Dear Parents and Carers

Thank you to the many people who have enquired about my recent holiday. Sandy and I had a fabulous time in New York, Tuscany and Paris. However, I am very lucky to have such a great school to return to and I am looking forward to a busy and exciting term.

NAPLAN Testing took place last week. Staff involved prepared our students so that they had the best possible chance of achieving results that reflect each student’s level of ability. Traditionally, the school’s results have indicated that our students outperform students from ‘like’ schools across Australia. Results are usually made available to schools at the commencement of Term Four. As was the case last year, in this year’s school plan, staff decided to also test the Year 2, 4 and 6 students on last year’s NAPLAN tests. This provides useful data to inform our teaching programs for the remainder of the year as well as providing additional practice at completing this style of assessment.

Thought of the Week
We shouldn’t complain that things aren’t what they used to be – because we aren’t either!

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.
Independent Public Schools (IPS) Update

Yvonne Atkinson and I have been meeting regularly to create the school’s presentation to demonstrate our readiness to effectively manage the increased levels of autonomy, flexibility and authority that comes with being granted IPS status.

Results of the online survey that families had the opportunity to complete at the end of Term One indicated that 82% were in favour of the school being granted IPS status and 18% needed some more information. There were no responses opposed to the school becoming an IPS.

All IPS operate on a business plan model and as such are required to have identified a strategic direction for the school for the next 2-3 years. At last term’s school council meeting a new strategic direction was endorsed.

The new strategic direction for school is focussed on the promotion of the new PPS Identity that has been created as a result of the school revitalisation process that the school community has been engaged in for the past three years.

- For PPS to become the school of choice in Heathridge and surrounding suburbs
- Promoting the new PPS Identity:
  - Shared Values
  - New Vision “Creating Opportunities Together”
  - Agreed School Wide Pedagogy (Teaching and Learning Framework)
- Bring the above to the forefront of school community lives
- A focus on 21st Century Learners aspect of SWP – Sustainability, Global Citizens, ICT
- Continued focus on maintaining and improving our academic achievements
- Assisting with Australian Curriculum implementation

Potential benefits to the school community for the next 2-3 years

- Increased involvement of the school board and wider school community in the school’s business plan development and its self-assessment processes. An identified area for improvement
- Building stronger partnerships with the local business community – Peard Real Estate, Blackburn Financial Services and others
- Future staff selection will be focussed on appointing staff with skills and experience to enhance the school’s SWP – 21st Century Learners – Sustainability, Global Citizens and ICT
- Increased flexibility with resource allocation will enable PPS to establish new and /or extend existing programs:
  - Garden program to Kitchen Garden Program
  - Worm Farm initiative into a broader based focus on sustainability
  - Additional speech therapy support for identified early childhood students
  - Global education resources to support this new whole school focus
  - School based extension programs – Lego Robotics
- Increased flexibility with resource allocation will also enable the school to implement alternative strategies to maintain the already high levels of achievement with a focus on increasing the percentage of students achieving in the higher band levels

At last term’s meeting, the school council endorsed this year’s school plan which will guide our teaching and learning programs through to the end of Term 1, 2015. Each year, the staff analyses the NAPLAN data to help decide what the priority focus areas should be for the next year. As the school has maintained our focus on these priority areas for an extended period of time, this has enabled us to achieve consistent improvement outcomes across the school. The priority areas for 2014-15 are:

- Numeracy – focus on understanding numbers and operations
- English – focus on writing and spelling
- Cooperative Learning
- IDEAS – Promotion of the PPS Identity

Inter School Winter Sports

Our school teams (football, soccer, hockey and netball) will compete in the first round of fixtures against our neighbouring schools on Friday, 23rd May. All teams have been enthusiastically practising at lunch times and are looking forward to the chance to test their skills in a game situation. I wish all teams all the best for their first games.

