As we approach the end of the first month our organisation for 2013 is taking shape. We have altered our timetable so Health and Physical Education takes place from 9.00 am – 9.30 am. This combats the effects of warm weather. Maths is from 9.30 until 10.30 am followed by 30 minutes of recess. The two hour literacy block is 11.00 am until lunch time at 1.00 pm.

At 1.40 pm children read for 20 minutes silently and this is followed by a variety of afternoon activities: Welfare; Integrated Studies; Art; Library etc..

PLEASE READ THE FOLLOWING INFORMATION. I HOPE SOME FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS ARE ANSWERED

Parents can be of great assistance in learning:

Children should read for 20 minutes each night. If you can help by asking them questions it will reinforce understanding. Very occasionally some printed activity sheets will be sent as homework. Our policy on homework is simple: kids work hard during the day and need time with family and friends after school. The school has paid around $23 per student, in 2013, for access to Mathletics and Spellodrome. These are self-paced online programs in maths and literacy and can be accessed both at school and home. They are fun, challenging and provide “instant feedback” which is vital for learning.

Welfare

- For many years we have encouraged independent learning. During the day children are taught and encouraged to work with their peers when solving problems. Only when they have exhausted all avenues do they then “ask the teacher”. Making a mistake is part of good learning and children are encouraged to “have a go” without fearing failure. We also expect “self-discipline” from all children but most particularly from those in grade three and beyond. This approach creates kids who ‘LEARN HOW TO LEARN’!!

...continued over page...
Each month we have a DVD and a fun morning to reward good behaviours. Use of DVD technology is an excellent way of encouraging children to ask – “How do they do that???” Our technology enables them to then try and create along similar lines.

We have “Zero Tolerance” regarding poor behaviour. Children know the rules and they are consistently enforced.

School Uniform must be worn at all times. Harston School Hats must be worn in terms one and four.

School Equipment

It is a continual juggling act to make sure that our finances are used to provide students with the best equipment. We have not charged fees for many, many years. We plan to continue this policy. Recent funding cutbacks mean we must carefully monitor our usage of:

◊ Electricity
◊ Gas
◊ Photocopying

We continually remind students about care of computer/IPADS. They are expensive and misuse is not tolerated. Repairs to damaged computers, for example, often costs more than a new machine. Each machine has a lifespan of around 3.5 years and is not replaced if damaged. We have had no problems in the past and look forward to this continuing. There is no extra funding for replacing such equipment so planning replacement of equipment is a big part of budget planning.

SCHOOL BUDGETS

All schools are funded according to enrolments at Census (end of February each year). From our budget we must cover the entire running costs of the school. From power to office supplies, replacement teachers, student welfare, SCOPE etc…. No extra funding is available to us. When teachers are absent due to illness (unless it is serious and extends for over 31 days) the school must pay the replacement from its budget.

EDUCATION SUPPORT STAFF

These staff members are vital to the running of schools. They perform a range of tasks according to school needs and their individual areas of expertise and qualifications:

◊ Some work exclusively with students following the teachers advice etc..
◊ Some work exclusively in administration “looking after” finance and other mandatory requirements.
◊ Often jobs are shared – particularly in admin areas.

Education Support Staff pay scales are, in the main, much lower than teaching rates. Recruiting tertiary qualified people to work at this level is a bonus (and a bargain) and enables schools to spread budgets much more widely.

I believe the future of small schools is bound by the efficient use of funding. Education Support Staff are vital for schools such as Harston.

ILLNESS

We have had a large number of children absent with the same complaint this term: Headaches, sore throats and upset stomachs. As you can imagine these viruses sweep through the school in no time. PLEASE – when in doubt keep your child at home. Currently we have three staff members with these symptoms and 14 children have reported same. If your child has seen the doctor and requires time off school please request a medical certificate for our records.
HEAD LICE
- February seems to be the month when the incidence of Head Lice appears. We have staff members who conduct inspections and appropriate notes are then sent home.

PLEASE NOTE:
HEAD LICE DO NOT LIVE IN SCHOOLS. THEY MOVE FROM HEAD TO HEAD AND ARE NOT PARTICULAR WHOSE HEAD IT IS. PLEASE CHECK YOUR CHILD’S HEAD REGULARLY AND TREAT APPROPRIATELY.

INFORMATION
- Parents who have any issues or misunderstandings:
  ◊ Please call us or drop in for a cup of coffee. AND
  ◊ PLEASE FOLLOW UP ANY INFORMATION THAT YOUR CHILD EXPRESSES VERBALLY. THEY OFTEN GET THE INFORMATION MIXED UP.

• A STORY TO CONSIDER:
  ◊ In my first year at Harston we installed a SHADE SAIL over the playground equipment. Within 24 hours of telling the children of this I had numerous complaints (including one to my boss). Apparently one parent thought we were having a PLAYGROUND SALE, selling all the equipment, and was very unhappy about it. A simple phone call would have fixed this.

SCHOOL COUNCIL VACANCIES.
THIS INFORMATION IS ATTACHED. THERE IS A STRICT TIMELINE. PLEASE READ.

