From the Principal:

Dear Parents and Carers,

Census day for public schools was Wednesday. This is the day when entitlements for number of teachers/classes is decided. Unfortunately, our entitlement has fallen and we will need to restructure into 4 classes. This will be happening next week. The new classes will be K/1B with Mrs Barnes, 1/2H with Mrs Hall, 3/4/5L with Ms Logan-Pye and 5/6O with Mrs O’Brien and Mrs Couper. We are hoping for a smooth transition with as little disruption as possible but if you have any concerns please talk to me.

We had quite a roll up to the P&C meeting on Tuesday. Congratulations to our new committee.

P & C meetings provide a forum for parents to learn about the activities at the school and have input into the decisions affecting their children. The P & C raises funds for projects and activities for your children. Meetings are not a forum to discuss individual students or personal issues. If you have any concerns or issues regarding individual children please put make an appointment to meet with the class teacher or myself.

Mrs Susan Sims, Principal.

**Facebook and the Internet**

Many people use the internet and programs such as Facebook to discuss issues and often air grievances.

While the Department of Education can do little to stop comments on these types of public forums it can act on behalf of staff, students and schools that are being maligned or vilified through legal channels such as defamation charges.

From time to time, there are issues that do cause parents concern, however the most effective and worthwhile way to address these problems is to come to school and discuss the matter with the Principal.

Staff from the school deliberately do not engage in the responding to unhelpful ‘chatter’ on these sites, however they do monitor and report specific incidents as they occur, to the proper authorities.

On the flip side of the coin, thank you to the vast majority of families that comment positively about our school and the various programs that we put in place to support and extend our students learning opportunities.

**Safety around our school**

To ensure the safety of all students parents must not drive into the school grounds to drop off or pick up students at any time.

Parents are reminded:

**that parking at the front of the school is rear to kerb. Please park as directed only and not across parking area when dropping off or collecting children.**

**at shop gate all students are to cross at pedestrian crossing at all times. Parents waiting for children are asked to cross only at crossing and not in front of shop.**

**Absences**

*All student absences must be followed by a note when the student returns. Parents can email the school ellalong-p.school@det.nsw.edu.au or telephone the school before 9am.*

*If you are taking a family holiday during any term, please come to the office at least 7 days prior and complete the appropriate form.*

*Students arriving late must come to the office before going to the classroom. Parents collecting students early must come to the office before proceeding to the Classroom.*

**P & C News**

Our Annual General Meeting was held on Tuesday and the following parents have been elected to the P & C: (Minutes attached)

President Ellen Baker
Vice President Rebecca Elliott
Secretary Melanie Sills
Thank you for volunteering to be our executive on the P & C. We look forward to a great year with lots of support from our school community. P & C membership is $2.00 per family and payable at office. Copy of minutes of meeting attached. The next P & C Meeting to be held Tuesday, March 10 at 3.30pm.

**Canteen News: Price List attached**
*Monday and Wednesday from 1pm for 30 minutes the canteen will open for the sale of drinks, icys and ice creams/blocks. This will commence next Monday, February 16.*
*The canteen will commence operating for recess and lunch on Friday, February 20.*
*Thank you to Rachael Chapman and Natasha Kirk for taking on the job of Canteen Supervisors for 2015. Rosters and information will be sent home shortly.*

PLEASE REMEMBER ALL VOLUNTEERS MUST HAVE A ‘WORKING WITH CHILDREN’ CHECK. Please bring to school office to be recorded. See attached sheet.

**School Uniform** available at office
*Red School Shirt $30 each *Red School Hat $12 each  *Girls School Dress $45 each
*Red Polo Fleece Jacket $30 each  *Girls Uniform Material $15 per metre

**Student Belongings**
Please make sure all of your child/children’s clothing including jumpers, lunch boxes, etc. are clearly marked with his /her name. Lost property box in office foyer.

**Friday Assembly and Merit Awards**
At Friday assembly teachers give out Merit Awards to selected students. When you child has received 5 Merit Awards please bring them to the school office and a Principal’s Award will be presented at the following assembly. If 5 Principal Awards are received a school pen is awarded. *Awards must be at the office* no later than Thursday morning at 10am to be included in the next day’s assembly.

**Junior Creative Writing** will be kicking off again this month at both libraries – this free activity takes place between 4 and 5 pm on the last Tuesday of the month at Kurri Kurri Library and the last Wednesday of the month at Cessnock Library. If you’re aged between 10 and 16, and have an interest in writing, come along to our monthly meetings and explore new ways of unlocking your imagination and releasing the storyteller within!

Contact Karen at Kurri Kurri Library on 49371638, email Karen.bruce@cessnock.nsw.gov.au, or Sandy at Cessnock Library on 49934384, email Sandra.ryan@cessnock.nsw.gov.au for more information or to register.

**Dates for your Calendar**
Dance Program Each Thursday to end of term
Canteen Open from next week
P & C Meeting March 10 at 3.30pm - All Welcome
School Photos March 24
Water Saving Show April 29

**Assembly Awards** - Term 1 Week 2
Merit Award - Fletcher Phillip, Sophie Phillips, Wiley Cameron, Jordyn O’Hearn and Abby Garred.
PBL Award - Rhys Lambie, Macy Langworthy, Emme Formosa, Archie Sills and Ryan Watters.
Principal Award - Luke Kime  Pen Award - Tori Farley