Sports will be played at the following venues:

- Football: Sail Terrace Reserve
- Hockey: Eddystone Primary School
- Netball: Belridge Senior High School
- Soccer: Heathridge Primary School

**PLEASE NOTE:**

TOMORROW’S NETBALL GAME (FRIDAY MAY 23) WILL BE PLAYED AT BELDON PRIMARY SCHOOL

All students are to wear their school uniform and bring a drink bottle. They may also bring required equipment to school (shin pads, boots, mouth guards, etc). Students who need asthma medication are to make sure they bring it with them.

Each week Poseidon Primary staff work to allow the Winter Sports fixtures to take place (if at all possible). A final decision is made at 12 noon if weather may stop the matches being played. Please do not phone the office prior to 12 noon.

**Teams will be leaving school at 1:00 pm and returning at 3:00 pm.**

Due to duty of care arrangements, ALL students will need to return to Poseidon Primary at the end of the day.

Lost Property

There are HEAPS of lost jackets, t-shirts and other items in the Lost Property area near the Frog Pond. Tomorrow after assembly all lost property will be displayed. If your child has lost something, please check through to see if you can find it. Any items not claimed at the end of day will be donated to the Uniform Shop or charity.
Student Safety

The school has received a number of reports through our regional office in recent times of suspicious incidents that have been reported by students attending northern suburb schools when either walking to or from school. To help ensure the safety of all students when travelling to and from school, I’d like to remind families each term of the simple, but important ways they should regularly discuss and reinforce with their children.

Here are some simple suggestions to help children stay safe:

- 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

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.

Global Awareness Day

As part of a school initiative to raise global awareness, our Year 6/7s will be holding a Free Dress Day in Week 7. We will be asking for a gold coin donation to contribute to the construction of houses in a small poverty-stricken village in Cambodia. Your donation will also be used to maintain an elephant sanctuary and nature reserve. Your donations count, as every dollar can make a huge difference to those who need it most.

Parenting Ideas

This week’s article is called “A Mother Like No Other”. This year’s tribute is the inspirational story of Cheryl Koenig, a Sydney mum who fought against the odds to bring her brain-injured child back to optimum health. It’s an extraordinary read that will inspire all the mums who make the time to read it.
Only two more sleeps until Family Movie Night!!
Join us for a fun night out.
Tickets are only $3 each and are selling fast!!
Only 200 available!!
Grab yours from P&C Central before & after school.

Hotdogs $2.50
Hot Chips $2.00
Popcorn $2.00
Lolly Bags $2.00

Coffee & Tea $4.00 (L)
Hot Chocolate $3.00
Cold Cans $2.00

plus Mango Madness Smoothies $2.50 each!

EFTPOS facilities available.

Doors open @ 5pm

Don't forget to hand in your Cat In The Hat Colouring Competition entries to P&C Central by Friday afternoon.
Winners will be announced at the Family Movie Night.
Uniforms
We are still waiting for polo shirts and zip jackets in certain sizes to be delivered. Our suppliers have promised that they will arrive over the next week. We are making changes to our ordering process to ensure that these delays will not happen in the future.

Canteen News

Restricted Diets
Every now and then, a student may forget their lunch, or their sandwich might accidentally get trodden on. The Canteen is happy to help out and make sure kids don't go hungry, but if your child has a restricted diet, be it for health, religious or lifestyle reasons, we would like to know. Drop by and have a chat with us about your child's diet to ensure we can provide safe, healthy food for them.

Volunteers Needed!!
The Canteen needs more volunteers! If you have a spare half hour during the day, we’d love to see you. Our busy times are:

- 8:15am to 8:45am: Taking the kids' orders
- 10:40am to 11:00am: Serving recess
- 12:00pm to 12:20pm: Packing lunches
- 12:20pm to 1:00pm: Serving lunch

There are always lots of laughs, and we always have lots of coffee!!

😄 Bronwen, Claire & Sheree 😄

Entertainment Books
Entertainment Books are still available to order. Last year’s vouchers will soon expire, so why not get the 2014-2015 membership for another 12 months of great deals.

