Dear Parents,

Despite the rainy weather it is good to see classes settled and program commencing. Apart from a bit of tweaking we expect that we have our 2012 classes established. Over the next few weeks, we plan to arrange a range of playground activities at lunchtimes to help with the settling process.

MEET THE TEACHER TALKS

Next week we will commence Parent Teacher Information meetings for K-4 classes. These meetings are held so that parents can hear firsthand about what is planned this year. It is a very good opportunity to meet the teacher and ask general questions about classroom routines and procedures. Please note that it is not a time for discussing individual needs or concerns. That is best done at an individual interview so if you need to speak about your child please make an appointment.

Please note that Stage 3 meetings will be held in the week commencing 20th February (week 5).

STAFFING ORGANISATION FOR 2012

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Stage</th>
<th>Teacher/s</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tuesday 14 February</td>
<td>4.00pm</td>
<td>ES1 Kindergarten</td>
<td>Mr Swain</td>
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<td>In Classrooms</td>
<td>Mrs Robinson</td>
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<td>Ms Reeves</td>
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<td>Wednesday 15th Feb</td>
<td>3.15 pm</td>
<td>Stage 2 In the Library</td>
<td>Mrs Butler</td>
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<td>Mrs Cromie</td>
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<td>Mrs Sanderson</td>
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<td>Thursday 16th Feb</td>
<td>8.20 am</td>
<td>Stage 1</td>
<td>Mrs Butler-Cramer</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Mr Mathieson</td>
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<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td>Miss Gallego</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thursday 16th Feb</td>
<td>8.20 am</td>
<td>2/3R</td>
<td>Mrs Roberts</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Special programs
Mrs Haddow—ESL and release from face to face
Mrs Cake—Support Teacher Learning

Reading Recovery
Mr Swain
Mrs Butler Cramer

Quick Smart
Miss McGregor
Mrs Connor
Mrs Limn

School learning support officers
Preschool
Mrs Maryanne Leedham
Mrs Sue Dawson

Early intervention
Mrs Georgina Greenwood

K-6
Mrs Connor
Mrs Rufo
Mrs Limn

Office staff
School’s administrative manager
Mrs Robertson

School’s administrative officers
Mrs Iredale
Mrs Gorgievski

General Assistant
Mr Carraro

School Counsellor
Mrs Riley—Monday, Tuesday, Friday
Mrs Clay—Monday

Principal
Mrs Williams

GOT IT
This week we commenced our GOT IT program (Fun Friends) for both students and parents. Over the next few weeks we will be organising sessions for all parents and teachers so watch this space.

COMMUNICATION BETWEEN THE SCHOOL AND HOME
Mobile Phone Messages
Last year the Parents and Citizen’s Association and school embarked on a joint project to enhance the communication between the school and the home. This term we will commence a mobile phone messaging system. The first message is scheduled for 1 March. This message will indicate that the system is in place. From that time on the plan is to be able to inform parents of cancellations, send out reminders and alert parents to issues such as late excursion buses.
Another important function of the text message system is the ability to inform parents of student absences.

SWIMMING CARNIVAL
Despite the uncertain weather, we are planning to hold our Year 2-6 swimming carnival on Friday 10 February. The carnival is planned to go ahead despite rain but will be cancelled if the forecast predicts lightning. Miss McGregor has arranged for a radio announcement to be broadcast if the carnival is cancelled. The announcement will be broadcast on KOFM and NXFM during the 8.00 am news.

HOUSE COLOURS
TURTON       YELLOW
MATTHEWS     BLUE
PARKES       GREEN
PLATT        RED

Meet the school Leaders
We have arranged for a photograph of our student leaders to be part of the “Meet the School Leaders” feature of Friday’s Newcastle Herald.

Regards
Maria Williams

Priority Schools Program Nomination
Our school has been given the opportunity to make application for the Priority Schools Program. If selected, the school would stand to gain additional funding for the next three years to go towards programs that enhance learning outcomes for our students. Funding would be available for additional support for literacy and numeracy programs within the school. To be selected, all families will be required to complete a survey that is strictly confidential. The survey, to be carried out in 2012, is similar to the ‘census’ but it doesn’t have the same number of questions. The only tricky part is that we would have to receive 100% return on the survey. This is critical for our school. More information soon, so keep an eye out for the survey.
Leoni Butler.
Annual Swimming Carnival!

