School Strategic Directions 2016

- Consistent, high quality engaging learning to provide student success as learners and leaders.
- Consistent, high quality educational practices and student learning driven by assessment evidence in line with the Australian Curriculum
- Cultivate consistent, high quality collaborative processes within the Whitebridge Community of Schools to enhance the quality of teaching, learning and leadership.

What’s Happening This Week
Week 7, Term 1
Mon 7 Mar
- P & C Meeting 7.30pm
- Commence Peer Support Groups

Tues 8 Mar
- Learning Support Team
  - Scripture and Ethics
  - Cross Country Practice
  - Kids Matter Parent Survey Home

Wed 9 Mar
- Kinder Pirate Day
  - Creative Arts Groups
  - Yr 7 WHS Information Night
  - Yr 5 Chinese Program

Thurs 10 Mar
- Selective HS Testing
  - Staff Training
  - Cross Country Practice

Fri 11 Mar
- Assembly Item 3-4CP
- L3 Teacher Training

P & C Meeting
Our P & C will meet tonight, Monday 7 March in the school Library commencing at 7.30pm. During this meeting we will discuss:
- School Plan 2016
- Run Dudley Update
- Mother’s Day & Easter Fundraising
- Asbestos Information
- Committee reports

Our P & C are very keen to gain the support and input of new parents as well as our continuing parents. Please come along and help support your children’s school through the fantastic efforts of our P & C.

Congratulations to Brodie Wright who received his Principal’s Award for outstanding efforts at the Zone Swimming Carnival.

Congratulations to Phoebe Carlow who received her Principal’s Award for beautiful manners and being an enthusiastic Learner.

High School Parent Meeting
Year 6 parents received an information note last week from Whitebridge H.S regarding a meeting for 2017 Year 7 in their library this Wednesday 9 March from 7.00 - 8.30pm. This will outline information on their Stage 4 program and other aspects of the curriculum.
**KidsMatter**

During Term 4, 2015 our school commenced implementing an amazing framework called “Kids Matter”. **KidsMatter Primary is an Australian initiative that aims to improve children’s mental health and wellbeing.** It recognises the important role that parents and carers play in the lives of their children and encourages effective working relationships between school staff, parents and carers.

We have an action team of Terina Parmenter, Karen Murphy, Lucy Rees (as the P & C representative) and Peter Adams. Our entire staff is completing workshop training on this program, which will be ongoing this year.

KidsMatter is all about children’s mental health and wellbeing. **We know that being mentally healthy is vital for learning and for leading a rewarding life.** KidsMatter is a way for schools to nurture happy, balanced kids through mental health promotion, prevention and early intervention activity and planning.

Last week all students completed a survey and these are being compiled at present.

**Tomorrow you will receive a parent survey** (on coloured paper so you know it is very important!). The survey asks for your perspective about your child’s school and what you think is important for the school to consider in supporting children’s mental health and wellbeing. It will take less than 10 minutes to complete the survey and please return it by next Tuesday 15 March to our school office.

**Selective High School Testing**

This Thursday 10 March we have eleven of our Year 6 students who will complete the Selective High School Testing to gain entry into Merewether Selective H.S for Year 7.

They will complete four tests. Three of the tests consist of multiple-choice questions in reading, mathematics and general ability. The fourth test is a 20 minute writing task. They will complete the testing at Cardiff High School from 9.00am to 1.30pm. Good luck to these students.

**Cross Country**

This week we will commence practice for the upcoming school cross country carnivals. Students will complete laps around the school grounds on Tuesday and Thursday from 10.55 - 11.10am on these days with all teachers supervising.

Congratulations to our 2016 Library Monitors pictured above.

Our K-2 Cross Country is set for Wednesday 30 March and our Year 3-6 Cross Country will be held on Friday 1st April. Both these cross country events will be held at Dudley Oval this year.

**Easter Raffle**

It’s on again! Raffle tickets went home last week for our annual Easter raffle. The raffle will be drawn at our assembly on Thursday 24 March. The Easter assembly will run from 10.15 - 11.10am in the Fairleigh Hall. It would be greatly appreciated if each family could donate Easter egg/s (and baskets) for prizes, please leave them in the baskets provided located in the office foyer.

Parents are asked to return raffle tickets and money to the school office area by the final morning of Thursday 24 March please.

**Peer Support Groups**

Commencing today we will hold peer support groups throughout the school. These will run for the next 5 weeks on Mondays 12.30 to 1.00pm. There are 30 groups, each lead by Year 6 students and composed of K - 5 students.

