



# ALPHA STATE SCHOOL WEEKLY WATCH 2016

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**1 February 2016**

**Issue 1**

## *From the Principal's Desk...*



Dear Parents/Caregivers

Welcome to the first newsletter for 2016. I trust you had a great holiday and started the year with renewed enthusiasm. It was great to see so many happy faces last week, partly due to the fact that it was only a three-day week, and partly because of the excitement of starting a New Year level or new school and returning to see old and new friends.

### Welcome back to everyone!

A big welcome to our 7 new Prep students and their mums and dads. It was such a flawless transition this year and I was super impressed with how easily all the Preps settled straight into a routine. Thanks to Miss Wilson and Mrs Rogers for their dedicated approach to transition last year, which made this year, so much easier.

We also welcomed 3 new students; Jack, Charlie and Brooke. Our enrolments at the moment sit at 44, which is the same as 2015.

We also welcomed Ms Moore into Year 1 and last week I sent an email home about Mrs Coetzer sharing the teaching role in Prep while Miss Wilson takes on additional duties in relation to Students with Disabilities (SWD) and Learning Support (LS) We are still advertising for a Junior Secondary teacher, and when I have further information, I will share it.

As like every year, we have enrolment collections on Day 4 (Monday February 1) and Day 8 (Friday February 5) it is really important that parents have all enrolment paper work returned by then. Please check at home that all necessary paperwork has been returned by Day 8.

Last week on parade, I spoke about lots of new things that we are trying here at school to either make teaching and learning experiences more interesting (like the 'Jammin' program designed by Miss Clarke and implemented by the staff throughout the day), or offering more opportunities for our students here. I know Miss Clarke has been busy organising after school sport, however, this won't start yet. Mrs Goodwin and I are also trying to decide when to have choir and recorder. So far, this is what we have on offer, starting WEEK 2. **As per attached timetable.**

Time	Monday		Tuesday	Wednesday		Thursday		Friday
Before school	Brain Boost with Miss Clarke	Violin lessons with Mrs Koina	Brain Boost with Miss Clarke and Dancing with Mrs Goodwin	Brain Boost with Miss Clarke	Violin lessons with Mrs Koina	Brain Boost with Miss Clarke	Violin lessons with Mrs Koina	Brain Boost with Miss Clarke
2 <sup>nd</sup> Lunch	Violin lessons with Mrs Koina		Choir	Recorder group				

Please let me know ASAP if you are keen to learn violin as I will need to order more instruments if that is the case. We will let the students know about Choir and recorder on Tuesday's parade.

I have a few other notices below, so please take the time to read.

### **P and C meeting**

There will be a P and C AGM and general meeting on Tuesday February 9 @ 3:30 pm in either the staff room or Mrs Goodwin's room. All new and returning families are welcome. All executive positions will be open, so please come along and help out the P and C and the school. This year, we have a major camp to Canberra and the snow planned for years 4-10. We are trying to keep the cost to parents as low as possible, so we need to fundraise through the P and C in order to do this. Please consider this and consider taking on a role or becoming a regular P and C member in 2016. See you all there!

### **Attendance**

We are still focussing on an attendance rate of 95% or above for this year. Last year, with the increased focus on attendance, we were able to maintain the highest attendance rate in the Longreach area (P 10/P 12 schools and High schools). Again, this year, we will be giving out the trophy for the class with the highest attendance each week and also celebrating the class with the highest attendance each term by having a BBQ lunch or similar. If you would like further information about our school's attendance and absences policy, please let me know and I will send it to you.

### **Meet and Greet**

We will be having a meet and greet and BBQ on Wednesday night from 6-8 pm starting in the BER building. I will speak about various school things first and then each teacher will open their classrooms up for parents to come and speak with them. The teachers decided that they would take turns doing this, so, for example, while Miss Wilson's classroom is open and the parents of her class are visiting, the other parents without students in Miss Wilson's class, can enjoy the BBQ. We hope to see you there.

## **Lexia**

We will be running Lexia again this year, although we have made the decision not to retest all the students at the beginning of the year, but rather get them to continue at the level they finished on last year and work through the program that way. I have scheduled Mrs Ruthenberg on for some of her time to collate the class reports and data and help the teachers with differentiation activities for each child. If you have any issues with Lexia, please see your child's teacher or Mrs Ruthenberg.

