Dear Parents and Carers

As with the last two years, the hot weather is continuing for longer than we would all prefer and I would like to thank all parents for ensuring that their children have a broad brimmed hat to wear when outside the classroom.

Independent Public School Status – after not being selected to be part of this program in the previous two years our school, along with 240 other schools, has joined a development program that aims to support schools in meeting the criteria required for the granting of IPS status. Michael Wright and I attended the first day of three days on Monday, February 24 and now know the process and what the school needs to demonstrate, so that we can use the empowerment and autonomy that comes with becoming an IPS, to cater for the learning needs of all of our students.

In the future the school will need community and parent feedback about their thoughts on our school’s readiness for the increased responsibilities and accountability. Parent / Community information sessions will be offered to give people the opportunity to learn more about the benefits of Poseidon Primary gaining IPS status in 2015.

Peter
Peter Blackford
Principal

Thought of the Week
Self evident: Evident of one’s self and no-one else.

You don’t need to join Facebook to see our page! Simply Google Search “Facebook Poseidon Primary School Heathridge” to find our regular posts about upcoming events and school news.
Student Leadership Roles

As both the Year Six and Seven students will be graduating at the end of this year, the school has decided to have two sets of Student Councillors – four Year 7s and four Year 6 Councillors who will share the responsibilities throughout the year. Elections have been completed for Student Councillors, Faction Captains and Vice Captains and the names will be announced at this week’s assembly.

Safety Suggestions for Student

Each term I like to include a reminder to families of the police information for students to take care when going to and from school, and to report anything suspicious to parents, school and the police – call 000 in an emergency or 1800 333 000 to reach Crime Stoppers.

Here are some simple suggestions to help children stay safer:

- Always travel in company
- Walk on the right hand side of the road so you face oncoming traffic
- Wherever possible, leave space between yourself and the roadway
- Stay in areas that are well lit
- Stay in view – avoid going into areas that are hidden from view (such as parkland bush or behind shopping centres) and plan trips to avoid such locations
- Be alert – earphones and headphones can reduce your awareness considerably
- If you have a mobile phone, have it turned on and ready to dial an emergency number
- If a passing car stops nearby never get too close
- Do not hesitate to run from a situation in which you feel at risk
- Provide this advice to brothers and sisters, especially if younger
- Report suspicious behaviour to parents, school and the police, noting number plates of cars and/or clothing or distinguishing features of individuals.

Wanted

Miss Ward’s Year 1 and Ms Kasperkiewicz’ Year 1 / 2 classes are in need of the following empty food containers:

- Icecream containers with lids
- Yoghurt pots with or without lids
- Meat trays
- Margarine containers
- Clear takeaway containers with lids
- Any small clear plastic containers with lids

Please deliver these items to Olympus Block Wet Area.
Before School Routine

ALL students, who arrive before 8:20am including those whose classroom is part of the Olympus block, are required to wait in the under cover area. This is to ensure the school maintains its duty of care in respect to the supervision of students before the start of the school day.

A Must See for Educators & Parents

Every parent should view this video. I watched and agreed with the importance of the message it was sending to parents of today. I would be really interested in some feedback on what you thought. It will make a difference to your child’s and our students' development!!

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LyO2UOFXhcl

Duty Teacher Vests

Over the last few weeks, you may have seen all of our teachers wearing high visibility orange safety vests. Orange vests were instigated at the beginning of the year to enable students to easily identify the duty teachers during recess and lunch. This increases the level of security and safety for our students in the playground. This initiative is a positive addition to the normal school routines and the children have responded well.

Miss Ward and Ms Mugg brighten our day!
School Parking

There is never enough parking close to schools for the short period of time at the beginning and end of each school day. I would like to acknowledge the majority of parents who park their vehicles either on the oval side of the school or at Larkspur Park as this helps to ensure the safety of our students and relieves congestion at the front of the school.

Parents who regularly park on Poseidon Road, on the foot path in front of the Early Childhood building or on the verge in front of the school are likely to incur fines in the future. Plenty of parking is available at Larkspur Park.

We also ask parents to use our school crosswalk when crossing Poseidon Road, rather than crossing near Larkspur Place. Our friendly crossing guard Bruce is there to ensure your child’s safety, and by walking with your children up to the school crossing you are ensuring that we are able to keep our manned crossing. Don’t forget to say hi to Bruce!