Our annual Swimming Carnival is fast approaching. It would be wonderful if we are able to send some representatives to the Zone Swimming Carnival this year. We hope that children have been training hard in order to qualify.

Unlike the Athletics carnival, the times that children swim at our school carnival are paramount as to whether or not children attend the Zone. Children who are placed 1st, 2nd or 3rd **DO NOT AUTOMATICALLY** qualify for the Zone Swimming Carnival. If you require further information please speak with me prior to the carnival.

Miss McGregor
Sport Co-ordinator

Twitter

Waratah Public School now has its own Twitter account! To find our school on Twitter, search for WaratahPS.

**What is Twitter?** Twitter is a real-time information network that connects you to the latest stories, ideas, opinions and news about what you find interesting. Simply find the accounts you find most compelling and follow the conversations. ([https://twitter.com/about](https://twitter.com/about))

**So why is Waratah Public School using Twitter?**
During our surveys last year, we found that all members of our school community would like increased communication between school and home. While we have our school website to showcase student work and notify you of upcoming events, our Twitter account will enable WPS to be able to send instant reminders home about notes due, whether events such as the swimming carnival will be going ahead, or expected arrival times from excursions, without printing off more notes that may get lost at the bottom of a bag!

It will **not** be used to communicate information about individual students or answer other questions about our students or school practices, as these are conversations best held one-on-one with a teacher, Assistant Principal or Principal.

**How do I sign up to receive ‘tweets’ from Waratah Public School?** A few easy steps.
First, sign up to Twitter. Many smartphones (eg iPhones, Android and Blackberry phones) have apps that will give you easy, free access to Twitter once you have an account, however you should always check with your mobile phone provider. You can also access Twitter through the internet on your computer. Go to [www.twitter.com](http://www.twitter.com) to sign up.

Next, search for **WaratahPS** (exactly as it is printed here, with no spaces). Once you find us, then click on ‘Follow’. There you go, you are done! You will hear from us soon.

While you’re on Twitter, there may be many other interesting Twitters you can follow. Why don’t you have a look around? You never know what you might find!

Happy tweeting!

*Mrs Christie*

**Garden & Environmental Group**

**Thurs mornings 9.15 am—11.00 am – Garden Working Bees starting on 16/2/12**

Volunteer gardeners, big & small, who are free on Thursday mornings & would like to help look after our school gardens please contact Richelle 0419 210 273 or meet under the COLA. Bring your gloves, some gardening tools & “Slip, Slop, Slap” for a chat or even a workout!

**P&C NEWS**

**WELCOME**

It was lovely to see all the new kindergarten children in their oversized uniforms starting at “big school” last week. I hope there weren’t too many tears, from parents / carers or their children!!

**P&C / FUNDRAISING MEETING**

The first Fundraising Meeting of 2012 will be held on Friday 24 February at 2.00 pm in the Multi-Purpose Room. Under discussion will be potential fundraisers for the coming year. This sub-committee is a great way of getting involved at the school, meeting new people, and allows you to pick and choose the events you’d like to help out at. We’re always looking for volunteers – any help from an hour all the way up to running an event and everything in between is very much appreciated.

The first P&C Meeting of 2012 will be held on Monday 5 March at 6.00 pm in the Multi-Purpose room. Supper will be provided. The P&C meeting is a great way to find out what is going on in the school and allows you to have your say. All new members are very welcome to come along – the P&C Committee and existing P&C members are looking forward to meeting you.

**P&C FINANCIAL AUDIT**

The P&C books will need to be audited before the AGM in April. If we have any Accountants within our school community who could do this for us and so
save us the money of paying an Accounting firm, please leave your name and contact phone number with the school office.

**SENIOR PLAYGROUND EQUIPMENT**

Over the past two years, the P&C has been fundraising to fix up the above playground. Work has started on getting the area assessed to see how we can improve on the current design before adding in new equipment. The area needs to be leveled off and a retaining wall of some sort built. An extension of the area is also planned to accommodate new and future equipment. Once this work has been done, the area will receive new soft fall like the kindergarten equipment and new equipment will be purchased.

