

Thomas Acres PS NEWS



Term2 Week 2

2023

Term 1 is a wrap & Term 2 has kicked off

Already we are one Term down and have just started another.

Term 1 was busy. In a way schools are trying to return to normal after 3 challenging years of COVID and on top of that we are now trying to run our school with staff shortages, increased workloads, varying expectations and growing complexities.

Despite this in Term 1 we were able to

- rejugle & reform many classes after having many new students enroll early term one while having others move away
- run a productive and fun swimming carnival. With 4 great swimmers moving onto 'Regional' representation.
- hold a successful Meet, Greet and Eat with hundreds of parents coming to meet teachers and staff and share some food.
- meet face to face with parents and students with needs to design individual learning plans and start external services



- Kick off Gala Days – Primary sport involving more students than ever.
- Build a beautiful new sand stone edged SANDPIT.
- Introduce/ reintroduce morning and playtime activities including – Table Tennis, Skipping, Creative space (both for creativity and for those students needing to talk), football / soccer, farming with the chickens, rabbits and soon goats, vegetable gardening, play equipment, Mana – cultural activities for our pacific islanders, Koori Groups for our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students, drumming, band and so on.
- reengage in a big way with our community at very well attended EASTER HAT Parade.
- add more 'fantastic' murals to further enhance our school.
- Introduce SMS messaging to support student attendance.

Term 1 was busy for teachers too

During Term One teachers began and continued their work in New curriculums including new English and new mathematics not to mention increased work in phonic and phonemes. As a school we continue to work on the Departments new approach to Behaviours, Inclusivity and catering to a range of disabilities, student needs and complexities. As school. As a school a team of staff brought transition, playgroup and Pre-school prep groups back.

Through Term one teachers continue to work hard on School Targets and Processes - including quality teaching in Reading, Mathematics, Formative assessment, Aboriginal education, Supporting student wellbeing and increasing Student attendance.

A quick celebration in attendance is we are currently at an attendance rate of almost 90% above both our local network and the state! Yay parents, students and staff!



Moving forward into Term 2 your assistance & encouragement is needed.

As principal I am immensely proud of our school.

It is a school full of kind and caring students. It is a school where we constantly see children improve in learning, in maturity, in behavior, with many shining through the various opportunities provided, be it debating, dance, sport, band, drumming and so on. And we aim to continue to provide opportunities to promote 'FUN' at school, while unlocking and/or promoting the gifts and talents in our students.

However right now schools, including ours are facing challenges in workload and with a teacher shortage and shortage in key staff, with more and more leaving and less and less joining the 'ranks'

So I'm asking for your help..... (see next page)

I'm asking you to encourage my staff

If you find my office staff to be polite and helpful (and they are second to none really) then thank them.

If you know your child's teacher cares about your child, giving them the best learning opportunities they can provide and goes above and beyond adjusting for a range of students then please encourage and thank them.

Likewise if you notice something great our support staff have done from maintenance to School Learning Support Officers (teacher's aides) then thank them.

Please stop and think before you criticise because I know your kids are your world (hey I'm a dad too). But I can assure you everyone we really care for and love your kids too and always will do our best, and certainly don't aim to make mistakes. (We be human too and sometimes we might or we might just have a different opinion or approach).

Right now we can't afford to lose teachers and staff if we want to provide the best support. The best thing you can do to help me keep and attract staff is to show your appreciation.

Cyber safety

Unfortunately during Term 1 a number of students were involved in inappropriate incidents or content on social media outside of school which for many has had impact on them at school.

Parents and carers, please make sure that your kids are of the right age. Most apps such as Tic Toc, Instagram, Snapchat, Facebook etc say students should be 13 or over. Problems have included 'adult only content, bullying and / or conflict.

If they are on social media or online please make sure you are aware of what they are doing, saying, sharing and following.



Communication with the School ...

Thankyou for your patience as we work through communication changes now that 'Seesaw' is unable to be used due to risk of 'data breaches'.

Many of you have done as advised and gone old school in reaching out to teachers through phone calls, notes to teachers (when I started teaching this was the main way), emails to the school or a quick check in at pick up. Please be assured from us too if we have concerns we will always reach out.

Having said that though in the coming week or two we will start sending out messages through SENTRAL (our report, attendance software – but please give teachers time to 'learn' and set up). This week you will receive further information and notes about this program.



Respect, Kindness, Fairness, mindfulness & Resilience

During the year we teach and promote a range of values and important character traits. You supporting and reminding your kids of these will help them at school and life as much as learning to read and do math.

In Term 1 our main focus was respect, kindness and fairness, while getting to know and work with others. This term as a school we will focus on Anti Bullying, mindfulness, resilience and perseverance

COVID 19 & School

Cases are still popping up consistently in students and staff. While Mandatory Isolation is over (late 2022) students, staff, parents and visitors who are symptomatic and unwell should stay home.

Students and staff displaying symptoms will be sent home. If you have symptoms you should test (with a Raht).

If you have a positive result this should still be reported to NSW Health.

<https://www.nsw.gov.au/covid-19/testing-managing/register-a-positive-rapid-antigen-test-rat-result>

Also monitor you child for symptoms if they have been in close contact.

You can return to school when well and symptom free.

Masks are optional but advised if close contact or non symptomatic. Vaccinations are encouraged

Please help us stop the spread. Currently it is a challenge to replace teachers who are unwell.

Dates to be on the look out for

- 4.5.23 School Cross Country
- 10.5.23 P&C from 2pm – School Hall
- 11.5.23 – Mother’s day Stall
- 19.5.23 Gala Day (Primary sport teams - winter)
- 15.3.23 Stage 3 Science / Space excursion
- 19.5.23 Zone Cross Country
- 19.5.23 – National Sorry Day
- 29.5.23 – reconciliation week
- 12.6.23 – Queen’s Birthday – Public Holiday
- 15.6.23 – Mana POLYFEST
- 20.6.23 – Stage 1 Excursion
- 22.6.23 – Zone Public Speaking (Classes and Stages will work on Public Speaking throughout Term prior to this)
- 26.6.23 – Naidoc Week
- 29.6.23 – Stage 2 – Science excursion
- 29.6.23 – Reports Home
- Early Term 3 – Parent, Student, Teacher Interviews



What do I value or enjoy about school

School is great because

SPORT: A good form of exercise

COUNTING: A way to know your numbers

HANDWRITING: How to make your writing neat

OUTSIDE SPACE: You may want to have a break away from your classroom

OUTSIDE PLAYING: Time to play with your friends

LIBRARY: Get to borrow library books and read at home

There are many subjects you can learn.

School is such a great place! TAPS is the best!

by Lilian T 3/4F

Things you may be interested in – Work in the holidays, last week & a student’s POEM

