Reporting the learning, and now time for a break!
Well done everyone on making it through an 11 week term. I know many of the children have recently been sick and are in need of a break. What a mammoth term for everyone in our learning community. Everyone has been involved in the assessment and reporting cycle, and parents have had an opportunity to engage with their child’s teacher. I am very impressed by the focus on learning at this school. It may sound strange but a school business is learning. At Blue Gum Montessori School (BGMS) it is about learning to become. To become what, one may ask. That is the very secret in the hearts of our young learners, and at our Montessori school we provide every opportunity to explore, research and learn about oneself. We value each child becoming self-aware and feeling inspired to learn, follow their passions and to have the necessary toolkit to be successful.

Acknowledging the learning
As reported to our parent community, The Weekend Australian newspaper recently printed its annual ‘Your School’ report. The report highlights the achievements of students and teachers in Australian schools. The publication reported on the achievements of both private and public schools across Australia.

In a Montessori school we don't focus on competition, but simply get on with the job of learning.

The school data presented by The Weekend Australian provides a snapshot of the learning achievements at a particular moment in time via NAPLAN testing. To this end, it is important that we acknowledge the dedication of the children, staff, parents and the governing Board at BGMS for their outstanding achievements.

BGMS was listed 42 in the nation’s top 50 comprehensive Primary schools, including both public and private. We are led to believe that 'comprehensive' covers all areas of the NAPLAN testing. There were only two other Primary Schools in WA that ranked higher than our school.

We encourage all our students to participate in NAPLAN, regardless of their ability. For us at BGMS, it is about individual student’s learning.

Another interesting statistic is that BGMS was listed 81 in the nation's top Primary schools, and was the only Montessori school. A full report can be found on The Australian website.

Please click the following link to read about our school as reported by the journalist:

Please remember that next year a different cohort of children will be assessed, and so the data will provide yet another snapshot of learning through a different lens. As always, the teachers will be posing questions and discovering how they can best assist each child with their particular learning needs. The beauty of a Montessori education!

P&C
The P&C members have been the silent supporters rallying together to make a difference to our school. The term finished with a raffle and bake sale. It amazes me when cakes and all sorts of goodies just appear for a community event. The P&C have generously donated money to the classrooms’ wish list, and we would like to acknowledge their generosity. The Scholastic book fair has also raised funds that will go directly to each cycle throughout the academic year. Parent contribution and involvement in these events goes directly to supporting our beautiful children. We do not take this for granted and wish to thank you for your ongoing support.
Positive Education

Positive education is an approach to education that draws on positive psychology's emphasis of individual strengths and personal motivation to promote learning. Recently, I attended a one day conference on how schools can implement a more positive approach to learning. Creating a culture of Positive psychology is extremely relevant to the school setting to assist in the understanding and development of high levels of psychological well-being in students, staff and the wider school community. A Positive education curriculum module will be developed to include teaching a specific social skills program as from next term. Staff will undertake professional learning in this area of the curriculum to ensure it becomes a school-wide approach and embedded in the culture. I am pleased to announce that our Curriculum Coordinator, Crispin Rapsey, will be teaching these classes with an emphasis on learning literacy.

Community survey

The community survey has been emailed to all families, and a hard copy also posted in each pigeon hole. We invite you to complete the survey by Friday, 31 July – either online or via the hard copy - to assist with the school's strategic planning process. A community consultation session will be held in Term 3.

Team Leaders

It is with pleasure I officially announce the Cycle Team Leaders.

The Team Leaders will coordinate the overall cycle. They will follow-up any enquiries regarding the cycle after the relevant staff member has been communicated to. The Team Leader will also act as the contact person for each cycle to relay further communications. The Team Leaders will also play a significant role in supporting teachers and students. The Team Leaders will work closely with the Montessori Curriculum support team. Please join me in welcoming these teachers to Blue Gum’s leadership team.

Laura Nicholls
Upper Primary Team Leader

Sujatha D’Souza
Middle Primary Team Leader

Mereio Hughes
Junior Primary Team Leader

Farewell and good luck

This week we have had a number of farewell functions for Deborah Dwyer. As a dedicated Montessori teacher, Deb made a difficult decision to leave BGMS in search of a work/life balance. We wish her well in her new adventures and know that the BGMS guardians are looking after her. Together with the Junior Primary team at a school-wide assembly, we celebrated Deb’s innings at BGMS and wished her every success in her next journey.

We look forward to welcoming back our families to an exciting Term 3.

Dr Maree Matthews
PRINCIPAL
‘Wattleuca’ (*Melaleuca and Wattle*) wear white eye patches and donate a gold coin to raise awareness of childhood brain cancer.

Many thanks to Emilie Saroute-Dotte (Mawel’s Mum) for visiting Wattle and teaching us all about her job as an archaeologist. The children had a great time exploring her toolkit, complete with trowel, duster and tweezers. One child noticed that we had tweezers in the classroom just like Emilie’s! The children passed around fossils and other artefacts, feeling a smooth grinding stone and the pointy teeth of an animal’s jaw. We had a great discussion on the difference between archaeologists, palaeontologists and geologists!
The children used this to first outline their butterflies, then drawn the butterfly veins. This provided a great fine motor challenge for the children; they needed to apply just the right amount of pressure to control the paint. Once half their butterfly was complete, they then folded the paper over to print the other half of the butterfly. Once this was dry, the children mixed their own shades of orange to complete their butterflies. The results were stunning.

