FROM THE PRINCIPAL'S DESK

The Uniqueness of Area Schools.....

The vastness of Australia produces many and varied responses to our environment. To travellers throughout Europe the local Motel or Roadhouse would be a mystery. Educationally, rural Australia has evolved and celebrated the Area school. In NSW Area Schools are known as Central Schools and in WA they are called District High Schools. What they really are is schools designed for and owned by a community. They are schools where older brothers, sisters and cousins are on hand to see the youngest in the family come through and there is no better place than an Area School for there to be a common spirit amongst its students, staff and community. Most importantly, an Area School clearly displays each of the stages of a child’s educational pathway to adulthood quite clearly. Each stage needs to be quite deliberate, staged and supported by commitment.

If all the above seems just like words then consider the relationship between just some of the activities that are currently in our school. The Junior Sub-school teachers are currently studying the First Steps Program in Speaking and Listening, learning how to deliver practical, focussed teaching that develops a child’s ability to understand what they are hearing and developing the ability to converse and communicate in an increasingly sophisticated way. The Year 6-8’s have just returned from a camp at Arbury Park where, amongst specific environmental studies and fun, they have had to practice the language of being together in a community for a period of time far more demanding than the normal school day. Our year 10’s attended the recent country hospital Re-organisation Meeting and some Year 9’s and 10’s went to the Save the River Rally in Adelaide last Friday. At both these events they were able to witness the process by which communities were attempting to influence how they were treated by government. This provided an unparalleled advertisement for the power of language, particularly speaking and listening, to influence the quality of an individual’s life. Whilst they were doing this, Ms Hese and I were attending a session looking at the planned changes to Senior Secondary education due in 2010 and beyond. It was exciting, but one thing stood out …. The future is brightest for the student who can understand, use and express language to control their learning.

Our task is to organise this to the best of our ability as one community. An Area School is a good structure to do it in.

Departmental Visitors

Last week Mr. Trevor Tiller (Educational Consultant) and Mrs.Catherine Nikkerud (District Improvement Officer) spent time at the school interviewing some students, staff and community members as part of a consultation they were undertaking with the Raukkkan community. What was really pleasing is that they have written to me thanking people for their co-operation and specifically complimenting our students’ ability to express themselves in a positive and confident manner.

Book Week Coming Up

Don’t forget, the ability to read is essential to the power to communicate. The most influential communication is between a child and their carer. If a carer values reading, what effect does that have on the child? Makes you want to read doesn’t it?

Ronald Pratt
WEBSITE UPDATE

Some recent additions to the school’s website include the Term 3 Planner. This can be found under the “Events” sub-heading under the “School” major heading.

If you need to find out what lessons your child in Years 6 to 12 has on a particular day, go the “Parents” heading and click on the “Year 6 to 12 Timetables” link and you will be able to download a PDF file for each class.

There are regular updates of photographs and information about school activities and excursions, and more school policies are being added as they are reviewed and updated.

We hope that the website can be a useful tool for all stakeholders and would be happy to accept any suggestions for additions or improvements that you may have to offer. Please contact the school by email, phone or at the front office.

CHILDRENS BOOK WEEK IS COMING IN WEEK 5!

This year’s theme is “Fuel your Mind”.

Step into the library and refuel your mind with books to entertain, intrigue and amaze.

This year our classes are participating in readings and activities during a morning workshop, focusing in this year’s shortlisted books.

The titles this year include new books by some of our favourite authors. Bob Graham as a new title called “The trouble with dogs.” “Shhh! Little mouse” is Pamela Allen’s new book and “Cat” is by a personal favourite, Mike Dumbleton. New favourite titles will be “The Night Garden”, “Lucy Goosey”, and “Pearl Barley and Charlie Parsley”.

For older readers we have the start of a new world of adventures by Emily Rodda who wrote Deltora Quest, one of the most popular Australian series ever printed. My personal favourite is “Dragon Moon” by Carole Wilkinson, the third book in her Chinese “Dragonkeeper” series.

So, down to business. Collect your colouring in sheet from the library and get it back to Mrs Clarke by Tuesday the 19th August. There is a puzzle for Early Childhood readers and a crossword for middle primary to middle school years. Get involved! You just never know; there might be prizes?

Margaret Clarke (Librarian)