## **IMPACT programs**

The Booster Numeracy and Writing online courses through Brisbane School of Distance Ed will begin this week for Year 5 students. At this stage, they will complete the program this term, and, depending on its success and value, we will enrol other year levels in some programs later in the year. We have not yet been given a time for the secondary programs to start.

## **LOTE**

We received an email from the new LOTE teacher based at Longreach SODE last week and her lessons will begin in Week 3. She has sent through work for the students to do this week with Mrs Ruthenberg, however, she is still trying to organise timetables for a few schools. LOTE is mandatory for students in Years 5–8 and we are lucky that we can tap into the online delivery of these lessons without too many hassles.

## **Swimming lessons**

Miss Clarke sent home a note last week about swimming lessons starting in Week 2. Please ensure that you have returned your child's permission note prior to swimming.

## **Office Duty times**

In an effort to respond to the School Opinion Survey and other issues arising from meetings with parents last year, and the need for Leisa and Bernie to access their breaks during the day, we have organised the duty roster, so that the office is manned most of the time and there is limited need for the phone to be switched to message bank. While this won't help too much if one of us is already speaking on the phone and the other line rings, it is a first step toward better communication through the school office. The plan of who is in the office at any given time, is below. This may change as my commitments with choir and music groups increase.

<u>Time</u>	<u>Monday</u>	<u>Tuesday</u>	<u>Wednesday</u>	<u>Thursday</u>	<u>Friday</u>
7:15 – 9:00 (Office officially opens at 8 a.m.)	Bernie	Bernie	Bernie	Bernie	Bernie
9 – 11:15	Leisa	Leisa	Leisa	Leisa	Leisa/ Bernie
11:15 – 11:30	Vanessa	Vanessa	Vanessa	Vanessa	Vanessa
11:30 – 1:30	Leisa	Leisa	Leisa	Leisa	Leisa/ Bernie
1:30 – 1:45	Message bank	Vanessa	Vanessa	Vanessa	Vanessa
1:45 – 2:00	Bernie	Bernie	Bernie	Bernie	Bernie
2 – 5 (office officially closes at 4 p.m.)	Leisa	Leisa	Leisa	Leisa	Leisa/ Bernie

## **Student Leader elections, speeches and investiture**

Here are the timelines for Student Leader election and voting etc. We will go through the timetable at the staff meeting on Monday to work out the best time to have the speeches and do the investiture. I will keep you posted when we have decided.

<u>Week</u>	<u>What</u>	<u>To whom</u>	<u>What's required</u>
1 (Friday January 29, 2016)	Student Nominations	Class teacher or Vanessa	Brief letter stating what position they want to ap-
2 (Thursday February 4, 2016 at a time TBC)	Speeches and voting	Year 4–10 to be present for these	Speech stating what position they are applying for and why they would be
2 (Before the ceremony next week)	Student Council voting for Year 1–6 (in each class group) and one for the High School	Class teachers get student together and receive nominations and the vote	Class teachers get student together and receive nominations and the vote. Nominated Student Council reps name to be
3 (Monday 8 February, 2016 at a time TBC)	Student Leader Investiture	All student are present for this.	Students receive badges and do pledge etc.

I hope you have an enjoyable fortnight. Please keep in communication with your child teacher/teachers regularly and if you have any concerns.

Vanessa

## Prep Newslash

Hello everyone, and welcome to school for 2016!

This term will be a short but busy one. In English the preps will be learning about narratives and characters. They will then be assessed on their ability to retell a familiar story, communicating their feelings about the story, and responding to questions about the characters in the text. Currently students are learning about numbers in Maths, to assist with comparing and ordering numbers later in the term. We also have an exciting Science unit planned, learning about living things and their needs. They will be assessed on their ability to recall and explain the needs of plants and animals.

Beginning this week, students will be going to swimming lessons for PE, to get ready for the swimming carnival later in the year. Please remember if you have not yet returned your permission note, please do so as soon as possible to allow your child to go swimming. Prep homework will also start this week, and will be spoken about at the Parent Information night this Wednesday, 6-8 pm.

If you have any questions or concerns, please email any time.