In Tuart this term we have been learning about minibeasts. We have found out that minibeasts are small animals, and that many minibeasts are insects. Insects have three body parts and six legs.

Tying in with our assembly song, we have been learning a little more about butterflies. We have looked specifically at the lifecycle of butterflies (along with the lifecycles of other minibeasts such as ladybugs, ants and frogs). The children were particularly drawn to the Monarch butterfly, with its striking colours. Providing the children with large pieces of paper, we folded the paper in half, and drew the outline of half a butterfly. I mixed a solution of glue and black paint in a squeezy tube with a thin nozzle.
'Library Literacy' is one of the many sessions that all the students take part in on Fridays - as well as French with Madame, Visual Arts with Michelle, Performing Arts with Leanne and Sport with Tara.

In our 'Library Literacy' sessions I read novels or picture books and lead discussions related to the books (e.g. the character’s choices, whether a book is fiction or non-fiction, literacy devices).

We do activities based on the books, play games such as Homophone/Homograph Charades, draw pictures related to the books, and draw pictures for literary devices such as metaphors and similes.

Next semester we will also be incorporating ‘Social Skills’ into the sessions, which are often related to characters in the books we are reading.

Crispin
French News

French

This term, the children in Upper Primary have been studying places and transport during French lessons and we thought it would be great to get into groups and create some booklets.

So during French lessons in the second half of term, the upper primary classes used laptops to print pictures and either typed or wrote up names of transport along with a sentence in each.

The most exciting part occurred after children laminated and bound their own books, then sat in a group to read their French transport books to each other.

We intend keeping these as a resource for future French classes to look at.
Museum Incursion

The Middle Primary Museum proved to be a learning exercise that engaged the children in a very personal manner. The children liaised with their parents to locate a clothing item from the past, and proceeded to ascertain the origins of the item along with many other interesting details. This work was followed by the children making a display of the information for the museum day.

It was very satisfying for us to see the Middle Primary children so proud of their displays and confidently speaking about them to their visitors. Positive feedback and appreciation was given by most who visited to the museum including parents, school staff, other children and most importantly the children who created the museum.

Vinita De Sa and Sujatha D’Souza

Wireless Hill Park Visit

The visit to Wireless Hill Park was a wonderful opportunity for the Middle Primary children to learn about this one hundred year old site, which has played an important role in Western Australia’s history. The children learnt that this station was used for communication and was one of Australia’s first links with radio technology. The older children walked around the site and mapped the features of the site on a grid map. The younger children explored the site, recorded the features of the site as tally marks and then used the data to create a graph. They also marked some key features on a map of the site.
Middle Primary News

All the children had a guided tour of the Museum which houses a collection of artefacts that commemorate our ANZACs. The history and evolution of transport and development in the Fremantle, Melville and Cockburn areas was also discussed with the children. Many of the children could make connections to what was being said because it they are familiar with these areas.

Vinita De Sa and Sujatha D’Souza

Upper Primary News

Simon Stewart, Malu’s dad, visited Upper Primary to celebrate NAIDOC week and provide the children with a greater understanding of Aboriginal Culture, including art and his family history.

Thank you Simon! Your paintings are beautiful and we all learned so much.

Charley: “It was fun and interesting”
Hannah P: “I learned that Aboriginal people were taken away from their families because they were a lighter colour”
Lexie: “I really liked Simon’s art ‘The Keepers’”.
Sam: “It was really interesting to learn about why he did different things in his artwork”
Estelle: “I liked the patterns that Simon used in his art. I liked the first painting”.
Mitchell: “I really liked Simon’s artworks”.
Joshua: “I learned that the dots on the paintings meant the people lived in the desert, and the lines meant people that lived near the coast”.
Candice: “I found his art inspiring and detailed and I learnt a few things”.
Hannah M: “Simon’s grandfather was the bravest because he put up the bell in the church”.
Ethan: “I learned that the Police took the lighter skin children to the Beagle Bay Mission”.
Giuseppe: “I liked the paintings and how effective the colours were”.
Ella: “I liked how Simon’s paintings told stories about his life”.
Grace: “I found his background very interesting”.

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Charlie: “I thought that the art was awesome and I had a lot of fun”.
Estella: “I thought it was a really good presentation and I learned that modern Aboriginal paintings have more squares than dots”.
Matilde: “I learned what the lines and dots meant on Aboriginal paintings”
Crystal: “I learned about the different Aboriginal language groups”.
Malu: “I’m proud of our heritage”
Violet: “The art was really cool”.
Bianca: “I thought that Simon’s history of his family was very interesting and his art was amazing”
Conall: “It was very interesting to hear about what Simon’s family had been through”
Alex: “Simon’s art was very interesting”.
George: “I thought Simon was really interesting”.

