Welcome back Families

Term two at Blue Gum is going to be a busy time with our Middle Primary information evening, a celebration of Mother’s Day, NAPLAN testing for the year 3s and year 5s and our get-together on World Environment Day just for starters.

I am very pleased to be back as Acting Principal, ably assisted by our Senior teachers Sujatha and Debbie. We are blessed with hard working teaching staff and independently minded children. The administration staff are also highly competent and very supportive so the term holds no challenges that we can’t meet.

Regards Jenny

MOTHERS TEA

Mothers will soon be getting hand delivered invitations from the children.

Please come at 5pm on Thursday 8th May.

The first half hour will be spent in your child’s classroom.

Enjoy watching them work at their favourite activities.
From 5.30pm there will be light refreshments served in Mallee classroom.
TERM 1 ASSEMBLY—FAREWELL JANET

The assembly was a time of sadness mixed with celebration. Thanks to all the Staff and Children for giving Janet such a wonderful send-off.

Janet said “The children sang “This little heart of mine” beautifully.

The children learnt this song especially for Janet’s farewell.
The children gave a wonderful drumming performance inspired and guided by our amazingly extrovert teacher Trey.

Janet, from the Blue Gum Community we wish you all the very best for your future and thank you for all you contributed to Blue Gum, over the past 10 years.
My child is not average – the problem with Naplan and Montessori

I am a parent of two children who attend Blue Gum Montessori. When I first started at the school there was a culture that did not like Naplan and a lot of parents opted out of the test due to it not aligning with the Montessori Method. However, due to the linking of Naplan to funding and marketing for the school the emphasis on Naplan testing has changed the culture of the school. I am one of the parents who looked at Naplan results when I chose the school and compared them against my local school. However, since my child sat Year 3 Naplan last year, I have changed my outlook on Naplan in relation to how it represents a school.

My child is not average and I would not have my children aspire to be anything different than what they are. My child is extremely intelligent and obtains high marks in numeracy. This was reflected by Naplan results obtaining marks above the range of achievement for the middle 60% of Year 3 students in Australia. However, my child has difficulty in language conventions (spelling, reading and writing). This is reflected on the Naplan, the results were actually better than I expected, but the marks were of no surprise to me. As a result of going through the process last year, I do now realise that my child’s difficulty impacts on the school results in that of a lower average for the school for the total Year 3 results. It only takes a couple of children who are “not average” to cause the results to turn red and cause parents to be concerned about the school, to make negative comments about teaching staff and question what are they doing about it to fix the problem.

If I could have a magic wand and fix my child’s language convention problems I would, however it is not reality. The reality is the results are no surprise to the teaching staff either and the results do not reflect the huge amount of resources and effort put in by multiple teachers and assistants, the principal and parents that is put in to get on top of the issues the children have. This is not reflected in the Naplan test or the results on the My School website. I have learnt that you cannot judge a school by their Naplan results but by the effort of the teachers and the school at helping children with their learning difficulties. This is our school, Blue Gum Montessori and I would not choose a better school to help my children deal with any education issues they have. Also of note is that I did consider opting out of my child sitting the Naplan test but instead I told my child that I did not want to teach them that if something is hard or difficult you can get your mum to write a note and you do not need to do it. I told my child to try their best and there would be no surprise in the results as I know exactly what my child’s strengths and weaknesses are.

“We cannot know the consequences of suppressing a child’s spontaneity when he is just beginning to be active. We may even suffocate life itself. That humanity which is revealed in all its intellectual splendour during the sweet and tender age of childhood should be respected with a kind of religious veneration. It is like the sun which appears at dawn or a flower just beginning to bloom. Education cannot be effective unless it helps a child to open up himself to life.” – Maria Montessori
The 2014 AGM elected the following group of parents to serve as Directors on the School Board. The role of the Board is to provide strategic guidance for the School and to effectively oversee and review the School’s management. The Board provides a governance role and has regulatory, financial and risk management responsibilities. The whole Board meets monthly to which its various sub-committees (e.g. Finance, Human Resources and Strategic Planning) report. The Principal attends Board meetings, but does not have voting rights. Your Board is a group of passionate, dedicated parents who generously give their time to the governance of the School. Each person brings their unique experiences to the Board to help ensure the School is heading in the right direction. Keep an eye out for further Board updates in future Newsletters.

Regards
Selina Horrocks – Chair

Selina Horrocks - Chair
BA(Hons)

Selina is the mother of three boys - Mitchell (Boab), Fletcher (Karri) and Hayden (Jarrah). She has been a parent at Blue Gum since 2008 when Mitchell started at the school as a three year old. After completing a Bachelor of Arts with Honours, Selina has spent her career in the tertiary education and government sectors in policy and legislation, the last eight years with the Department for Child Protection. Selina has previously spent three years on the Board of Management of a high profile Perth private school, and was Secretary of the WA Cricket Umpires Association for two years. Although new to the Board in December 2013, Selina’s commitment to Blue Gum and her experience made her an obvious choice for the role of Chair.

Rachel Mirco - Vice Chair

I have 3 children, Giuseppe in Boab, Claire in Karri and a 2 year old Sophia. I am a Chef by trade and now a stay at home Mum. I have been on the board for 3 years.

JP Clarence - Treasurer

BSc & Grad Dip Maths & Stats.

