WANGALA PRIMARY SCHOOL

NEWSLETTER

Friday September 16th, 2021

From the Principal

We have made it! The end of another term at Wangala Primary School, and what a topsy turvy term it has been. I admire the attitudes and approaches of many of you jumping in and out of remote and onsite learning, and making it work in your own context. I also admire the staff at Wangala who have also taken this term in their stride, dealing with their own experiences while still holding your child's academic progress in the forefront of their mind. While remote learning makes it difficult to assess the progress of individual students, the program delivered online has been great to witness. Thank you everyone for your resilience during this time. We can only hope that next term is all smooth sailing onsite.

I recently received correspondence from the Department of Education and Training regarding attendance data, highlighting a number of individual students who have been flagged in one of the following categories: at risk of chronic absence (15-19.5 days); chronically absent (20-29.5 days); or severely chronically absent (30+ days). A child missing an average of 20 days per year for 13 years has lost 52 weeks of learning. Effectively they have missed a little more than five terms of 1 ¼ years. Below is a graphic that details the significant impact this type of absenteeism has on your child's overall education with some alarming statistics and putting your child at a huge disadvantage in comparison to their peers. I will be sending letters out to individual families to highlight this concern further in the coming days. While we know remote learning makes the normal teaching and learning program difficult to deliver, our teachers have created work that is still challenging enough for students to feel the stretch, while offering whole class or even one-to-one WebEx sessions to help students in their learning.

I hope everyone has a wonderful break and come back, hopefully to everyone onsite, refreshed, and ready to learn.

Steven King

Dates to Remember

Friday 17th September
Last day of term (early finish!)

Monday 4th October
First day of term four

Monday 11th – 22nd October
Whole School Swimming Program

Tuesday 26th October
School Council Meeting

Friday 29th October
'Glasses For Kids' assessment onsite for Prep – Year Three

Every Day Counts!

If your child misses...	That equals...	Which is...	And over 13 years of schooling that's...	Which means the best your child might perform is...
1 day per fortnight	20 days per year	4 weeks per year	Nearly 1.5 years	Equal to finishing Year 11
1 day per week	40 days per year	8 weeks per year	Over 2.5 years	Equal to finishing Year 10
2 days per week	80 days per year	16 weeks per year	Over 5 years	Equal to finishing Year 7
3 days per week	120 days per year	24 weeks per year	Nearly 8 years	Equal to finishing Year 4

Helping Children Develop Social Skills Through Play

Play is important for learning the social skills (including language and communication) that develop over time and will be the foundation for future relationships.
Through play, children learn about:

- The give and take of relationships with friends (negotiating)
- How their behaviour can affect others and to develop empathy
- How to lead and follow
- Repairing relationships

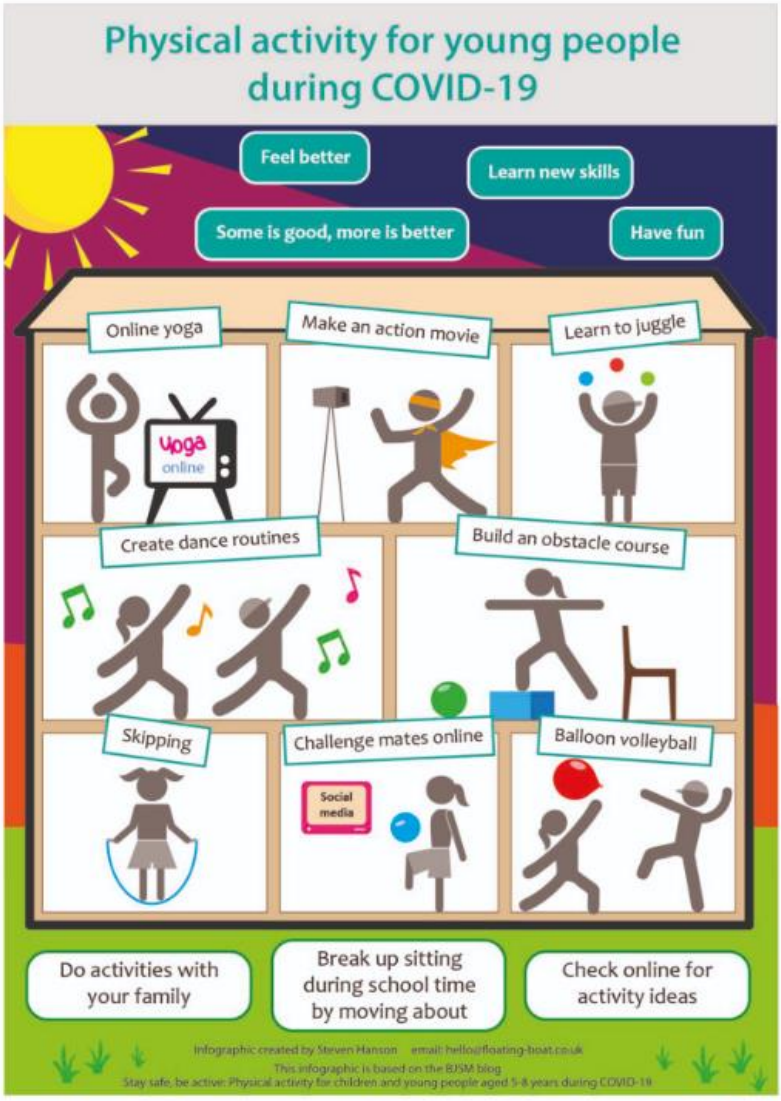
Play helps children develop emotional skills
Through play, children can express their feelings. Play also fosters imagination and becomes the basis for creativity in art or music or other ways of self-expression. These ways of personal expression can help people cope with feelings all their lives. Play can also help children learn impulse control. They learn to think about what they want to do, plan and be patient.