Regards  
Miss Wilson



## Year 1 Jottings

In the Year One classroom we have had a great start to 2016, with lots of discussions and activities to get to know each other. We started our Math, English, Science, Art and Geography Units, and were excited to start our new weekly Philosophy lesson with Mr. Hammer.

### English:

We are observing different feelings and how to engage in discussion and



understand how to make connections between texts and personal experiences.

**Maths:** We have been concentrating on the use of twos for counting on and counting backwards. We will continue with this for the current week.

### Science:

We have a science table in the classroom as you walk in. I encourage the students to bring objects of interest for the table. We have commenced our Science Unit which looks at examining external features of animals and called "Living Adventure" students will investigate the external features of living things, and learn about healthy and unhealthy habitats in which living things may live.

### Geography:

During this week we will be looking at features of our classroom and how people use this space.

### Communication.

Our first class email went home on Monday. I will be sending alternate emails/newsletters every week, and have all parents email addresses. I will also contact you daily if needed on the same email. If there is anything that I can do or anything I may need to know for the day regarding your child please email me on [m Moor158@eq.edu.au](mailto:m Moor158@eq.edu.au) I will check these emails before school 8 am, at 1st break, 2nd break and after school at 3 pm. I encourage healthy communication between the students, teachers and families as we are a stronger force together, and as such can achieve so much more.

### Homework

Homework will start this week and will come home in a folder with the reading. I would encourage students to read every night and complete their homework over the four nights. Homework and Reading folders are to be returned on Friday.

I look forward to getting to know you, your children and families over the next few

months. We have an endless amount of exciting things happening over our first term. Have a beautiful week. Enjoy.

**Michelle Moore**  
**Year One Teacher**  
**Ms Moore**

## **Year 2/3** **Bulletin**

Welcome back to the new schooling year! The year 2/3s have settled into their classroom routine well! Week 1



consisted of creating classroom goals and rules, engaging in a variety of diagnostic tests and beginning our English, Maths and Drama subjects. The curriculum content for this term includes:

- ◇ Maths: We have begun a new program called 'Back to Front Maths' which allows students to discover concepts more independently through problem-solving. This term will focus on name numbers, place value, sequencing and sums.
- ◇ English: We will be looking at Narratives this term and students will be writing their own narratives by taking on the role of one of the characters.
- ◇ Literacy: Other core literacy lessons include vocabulary expansion, spelling, grammar, reading comprehension, Lexia, reading groups and focused writing lessons. These have been scheduled on a weekly basis.
- ◇ Science: The topic for this term is 'Earth's resources'.
- ◇ Geography: This term students will look at the key features of places. We will explore places on different scales and learn more about Australian states/territories and the world's continents.

As this is a short 9 week term, assessment will be conducted around the week 6 to 8 mark. Ongoing assessment will also occur throughout the term to

ensure students are grasping concepts.

### **Other news:**

- ◆ The classroom will open at 8:30 am each morning. Students are to place their bags in the port racks and their lunch box in the classroom fridge. If your child arrives before 8:30 am please ensure they wait outside the office or go to Brain Gym in the BER building. The year 2/3s are able to attend Brain Gym Monday through to Thursday.
- ◆ Homework will begin this week and includes sight words/vocabulary expansion, spelling words, readers, Lexia and a numeracy sheet. Homework will be handed out on Monday and is due back on Friday.
- ◆ Swimming this week will be on Tuesday as Miss Clarke is away on Friday. After this week, swimming will return to Fridays for the remainder of the term.
- ◆ Parent Information Night will be held this Wednesday (3/2/16) in the BER building from 6-8 pm. We would love to see you all there ☺

Miss Grogan

## **Years 4/5/6 Intelligence**

*Dear Parents,*

*Welcome to Term 1, 2016! I hope you all enjoyed your Christmas Break and had some time to catch up with friends and family. This year is going to be a very busy one for 4/5/6, as we have our usual subjects: English, Maths, Science, Geography, Drama, PE, Health and Technology, as well as Civics and Citizenship, French and Philosophy. I have sent home an outline, indicating what is required for each subject this term.*



Week 1 was jam-packed with goal setting, classroom organisation and getting to know each other. We did some diagnostic testing and commenced our units for each subject. Week 2 will see the start of homework, swimming, brain boost, drama and the IMPACT program. Last week, each child had a really positive attitude and applied themselves to every set task. I am very confident that this will continue as the work load increases.

