FROM THE PRINCIPAL

I would like to begin by inviting all parents, especially those parents new to the school to our first Parents and Citizens Meeting for the year. The meeting is on Wednesday, 25 February commencing at 6.30pm in the first floor classrooms of our administrative block. There will be a light supper followed by a tour of the school for our new parents.

By the time you read this edition of Westnews, you should have already received invoices for outstanding fees and contributions. You will notice that included in the invoice is a $15.00 P&C levy. This levy covers the insurance for your sons and daughters, which the P&C pays on your behalf for things like ambulance, medical, physio and dental. As school activities are not covered by insurance, I would strongly recommend that parents pay this levy. I would appreciate it if you could make arrangements to pay the fees and contributions outlined on the invoice as soon as possible. Subject fees need to be paid immediately as we have already purchased the resources and products that your sons and daughters are currently using in these practical subjects. Similarly, we are also paying our coaches so the first instalment ($300.00) of the sport fees also needs to be paid immediately as well. If you are unable to pay these fees in full, I would ask that you contact Tracey Giorgiutti in our office who can arrange for these contributions to be paid off in instalments by the end of Term 3.

We have had a very settled start to the year and as I wander around the school, it is good to see the students working hard in all of their classes. It is essential that this continues for the entire year if we are to maximise the learning outcomes for all students and equal the success of the 2014 HSC. The value added data for last year’s HSC has just arrived and I would like to congratulate the students and staff for achieving such a fantastic result. The value added data for the 2014 HSC is determined by comparing that performance with the performance of the same students when they sat their NAPLAN tests in 2011. I am pleased to say that once again our value added places us in the top 10% of all schools from throughout the state, which is a further indication of the excellent academic record that we have at Westfields Sports. I challenge this year’s HSC students to work even harder and out-perform last year’s results.

At the weekly assemblies, I have been stressing to the students the importance of being at school on time, attending all lessons, and I would like to reinforce this with the parents. When students arrive late, not only are they missing out on valuable work, they also disrupt the rest of the class who are already working, and that is not fair on the other students or the teacher. It is even more important that students attend school all the time. Frequent absences affect the continuity of learning and means that students often miss out on valuable knowledge and skills that are a prerequisite for further learning to occur. I would ask that you support us by ensuring that your sons and daughters are at school on time every day.

Mr R. Davis
Principal

20 February 2015

IMPORTANT EVENTS

25/2/2015
P&C Meeting
6:30pm

6/3/2015
Swimming Carnival

Winners
International Olympic Committee
Sport and Youth Trophy 2008
FROM THE DEPUTY PRINCIPAL

Term 1 is always a busy time of year as we get programs and procedures established smoothly for the year. We look forward to continuing our relationship with Sydney University and participating in some rich activities for our students at the University throughout the year. Once again volunteers will assist us in delivering quality support to our Homework Centre. Our Homework Centre runs Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday afternoons from 3.15pm – 4.15pm Students are supported with teachers and University volunteers to assist with homework and study. Our Saturday school is running regularly Saturday mornings for Mathematics and English.

We look forward to a visit from Jim Wilson and Channel 7 with our Year 12 students to participate in an inspire program. We are also preparing for an exciting Links to Learning Program to empower some of our Year 10 students. This will explore leadership and team building as well as practical skills for enhanced learning.

School Uniform should be worn with pride to reflect students being part of the Westfield's team. Encourage your child to be prepared and organised for school by having a uniform ready each evening for the next day. Wearing the uniform with respect speaks volumes about your child’s attitude and character. Help support us by encouraging full school uniform please.

Mrs S. Walker
Relieving Deputy Principal

THE WELFARE TEAM

In the last school newsletter, the Welfare team was outlined. This team is in place to ensure that school is a supportive environment for all students. Please do not hesitate to contact your child’s Year Advisor or Mrs Taylor (Head Teacher Welfare) should you think there is extra information we should know about your child to help support them at school. If your child has a medical condition that the school is not aware of, please consider this as a matter of urgency, let us know.

Mrs S. Taylor
Head Teacher Welfare

MUSIC TUITION

Westfields Sports Music Department offer students the opportunity to have guitar, drums, singing and piano lessons.

Lessons are held on a weekly basis during school time.

Our school provides your child with expert tuition by experienced musicians at very reasonable rates. Students also have the opportunity to sit for external music exams eg AMEB.

For further information, please contact Ms Ricapito or Mr Butler as soon as possible.

