



Wollongong West Public School

Crown Street, West Wollongong, NSW 2500
Email: wollongwst-p.school@det.nsw.edu.au

Ph: 02 4229 2096 - Fax: 02 4226 5057

Welcome Letter for the 2017 School Year

Dear families of Wollongong West Public School,

Happy New Year! It is with much excitement that the 2017 school year is commencing. Our teachers have spent considerable time over the Summer holidays planning for a dynamic, productive and inspiring year of learning – with lots of fun as well!

This year, some major initiatives will be undertaken by our school. Firstly, Mrs Elizabeth Heritage, will be assuming the role of Instructional Leader - a newly created position at our school. The role of an Instructional Leader is to work with our school executive and teachers of Early Stage 1 and Stage 1 to devise a literacy and numeracy plan for teaching and learning in the early years of school. This will involve building teacher capacity to identify the literacy learning needs of students, leading local decision making regarding the choice of tiered intervention strategies, identifying teacher professional learning needs, providing high quality professional learning and in-class support and monitoring the impact of practice and interventions.

Quality teaching and learning will continue to be a focus for our senior classes as well. Over the first few days of this school year, our students in Stage 2 and 3 will complete a variety of literacy and numeracy assessments. These assessments will be carefully analysed by our Learning and Support Teachers and classroom teachers to ensure a thorough understanding of where every child sits on the continuum of learning for literacy and numeracy. Our teachers will be able to determine exactly what each child already knows and what they need to learn next, so that targeted and focused teaching and learning programs can be devised and implemented for our senior students.

In 2017, our school will also be fostering a collegial relationship with Mount Keira Demonstration School and Coledale Public School to embark on a Visible Learning project. This initiative will see lesson intentions and success criteria being introduced into regular practice in our classrooms. This involves teachers making explicit to children what they are learning, why they are learning it and what children need to be able to show or do to have been successful in their learning. This evidenced-based pedagogy, which is based on the work of Professor John Hattie, will shape much of our teacher professional learning in 2017.

This year, we will also be having a whole-school focus in the areas of Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM). Our school has spent considerable time last year exploring new and emerging technologies that will enhance our future-focused learning programs. Robotics and coding classes will be introduced across all stages in our school. Our optional Bring your Own Device (BYOD) program will commence in our Stage 3 classrooms on Monday. Children must return to school a signed BYOD contract, prior to bringing a device to school. Miss Whitaker will be able to assist children who participate in this program with connecting to the school wifi. Please see Miss Whitaker or myself with questions regarding device capabilities.

This year, Enrichment lessons will be introduced for students in Years 1-6. This initiative will involve students being withdrawn from their regular class for a weekly lesson with the aim to provide opportunities for extended learning to occur in a challenging environment. Enrichment lessons cater for high-achieving students in various areas of the curriculum. Our Enrichment lessons will provide intellectual stimulation by grouping students together, concentrating school resources and using specialised teaching methods. Selection criteria have been devised to determine which students will be accessing this program. Past and current teachers of the students will use assessment data to inform decision-making. The students offered positions in these lessons will vary throughout the year as the focus areas for the lessons shift.

Our school is also hoping to establish Ethics classes during the Scripture/Religious Education timeslot, as an option for those students currently attending non-Scripture classes. We are currently seeking parents/carers/grandparents to volunteer to teach these classes. No teaching experience or qualifications are required as in-depth training will be provided prior to the classes commencing. Please see me if you are interested in volunteering.

2017 will also see some revamping of our indoor spaces. A student toilet for our Early Stage 1 and Stage 1 classes was installed over the holiday period, and is conveniently located near our administration area. The Assets Management Team for the Department of Education has also assured me that the relocation of our administration area to the front of school should be completed by Easter (fingers crossed this is the case!). A maker-space area, to enable our innovative technology programs to operate more effectively, is being created in our largely unused multi-purpose room, located on the bottom level of our school and our OOSH services are currently being relocated to that area of our school also. We are hoping that our Before School Care program, operated by Big Fat Smile, will be commencing by Easter as well.

Yesterday, our staff met to explore the Department of Education's recently developed Wellbeing Framework and to develop a school-based framework, reflective of localised needs. This framework will ensure a consistent, positive and evidenced-based approach is taken to whole school wellbeing for our children, teachers and community members. It will be uploaded to our school website next week.

