Welcome Back!

DATES TO REMEMBER

Monday 21st February
Hairdresser visit $15.00

Tuesday 8th March
Family Night

Monday 14th March
Labour Day Holiday

Friday 8th April
Last day Term 1

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URGENT ATTENTION REQUIRED

Could all parents/carers please ensure that all completed medical forms (signed by Doctor if required) are returned to Ali Knowles, our School Nurse, as soon as possible.
Welcome back to all returning and new students and staff for 2011.

A special welcome to Joshua [Room 1, Jed and Henry [Room 3] and Joshua L. [Room 7].

Intake meetings with their parents assisted us to know a lot about the children before they commenced at Belmore.

Some staff changes which happened over the holidays included the appointment of

Patrick Moody [Teacher, Room 7] and Ai May Lee [Teacher Assistant, Room 7]. Prue has transferred to another school.

Prior to the holidays, we had announced the appointment of Gillian Mosley [Leading Teacher, Room 8], Kim Sacks [Teacher, Room 1], Paul Cooper [Teacher Assistant, Room 8] Christina Williams[ Teacher Assistant, Room 2] and Emma Kidd [Teacher Assistant, Room 9]. We still need to appoint another Attendant Carer, that should be announced soon.

Yooralla also welcomed Alisha Mann, an O.T. who is replacing Marie Claire for 6 months.

We have returned to a very different environment at Belmore.

Our builders worked extremely hard over the holidays to get the internal spaces ready for us a month ahead of schedule.

This has made it so much easier for staff to prepare all of the wonderful new spaces we now have.

Over the 3 days last week before students returned, the whole staff worked amazingly hard to move furniture and equipment from "old" areas and storage into the new gym, art classroom, music space [on the hall stage], re-establish the meeting room to make it a more attractive area for Friends of Belmore and Parent/Teacher meetings and into various new store rooms under the school.

Peter, the Yooralla equipment officer, was able to have all of his large equipment set up in the new workshop, so will be able to do large repairs on site again.

We are delighted with the quality of the new facilities; if you have a chance, call into the office and one of us will give you a tour. We plan to have an official opening in the near future to celebrate this long awaited improvement.

As well as temporarily becoming furniture removalists and interior decorators, all staff participated in some Professional Development sessions on those 3 days. We had a psychologist talk about grief and loss, some sessions to brush up on our signing skills, and many, many staff spent long sessions with nurse trainers from RCH to revise or learn medical intervention practice for our high needs students.

All staff members are to be thanked and congratulated for the amount achieved as they worked in teams for long days to be ready by last Friday.

The finishing touches to the outdoors remain to be completed - re-asphalting, a wider gate for the dental van, and some paving and landscaping. If you drive down Belmore Rd., I think you will agree the improvement to the building is really noticeable.

Class and therapy staff have worked closely to implement student programs right from the start; all of the students are happily engaged in learning programs, whether they have new rooms or staff to become familiar with, or whether they remained in the same class.

We all look forward to a very productive and happy 2011.

Jan Welsh
WHAT IS HAPPENING?

New Art Room!

We now have a new dedicated “Visual Arts“ room. Sandy is busy setting up, moving, cleaning, sorting lots of interesting art materials for our students to explore. We are all looking forward to having lots of "messy fun" in our new dedicated area. This will be a special place for our budding artists to grow and bloom!

New 'Music Space'!

The stage in the hall has been cleared and will be used for classroom weekly Music Therapy sessions. Dewi is busy preparing the space - setting up the drum kit, special access kit (banana keyboard), the microphone and amp. The students will greatly benefit from having a dedicated music room in which equipment and instruments are permanently installed for use. Music to our ears!
WHAT IS HAPPENING?

Our new gym!

Our new Art Room!

Our new Staffroom!

Our new Workshop!
Welcome to everyone from your new Yooralla Therapy Teams.

All therapists would love to hear from parents/carers either by email, phone and/or communication books.