These groups create and extend student networks and will present themes on: rules, health and food, friendships and cooling a conflict. They will employ a “Rock & Water” activity, warm up games and a group activity. They will finalise in week 11 with a presentation of their group drama skits. Our Year 6 students have been receiving intensive training on Wednesdays from Karen Murphy and Kate Sullivan in preparation to lead groups.
**What's Happening Next Week**

**Week 8**

**Mon 14 Mar** - CTC Program Day 3
- Peer Support Groups

**Tue 15 Mar** - Scripture and Ethics
- Learning Support Team
- Cross Country Training
- Rosalie returns from LSL

**Wed 16 Mar** - Creative Arts Groups
- Yr 5 Chinese Lesson

**Thurs 17 Mar** - **Whole School Photos**
- Staff Training

**Fri 18 Mar** - Assembly Item 3-4M
- National Day Against Bullying

**Communication Training in Classrooms (CTC)**
CTC is a speech pathology program for staff development and student support. Bronwyn Fraser, a speech pathologist will complete 5 days (one per fortnight) this term. She will conduct screening assessments on identified students and train teachers in identifying and managing children with communication difficulties. Our school will commit $2300 of school funds to implement this important program.

This is the third day of this program is next Monday 14 March.

**Whole School Photos**
Newcastle School Portraits will take our whole school photos next Thursday 17 March. Parents need to select from the packages outlined and order online or place the money inside the envelope and return to the class teacher on the day of the photos. Please don’t send the envelopes to the school office, the Photographers handle all the money and the correct money must be sent in on the day. **If you require a family photo, please collect a family photograph envelope from the school office.**

**National Day Against Bullying**
Next Friday 18 March is the National Day Against Bullying. At the start of this term all classes completed a class unit on bullying. On this day all students will bring home a “Student Anti Bullying Pledge” for students and parents to sign to help join together to stamp out bullying at our school.

Students will also develop a poster display on anti-bullying. Our staff are at present drafting an updated School Bullying Policy.

**Regional Swimming**
Congratulations to all our regional swimmers who competed at Maitland last Thursday. We have two students who qualified to compete at the State swimming carnival in Sydney, congratulations to Brodie Wright who will compete in 50m junior butterfly and 200m medley and Saij Carson who will compete in the 50m senior butterfly.

**Suspected Asbestos Fragment**
Last week we found a suspected asbestos fragment, which may have been part of the landfill under a grass area in the playground. The landfill we believe was completed in the 1970s.

The fragment was located in the grass area to the side of the canteen on the slope below 3-4R demountable. A security fence was placed around the grass area to make safe the site.

Public Works and a hygienist investigated the area last Thursday to determine if the fragment is asbestos.

I am still awaiting the full report on this, however have the following details. They identified the fragment as non-friable asbestos and have actioned it according to the DET Asbestos Plan. They have listed this as low risk. The hygienist cleared the playground area and the temporary fencing will be removed. The school will top dress and turf the small area that is eroded.

Further fragments were located along the fence line of the Fairleigh hall and temporary fencing placed. This area will be cleared in after school hours shortly.

The school will continue to monitor for asbestos fragments, particularly after heavy rain.
International Competitions For schools

The Australian Schools Competition has been renamed the “International Competitions and Assessment” to reflect its growing international status.

Each year our students in Years 3 - 6 are encouraged to participate in these competitions. This year there are 6 competitions: Digital Technologies (Computer Skills), Science, Mathematics, Writing, Spelling and English. Each competition is presented in individual year levels (3-6) and are generally 40 minutes in length involving multiple choice questions. The competitions are not just for the most academic students in the school, rather they can be a wonderful indication to all parents. They provide an opportunity for students in Years 3 - 6 to gain a measure of their own achievement in an external assessment situation. Many of our Year 5 and 6 students use the results to support their application to selective high schools.

All students receive a certificate and an individual student report indicating which questions they answered correctly and their score compared with the rest of the students tested. The tests are an excellent preparation for National tests and the student report is useful for highlighting your child’s strengths and weaknesses.

I am aware that these competitions have become more expensive and understand if parents decide not to support.

We would like students in Years 3 - 6 to discuss with their parents and decide if they intend to enter a competition and indicate on the note below. Payment is to be sent in with the note to the school office.

If we have less than 3 students completing a competition, the price increases dramatically. e.g Science from $8.80 to $26.40 in which case we would inform parents in this situation (we have always had at least 3 students in the past).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Competition Name</th>
<th>Competition Date</th>
<th>Cost</th>
<th>Selected Competition</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Digital Technologies</td>
<td>Tuesday 17 May</td>
<td>$8.80</td>
<td>_____________________</td>
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<tr>
<td>Science</td>
<td>Tuesday 31 May</td>
<td>$8.80</td>
<td>_____________________</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Writing</td>
<td>Monday 13 June</td>
<td>$18.70</td>
<td>_____________________</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spelling</td>
<td>Wednesday 15 June</td>
<td>$12.10</td>
<td>_____________________</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English</td>
<td>Tuesday 2 August</td>
<td>$8.80</td>
<td>_____________________</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mathematics</td>
<td>Tuesday 16 August</td>
<td>$8.80</td>
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</tbody>
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International Competitions for Schools
I give my child permission to enter the following competitions indicated above and have included payment for the entry fees. Please return by Friday 25 March to the school office.

