



Mount Isa State Special School

Moving Beyond Expectations

Newsletter 5th December 2013

FROM THE PRINCIPAL

Thank you to all staff and parents who made the senior graduation last Friday night a huge success. No doubt photos and an article will feature in our local newspaper the Northern Star on the graduation of Latisha, David and Lachlan. It was fantastic to see Latisha's and David's parents and family members attend the function and help



celebrate this milestone. Both Latisha and David have been at this school since year one, so it is with mixed feelings that we say farewell and good luck as they move onto the next stage of their lives. All staff and students will miss all these wonderful students. David presented a speech on behalf of Latisha and Lachlan to thank all at the ceremony and he did a great job with the speech.

Looking back at this year, though I came into the position of principal of this school from the commencement of second semester, I believe that the school has successfully built upon what was here before I arrived. It is a credit to previous principal Ms Mary Heneghan and what the school had achieved that I feel proud that we have added to that success.

The Teaching and Learning Audit and the Discipline Audit conducted earlier this term demonstrated what a fantastic staff, student and parent/carer community we have here at this school. The results also showed that we have much more to do to be the best that we can be and this was confirmed in the School Opinion Survey data that was recently released to schools. Next year promises to be a highly productive, highly successful and highly rewarding year as we commence progressing three main goals of our Annual Implementation Plan:

Goal 1. Deliver curriculum focused on high quality teaching and learning experiences.

Goal 2. Develop consistency with students reading levels and intervention strategies

Goal 3. Develop stronger connections with our school community.

Once again, I would to formally thank all staff members, students and parents/carers for what I believe has been a brilliant six months of schooling. From here, the journey can only get better.

Best wishes to you for a safe and happy Christmas holiday and we look forward to recommencing school on Tuesday 28 January 2014.

Reno Tieppo

P & C Report: from Jodie Wilson

Our last P&C meeting for 2013 was held on 21st November. Points of interest were:

- ◆ Teaching and Learning Audit and Discipline Audit: Auditors came to the school in the middle of October. The audit is conducted in all QLD State Schools as part of an initiative to improve student learning. The audit provides feedback on how the school is performing and to inform the school planning process.
- ◆ Senior Graduation—Three students graduated this year: Latisha Price, David Jackson and Locklan Chong. The Graduation took place at the Ibis Hotel on the 29th November.
- ◆ School Facilities Maintenance—Inspectors were at the school on 25th November updating any areas by improving or repairing them.

A big thank you to our families who have contributed to our P&C committee this year.— Mrs Maria Luff (president), Ms Stacy Portch (Vice President/Tuckshop convenor), Mrs Kym Hensler and Ms Lisa Hensler. The next P&C meeting will be Thursday the 13th February 2014 at 3pm.

David and Latisha with Miss Andrea and Mr Geoff at Graduation





Mount Isa State Special School

Newsletter 5th December 2013

PRE-INTENTIONAL CLASS

This term has gone by very fast. We have been enjoying the last week of school by continuing the normal routines and adding some Christmas craft. Music we have focussed on this week are Christmas songs which have been fun and the children are all enjoying them. It has been extra noisy in the classroom with Christmas carols, bells and vocalisations all at once.

On Wednesday, we had an exciting day planned with Christmas carols. Santa came and also we also had a BBQ lunch for students and staff.

It has been my pleasure to teach the pre-intentional class this year. I have loved seeing their improvements with goals and enjoyed each personality over the year. We wish everyone a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

Ms Scott, Ms Suni, Ms Veronica



ALICIA SCOTT
TEACHER

MIDDLE CLASS

We've had a great year. All students have made huge progress academically, personally and socially.

We are very proud of what they have achieved and their efforts are reflected in their report cards.

Our favourite memory for this year has been our swimming lessons at the pool.

We had a lot of fun swimming one on one with the students. We are proud of their safety skills in the pool and when in the community.

We wish you all a very Merry Christmas and a safe and Happy Holiday.

Miss Jess and Miss Jodie.



JESSICA READER
TEACHER

SENIOR CLASS

Wow. Not only has the term flown by really fast, but the whole year has come and gone just as quick. Miss Andrea, Miss Robyn and I have had an absolutely fantastic year working with the students in the senior class. All of the seniors have worked really hard all year and have definitely earned their holidays.

It is with some sadness that we say good bye to three of our senior students. David, Latisha and Locklan all celebrated their senior graduation this week. They have all successfully completed their schooling at Mt Isa State Special School. We wish them all the success with their future and hope for their best.

