE-EM 6 (year 6 extension students will use ICE-EM 7 and ICE-EM 8 where appropriate)

This flexible grouping strategy has the advantage of lowering class numbers (all school administrators will also teach a maths group) as well as providing a challenging and focused learning environment for all students. Past experience has shown me that students embrace this model as they often ask, “... *what do I need to do to get into the extension group?*” That question kick starts a very interesting discussion. Students asking about what they need to do to improve – the motivation is intrinsic.

Note: the ‘flexible grouping’ of students will only apply to students in Years 3 to 6.

In semester 2 of 2018 some of the current Year 2 students will have the opportunity to commence work on En-Vision 3.

Clearly, the groups are not ‘fixed’ for the year (*i.e. flexible*). If, during the year, a student consistently demonstrates the ability to work at an extended level or, the extended level proves too onerous for a student, then a move to another class will be discussed with the parents, teacher and school administrators. It is anticipated that if this is required that it will be done between semesters.

The focus will remain on responding to student need as determined by the school and in consultation with parents.

No student will be placed in a maths class below their year level. Indeed, should a family not want their child placed into an extension class, then that is a decision for that family.

As an example – a Year 3 student will either be;

- (a) Working on En-Vision 3 or,
- (b) Working on En-Vision 4.

A Year 3 student will not be placed into an En-Vision 2 program. We do not believe that that reflects sound educational practice.

Further, it is expected that all staff will employ an ‘extension’ pedagogical process irrespective of whether they teach an extension or at level group of students. Often, this can be as simple as consistently employing questioning techniques and relating content and knowledge to problems.

Prior to finalising our plans, we sought the advice of a Departmental maths specialist. This advice assisted the staff to settle on the text, review and change lesson structure and how to make extension a daily routine for all students.

It is my view that this change will refocus our numeracy instructional technique and provide challenging and engaging learning opportunities for all students.

Principal News cont...

Scope and Sequence

In 2018 the school will develop a specific WDPS scope and sequence document. This document will outline what learning outcomes we expect for every year level across all of the learning areas. That is, at the end of year 1, we expect all students to have achieved X etc. This will ensure the achievement levels that we expect for all students are known by all families and students. Clearly, a school based scope and sequence must align with the Western Australian Curriculum.

Literacy

All literacy lessons will occur in the morning for all years from PP to year 6. The timetable for 2018 has been arranged so that the students and teachers have an uninterrupted literacy and numeracy 'blocks'.

Based on our experiences with the numeracy structure, we will examine ways in which the same or similar model can be used for literacy classes. This may occur in semester 2 of 2018.

Specialist Subjects

All specialist instruction will occur in the afternoon sessions and on Fridays. The intent is to maximise the learning time for literacy and numeracy in the mornings.

The specialist areas in 2018 will be;

- (a) Art (provided we can locate a fantastic art teacher)
- (b) Music
- (c) LOTE
- (d) Physical Education
- (e) STEM (science technology, engineering and maths)

Library

The library will be completely reconfigured to create a more flexible and dynamic learning environment. We have received 3 design concepts and quotes for a new library design and configuration. The P&C executive have committed funds to this project and the school will contribute an equal amount. We are planning for this work to occur over the school holidays so that the students commence 2018 with a 21st C learning space.

Technology

The school will be leasing ~100 new i-Pads to be used across the school. All staff will be provided with the opportunity to develop their skills in integrating technology into their classes.

NAPLAN 2018

We have been developing and working on systems with the Education Department representatives to become one of a small number of schools selected to trial the use of NAPLAN online in 2018.

We will issue further information to the school community as we work through this process with Departmental specialists.

Excursions / Camps

During 2018 there will be a significant excursion or camp for students in years 1 to 6. The key purpose behind the excursions and or camps is to create authentic learning experiences that focus on;

Perserverance and Resilience – creating learning experiences that enable students to learn how to pick themselves up and try again when things don't go as they expect – a very useful life skill.

Self-Management - creating learning experiences that enable students to learn to regulate their emotions so that they can deal with stress, control their impulses and motivate themselves to

Principal News cont...

overcoming obstacles. Self-management skills enable students to set and monitor their progress towards the achievement of personal and academic goals and to express their emotions appropriately.