To have the remodeling work done by an outside company will cost over $10,000 (does not include equipment or soft fall). I’m hoping that we have enough expertise within our school community to do the work ourselves so we can maximize the dollars we spend on the actual play equipment. If you have surveying / building / earthmoving / landscaping experience or any other skill you feel would be of help on this demanding project, please give Verity a call on 0421 599 458 or fill in the slip at the end of the Bulletin and return to P&C Postbox. Let’s get this project happening so we can see the smiles on the kids’ faces when they get their playground back.

**UNIFORM SHOP**

Parent volunteer Megan Mills has managed the WPS Uniform Shop for the past four years in a friendly and dedicated manner, welcoming new kinder parents and their children and providing a much appreciated service to the school community. I’m very sad to say that Megan is hanging up her hat and passing on the reins – she will be sorely missed by all of us and I’d like to take this opportunity to thank Megan for her hard work and commitment, but especially for the laughs.

Megan and her helpers are planning on having an Orientation day to explain how the Uniform Shop works. If you are interested in volunteering, please fill in the slip at the end of the Bulletin and drop in P&C Postbox (in the foyer on the wall opposite the school office).

**2012 BREAKFAST CLUB**

It is with great excitement and appreciation that our Breakfast Club will continue again in 2012. A huge thank you to our supporters (Coles Supermarket, Bakers Delight and Kmart of Waratah Shopping Village) who kindly donate their produce each week. This wonderful program wouldn’t exist if it wasn’t for the enthusiasm and dedication shown by Donna O’Meley, Mrs Rufo, Mr Mathieson and Alex Gorgiou who volunteer their time each and every day - thank you!

**SCHOOL BANKING**

Tuesday is School Banking day and students should remember to bring in their weekly deposit.

**This week’s School Banking tip:**

Encourage your child to earn their School Banking money each week by doing some basic chores to help you out! Great chores include emptying the dishwasher, cleaning their room or feeding the dog. Thank you for supporting the School Banking program at Waratah Public School.

**FUNDRAISING – TERM 1**

**Entertainment Books** will be available from the end of March and they will be valid straightaway – you don’t have to wait until end of June for last year’s book to run out. So pre-order your book now to start saving over the Easter holidays. All it takes is one dinner out and a trip to the movies to recoup the $60 cost of the book PLUS hundreds of fabulous offers still to use – McDonalds vouchers, ten pin bowling offers, money off tickets to see the Knights . . . $12 of every book goes to the school.

If you would like to pre-order an Entertainment Book, please complete the information on the back of the bulletin and return it to the P&C Post box in an envelope marked “Entertainment Book”, with your name, child’s name and current class. Layby available at $5.00 per fortnight (see back of bulletin with a suggested payment schedule).

Last year’s Trivia Night was a huge success, so much so, that we’re doing it again on **Saturday, 24 March 2012** at the New Lambton Community Centre. Keep this date free as it is a great opportunity to come and meet new people but most of all, to have fun!

Verity Currey
P&C President
0421 599 458

**CANTEEN ROSTER**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DAY</th>
<th>DATE</th>
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<tr>
<td>Thursday</td>
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<td>J Sparks K Boyle</td>
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<td>Friday</td>
<td>10 February</td>
<td>R Stoupe A Hancock</td>
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<td>Monday</td>
<td>13 February</td>
<td>P Pirini A Hancock</td>
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<td>Tuesday</td>
<td>14 February</td>
<td>T Robinson C Rizzoli</td>
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<td>Wednesday</td>
<td>15 February</td>
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<td>Term One</td>
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<td>Year 1-6</td>
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<td>Best Start assessment</td>
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<tr>
<td>Three day preschool commences</td>
<td>Kindergarten photos</td>
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<td>13 Feb</td>
<td>14 Feb</td>
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<tr>
<td>Meet the teacher afternoon this week</td>
<td>Meet the teacher E51 4.00 pm</td>
<td>Meet the teacher Stage 2 3.15 pm</td>
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<td>20 Feb</td>
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<td>MGM first text</td>
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<td>12 March</td>
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<td>Joffa - Cartoon Workshops</td>
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<td>19 March</td>
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<td>Harmony Day</td>
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<td>P&amp;C AGM</td>
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<td>Easter Monday</td>
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Changing beginning of the year challenges to opportunities to learn