Next year, the seniors will be welcoming a few new students. One of these students has been part of our program every Tuesday this term. We wish Reece and his family a happy holidays and look forward to working with them next year. Finally, the senior class would like to wish all the families, students and staff at Mt Isa State Special School a Merry Christmas, a Happy New Year and wish that everyone stays safe.

Mr Geoff, Miss Andrea & Miss Robyn.



GEOFF MILLER
TEACHER



Students Harkarsha Spain, Xavier Anderson, Georgina McPherson and James Rowland, T/A's Suni Thogersen and Veronica Feliciano.





Keeping your kids safe online this holiday season

Between the last minute shopping rush and the impending arrival of family and friends, you've got enough on your plate this holiday season without worrying about what your kids are up to online.

You can't keep your eye on them 24/7, but there are some steps you can take to ensure your kids safe online when you're not around. Telstra brings you some tips when putting that tablet under the tree:

1. Talk with your kids about their digital lives. Create conversations and stay involved
2. Ask your children how they use technology and try it for yourself – try playing a game or uploading a video together
3. Explain the rules of responsible device ownership
4. Protect personal information – teach your children how to turn on privacy settings
5. Encourage children to 'think before they click', to think about content and the consequences of posting it
6. Be an offline supporter. Encourage kids to have some screen-free time each day and turn off devices at bedtime
7. Teach kids to treat others the same way they'd like to be treated online and be zero-tolerant to rude or mean online behaviour
8. Make the most of parental controls on devices
9. Let your children know you're always there for them assure them that their internet privileges won't be taken away if they are exposed to content that makes them feel uncomfortable or concerned
10. Don't just talk about the right thing to do; be a role model with your own digital habits

Above all, have a fun and safe holiday season!
For more information about keeping the family safe online visit: telstra.com.au/cyber-safety

UP COMING EVENTS AND IMPORTANT DATES

6th December—Last day of school
28th January 2014—first day of Term 1.

Tuckshop

On Thursday the 14th November, we had our very first tuckshop with one of our wonderful parents Ms Stacey Portch. On the menu was fresh salad, chicken burgers and jelly which proved to be a very popular with the staff as well as the students. Most popular on the menu was the fried rice. Stacey recently went away to a course in Brisbane to learn how to operate and maintain a health smart tuckshop. We shall be keeping the prices at an obtainable level so that all students have an opportunity to access tuckshop. The students and staff were very impressed with the size of the meals as well as the taste. Tuckshop will resume in 2014 and we shall advise everyone of the date.



Stacey, Jack, Rowena, David and Lillianna enjoying tuckshop.

'A Garden of Helping Hands'

The photo below is the end result of an activity lead by Rev. Betty Handley and Chaplain Vanessa Cross to encourage the students to think about ways that they can help others. Cortnee Hensler and David Jackson enjoyed the task of drawing their hands on cardboard for the poster.





Christmas Party

With assistance from our music teacher, Ms Kylie De Calmer, our students sang a number of Christmas carols for their families.

Santa arrived at the end of the songs and Kai and Travis went straight to him and gave him a huge welcome. All the students loved having Santa in the classroom and each child received a gift from Santa.

Santa even had little gifts for Kyle and Cortnee's siblings. All the students were sad to see Santa leave, but he explained to them that he had a lot of gifts to hand out as this was a very busy time of year for him.

This was followed by a sausage sizzle, enjoyed by the staff, students and families. Everyone enjoyed the event in the large covered area even as the rain came down.



Inez DeStage and Travis Portch receiving their gifts from Santa

Chaplain's Corner

I have enjoyed my time here at school this year. It has been a pleasure to spend time with and get to know the staff, students and families.

My interactions with the students has always been the highlight of each day. I always enjoy going to the playground with the students whether to colour-in, shoot hoops with a basketball, or even just to talk with the students.

Observing the students, growing and learning to their full potential and being themselves is such a delight.

I am so proud of the hard work that the staff provide in building an excellent learning environment for the students.

I would like to take this opportunity to say farewell. It is with sadness that I shall not be returning next year, as I am moving away. I will miss everyone at school.

I want to wish everyone a Merry Christmas and Happy New Year. Enjoy the break from school and amidst the gift giving take some time to remember the Christmas Story.



Parent Mada Mullins with Raquel Mullins, Di Marshall and P&C president Maria Luff