A quick reminder that the Parent Information Evening is this Wednesday night from 6-8 pm. This will give you an opportunity to come and see the classroom, what the children have done so far and have a chat to me if you have any concerns or questions. Looking forward to seeing you all there!

Kind Regards,

Courtney Hodge  
chodg145@eq.edu.au

## **Years 7/8 Broadcast**

Welcome back parents and students to yet another year and hopefully another one filled with learning experiences we can all be proud of. Our class is really quite small this year with only seven students all up. I hope Catie, Hannah, Clay, Corey and Patrick enjoy being in our 7/8 class and love being in High School and that Kailum and Brooke (welcome back from New Zealand) are excited about being in Year 8 and continue to make gains in their education.

I hope the holidays were relaxing and good to everyone and brought with them lots of family time filled with much laughter and smiles. Now we need to dig deep again, work hard and settle back into our school routine.

In English we are beginning our unit on Spine-Chilling Narratives. We will be looking at narratives in general and then analysing the features of various 'spooky' stories. It should be a topic which the students enjoy. Students will be expected to write a 'spooky' story at the end of the unit for assessment purposes. We will also be looking at persuasive texts and writing to persuade others to our way of thinking. There will be two pieces of assessment in English for this term. One will be due around Week 5 and the other around Week 8 or 9. Majority of the work for these will be done in class time

although anything which is started in class and doesn't get finished may end up at home as homework (please keep this in mind).

In Year 7 Maths we will be looking at index notation, expanded notation and creating factor trees showing prime factors of numbers. We will also be revising square roots and square numbers. In Year 8 Maths we will be applying the four operations (+, -, x and ÷) to rational numbers and integers and solving problems. We will also be revising the order of operations (BOMDAS or PEMDAS).

### **In the Electives:**

**Business** – this week we will continue to look at what Assets, Liabilities and Owner's Equity are and how they relate to the Accounting Equation and will learn how to prepare a Balance Sheet.

**ICT** – this week we will begin our topic of designing a suite of business stationery for ourselves using the programs Publisher and Paint. Students will be designing a logo and this logo will be used on all the stationery they will be creating over the next eight weeks – business cards, letterhead, memo etc

**Visual Arts** – as their teacher is not here yet I have students working on tasks which involve using different mediums – this time it is paint and newspaper. They have to draw a tree, paint the background and then they will be using newspaper that is twisted, curled or scrunched to shape and form their tree. Finally they will paint it in the colours they want depending on which season they are trying to depict.

Please remember if you have something you would like to discuss or know, come and see me or send me an email. Good news stories are always welcome and issues only become issues if they're not dealt with straight away. I have an open classroom so if you would like to sit in on a lesson feel free to come in and join us and see how we operate as a class. I look forward to **working with you** to get the best out of your children.

Welcome to Ms Michelle Moore – I am sure you will enjoy your time here with us at Alpha State School.

Keep smiling.

☺

Mrs Goodwin



## **YEAR 9 NEWSCAST**

### **Year 9 -**

Week 2 is underway and the students are already busy learning new concepts.

In English this term students are examining Australian's identity and relationships. They will look at various sources to develop the concept of what it means to be Australian.

Their assessment this term is to analyse two of the sources studied and present a multimodal speech about what they think it means to be Australian.

Maths is busy with many topics including ratio and proportion, linear equations and Pythagoras' theorem to name a few. Most of the maths this year include algebraic concepts so students will need to be revising classwork and clarifying with me their understanding of algebra.

### **Year 7-8**

This year I am teaching the subjects Science and Home Economics to the YR 7-8 students and at the moment Civics and Citizenship (until we get a teacher).

In Science students explored the lab and participated in their first experiment – safe use of the Bunsen Burner. The topic this term is Water Cycles and students will participate in both theory and practical lessons to reinforce the concepts being learnt.

It was straight into the kitchen and “What are we cooking today?” on the lips of Hannah, Catie, Brooke and Kailum last week for Home Economics. This year we have been able to timetable 1 hr 45 mins for both HEC and Man Arts. This allows the students to have more time to not only complete practical sessions but time to learn theory associated with the tasks. Last week we explored the kitchen, learning where the equipment was kept and how to work safely and hygienically. Students were keen to cook (as you can see from the photos) and successfully made pikelets. Now you can have them cook smoko for those unexpected guests.



