Dear families,

Last Friday and Saturday the entire executive team participated in leadership training titled “Great Leaders, Great Teams, Great Results”, based on the work by Stephen Covey. This was a great opportunity for the team to discuss our school leadership and start to develop a plan for the future. I would like to thank the entire executive team for giving up their own time to participate in this training. It is a clear demonstration of how committed they are to their roles and the school.

This year our school is focussing on shifting the focus in classrooms from students being compliant to students being engaged. With the support of Mrs Samutt, Mrs Heyburgh, Mrs Gibbs and Mrs Shipley staff are reflecting on their practice. Staff are now regularly visiting other classrooms, being observed, watching lessons and spending time discussing their pedagogy. It is professionally a very exciting time at Blairmount.

Finally it is fantastic to see our students enjoying our new playground. Although it is now a very popular area the students are sharing the space very harmoniously. I would again like to thank all our students for the patience they demonstrated while our new playground was being developed.

Please look out for our full report of todays Harmony Day activities in our next newsletter.

Regards
Greg Turnbull
Principal

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Home Reading

All students should be given books to take home at an independent level, as this is a level where they can read with ease, usually 1 or 2 levels below the instructional level.

We want your children to develop a love for reading and not feel like it is a chore to read. By sending home readers at an independent level, the children should feel confident in their reading skills and enjoy the text. I still want to emphasise the importance of sitting down and reading with your child.

Reading Levels
Independent Reading Level: A student could read it alone with ease (e.g. home readers, recreational reading).

Instructional Reading Level: Challenging but manageable for the reader. This is the best level for learning new vocabulary (e.g. guided reading reading with the teacher).

Hard Reading Level: Difficult text for the student to read. This is too hard for the reader.

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Clean Up Australia Day

The School’s ‘Clean Up Australia Day’ was held on Friday the 28th February. The students from Years Three to Six joined over 2,500 other schools around the country to help remove rubbish from the environment.
The students cleaned all areas of the school grounds and the external fence-line. Most rubbish was found around the perimeter of the school. Rubbish was found in the gutter, caught under the fence, and in the bushes and plants along the fence-line. The rubbish consisted mostly of pieces of paper, plastic bags and wrappings. Disturbingly items such as cigarette butts and broken glass were also found within the school grounds.

The students demonstrated national pride and a great sense of community as they worked together to make our part of the country a cleaner environment.

5G Learning Goal Trophy Title-Holders

The following students have achieved their learning goals in addition and subtraction:

Ashley, Cassi, Justyce, Harmonie, Sarah, Hassan, Lauren, Annalise and McKayla.

Congratulations to these students.

Mrs Gawthorne

Stage 2 News Bites

This term, Stage 2 have been working very hard on their homework. We have been studying a unit of work on the Winter Olympic Games. The students were highly engaged in this unit of study, have produced some amazing pieces of work and have been having some excellent discussions in class on their research.

Well done boys and girls, we are all very proud of your efforts!

Miss Howick, Miss Lawton, Miss Chatterjee, Mr. Collins and Mr Neill

B.Y.O.H (Bring Your Own Headphones)

If your child has been using the school iPads within their class could you please send a set of headphones to school for your child to use.

Any headphones with a 3.5mm jack would be great. They do not need to be Apple products. The headphones that are brought in will be kept in a safe place and will only be used by your child.

As with all student belongings, please ensure the headphones are labeled with your child’s name.

Thanks

Mrs Gawthorne
National Assessment Program – Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN)
If your child is currently in Year 3, 5, 7 or 9, they’ll sit NAPLAN tests this May. And despite what you may have heard, there’s no reason to panic or start an intensive study schedule for your child.

Find out more:

School A to Z app
Do you struggle to understand your child’s homework? Does your child need to practise their spelling and times tables? Are you looking for inspiration for projects and assignments? This free homework helper app provides maths and English glossaries, assignment starters and more.

Find out more:
http://www.schoolatoz.nsw.edu.au/about/mobile-applications/school-a-to-z

Wild Australia app
Your child can use this terrific app as an interactive educational tool at Taronga Zoo in Sydney or at Taronga Western Plains Zoo, Dubbo. Wild Australia can also be used at home to discover more about the zoos’ amazing animals and interesting keepers.

Find out more:

K/1M Star of the Week
For showing that learning is important to them,

The star of the week for:
Week 7 was....... "Fila Afu" from Kindergarten
And for
Week 8 is....... "Pursayis Ahmad" from Year 1

Congratulations Fila and Pursayis you should be very proud of yourselves.

MathsMAD Time in 1A
1A have been working hard during MathsMAD time. Over the last fortnight students from 1A have been practicing the mathematical strategy of visualizing to solve addition sums. Instead of using concrete materials such as counters, teddies or even their own fingers, students visualized to count on.