Student’s Name: ___________________________ Class: __________________
Parent/Caregiver Signature:_______________________ Date: ______________
**Book Club Orders**

All orders are due back **Monday 14 March**

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**CAFFEINE ROSTER**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mon 7 Mar</th>
<th>Tues 8 Mar</th>
<th>Wed 9 Mar</th>
<th>Thurs 10 Mar</th>
<th>Fri 11 Mar</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A. Hanson</td>
<td>H. Wilson</td>
<td>J. Thompson</td>
<td>K. Parsons</td>
<td>B. Gillard</td>
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<tr>
<td>S. Stewart</td>
<td>L. Whitaker</td>
<td>K. Sutton</td>
<td>P. Grainger</td>
<td>L. Buckneridge</td>
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<th>Fri 18 Mar</th>
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<tr>
<td>S. Newton</td>
<td>M. Downey</td>
<td>M. Jones</td>
<td>F. Gonzalez</td>
<td>S. Newton</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>K. Butterfield</td>
<td>M. Rigney</td>
<td>M. Bickford</td>
<td>P. Hunt</td>
<td>L. Clark</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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**From the Library…..**

The Premier’s Reading Challenge officially begins today 7 March. Below is a graph showing Dudley’s participation rate over the last 7 years – in 2016 we are sure to surpass these numbers.

At the moment we have over 170 students registered! – and expect many more in the coming weeks.

Don’t forget the PRC runs from March – August, so there is plenty of time to complete the reading which is 30 books for K-2 students, and 20 books for Years 3-6.

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**GIRLS ARE YOU INTERESTED IN PLAYING BASKETBALL**

Lakers Basketball is looking for girls aged 10 & 11 to join our local club competition.

Join a team or enter your own

U/12 Girls - games are Friday from 4.30pm

Learn new skills! Make new friends!

For more information please contact Lakers Basketball

Email: lakersbasketballclub@gmail.com

or Call Jamie Summers (Club President) 0425 367023

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**Head Lice**

Back to school for another year and unfortunately this often means the start of the head lice season too.

**Head lice are extremely contagious. Early treatment is recommended to kill head lice and their eggs and to limit school and family contamination.**

Below are 4 crucial steps to keep your school head lice free:

- Avoid sharing clothing, especially hats, ribbons, head bands and helmets
- Discourage children from playing with each other’s hair
- Don’t share brushes, combs, towels and pillows.
- Keep long hair plaited or firmly tied back to prevent contact from other kids.
If you’re male, over 8 yrs old and interested in aviation come and visit our Belmont Squadron!

Cadets will participate in;

- Aviation theory
- Marching drills
- Recreational camps
- Flying days

For more information call 0409 030 867 or visit www.airleague.com.au
Why connect at school?

Peter held his daughter Rachel’s hand tightly. It was a first for him to be taking Rachel to school. His heart was pounding as they made their way to the classroom. There was the teacher, Ms Lim. She smiled at them, “Welcome Rachel, hello Peter.” Another child waved at Rachel. She seemed happy to have a friend to play with. So why was Peter still nervous?

“We’re having a morning tea for parents next week. Will you come?” Ms Lim asked.
“I’ll try,” Peter said. “It all seems different from when I went to school,” he thought as he headed out the door. “They seem to want parents to be involved. I wonder what else has changed?”

Schools can be scary places, and not just for children

Parents and carers also need to feel welcome and at ease to get the most out of being involved with their children’s school.

When parents and carers are involved and connected with school, children are better learners and have better mental health and wellbeing. This is an important emphasis in schools nowadays that may be very different from what parents or carers remember, or what they may have experienced in another country.

Connecting at school

Being connected at school is not about having mobile phones and computers. It’s about knowing you can get support, that you will be listened to, and that you can work together with school staff to help your child learn and develop. Working together to care for children is the best way for schools and parents and carers to support children’s mental health and wellbeing.

• When schools and parents and carers work together, children find it easier to understand what is expected from them and are better able to manage. They have fewer behaviour problems and do better at school.

• When parents and carers are connected to school it helps them get support when they need it. Support may come from talking with teachers or other school staff, or from making connections with other parents and carers. Schools help families to connect through having lots of different activities that parents and carers can get involved in.

• Being connected to the school helps keep parents and carers informed. Parents and carers who are informed about what their children are learning at school and about opportunities to get involved are able to support them better at home.
School is a place for adults to make new friends too!

Having opportunities to get to know other parents and carers, to find out how to support children’s learning, or to get involved in class activities can help parents and carers feel connected to the school.

Working together is the best way to support children’s mental health and wellbeing.

How parents and carers can get connected to the school

- Make contact with your child’s teacher and keep in touch. Ask for help if you don’t understand something.
- Check for notices that are sent home and keep informed about school activities through the school newsletter.
- Attend information sessions and social activities at the school whenever you can.
- Make contact with other parents and carers at your school: perhaps meet up informally with parents or carers of other children in your child’s class, find out about parent social groups that meet at or near the school, or join a parent committee.
- Take an interest in the school council and consider joining it if you have the time and skills.

This resource is part of a range of KidsMatter Primary information sheets for families and school staff. View them all online at www.kidsmatter.edu.au