Play is a way that children can work through and resolve problems
For example, a child whose family has separated may feel very anxious about what's going to happen to them. These feelings and possibilities can be explored through play. The child can practise having two homes set up with two houses and different dolls. There's no need for you to take part, but being near while the child plays shows support and acceptance

Play helps children develop physical skills
Children like games that test their physical abilities (motor skills) – running, climbing, jumping and exploring. These games bring children happiness and build their confidence.

School-age children can have fun playing with the following objects and activities:

- Furniture, linen, washing baskets, tents and boxes are great for building
- Home-made obstacle courses can get your child moving in different ways, directions and speeds
- Rhymes or games like "I spy with my little eye, something that begins with…" are great for word play and help develop literacy skills
- Simple cooking or food preparation like measuring, stirring and serving food is great for developing numeracy and everyday skills
- Your child's own imagination – with imagination, your child can turn themselves into a favourite superhero or story character
- If your child is interested, you could think about getting them into some sports or team activities for school-age children



Hats For Term Four

A reminder that hats must be worn next term when students are outside during recess, lunchtime and during sports times. These hats must be wide-brimmed school hats, with caps and other hats not appropriate as outlined in the school's 'Sun Smart Policy'. If your child requires a new school hat, please let us know. We have recently applied for a shade grant to have shade structures installed over the two playgrounds, and, as we know from the beginning of the year, the lack of shade on the site has been a problem, especially on quite warm and sunny days. This further highlights the need for hats to be worn. On hotter days we will be popping some gazebos up around the school to provide some instant shade for our students. Anyone who does not wear their appropriate hats will be directed to a shade area.

Lunchtime activities

Starting next term we will be introducing opt in lunchtime activities to promote cooperation, positive social skills, and to ensure students are engaged and having purposeful fun during this time. There will be a range of different activities like board games, fun sport activities, art and craft activities and building and construction fun.

Swimming

A reminder that the swimming program begins in week two next term. Please return your permission forms. These have been sent home Tuesday, so look out in students' bags.

Whole School Webex

It's been great to be able to hold whole school WebEx assemblies this term. We had grand plans for regular assemblies onsite, and hope these can happen next term. If regulations prevent parents and carers from being onsite, we may attempt streaming these online so you can be a part of these as well.

School Grounds Update

There continues to be quite a bit happening around the school site with the recent installation of our flag poles halfway up the drive, and the first section of our new 'grand entrance' installed at the front of the driveway. This will be ready for signage to be installed later in the year. This beautiful start to spring has also seen our plants and most of our grass taking off and growing. Our landscaper has recently installed a dry creek bed near the top of the ramp which is also looking amazing.

End-of-Year Excursion

We're in the process of organising an adventure for all students at the end of the year! Watch this space!

Junior class students have been learning about division! We used a 'hands on approach' where students shared out their lollies, then drew a picture and wrote an equation. We also worked out what to do with our leftover lollies and learnt about remainders.

Have a great holiday everyone!