The teams for 2011 are:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Room 1</th>
<th>Room 2</th>
<th>Room 3</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>PT: Liz</td>
<td>PT: Viv</td>
<td>PT: Liz</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OT: Leah</td>
<td>OT: Leah</td>
<td>OT: Leah</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SP: Jenny</td>
<td>SP: Jenny</td>
<td>SP: Jenny</td>
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Room 4</th>
<th>Room 5</th>
<th>Room 6</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>PT: Liz</td>
<td>PT: Grace</td>
<td>PT: Grace</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OT: Alisha</td>
<td>OT: Alisha</td>
<td>OT: Alisha</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SP: Cassie</td>
<td>SP: Jenny</td>
<td>SP: Cassie</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Room 7</th>
<th>Room 8</th>
<th>Room 9</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>PT: Grace</td>
<td>PT: Liz</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>OT: Alisha</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>SP: Jenny</td>
<td>SP: Jenny</td>
<td>SP: Cassie</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Email Addresses:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Email Address</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Alisha Mann</td>
<td><a href="mailto:alisha.mann@yooralla.com.au">alisha.mann@yooralla.com.au</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cassie Kenyon</td>
<td><a href="mailto:cassie.kenyon@yooralla.com.au">cassie.kenyon@yooralla.com.au</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grace Yao</td>
<td><a href="mailto:grace.yao@yooralla.com.au">grace.yao@yooralla.com.au</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jenny Ayres</td>
<td><a href="mailto:jenny.ayers@yooralla.com.au">jenny.ayers@yooralla.com.au</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leah Picking</td>
<td><a href="mailto:leah.picking@yooralla.com.au">leah.picking@yooralla.com.au</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Liz Martin</td>
<td><a href="mailto:liz.martin@yooralla.com.au">liz.martin@yooralla.com.au</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Viv Kostoglou</td>
<td><a href="mailto:vivk@yooralla.com.au">vivk@yooralla.com.au</a></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Welcome back to Cassie Kenyon - Cassie spent 2010 working at Croydon Special Developmental School.

Welcome to our new Occupational Therapist, Alisha Mann. (Alisha will be replacing Marie-Claire Ryan for 6 months - Marie Claire has been seconded to Yooralla’s Early Childhood Intervention Services). Alisha has been working at Broadmeadows Special Developmental School for the past 3 1/2 years and brings a broad range of experience working with students of many varied needs.
EDUCATION MAINTENANCE ALLOWANCE: INFORMATION FOR PARENTS/GUARDIANS

The Education Maintenance Allowance (EMA) provides assistance to eligible families by helping with the costs associated with the education of their children.

In 2011 the EMA payment for parents/guardians is **$230 for primary school students** and **$460 for secondary students**. This amount is split evenly between the parents/guardians and the school and is paid in two instalments as per the schedule of payments set out in the table below.

**Schedule of payments in 2011**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Instalment</th>
<th>Portion payable to</th>
<th>Primary school rate</th>
<th>Secondary school rate</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>One (70% of EMA)</td>
<td>Parent</td>
<td>$83.50</td>
<td>$161.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>School</td>
<td>$83.50</td>
<td>$161.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Two (30% of EMA)</td>
<td>Parent</td>
<td>$34.50</td>
<td>$69.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>School</td>
<td>$34.50</td>
<td>$69.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total for 2011</td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>$230.00</strong></td>
<td><strong>$460.00</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Student year level (or age for ungraded and special school students) forms the basis for calculating the amount payable. Students turning sixteen during the year will be paid on a pro rata basis up to and including the month they reach the age of sixteen.*

The first instalment will comprise 70 per cent of the EMA and will be paid from March 2011. The second instalment will comprise the remaining 30 per cent and will be paid from August 2011. This payment schedule recognises that families incur the highest educational costs at the start of the school year.

Eligibility

To be eligible to receive the EMA, you must:

- be either a parent or guardian of a primary or secondary school student up to the age of sixteen; and
- be an eligible beneficiary of a Centrlink pension, allowance or benefit within the meaning of the State Concessions Act 2004 or be a Veterans Affairs (Vet) pensioner or be a foster parent; and
- submit your application to the school by the due date.

The eligibility criteria must be met as at the first day of 1st Term (1 February 2011 which is the first day for teaching staff) for the first instalment and the first day of 3rd Term (18 July 2011) for the second instalment. Any applications based on Centrlink payments that are not income tested (e.g. Carer Allowance, formerly Child Disability Allowance, Mobility Allowance and Remote Area Allowance) are not eligible unless the claimant, in their own name, complies with the second dot point above.