This year, there have been some slight changes made to the times for our lunch and recess breaks. Our revised daily schedule is:

8:30 - 9:00	Outdoor Play
9:00 – 11:00	Learning Time
11:00 - 11:10	Lunch Eating Time
11:10 - 11:50	Outdoor Play
11:50 – 1:40	Learning Time
1:40 – 2:00	Recess / Outdoor Play
2:00 – 3:00	Learning Time
3:00	Home Time

Please note that teacher supervision of our children commences at 8:30am and finishes at 3:00pm.

In 2017, we are also opening more areas of our playground during our outdoor playtime, to make best use of our beautiful and spacious grounds. Our school will meet together each morning at 9am for a short assembly as we always have, however, following our lunch and recess breaks, children will now move

directly to their classroom instead of having further assemblies. This will maximise learning time in our classrooms.

This year, our teachers are also very excited to be continuing to work closely with our P & C and wider parent body on ventures such as our 90th birthday celebrations, Halloween Carnival and Green Team initiatives. Our first P & C meeting for 2017 will be held on Thursday 9 February at 7pm in the staffroom. I encourage all parents/carers to come along, from both existing and new families. Our P & C warmly welcomes new families and new ideas.

2017 also sees a new operator for our school canteen. In the holidays, an industrial clean of our canteen was undertaken, ensuring the area is pristine. Our staff enjoyed a fabulous lunch yesterday, catered for by Mel, our new canteen operator. Staff can highly recommend the quality of Mel's cooking – absolutely delicious! I encourage our entire community to support our school canteen, which is offering nutritious and quality meal options for our children at a very reasonable price.

2017 also sees some changes to our school staffing arrangements. Below is a list of our staff for this year and the roles they will be undertaking.

Executive Team

Principal (relieving) - Mrs Michelle Barnes

Instructional Leader - Mrs Elizabeth Heritage

Assistant Principal (Early Stage 1 and Stage 1) - Mrs Nadine Risi

Assistant Principal (Stage 2 and Stage 3) - Miss Deborah Main

Classroom Teachers

KD – Mrs Holly Degotardi

KF – Mrs Nadine Farmer

1/2M – Mrs Jo-anne Morrissey

1/2SL – Mrs Kylie Swainson (Monday – Thursday) and Mrs Kim Liplyn (Friday)

1/2T – Mrs Margaret Tolhurst

3/4B – Miss Olivia Bormann

3/4H – Miss Kristy Horner

4/5M – Miss Deborah Main

5/6H – Mrs Jenine Hickey

5/6K – Miss Natasha Kandilas

Technology/Enrichment Teacher

Miss Laine Whitaker

Teacher Librarian

Miss Erin Heino

Learning and Support Teachers

Mrs Janet Pezzutto (alternate Tuesdays, Wednesday – Friday)

Mrs Nadine Risi

Reading Recovery Teacher

Mrs Nadine Risi

English as an Additional Language/Dialect

Mrs Jane Carnevale

Mrs Catherine Sharp (Monday – Thursday)

Learning Support Officers

Mrs Ghada Al Hussein

Mrs Caroline Kettlewell

Ms Michelle Reid

Mrs Elisabeth Schott

Mr Burhan Zangana

Aboriginal Community Engagement Officer

Mrs Leanne McKay

Administration

Mrs Brenda Gregory

Mrs Teresa Trigg (Tuesday, Wednesday, alternate Thursdays and Friday)

Mrs Jan Renwick (Monday, alternate Tuesdays)

General Assistants

Mr Andrew Beattie (flexible days)

Mr John Lochhead (flexible days)

On Monday, our children in Years 1-6 will start school. All children will meet in our usual place for morning assemblies with their classes from last year, before being placed in their 2017 classes. Please do keep in mind, that there may be some reshuffling of children within classes after the first few weeks of school, when our student numbers for 2017 are finalised. A list of stationery requirements for children will be sent home in the first week of school by our classroom teachers.

Over the first few days of the school year, our Kindergarten children will be attending school for short timeslots to participate in the Best Start assessment. Our Kindergarten children will enjoy their first full day of “big school” on Thursday. We are thrilled to be welcoming our new children and their families to our Wollongong West Public School community.

I can be contacted in person at the school office, via email - michelle.deebank@det.nsw.edu.au or by phone - 4229 2096. I am very much looking forward to an exciting, fresh and dynamic 2017 at Wollongong West Public School.

Regards,

Michelle Barnes

Principal (relieving)