Ms T. Ricapito
CAPA Faculty

SCHOOL VACCINATION PROGRAM 2015

This year your child will be offered free vaccinations to protect them from Human Papilloma Virus, Varicella (Chickenpox) and Tetanus, Diptheria and Pertussis (whooping cough). Registered nurses will visit the school three times over the course of the year to provide this vital service. It is important that you read the parent information pack provided and sign the consent card for each vaccine you would like your child to receive. If you have any queries, the Immunisation Team at SWSLHD Public Health Unit will be happy to take your call on 87780855.

Mrs S. Taylor
Head Teacher Welfare

THE TELL THEM FROM ME

Student feedback survey

I am delighted that this term, our school, like many others in the state, will participate in a Department of Education and Communities initiative: the Tell Them From Me student feedback survey. The survey aims to help improve student learning outcomes and measures factors that are known to affect academic achievement and other student outcomes. The focus of the NSW-wide survey is on student wellbeing, engagement and effective teaching practices.


The survey is a great opportunity for our students to provide our school with valuable and quick feedback on what they think about school life, how engaged they are with school and the different ways that teachers interact with them. Schools in Australia and around the world have used the Tell Them From Me survey to help improve how they do things at school.

I want to assure you that the survey is confidential and school staff will not be able to identify individual students from their responses. The survey is conducted online and will typically take less than 30 minutes to complete. It will be administered during school hours between 9 March and 2 April. Participating in the survey is entirely voluntary.

If you do not want your child or children to participate, could you please call the front office on 9604 3333 by Friday 27 February.

Mr D. Barrett
Deputy Principal

SCHOOL PHOTOGRAPHS

Catch up photos will now be on Thursday 19 March, 2015.

On this day the following photos will be taken
- Year 8 portraits (remaining students)
- Year 7 portraits
- Any absent students from previous day
- Sibling photos

Students to see Mr Boulous for a sibling envelope

Mr G. Boulous
Head Teacher Administration
PDHPE

Last week 50 students took part in the 2015 NSW Schools Physical Activity and Nutrition Survey.

SPANS is a NSW government population monitoring survey of school aged children, and is conducted approximately every 5 years. The purpose of SPANS is to monitor and report on the trends in school-aged children’s weight and weight-related behaviours. The findings are used to guide government policy and practice and evaluating interventions designed to promote healthy lifestyles in children, including healthy eating and physical activity.

Students completed a pen and paper questionnaire, which included information on their physical activity, sedentariness and food habits. They also had their height, weight and waist circumference measured, participated in the 20 metre shuttle run test and were asked to demonstrate their ability in 7 fundamental movement skills.

The survey will provide answers to a number of important questions:

- What proportion of young people in NSW is overweight or obese and is the problem getting better or worse?
- How much time do students spend in physically active and sedentary pursuits and are students becoming more or less physically active?
- How fit are school students and is their fitness improving or deteriorating?
- How well are young people eating?
- And, finally, what are potential ways to reduce the prevalence of overweight and obesity in your people?

All the students enjoyed being involved and took part with an excellent approach. Well done to those that volunteered.

Mr C. Jarvis
Head Teacher PDHPE

UNIFORM SHOP

Students wishing to order a blazer for the colder months need to do this at the Uniform Shop over the next four weeks - Thursday 26 February, 5 March, 12 March, 19 March - to ensure delivery at the start of next term. A deposit of $30.00 is required when ordering.

The Uniform Shop is open every Thursday during the school terms from 8:00am to 11:30am.

Mrs J. Stickler
Uniform Shop

WESTFIELDS SPORTS - AN ESMART SCHOOL

An eSmart school is a school where the smart, safe and responsible use of information and communications technology is a cultural norm. Students, teachers and the wider school community are equipped to embrace the best these technologies can offer, while being savvy about the pitfalls. In each school newsletter this year, we aim to give some information to parents to assist them with being more informed cybercitizens.

Cyberbullying is the use of technology to bully a person or group. Bullying is repeated behaviour with the intent to harm others. Behaviour may include:

- abusive texts and emails
- posting unkind or threatening messages, videos or images on social media websites
- imitating or excluding others online
- inappropriate image tagging

For many teenagers, their online life is an important part of their social identity. Any young person fears that parents might take away their devices and refuse access to the internet and so do not report cyberbullying to their parents. Teenagers are also often concerned that parent’ actions will make cyberbullying issues worse, so it is important to remain calm and supportive.