Civics and Citizenship is a new subject for students in Year 7-8. Parents might know this subject previously as

Cit Ed and studied it themselves when at school. This semester, students study key features of Australia's system of government and explore how this system aims to protect all Australians. They examine the Australian constitution and how its features, principles and values shape Australia's democracy. Students look at how the rights of individuals are protected through the justice system. They explore how Australia's secular system of government supports a diverse society with shared values.

The unit actually starts with an assessment task over four weeks examining relevant documents relating to government including the Australian Constitution. Students will have time in class but will also need to work on this at home. I will keep you updated with timelines and due dates over the next few weeks.

Once again if you have any concerns or questions drop me an email or ring the school for a meeting.

Hope you all have a good week  
Mrs Rogers



## **HPE News**

Alpha has once again registered with Sporting Schools. Sporting Schools replaced the Active After Schools Program last year. Once again we have received funding to run sporting programs in terms 1 and 2. In term one we will be running a Gymnastics program after school starting in week 4 (hopefully, depending on arrival of equipment). Notes will go home about this program in the near future. Good luck to the students travelling to Barcaldine for the CW Swimming trials this Friday.

### **Sports Dates:**

- 5th Feb – CW Swimming Trials
- 12th & 13th Feb – U15 & U18 CW Netball/Touch/Rugby League Cluster Weekend
- 15th-20th Feb – Australia's Healthy Weight Week
- 16th Feb – Visit from North & West Remote Health (Yr 4-10)

Miss Clarke

## PHILOSOPHY NEWS

We had a great start with Philosophy last week. Our focus was practicing the skill of listening along with evaluating the rules of philosophy. I was very impressed with the quality of every group. I got to meet with the P-1's, establish some routines learn everyone's name which was great fun. I collaborated with the 2-3's to develop some actions to go with the rules of philosophy. I was then able to teach these to the remaining classes during the day. The 7-10's learnt the actions in lightning fast time and then proceeded to enter into a fierce debate regarding which of the rules was the most important and why. The 4/5/6's showed fine form in celebrating each other's success in memorising the rules with some particularly creative dance moves. I look forward to a rigorous and rewarding year as we start delving into creative, compassionate and critical thinking skills on a weekly basis.

Mr Hammer

## CHAPPY'S NEWS

Welcome everyone to the new school year. The year has started very positively with students geared up and ready to learn.

On a Chaplaincy point I am excited to announce that we were successful in obtaining 3 more years of funding. This will see Alpha State School keeping a Chaplain position until the end of the 2018 school year. This also allows us to plan long term with confidence.

### High School Hangout Area

During 2015 I proposed changes to create a High School Hangout eating area after talking to a lot of students.

Near the end of the year we (Mrs Koina, Mrs Rogers, Mrs Goodwin and myself) agreed to put the plan into place.



The Hangout area has a microwave, fridge/freezer, kettle, games and relaxed seating allowing the students to move around rather than just sitting and eating. There is also milk for the students to make a milo (Hot or Cold), ice blocks, biscuits and small packets of chips. These items are supplied to supplement their lunch not replace it. The Chaplaincy committee will supply a limited amount of the catering supplies and the students are asked to bring in a packet of biscuits once a term to help out. This is just like any shared workplace smoko room.



This area will also be part of the Wednesday afternoon hangout and homework time. This will commence week 3 and run from 3 pm to 4:30 pm. A note will be sent home to all parents of High School students later this week with full details.

### Free Sausage Sizzle

A note will go home next week with details of a free Sausage for all students on the 17th February. This event will be funded by the Local Chaplaincy Committee.

### Rock and Water

Grades 4-10 this year will be undertaking the Rock and Water program once a week during 2016. This program is designed to build a student's personal resilience. Sessions commence week 2.

### Terrific Traits

Grades Prep to 3 will be continuing doing the Terrific Traits as per 2015.

### Chaplaincy Service

The Chaplaincy Service is available to everyone including, students, staff, parents, friends and community members. Please feel free to contact me if I can assist in any way or you want to know more about Chaplaincy or to find out what a Chaplain does?

Thanks  
Chappy