Regional Swimming Finalist!!
On the 18th March 2014, Eliza from 5G represented Blairmount Public School at the Sydney South West Regional Swimming Carnival.

Eliza competed against the best 11 year old girl swimmers from Bankstown, Campbelltown, East Hills, Green Valley, Horsely Park, Landsdowne, Liverpool, The fields and Razorback.

Before her 50 metre heat, Eliza said, "I feel good and I’ll do my best and forget the rest!"

And, do her best she did by winning her heat by a few body lengths !!

Though Eliza did not make it to State Level, she was extremely happy with her efforts and can’t wait to come back next year. Well Done !!
Zone AFL Team - Deacon Fox 6N

- How long have you been playing AFL? I have only been playing for school gala days.

- Have you been selected for a zone representative team before? Yes, touch footy and rugby union. This is the third time.

- What is the best part of being a member of the zone representative team? New experiences and I love competing in sports.

- What is your proudest sporting achievement? Winning a grand final with my team.

- Who is your favourite athlete and why? Jayrd Hayne because he has lots of skills and he is a good player.

- What are your dreams for the future? I want to be a NRL Star and play for the Eels.

- What advice can you give to other students at Blairmount Public School who want to play for a zone representative team? Work hard, try hard and never give up until you reach your goal.

Student Toilets
We would like to remind parents that due to child protection requirements it is not appropriate to use the students' toilets. We appreciate your understanding in this matter.

Zone Swimming
The zone swimming carnival was held on Wednesday 12th March at Bradbury swimming pools. Blairmount was represented by:
- Andrew Liddle
- Ezekiel Siilata
- Eliza Siilata
- Tiara Walters

All four swimmers swam their fastest times in their heats and beat their personal bests. Andrew and Eliza both made it to the finals.

Andrew just missed out on making it to the Regional Carnival by coming 4th. Eliza came in third, which meant that she represented Blairmount at the Regional Carnival on Tuesday 18th March.

All four were excellent representatives and all tried their very best at the carnival. Congratulations to all four swimmers and we wish Eliza all the best at the Regional Carnival. I would like to also thank the children's parents and Miss Brownlee for their attendance and support on the day.

Miss Dash
Reminder!

“EASTER BILBY”
Incursion
For Kindergarten and Year 1

Kindergarten and Year 1 students have the opportunity to participate in a uniquely Australian Easter experience conducted by the Georges River Environmental Education Centre.

Through story, song and craft the students will be introduced to the endangered Bilby and other Australian animals while learning about how we can play our part in protecting our native wildlife. They will meet some bush invertebrates up close, create their own clay Easter Bilby, paint Bilby ears and stencil a leaf design onto a bookmark.

The cost for the incursion is $8.00.

Payment for Year 1 students is due on **Friday March 28** for Friday April 4.
Payment for Kindergarten students is due on **Friday April 4** for Thursday April 10.

Payment can be made to the front office or paid online.

We look forward to your child joining us for this wonderfully enriching learning experience.

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P&C “EASTER RAFFLE & CAKE STALL”

**Wednesday 9th April 2014**

RAFFLE TICKETS $1 EACH
(tickets & monies due Monday 7th April)

**Hampers will be drawn during the k-2 Easter Hat Parade**

1st Prize 2nd Prize 3rd Prize

CAKE STALL WILL BE HELD AT 11am

**Every family is asked to please donate a cake for the stall**
A Guide to Reading with your child at home

When your child makes a mistake that makes sense. Do NOT correct them. When they finish reading the book, then go back to the word and say:

'You said this word was ______. It made sense but does it look right?'

'What do you think it could be?'

If your child does not know the correct word, tell them.

When your child makes a mistake that doesn't make sense. Give them time to correct it themselves. If they don't, then ask:

'Does it make sense?'

'Try that again.'

'There was a tricky word there, read the sentence again.'

If the picture in the book would help them say: 'Look at the picture.'

Then if your child still doesn't know the word, tell them it.

SELF-CORRECTION is the term used when kids correct their own mistakes by:

Reading a word or sentence again correctly.

Checking with a pictures and correcting their mistake.

Trying a word and then confirming it or trying another word.

These are the strategies we are looking for: THIS IS WHAT GOOD READERS DO!

Praise all attempts to self-correct by saying things like:

'You worked that out really well,' or 'I like the way you had another go at that.'

Reading at home is a time for kids to practise their reading skills. The reading should sound good, fluent, like talking. Not word by word and struggling with words they are unsure of.

If you think the book is too hard then read it to your child and return it to the teacher with a note letting them know.