Responsible Decision Making - creating learning experiences that enable students to make decisions based on a consideration of relevant factors, including ethical standards, safety concerns, and social norms. Camp activities encourage students to ask, "... *how do my actions affect others and what are the likely consequences of taking an alternative course of action?*"

There's a lot more to be said on the importance of developing self-regulated learning i.e. the ability to direct their attention, emotions and behaviours to the demands of learning.

Staffing

We are currently examining how to create the most effective staffing profile that best meets the needs of the students. It is my duty to locate the best teachers for the students and deploy them to ensure that the educational needs of the students can be addressed. We are also working to ensure that we have early childhood trained teachers teaching our Kindergarten to Year 2 students.

I have the view that schools are places of learning for students and not employment conveniences for adults. Clearly, there is a balance to be struck. However, the needs of the students are paramount. This position is reiterated in all key Education Department documents.

Mrs Michelle Leeming will be in the role of Acting Principal during my leave. I have full confidence in Michelle and I know that the year will conclude in an orderly fashion.

Notwithstanding the taking of leave, I look forward to seeing everyone at our Year 6 drama performance – it will be an outstanding event and I encourage all families to support the school and our Year 6 students. The drama performance will be supported by our school choir.

Together we create the school we want for the students.

As a concluding note – and from the above it is reasonably easy to conclude that the staff have been extremely busy positioning the school to be as effective as it can be in 2018.

From a personal perspective, I have been focused on ensuring that we are ready to implement all of the planned changes as effectively as possible. Fact is, I am normally a far more *'out and about'* person talking to mums and dads in the morning, listening to their ideas and thoughts about the school as well as general chat. Sadly, I haven't been able to do this due to the desire to establish many new systems and structures within the school as well as developing a forward looking and positive culture of excellence across the school. It is my hope, as we move into 2018, that the need to be *'stuck at the desk'* will diminish and I can move towards getting to know everyone just a little better.

Enjoy the Christmas break with your families – please stay safe and I look forward to seeing everyone at the commencement of the 2018 school year or, at the drama performance on 1 December 2017 :)

Mr Lincoln Day—Principal

From the Front Office

Have You Paid Your Term Account?!

If not, it would be appreciated if you could do so as soon as possible.

Nearly all students have had the pleasure of in-term swimming and in the process of enjoying Edudance!

Year 4 Zoo, Rottnest, Penguin Island, Year 5 Camp are coming up very soon!

Any queries please contact the School Office on 9245 3199 or e-mail

Kerry.Blechynden@education.wa.edu.au

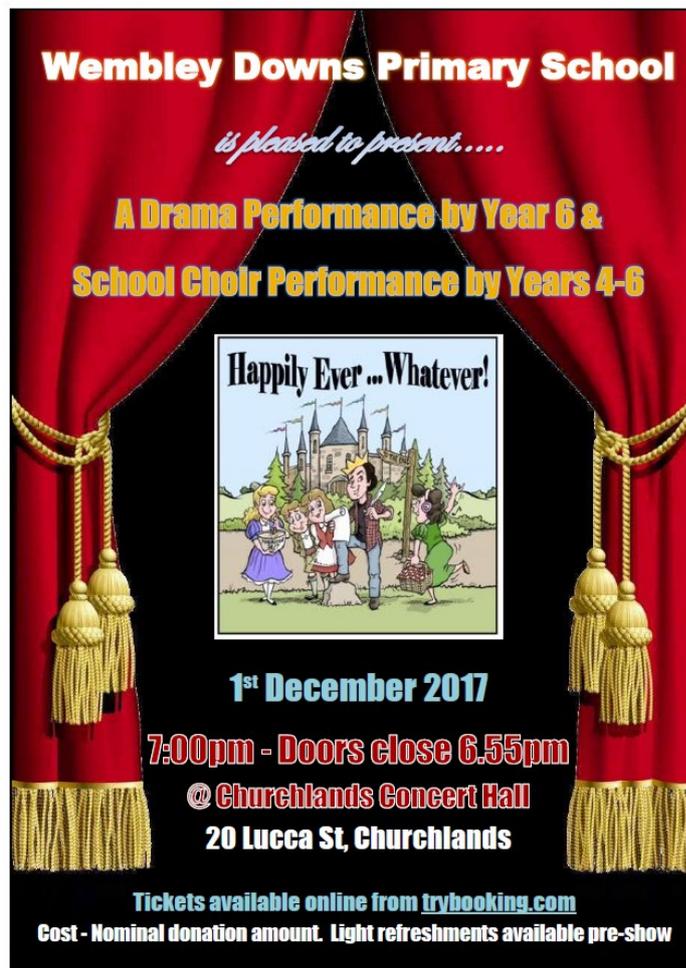
Happily Ever After—Drama Production and Choir Performance