Parenting Ideas

This week’s parenting ideas is on Developing Character Strengths - just as important to your child’s future success as building academic skills.
How Can I Help My Child Read?

In this second edition of the newsletter I have also included some information in response to a question that many parents often ask teachers and school administrators - How can I help my child read?

This is a question parents often ask. Mem Fox, Dymocks Literacy Foundation Advisory Group Member and acclaimed children’s author, offers the following as a very simple answer – **read to your children EVERY DAY.** International research claims it’s the most important thing parents can do to improve childhood literacy, yet a recent news poll survey confirmed almost 50% of Australians don’t read daily to their children.

Almost two thirds of Australian parents said they would like to read more to their children but did not have enough time. Half the respondents said they would like to spend more time reading to their children. Mem Fox has dismissed the excuses, suggesting the average Australian needs only to rearrange their priorities to accommodate reading time.

‘Given that the ABS (Australian Bureau of Statistics) reports Australians watch two hours of television a day, spending less than this across an entire week reading to your child will be an investment in their future’, she said.

To help your children become skilled readers, try these suggestions:

**Read to them:** Reading to your children is the single most important thing you can do to help children develop a love of books and reading. While bedtime is traditionally story time, don’t limit yourself. Keep books in your car, in your bag, by the sofa, and even by the bathtub. That way, reading can easily be made part of the day. Also, keep books on low shelves, on the floor, in toy chests, or anywhere else your children can reach them.

**Have plenty of material:** Books aren’t the only thing children can read. Posters, maps, magazines, recipes and newspapers are great reading material. Computer games that emphasize reading skills may also be useful for your school age children.

**Listen to them read:** From the day your children begin sounding out letters, concentrate on how they’re doing. Try to include some “read aloud” time where they’re reading to you in your everyday routine. You can offer them praise and catch any early problems before they have time to become habits.

**Model good reading habits and limit TV:** Your children need to see that reading is a lifelong skill and a form of entertainment. When you take them to the library to choose books, choose some for yourself, too. If you can, subscribe to the daily newspaper or to magazines, and discuss articles you read with your children. This shows children that reading isn’t only schoolwork – it’s something that’s an integral part of everyone’s life. Also, limit the amount of time you spend watching television.

**Let them choose:** Within reason, allow your children to choose their own reading material. If they choose what to read, they’ll be more likely to actually spend time reading. Get your children their own library cards and entrust them with keeping their books in good shape and returning them on time.
Our New Executive Committee

As principal of our great school, it was so energising to see 27 parents and community members attend P & C's AGM on Wednesday night. I have been to numerous AGM's in my time as a school leader and this is by far the most number of people to attend a meeting where positions of responsibility are being decided. It is a clear indication of the high level of support Poseidon Primary has from its community and I am looking forward to creating opportunities together with the new P & C executive and supporters throughout 2014.

Congratulations to our returning committee members:

- President: Cameron Walton
- Uniform: Co-ordinator Brooke McKenna
- Fundraising: Co-ordinator Yvonne Atkinson
- Fundraising: Treasurer Katie Newbury

Additionally, Yvonne Atkinson is taking on the role of Vice President.

We welcome our new committee members:

- Secretary: Shona Long
- Treasurer: Debbie Ellis
- Communications Co-ordinator: Samantha Warren

Many thanks to our departing Treasurer Wes Buzza and Secretary Linda Orton for their commitment and service to Poseidon Primary. We will continue to see them in varying roles within the P&C through the year.

Thanks also to our special guests Michael Clarke from the Western Australian Council of State School Organisations (WACSSO) and Jan Norberger, MLA, who both took time out from their busy schedules to join us. We appreciate their input and feedback.

If you are interested in finding out more about what the P & C is, what they do and how you can be a part of it, come along to one of our meetings on the third Wednesday of each month at 7:00pm in the staffroom. We are also on Facebook - simply search for Poseidon Primary School P&C and request to join our group. Or you can contact us via email at poseidonpandc@gmail.com.

P & C Diary Dates Term 1

**Family Movie Night**

**Cat in the Hat**

Saturday, April 5, 5:30pm
Undercover Area
New School Hats

Our school hats with the new logo have arrived! $15 from the Uniform Shop – get yours NOW!!

The Uniform Shop is open from 8.30am on Tuesday and Friday in the Olympus Wet Area.