The EMA is payable up until the age of 16 years. Once a student turns 16, they should apply for Youth Allowance through Centrlink. For further information visit [www.centrlink.gov.au](http://www.centrlink.gov.au).

Application forms

Application forms are available from your child’s school. A separate application is required for each school if you have children attending different schools.

Please submit your application to your child’s school by 28 February 2011 for the first instalment of the EMA and by 5 August 2011 for the second instalment of the EMA unless your child remains enrolled at the same school and you were paid the first EMA instalment.

15/02/2011
NOTICE BOARD

Payment methods

Direct Bank Deposit (EFT) payment option: EFT payments can only be made to the parent’s nominated bank account for parent’s choosing the EFT payment option. Please advise your child’s school if your nominated bank account changes during the year.

Cheque payment option: Cheques payable to parents will be sent to the school for distribution for parent’s choosing the cheque payment option. Please advise your child’s school if your address changes during the year.

School portion of the Education Maintenance Allowance

Schools must spend the school’s portion of the EMA on essential educational items for which all parents are normally expected to provide. Such items could include:

- student text books
- student stationery (e.g. pens, pencils, exercise books, work-books)
- materials for electives where the student consumes or takes possession of the finished articles (e.g. home economics etc) or the payment sought is the difference between the basic materials/services and the higher cost alternatives
- programs provided by outside specialists (e.g. visiting artists, speakers, performers)
- camps and excursions which are integral to the curriculum and which all students are expected to attend
- school identification cards
- school uniform
- official diary/handbook/work planner
- student computer printing beyond the needs of the eight Key Learning Areas (e.g. personal use).

The school’s portion of the EMA cannot be used to offset voluntary contributions. Common examples of materials or services which are supported through voluntary contributions are:

- equipment purchases
- buildings and grounds beautification
- library fund
- general contribution to the school.

Schools need to inform parents on request of the cost of the items on which they propose to spend the school’s portion of the EMA.

Schools are only custodians of the school portion of the EMA. If a student transfers to another school, the balance of the school’s portion must accompany the student to the new school.

Any portion of the EMA which is not expended by the end of the year must be returned to the parent/guardian. However, with agreement of the parent/guardian, this money can be carried over into the next year or other appropriate arrangements made to suit the needs of the student.

Questions

All queries relating to eligibility and payments of the EMA should be directed to your child’s school.
The Multi Purpose Taxi Program (MPTP) is a government funded program which aims to improve accessibility to transport services for people with a disability. The program is administered by the Victorian Taxi Directorate (VTD).

The Information session will provide information on:

- how to apply for an MPTP card
- eligibility criteria (including the means test)
- the trip cap and annual cap
- additional subsidies
- interstate travel vouchers
- taxi travel for people with a disability
- wheelchair accessible taxis (WATs)
- how to complain and/or provide feedback to the VTD
- current VTD initiatives to improve taxi services.

If you are interested in learning more about the MPTP, please attend the free information session below:

**Where:** Maroondah Federation Estate, 32 Greenwood Avenue, Ringwood  
**When:** Monday 7 March 2011  
**Time:** 10:30am to 12 noon (morning tea provided)  
**RSVP 4 March:** response@maroondah.vic.gov.au or 9294 5731

If you have any questions about the event please contact: Pauline Hayes from MPTP on 8683 0604

The VTD would like to thank our hosts Maroondah City Council and Knox City Council, for supporting this program by donating their time and venue for these information sessions.
LAST MINUTE NEWS

Professor Ron McCallum AO has been appointed as the 2011 Senior Australian of the Year.

"Professor McCallum has been an outstanding contributor to Australia in his field of industrial law, and has demonstrated clearly the contribution which Australians with disability can make if we are given - or create - the opportunity to do so," said Graeme Innes, Australia’s Disability Discrimination Commissioner.

As well as being the Dean of Law at Sydney University for five years, Professor McCallum has been twice elected to the UN Expert Committee for the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, and has chaired that committee for the last twelve months.

"Professor McCallum is an exceptional Australian," said Commissioner Innes. "During his year as Senior Australian, I am sure that he will very effectively promote the need for other Australians with disability to be given an equal opportunity in areas such as employment, access to buildings and public transport, as well as in all areas of community life."

If you would like to join the email list to receive this Newsletter electronically, please contact allen.fiona.a@edumail.vic.gov.au