Trolling is when a user intentionally causes distress by posting inflammatory comments online.

Trolling differs from cyberbullying in that trolls aim to gain attention and power through disruption of conversation by encouraging a defensive reaction from those they attack. Cyberbullying usually focuses less on the reaction of the victim, and more on the feelings and authority of the bully. Cyberbullying is usually repeated behaviour, while trolling can be one-off.

As a parent, you can help your child and encourage them to take control of the issue.

Talk to them about cyberbullying before it happens. Work out strategies to address any potential issues and reassure your child that you will be there to support them.

Advise your child not to reply to any messages from a bully. Often if bullies don’t receive a response they will give up.

Learn how to block a bully so they are no longer able to make contact.

Keep a record of harassing messages in case authorities become involved. Put them somewhere your child won’t continue to see them.

Contact the website administrator or use the reporting function to ask for contact to be removed or to report harassment.

Talk to your child’s school if cyberbullying involves another student. The school should have a policy in place to help manage the issue.

Remember that if your child has been involved in cyberbullying and seems distressed or shows changes in behaviour or mood it may be advisable to seek professional support, including through the Cybersmart Online Helpline at cybersmart.gov.au/report.aspx

Cyberbullying information from ‘parents’ guide to online safety from Australian Communications and Media Authority website

Ms S. Taylor
Head Teacher Welfare

FOLLOW US ON TWITTER

For all the latest information follow us @WestfieldsSport.
APPLYING FOR LEAVE OF ABSENCE

From time to time, students may need to be out of school for short and occasionally long periods for medical or for travel reasons. When this happens caregivers are asked to contact the school in writing, requesting that leave be granted. This letter should explain the reason for leave and clearly state the dates the student will be absent. This letter should be given to Miss Lam, Head Teacher Administration.

It is important that before any decision to take a student out of school, consideration be given to the impact on the student’s education.

If leave is for more than 15 school days special approval is required and a pro-forma letter will be issued. Leave greater than 20 days will require a copy of an itinerary.

It is a student’s responsibility to discuss with their teachers what arrangements can be made to catch up on or complete work missed while on leave.

Miss T. Lam
Head Teacher Administration

LOCAL SPORTING CHAMPIONS FUNDING

This Australian Government initiative has been designed to provide financial assistance for junior sportsmen and women towards the cost of travel, accommodation, uniforms or equipment when competing at an official national sporting organisation (NSO) endorsed state sporting organisation (SSO) or national school sporting competition.

The grants for individual applicants will be $500. To be eligible to apply, young people must be aged between 12-18 years and travelling more than 250km to compete in state or national level sporting competitions. So if you know any junior sportsmen and women at your school that maybe finding it difficult to meet the ongoing and significant costs associated with participation at sporting competitions, send them this flyer and encourage them to apply for an LSC grant online at http://www.ausport.gov.au/champions

Mrs J. Kenny
Director of Sport

MOBILE PHONES

Students may bring a mobile phone to school. All phones must be turned off throughout the day.

Inappropriate use of phones – including images or recording of fellow students is unacceptable.

If a student is found using their mobile phone during school time the phone will be taken from students and placed in the school safe for collection by the student at the end of the school day.

Subsequent offences will result in parents having to collect the phone from the school office.

FROM THE SPORTS DESK

Congratulations

- Breanna Baker, Breanna Evans, Amber Frost, Jamie Johnson, Tayla Noble & Ashleigh Viera - SSW Softball Representatives
- Jake Barnes, Alex Brook, Gavin Dixon, Cooper Horton, Jarron Hoye, Shane Kelleher, Dean Matheson, Dean Pousini-Hilton & Riley Harrison - SSW Baseball Representatives
- Jack Bray, Luke Courtney, Brandon Crosby, Kyle Chisholm, Jarred Lysaught, Brendan Smith (c) - NSWCHS State Cricket Representatives

Mrs J. Kenny
Director of Sport

PEER SUPPORT FOR YEAR 7

This week has seen our Year 7 Peer Support program on Bullying commence. Forty five Year 11 students have been selected and trained to facilitate these sessions to Year 7 classes over the next two terms. The sessions are designed to ensure that Year 7 realise the consequences and effects of all types of bullying and how to treat others as they would like to be treated. The Welfare team believes this is a very worthwhile program and we hope Year 7 benefit from these sessions.

Ms S. Taylor
Head Teacher Welfare

Westfields Sports are proud to be supported by:

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