The beginning of the school year always brings with it changes and with that challenges. Changes can cause anxiety for children as well as for parents. Sometimes children are disappointed at the beginning of the school year when they are separated from close friends or are allocated a teacher they aren’t familiar with or don’t “gell” with.

As parents we often get drawn into fixing things for them and trying to negotiate with schools to make things right. However changes and challenges are not all bad. There is another way that we can view these. They are opportunities for your child to grow and develop a keener awareness of how he/she interacts with adults who may have a style that they are not familiar with.

It is also an opportunity for them to use their social skills and develop new relationships. It’s true that sometimes these new relationships cannot replace that special friend from last year, however it’s important for children to learn that the nature of relationships differ and that it’s important to make space in our lives for all kinds of friends. This may include ones we have fun with, ones we share interests with, ones we work well with and ones we can learn from because they challenge us.

So how do we as parents go about doing this without downplaying the difficulty of these changes for your child?

1. Name the feeling the child is experiencing (disappointment, fear, anxiety, unsettledness, loneliness)
2. Normalise that feeling and let the child know that people often have those feelings when things are unfamiliar and changing. You can give some examples of when you might have felt like that.
3. Give the child some space to think about how they might work through the issue themselves (How would they problem solve that issue?)
4. Help the child identify what they would like to work on to manage the situation better and help them break it down into small manageable tasks (For example looking at the other person, using their name and starting a conversation)
5. Plan for setbacks (what will happen if the other child says something rude back or ignores them?) Talk through the things that could go wrong
6. Let other people know that your child is working on this skill. You might even tell the teacher that your child is learning to manage meeting new friends and that they are practicing a specific skill (For example using a persons name to greet them). You can even recruit the teacher to be their supporter in this. When they notice your child practicing the skill they could praise them or let them know that they have noticed.
7. Ask your child about how they practiced the skill today, what worked and what they found challenging.
8. Once they have some success, let the people you recruited to be their supporters (dad, grandma, teacher, sibling etc) know and celebrate with them by having a special dinner, inviting the new friend for a play date, going to the park with the new friend after school etc.

It is always important to find the right time to attempt to have these conversations with your child. All children are different and it’s good to find a time when things are calm, you feel close to your child and they feel like talking.

Childhood is all about learning and growing so that one day our children will be independent and capable young adults. The challenges that come our way are great tools for learning. At the same time, if the circumstances are too challenging for your child and you feel that they are being impacted socially, behaviorally, physically or academically it’s good to talk to your school and to seek professional help.

Parent Line NSW is a state funded 24 hour professional counseling, support and information service to parents of children 0 – 18 across NSW.

1300 1300 52
www.parentline.org.au
2012/2013 ENTERTAINMENT BOOK ORDER

Name: __________________________________________________________________________

Child’s Name: ________________________________  Class: _______________

Quantity Required: __________ @ $60 per book     Total Amount Due: _______________

Layby Requested:   Yes □       No□

Entertainment Book Layby Example

This year we have set up a layby system for the purchase of an Entertainment Book based on regular fortnightly payments of $5.00.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Suggested Payment Dates for Term 1</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Suggested Payment Dates for Term 2</td>
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I AM INTERESTED IN THE UNIFORM SHOP ORIENTATION DAY

Name: _________________________________  Phone #:  ___________________

I AM INTERESTED IN THE SENIOR PLAYGROUND PROJECT

Name: _________________________________  Phone #:  ___________________

EMERGENCY CONTACT FORM

Student Name: _________________________________________________________________________

Address: ______________________________________________________________________________

Mum: H: _____________________  Mob: _______________________  Wk: ________________________

Dad : H: _____________________  Mob: ________________________ Wk: ________________________

Emergency contact:    _____________________________________________________________________
                        (Name and phone)