JP is the father of Isabelle and Jeremy, currently in Karri and Tuart, and has been Treasurer since 2012 and prior to that spent time on the Finance Committee. He works as a Senior Energy Markets Analyst for a national energy company and previously worked as a Statistician for a national market research company.
Jemma Doak - Secretary
BA English (Double - Film & TV, & Visual Arts), MA Fine Art (unfinished), Diploma Shiatsu, Diploma Reflexology, Cert. 4 Small Business Management

I am Mum to Violet in Boab and Aubrey in Karri. I have been at Blue Gum for nearly 8 years. I was lured in to my first volunteer role at Blue Gum within days and haven’t escaped from it’s vortex since. That first job was as book fundraiser, which has continued. I’ve been Class Liaison in JP & MP; expanded the newsletter from a black and blue A4 sheet to electronic and colour; P & C; Board and I’m sure there’s more but best I don’t think about it.

Work wise I am self-employed with an organic food business, Shiatsu and Reflexology, and property development to upkeep our Blue Gum habit.

Susan Cooke
BSc(Hons)

Sue is the mother of Jacob, 5yrs old, currently in his 3rd year in Wattle, and Alex, 2yrs old, who will burst through Junior Primary doors next year. Ever the "joiner", Sue was Class Liaison for Wattle last year, has been a member of the Finance Committee since 2012 and joined the P&C to do the BBB communications and never left.

To retain a moment of quiet sanity in her week, she works part time as a Senior Portfolio Analyst for a multi-national insurer. Having spent her early career as an analyst for a non-profit, member organisation with a focus on retention, she hopes this experience will contribute to the Board's strategic planning process.

Hennie du Toit
BAS B.Arch(Adv) RIBA

Hennie is the proud father of Leon (Karri) and Oscar (Jarrah), and is lucky enough to be married to the lovely Lee who is the Tuart Directress.

Hennie was raised on a farm in Zimbabwe, qualified as an Architect in South Africa and the UK, and has since 2010 made a home for his family in Perth and at Blue Gum Montessori School. He is currently practicing as a Design & Specifications Manager for a National Construction Company.

Paul Graham
BA LLB

Paul has a daughter, Charlotte, in Wattle and a son, Fletcher, who will not be attending school for some time (he was born in December 2013). Paul was admitted as a South African attorney in 1997, a solicitor of England & Wales in 2003, and an Australia solicitor in 2006. He has practiced almost exclusively in commercial litigation in all three jurisdictions, and followed his wonderful wife Megan back to Perth in 2006. While requalifying as a lawyer in England, Paul headed up the review and revision of the policies and procedures of the legal services department of a London Borough, which culminated in a service excellence certification.

Paul looks forward to applying his skills in the challenge of maintaining the high standards set by the Board and its predecessor Council.
Denise Pietersen

TAFE Certificate 111 Business - Frontline management 2001

Bachelor of Applied Science (Health promotion) partially completed at Curtin

M.U.M. Mother since 2006

Denise is mum to Lily, who’s almost 8yrs old in Wandoo. Her priority and focus is her family, and her part-time role with a not for profit organisation in the Community Health field.

Denise has always been enthusiastically involved with Blue Gum school, having previously served as a class liaison, library volunteer and most importantly... an enthusiastic baker of fundraising muffins.

Denise is looking forward to applying her studies in business and health promotion to the Board, with a focus on maintaining the school as a welcoming and encouraging place to educate our kids!

Anna Black

BSc (Hons) MSc Geophysics

Anna has a son, Owen, in Jarrah who loves coming to “Blue Monte-School” as he calls it. Whilst originally qualified as a geophysicist, she has undertaken a range of roles in her career so far and has recently requalified in the field of career development. The skills she brings to the board include strategic planning, data analysis, project management and equal employment opportunity amongst others. Anna is looking forward to working with the other Board members to make a lasting contribution to the school.

Alex Hyndman

BEng (Chemical) (Hons 1) BCom (Finance)

Alex is the father of a newborn Archie and 4 year old Saskia - who is currently causing mischief in Melaleuca.

Four days a week he uses his engineering degree as a project engineer, but saves Wednesdays for school drop off, pick up and an after school play at Meller Park.

He has training in both project management and strategic planning and has previously volunteered on the boards of two other incorporated associations.

Since joining the Blue Gum board in 2013, Alex helped coordinate the development of the strategic plan, drafted the P&C policy and coordinated the parent satisfaction survey.

“Scientific observation then has established that education is not what the teacher gives; education is a natural process spontaneously carried out by the human individual, and is acquired not by listening to words but by experiences upon the environment.”

— Maria Montessori, Education For A New World
“CONNECT FOR A CURE”

Facilitated by DISCOVER PARENT MAGIC, “Connect for a Cure” is a series of Emotional Intelligence workshops designed to explore the Model of Human Behaviour, and will give you valuable insights into who your children really are, and how you can live a happy, calm and ordered life together – even if they aren’t like YOU!

This Super Soul Saturday Series will be 5 workshops presented every 2nd Saturday beginning in May and ending with the last Saturday in August. You can do these as a series or any particular topic that is of interest so book in for one, two, a few or all!

- May 10th The Five Love Languages of Children
- June 14th Creating a Family Culture that Works
- July 12th Tools for Purposeful Parenting
- August 9th Understanding Personality Dynamics in Families - the key to effective communication, motivation and conflict resolution
- August 30th Personality awareness for Teens - how to choose the right vocation for your unique personality style

Where: LeisureFit Melville (Melville Recreation Centre)  
Corner of Stock Road and Canning Highway  
Melville

When: 1.00pm – 3.00pm  
Every 2nd Saturday of each month - beginning in May.

Cost: $45.00 per workshop  
Light refreshments and afternoon tea provided  
All proceeds to TEAM CHINA 2014

How: Contact Narelle at mnanonio@bigpond.com to reserve your seat.