Camryn & Ryan model our new uniform shirts and hats

School Banking

Our School Banking Program continues to grow, with great rewards to encourage our students to save more regularly. On Thursday, March 13 the Dollarmites will be visiting Poseidon Primary, so make sure you come by to say hello. We are in the undercover area every Thursday morning from 8:10am to 8:30am.
‘Talent or persistence. Which would you choose for your child?’

I often ask this question at my parenting seminars and the responses are fascinating. Parents naturally want both. Sorry, but that’s not an option.

When pushed most parents choose talent over persistence, which in many ways reflects the current thinking around achievement. However, intelligence, sporting prowess and ability in whatever it is we value will only get a child or young person so far. Talent is purely potential. They need more than this to achieve sustained excellence in anything they do. It is the character traits of hard work and the ability to stick at a task and see it through that make all the difference.

Malcolm Gladwell, in his book Outliers, describes twenty-something American student Renee, who took 22 minutes to work out a complicated math question. The average student gives up after THREE minutes, preferring to ask for help than work through the problem.

Renee was unusual in persisting for so long until she got the solution. The funny thing is, she doesn’t describe herself as a good math student, yet she is highly successful at maths. Grit rather than pure math talent is her forte.

Character matters

Cognitive (thinking and reasoning) skills by themselves aren’t enough for children to succeed over the long journey. Many recent studies (most notably the work of US-based Angela Duckworth) have found that character, not cognitive ability, is the single most reliable determinant of how a person’s life will turn out. The traits associated with success include the inclination to persist at a boring task (grit), the ability to delay gratification (self-control) and the tendency to follow through with a plan (conscientiousness). These are invaluable traits at school, in the workplace and in life in general.

Character works as an indicator of success when it’s seen as set of strengths and personality traits rather than personal values such as loyalty, tolerance or forgiveness.

Character is forged under difficulty

The key character traits of grit, self-control and conscientiousness are forged under hardship and duress. This makes our current propensity to over protect and over indulge kids problematic. When kids continually experience easy success we set them up for failure because when they finally face up to difficult situations many lack the capacity to push through the tough times.

Encouraging kids to step out of their comfort zones and take learning and social risks is one of the great challenges for modern parents. It’s critical that we challenge children and young people to attempt activities where failure is a real option. Overcoming setbacks and pushing through difficulties is how character is formed.
Character is malleable

The good news is that character, like intelligence, is malleable. It’s not fixed. It’s important to establish in your own mind as a parent, and also in your children’s minds, that character traits such as grit, self-control and conscientiousness can be developed.

To this end it’s important that parents steer clear of using absolute language to label behaviour and express views that traits and abilities are fixed. Comments such as ‘You’re no good at math’ become a rule that young people learn to live by, and become default thinking that’s hard to budge.

Make grit part of a family’s brand

In my book *Thriving!* I wrote about how every family has its own distinctive brand, which is a reflection of the strengths and traits that all members share.

For instance, if high work ethic is a common trait then it’s a fair bet that hard work is something parents focus on in their family.

Parents can actively promote grit and persistence in kids by making character part of their family’s brand. They can focus on character in conversations. They can share experiences where character paid off for them in their lives. They can discuss how character contributes to excellence and success in everyday life including at work, at school and in the sporting field. Character and its many components can become part the family narrative regardless of the age of the children.

Build proprietary language around character

Families develop their own language around what’s important to them and that needs to include the language of character if parents want to foster excellence.

Continuous messaging of terms and phrases such as ‘hang tough’ and ‘hard yakka’ help weave character traits into the family DNA.

Parents should reflect on the language and terms they already use and build key phrases and terms around the following key character strengths: grit, self-control, conscientiousness, enthusiasm, social intelligence, gratitude, optimism, and curiosity.

Character becomes the default mechanism

Habit and character go hand in hand. Conscientious young people don’t go around consciously deciding that they’ve got to delay the fun stuff until they’ve done their work. They’ve just made it their default mechanism to stick at their task, or delay gratification or jump into a task with enthusiasm.

Conscientiousness doesn’t always serve a young person well. They can sometimes place full focus on menial or unimportant tasks when a smarter option may be to cruise and save energy for the important times such as exams. That’s where parental guidance plays a part. However, in the long run conscientiousness serves a young person well when it’s their default because when the stakes are high and they really need to work hard, they will automatically make the right choice. In fact, it will be the only option they see when excellence really matters.

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