Available as a
Traditional Entertainment Book

OR

the NEW Entertainment Digital Membership
for up to four Apple or Android devices

Each book sale earns our school $13. A big thank you to the families who have chosen to donate $13 to Poseidon in lieu of buying a book. And thank you to everyone who has ordered books - we hope you enjoy your savings.

Follow the link to order https://www.entertainmentbook.com.au/orderbooks/8610t4
(Please remember to reference Poseidon Primary School when registering your 2014 | 2015 Entertainment Membership)

All book payments or unwanted books need to be returned to either P&C Central or the Front Office ASAP. If you need more information about ordering or returning books, please contact Katie Newbury on 0417954689 or via email at katienewbury@outlook.com
School Banking

The Dollarmites have found sunken treasure from the Lost City of Savings and they want to share it with your students in the form of some amazing prizes.

**Major student prize**
One student will win an underwater family adventure holiday including:
- Five nights’ accommodation at the Sea World Resort & Water Park on the Gold Coast;
- VIP Passes for two adults and three kids to Sea World, Warner Bros. Movie World, and Wet’n’Wild Gold Coast;
- A Dolphin Family Aqua Adventure; and
- A $3,000 travel voucher to get them there.

**Runner-up student prizes**
- 130 Toys”R”Us Gift Cards to the value of $250 each.

**Sunken treasure for schools and you**
- There will be a separate draw of $1,000 cash for a school in each State/Territory of Australia.

Here’s how to win!
All your students need to do is make three or more deposits through School Banking during Term 2 and they’re automatically entered into the competition.

Contact the P & C

The next P&C Meeting will be held on Wednesday June 18.

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.

Gaylene Bicheno, Peard Real Estate
Major Sponsor of the 2013 Spring Fair
A mother like no other

Seventeen years ago, Cheryl Koenig was a typical young Sydney mum celebrating Mother’s Day with her husband Robert and their two sons, Jonathan, 12, and Chris, 10. One week later, Jonathan was involved in a car accident that left him with a severe traumatic brain injury. Since that day, Cheryl has worked tirelessly to help not only Jonathan but also other sufferers of brain injury. Here, New South Wales’ ‘Woman Of The Year’ for 2009 – and the recipient this year of a Medal of the Order of Australia for service to people with disabilities, their families and carers – shares her extraordinary story.

I grew up as one of five kids in a close-knit family, and from an early age I wanted nothing more than to be a stay-at-home mum. I’d met Robert when I was almost 16 and, after nine years together, starting a family seemed as natural as night following day.

I gave birth to Jonathan two days before Christmas in 1984. He was an adorable baby and as a toddler he was boisterous and creative. I enjoyed every minute of those years at home with him and Chris.

Becoming a mother defined me. How can you not change when suddenly there exists something that is more precious than your own life? I discovered new things about, and deeper levels within, myself – because I held so much more in my arms. Of course the boys took my time, my space, even my patience – but they gave it all back with a smile.

Now that my boys are men, it’s not the fancy holidays or big events that are my most golden memories. It’s the ordinary, everyday things. Bedtime stories were a special time because they opened up their imaginations. Music: playing their favourite songs and dancing crazily with them. Dinner times: every night, without fail, we ate at the dining table together – the same meal for everyone, too. This was, and is, an important ritual in the milieu of our family life. It’s where we partake in each other’s day, share thoughts and exchange memories. I often call the dinner table ‘my altar table’ – it’s like a religious conviction, I guess, where I get to nurture and nourish my family.

On Sunday, May 18, 1997, I was cooking one such dinner for us when everything changed. Jonathan was 12 and I was 37. He’d been playing outside with the boy from next door and I was making nachos. Just after 5 pm I called Jon inside, and minutes later I heard a huge bang.