It is okay for your child to read 'easy' books and to reread favourites. This is how they gain confidence.

Encourage them to take risks and have a go. It is okay to look at the pictures, to point at the words and to reread to get the meaning.

Some DONT'S:

Do not make your child sound out every word
Do not lose your patience. The aim is to help your child and enjoy reading.

Finding a TIME & PLACE

It is important to establish a routine. 15 minutes each school day is good.

A little more often is better than longer only twice a week as there is less chance of either of you getting bored or stressed.

This time should be a special time that you have together.

No interruptions from other kids, TV, phone, radio, etc.

Be relaxed and comfortable.

Find somewhere that is convenient for both of you and where your child is comfortable.

Introduce the BOOK

Talk about the book before reading.

Encourage your child to hold the book.

You could begin by saying: 'This book is called...'

Then things like:

'Where do you start?'

'Tell me about the picture(s)'

'What happened here?'

'Who is this?'

'What do you think will happen next?'

Have FUN - it is a sharing time.

What to Do

If your child stops at a word...

Give thinking time.

Say:

'Look at the picture. Does that help'

'What do you think it could be?'

Welcome any attempt your child makes to solve the word with statements like:

'I like the way you tried to work that out'

'I like the way you did that.'
BLAIRMOUNT PUBLIC SCHOOL’s NEW SCHOOL RULES:

Students at Blairmount Public School have been busy learning their new school rules including the difference between desirable and undesirable behaviour.

- Do your best
- Let others learn
- Participate in learning
- Follow directions and instructions
- Be prepared for learning
- Keep focused and stay on task
- Actively listen

- Always be polite and use your manners
- Be cooperative
- Respect your own, others and school property
- Respect yourself and take responsibility for your actions
- Respect your school and the people and creatures in it
- Wear your school uniform with pride
- Respect the feelings of others
- Respect all natural and built environments
- Keep your play and eating areas clean from rubbish
- Be in the right place, at the right time, doing the right thing.
- Be sun safe – Wear a hat or stay under shelter
- Move safely at all times
- Keep your hands and feet to yourself
- Use all equipment correctly
- Travel safely to and from school
- Stay safe in cyberspace

Students are encouraged to demonstrate desirable behaviour at all times by following the school rules and earn some of our fabulous new awards including:

- Desirable Playground Behaviour Awards ~
- Being a Learner Award ~
- Being Respectful Award ~
- Being Safe Award ~
- Being a Safe and Respectful Learner Term Award ~

Please support and encourage your child to learn the new school rules and demonstrate desirable behaviour by following these at all times.
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<th>Monday</th>
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<td>28 Staff Return</td>
<td>29 Students Yr 1-6 Return</td>
<td>30 Kindergarten Begin</td>
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<td>3 February P&amp;C Meeting 6pm</td>
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<td>27 Assembly</td>
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<td>6</td>
<td>3 March P&amp;C Meeting 6pm</td>
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<td>7</td>
<td>10 Book Fair</td>
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<td>11</td>
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<td>9 Easter Hat Parade K-2 P&amp;C Cake Stall and Raffle</td>
<td>10 Easter Bilby Incursion</td>
<td>11 Cross Country Fun Run K-6 Last Day Term 1</td>
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Mother’s Day Stall

Children need to pre-order & pay for Blaimount Money before Friday 28th March 2014.

Dear Parents and Guardians,

On Thursday 8th May 2014, the P&C will be running their annual Mother’s Day Stall. The Stall allows children to purchase a special gift for their mother, grandmother or special someone, while at the same time raising money for Blaimount Public School P&C. Participation in this event is entirely voluntary.

Gifts will range in price from $1, $2, $3, $4, $5, $7 and $10.

A limited amount of gifts will be purchased and children who have pre-ordered and paid for Blaimount Money will be given the opportunity first to purchase a gift or gifts of their choice, anything that is left over will be sold at lunchtime.

This year’s PRE-PURCHASED stall will provide your child with the opportunity to purchase more than one give if they so choose. There is NO LIMIT to the number of gifts than can be purchased providing they have purchased Blaimount Money PRIOR to the day.

In order to streamline the running of the stall, the reply slip needs to be completed and returned with your order. (Blaimount Money will be handed out to children on the day of the stall. $1 = 1 Blaimount Dollar).

What do you need to do before the day?
Please return the attached slip, along with all monies addressed to P&C Mother’s Day Stall, in a sealed envelope to the front office by Friday 28th March 2014. (This will give us time to order and arrange gifts).

RETURN SLIP – MOTHER’S DAY STALL
Return this slip and monies by Friday 28th MARCH 2014

Child’s Name: ___________________________________________ Class: ____________________________

Amount of money enclosed: $_______________________________