Don't Forget!!

Book your tickets NOW!! Try booking. <https://www.trybooking.com/book/sessions?eid=324768>

Choir and Drama Production coming up on the 1st December at the Churchlands Senior High School – Concert Hall

Support the students in what sounds like a fun drama show in the making to be enjoyed by all!



Music News

Startlight Concert

Dear Parents,

Wembley Downs will be hosting the annual Starlight Concert on Wednesday 15th of November.

Students involved:

All scholarship students, as well as the choir and string orchestra.

Where: Wembley Downs PS Undercover Area

Time: 6.30pm, students meet at 6.10pm in music room

Entry: Gold coin donation

Wearing: school uniform shirt, long black bottoms, black shoes

Kind regards,

Gillian Archer—Music Teacher

P&C News

Uniform News

We have been quiet for a while just getting on with business, so forgive us the length of this communication, which is probably our last for the year: **but please do read it as there will be information you likely need to know about.**

- First off we'd like to thank you for your cheerful patience for those parents waiting on **faction shirts and also those staff waiting on staff polos**. The new uniform is manufactured in China and we have to wait on shipping etc so it takes months to arrive. We have been advised that these items and our summer stock will be arriving at the port at the end of the month in two shipments, and then obviously it has to reach us...so you should get your hands on them this term.
- ...that said, in relation to **next years leavers shirts**, they need to be printed once they arrive, so there is a small chance that you may not get them until the start of next year. As year 5 parents will know, we started the ordering process as early as we possibly could to minimise this type of thingso fingers crossed all will go well and if there are any issues we will notify reps.
- For parents of **kindy kids going on to Pre primary**, uniform size samples were left in classrooms for your convenience and will now be in the office for a few weeks for those who missed them and need to establish sizes. Details of uniform requirements were sent to class reps, so any parents unsure of what's needed please speak to your rep.
- In a similar fashion class reps were contacted and size samples for the red hat have been left in pre primary classrooms for parents convenience . **Children going into year 1 need the red hat.**
- As we are waiting on our summer stock, it will be likely that we run low on certain items. In order to save volunteers doubling up on work **we may not deliver orders if we are waiting for items to arrive in your order, that we know will arrive by the end of term.** This also minimises potential errors from occurring. Whether we do this or not depends on the volume of orders that come through and volunteer capacity, but please just be aware that if **you don't receive your order we have not forgotten about it, we are just waiting on imminent stock.** Thank you in advance for your patience and support regarding this.
- in the event that we cannot deliver your order this term - due to stock not arriving in time, or very late orders, payment issues etc we will find your child's classroom and deliver in the new year.
- Please note that the **uniform and canteen operate separate accounts and we cannot access 'canteen credit' to pay for uniforms.** There has been misleading info on School 24, and they have informed us that the message that appears as you are about to pay for uniforms, inviting you to top up your canteen credit has been removed. Hopefully this will help matters. Big thanks to parents who have been caught up in this frustration and have again remained cheerful and helpful.
- In relation to warmer winter clothing that some parents have requested, we are waiting on a fleece sample to arrive so the relevant approvals etc can be given. To be clear, This does **not** replace the existing jacket but rather offers the second option of a warmer fleece for those kids who feel the cold.
- Thank you to all parents who have offered to help out at the kindy info session in November. It's much appreciated.

Finally, as this may be our last communication this year, I (Sarah) want to acknowledge the brilliant uniform volunteers—Nic, Daisy and Ursula. Without their weekly commitment there would be no uniform shop—thank you for your support!

Enjoy the rest of the term,

Uniform Team