Jonathan didn’t see the car coming. The car took him out and sent him flying for 20 metres. I found Jonathan lying on the street, his leg all twisted, with a horrible amount of dark-red blood coming out of his mouth and nose. There were two voices in my head – one telling me to scream hysterically and the other telling me to stay calm because my baby needed me calm. That was the voice I chose to listen to.

At the hospital I didn’t cry; I just felt numb. A doctor told us a CT scan indicated a brain injury; that Jonathan’s clinical signs weren’t good, and he couldn’t tell us if he’d make it. I thought, ‘You don’t know Jonathan’.

Jonathan was in an induced coma for the first month and for four more months I didn’t leave his side. Some deep reserve of energy kicked in and I knew I was making a difference to his recovery. All day long I told him how much we loved him; that he was going to be all right. But Jonathan got worse before he got better and each day felt like a ghastly repeat of the one before.

Jonathan was in intensive care for three weeks and then his eyes started to open. From early on, I knew he knew me. I’d lie on his bed and cuddle him and tell him about his life and read him stories. I was completely driven in my mission to restore what little semblance was left of my family. I saw signs of positivity everywhere.

Around the two-month mark I knew I had something to work with. I wheeled Jonathan to a piano in the hospital music room. He had no neck control, he was still dribbling and not talking, but he was just starting movement in his right arm. He’d begun to reach up and touch my face and take my rings off and do little things he’d done as a toddler. At the piano he reached out and started playing ‘Chariots Of Fire’, which he’d been learning at the time of the accident.
... a mother like no other ...

There were no doctors around but the teachers saw it and everyone was crying – me hardest of all. That’s his theme song now, and he played it at the launch of my book.

Jono had post-traumatic amnesia for about 10 months, which indicates the worst kind of brain injury and the unlikeliness that memory will be regained. But we didn’t listen to the doctors. I see his memory improving all the time and that’s because he has a full and active life.

It’s been a long, hard journey. At three months he started making moaning sounds. I saw that as positive – he was trying to communicate. And then he started making ‘mmm’ sounds. I literally pulled apart his lips to get his mouth moving but I closed the curtains around us because people thought I was crazy. But then one day he looked at me and said ‘Mum’. I can’t describe the joy I felt.

The first day I left him, to go to the hairdresser because I was a mess, my sister stayed with him and gave him a drink of grape juice that hadn’t been diluted. He gagged and blurted out: ‘I want my Mum!’ I’d cried all the way through getting my hair done but I walked back into his room and he was talking! We called Robert and I said ‘Someone here wants to speak to you’. Without any prompting, Jonathan said in the softest voice: ‘Hi…Dad…I…Love…You…Dad’. We were all in floods of tears.

Jono’s accident not only changed who I was, it also changed the complete dynamic of our family. I had to wear so many different hats in my new role as mother to Jono. I was – and, to varying degrees, still am – his carer, his rehabilitation case manager, speech therapist, occupational therapist, physiotherapist, tutor, social secretary, counsellor for depression, and by and large his navigator through life.

My mothering of Chris did a complete 360, too. Chris was only 10 at the time of Jonathan’s accident and I had to neglect him and his needs for the best part of five to 10 years because my entire energy was driven towards getting Jonathan better. To this day, I feel an enormous amount of ‘mother-guilt’ about not being there throughout probably the most crucial years of a boy’s life: adolescence.

I was also guilty of being overprotective because I was terrified something bad would happen to Chris too. But I learnt, with time, to let him find his own way and I’m so glad I did, because he has become the most extraordinary young man, with the right blend of compassion and empathy, integrity and humility. He’s a civil engineer and he married his girlfriend Danielle last year, with Jono as his best man. It was an incredibly happy day for our family. Jono made a five-minute speech he’d memorised, jokes and all, which brought the house down.

I’m enormously proud of both of my boys although Chris is probably my proudest achievement, because he’s done it all by himself. But our kids learn through watching us, in ways we don’t even realise at the time.