Do not erase the designs the child makes in the soft wax of his inner life.”
— Maria Montessori
School Clubs

Morning and Afternoon School Clubs for Term 3
The school is officially open from 8.15am for the commencement of supervision and class begins at 8.30am. To ensure our children are supervised before and after school, we have clubs in the morning and afternoon. These clubs will operate:

Monday – Friday 7.30am—8.30am

**Early Bird Breakfast Club**
Held in Mallee every morning. Children enter through the side gate from the car park.
Children are able to make their own healthy breakfast and engage in practical life activities.

Monday 3.00-5.00pm

**Mandarin Club**
The Chinese Programme for 6 to 12 year old, will allow children to develop a perspective for Chinese language as well as Chinese Culture. Class run by Richard.
Enrolment forms from administration. Cost $150.00

Monday 3.00-5.00pm

**Kidz ’n’ Sports**
Programme is run by Paul. Paul supplies a fruit snack. Please ensure your child has a water bottle that is able to be refilled prior to sport commencing.
Please discuss timetable and fees by calling Paul, phone 0421606425 paulr@kidznsport.com.au

Tuesday - Drama Class 3.00—5.00pm
Jenny Moyle runs this Club.
Classes include vocal exercise, improvisation, mime, puppet work and movement to music. There will also be some stage performance using scripts.
Enrolment forms from administration. Cost $150

Wednesday 3.00—5.00pm

**The Art of Drawing**
Judith runs the art club. Classes are about passing on basic drawing and observational skills to the children, but more importantly these sessions are about encouraging confidence to explore visual expression without judgement.
Enrolment forms from administration. Cost $150

Thursday 3.00-5.00pm

**Kidz ’n’ Sports**
Please discuss timetable and fees by calling Paul, phone 0421606425 paulr@kidznsport.com.au

Friday 3.00—5.00pm

**Cooking Club**
Micro cooking kitchen class is run by Andy Vernie in Mallee.
Children are to supply an apron and a container to take home their wares!
Enrolment forms and a copy of this terms menu available from administration. Cost $150
School Clubs

Out of School Club

All Blue Gum Montessori students will be able to take advantage of our afterschool club that will run from 3pm to 6pm, Monday to Friday. During this afterschool club children will be given the opportunity to explore, socialise, relax and enjoy the company of their peers and teachers.

The places are offered on a ‘first come first serve’ basis from Monday to Friday inclusive each term, at a cost of $28 per afternoon. Families will be invoiced separately from the school fees each term and the amount is payable within 7 working days of the invoice date.

Enrolment forms are available from the administration office and sent via email.

Please note preference is given to enrolments for full time positions, Monday to Friday.

Staff Profiles

Introducing new staff member, Michelle James

I felt very fortunate and excited when offered the position of inaugural Personal Assistant to the Principal at Blue Gum Montessori School. I thank Dr Maree Matthews and the Board members for their confidence in my ability and experience. I was warmly welcomed into the BGMS administration team on my first day last Monday, 29 June 2015.

Moving to BGMS means I have now worked in four schools. Two were co-educational Catholic secondary schools and one an independent Pre-Kinder to Year 12 girls’ school. My roles at these schools included Executive Assistant and Personal Assistant to the Principals, Head of Junior School and a number of Deputies.

Previously, I held the position of Personal Assistant to the Western Australian Director of Immigration, and the Managing Director of a machinery import company. Additionally, I have held various administrative roles within the Department of Veterans’ Affairs and the Bureau of Statistics.

I have raised two beautiful daughters; the youngest is currently studying at Curtin University, and the eldest has now returned to live in Perth after working in Italy for a number of years. She was married last year and is expecting her first child next January.

I consider myself a ‘local’, having built my current home in Atwell in 1997, and have been actively involved in community issues over the ensuing years. I consider this area to be a wonderful place to live that offers a variety of interesting and family friendly resources and events.

Personally, my concerns and passion are related to child and animal welfare, resulting in me becoming a registered foster carer, and being involved in various animal welfare organisations.

I am looking forward to getting to know all the BGMS staff, parents and students over the coming weeks, and providing administrative support to Dr Matthews and the Board. I am delighted to be part of the BGMS community.

Should you wish to communicate with me or Dr Matthews, please email me at p.a@bluegummontessori.wa.edu.au

Kind regards

Michelle James

“The essence of independence is to be able to do something for one’s self.”

— Maria Montessori
Dear Melaleuca Children and Parents and the Blue Gum Community,

I have been overwhelmed by the wonderfully supportive and loving compliments and wishes that I have received from everyone during the last few weeks.

From the bottom of my heart, I would like to express the gratitude I feel to everyone and especially to the Melaleuca families for sharing so much with me during my years in the classroom. I would like you all to know the wonderful things that you have said to me are a beautiful reflection of the caring and thoughtful people that you are. Through easy and not so easy times, we have found common ground and you have all willingly, supportively worked with the school and with me to find the best way forward for the little people that are so important in our lives.

I have loved every minute of time spent with all the Melaleuca children and many others in the school as well. My life and teaching practice are much richer for knowing you all, and I hope you continue as a community to cherish the special place you have made for the Montessori education of your children.

Humba kahle,
Until we meet again,
Deb Dwyer