Looking forward to the rest of the year being as good as the start.

More soon.
Regards
Owen

EDUCATION MAINTENANCE ALLOWANCE
EMA applications must be in for processing by Tuesday 26th February. To be eligible for EMA you must be a holder of a If you require an application form please call in to school and pick one up or ring and ask us to send one home. You will need to bring in your pension or health care card to be photocopied. Late applications cannot be accepted. To be eligible for the EMA:

1. You must on 29 January 2013 for the first instalment and 15 July 2013, for the second instalment:
   • be a parent or legal guardian of the student; and
   • be an eligible beneficiary within the meaning of the State Concessions Act 2004, that is, be a holder of Veterans Affairs Gold Card or be an eligible Health Care Card (HCC) or Pensioner Concession Card (PCC) holder or
   • be a temporary foster parent.

PREP FPHOTO FOR SHEPPARTON NEWS
On Thursday 7th March a photographer will attend the school to photograph our prep students. This photo will appear in The Shepparton News at a later date. We will advise the date when we have it.
**COMMUNITY NOTICES**

**TATURA AMATEUR BASKETBALL ASSOCIATION**

Autumn 2013 competition. For ages 8 to 16.
Registration:  6-7.30pm Wednesday February 13th and Thursday February 14th.
At Tatura Stadium, Albert St.
Competition starts on March 6th.
For further information contact Lisa Cullum on 0428242889.

**TATURA JUNIOR NETBALL COMPETITION**

The Tatura Netball Association is again running its highly successful Friday night junior competition in 2013.
Join a vibrant & friendly competition that frees up your weekend & gives your child the opportunity to play under the ‘Friday night lights’ (& continue to play in Saturday competitions).
Division 1 (grade 5-6), Division 2 (grade 3-4) & the fantastic Netta program for those just learning the game (Prep-2) will again be running.
Come along to the registration day on Thursday 28/02/2013, 5.30 pm - 6.30 pm at the Tatura netball courts, Hastie St, Tatura. The season begins on a one off Saturday on 13/04/2013 to coincide with the 50th anniversary celebrations of the Association that evening. The competition will run on Friday nights thereafter.
School based teams, community teams, friends & individuals of all levels are welcome.
Contact Kerry Casey 0418 562 554 caseyfamily4@bigpond.com or Simon Pogue 0417 3054 637 spogue8484@bigpond.com

**MY GOLF PROGRAM**

HILLTOP (Tatura) Golf Club is starting the above program to help juniors try out or start playing or develop their skills in golf.
The initial program will run for six weeks starting on Sunday 17th February 2013 at 9:30am at Hilltop Golf Club. The program will continue for the six Sunday mornings.
The program runs for one hour and is free for all participants. All equipment will be supplied by the Golf Club. The only requirement for participants is to wear a pair of runners or such for the protection of their feet when they are walking around.
If you have a young person who would like to try the program then contact the Club to register their interest.
Junior Coordinator: John Fanning 0409024438
Club Manager: Alex Howson 58252449
CLEANER

THE SCHOOL HAS A VACANCY FOR A CLEANER.
BECAUSE OF THE RURAL AND REMOTE NATURE OF OUR SCHOOL PANEL STATUS IS NOT REQUIRED.

THE FOLLOWING MUST BE ADDRESSED:

CLEANING TIMES:
TUESDAY; THURSDAY AND SUNDAYS
CLEANING SHOULD NOT COMMENCE BEFORE 4.00 PM

MANDATORY RESPONSIBILITIES:
MUST HAVE A CURRENT POLICE CHECK
MUST HAVE AN ABN
MUST HAVE WORKCOVER AND PUBLIC LIABILITY INSURANCE OF $10,000,000.
MUST COMPLY WITH EQUAL EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY POLICIES.
MUST MEET ALL OH&S REQUIREMENTS.

AS A SOLE TRADER CLEANING MUST BE CARRIED OUT BY APPLICANT. CHILDREN ARE NOT PERMITTED TO BE ON SCHOOL GROUNDS DURING CLEANING.

REMUNERATION:
$480.00 PER CALENDAR MONTH

THIS ENTAILS CLEANING 3 TIMES PER WEEK AND TAKES BETWEEN 1.5 AND 2 HOURS EACH TIME. ALL EQUIPMENT IS PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL. PROTECTIVE CLOTHING MUST BE PROVIDED BY THE CLEANER.

FURTHER INFORMATION IS AVAILABLE FROM SCHOOL REGARDING AREA TO BE CLEANED ETC...

ENQUIRIES MUST BE MADE IN PERSON.

APPLICATIONS MUST BE MADE IN WRITING TO:

THE PRINCIPAL
HARSTON PRIMARY SCHOOL
155 HARSTON ROAD
TATURA 3616.

APPLICATIONS WILL CLOSE ON WEDNESDAY FEBRUARY 20TH AT 3.00 PM.

PREVIOUS EXPERIENCE IN AN EDUCATIONAL SETTING WILL BE PREFERRED.