Dear Parents & Carers,

Welcome to our first autumn edition of the Newsletter. I am reliably told that at the end of this week we have reached half way through Term One!

The school gardens are starting to flourish with the recent rains and I would encourage all parents that have not had the opportunity to have a look around our new school to "call in" whenever they are in the area.

ID Cards for Students
From time to time parents are asked to provide proof of age or proof that their child is still enrolled at school. To assist parents and our students we have provided each enrolled student with a school ID card. This card is not required at school and parents/carers can use the card as they see fit.

Spa/Hydrotherapy Program—Volunteers Needed
Modifications to our spa have been completed and we are almost ready to begin our spa and hydrotherapy programs. Because the spa is a much bigger model staff will be spending some time over the next two weeks reviewing operation and completing risk assessments around the safe use of the spa. Initially we have identified that we will need more volunteers to run the program. If you know of anyone that is interested in committing to our volunteer program for a few hours per week could you please ask them to contact the school with their information and our Volunteer Coordinator will get back to them with details about the program and training dates.

Individual Learning Plan Meetings
I would like to thank all those parents and carers who have taken time from their busy schedule to have a meeting with their class teacher around setting goals and priorities for their child's education in 2014. We have 65% of planning meetings completed to date. The Disability Discrimination Act mandates that all students in support settings require an Individual Learning Plan to be developed in conjunction with parents and carers. Could I ask if you have not as yet made an appointment with your child's class teacher, you do so as a matter of urgency. Whilst we would prefer the opportunity to meet with you face to face, if you cannot get to the school we are happy to telephone you.

Sick Students
It appears that we may have a "stomach bug" in the school. We have had several students absent from school with vomiting and diarrhoea this week. Could I ask that all parents keep their children at home for at least two days if these symptoms appear. Hopefully we can stop the spread of this virus before it becomes more serious.

P&C News
Don't forget that our next P&C Meeting on 26th March at 10:00am will be our Annual General Meeting. All positions will be declared vacant. Nomination Forms for executive positions have been sent home, or they can be downloaded from the School Website under the P&C Section.

Ian
School Information

Getting Started!
Luke and Courtney are very excited about their new adventure. Last year both students applied and interviewed for a place in Mai-Wel “Get Started” program. This program assists young people develop skills for future work opportunities.

Each Monday Luke and Courtney attend Mai-Wel centre at Telarah and, with 20 other young people, work on developing skills for the future.

This is the first time Hunter River Community students have been a part of the program and we look forward to hearing about the duo’s experiences. Great work Luke and Courtney!

Valentine’s Day Surprise
Valentine’s Day was made a whole lot sweeter by the surprise delivery of cupcakes from KJ’s Cakes For You! The staff were very excited to try the delicious variety of cupcakes that were decorated with hearts and special messages! Thanks Kiley and Josh!

New South Wales Community Forum

East Maitland Bowling Club
Cnr New England & Banks Street,
East Maitland

Wednesday 2 April 2014
Time: 10.00am – 12.00pm

You are invited to:
Hear detailed information about the National Disability Insurance Scheme.
Meet members of your local National Disability Insurance Agency team.
Learn about becoming involved with the scheme.
Ask questions.
Room 3
Room 3 are doing a science unit on living and non-living objects. Last week we decided to make some art that displayed living things. To do this we painted our hands and feet and made them into animals. We had a great time doing this and the final result was fantastic. GOOD JOB ROOM 3.
Senior School News!

Senior school electives have commenced and students are very excited about upcoming projects. Every Monday and Tuesday students have the opportunity to attend Agriculture / Horticulture, Food Technology and Creative Arts.

Students in agriculture are busily replanting the garden beds and have just planted Silverbeet. Creative Arts students have been introduced to pottery and have created some lovely pots. School lunches and canteen are the main focus of the Food Technology students. They are looking forward to their first “Coffee Shop” in the new school!

Room 4

Room 4 are excited to have their own garden plot in the new horticulture area. We have planted some marigolds, carnations and dahlias. We have planted some herbs and lettuce to cook up in the kitchen when they are ready to eat!! All students worked very hard in preparing and planting the seedlings in our garden plot!
Room 7 News:
Room 7 students love food! So, we have put that enthusiasm into our celebrations cooking unit and become apprentice master chefs this year! Each week Room 7 have cooked and tasted food items associated with a current special event or celebration taking place around the world. Colourful foods during the Mardi Gras week and Valentines Day cookies and cupcakes have been favourites so far. Well done Room 7 master chefs!  

Jackie, Deb & Karen

Markus sampling some Chinese treats for Chinese New Year.

Connor mixing pink icing.

Billy and Jorja adding ingredients for Valentine Day cupcakes.

Room 5

We are happy to have 2 new kindergarten enrolments in Room 5. Welcome Christopher and Ethan! These lovely boys have settled into life at BIG school and are making lots of new friends.  

Mandy, Karen & Amanda
Welcome to my news page. Each newsletter I will be posting interesting facts about our school.....Term 1 will be dedicated to “Getting to Know the Staff”........Enjoy!!

**Staff Profile**

**Name:** Damian  
**Nickname:** Damo  
**Favourite Colour:** Blue  
**Favourite Sport:** Rugby League  
**Favourite Footy Code & Team:** Rugby League – West Tigers  
**Favourite subject at school:** P.E  
**Three people I would invite to dinner:** Benji Marshall, Robbie Farrow, Eddie Murphy  
**If I won $$$$$ I would:** Buy a farm  

**YOU HEARD IT HERE FIRST:** I have heard a rumour that our favourite bovine is about to get a much needed make over! Watch this space for more news!
10th February 2014
Dear Local Schools,
Below is an introduction to the Child Dental Benefits Schedule which started on 1st January 2014.

Child Dental Benefits Schedule 2014 Introduction

The Child Dental Benefits Schedule (CDBS) commenced on 1 January 2014 and will provide access to benefits for basic dental services to children aged 2-17 years. It will replace the existing Medicare Teen Dental Plan (MTDP) which was a prevention only scheme.

The total benefit entitlement will be capped at $1,000 per child over a two calendar year period. A Childs eligibility for the Child Dental Benefits Schedule is assessed at the beginning of each year and requires receipt of Family Tax Benefit Part A (FTB-A) or a relevant Australian Government payment.

The CDBS will provide individual benefits for a range of services including examinations, x-rays, cleaning, fissure sealing, fillings, root canals and extractions. Benefits will not be available for orthodontic or cosmetic dental work and will not be paid for any services provided in a hospital.

All Hunter Dental Group practices will be accepting these vouchers and **Will FULLY BULK BILL to Medicare.**

This means as long as funds are available there will be **NO OUT OF POCKET EXPENSE.** To make a booking please contact your local practice on:

**CESSNOCK 4990 1279  GREENHILLS 4934 7877  DUNGOG 4992 3366**

We hope that you could pass this information on to your parents and students.

Yours sincerely

Dr George Patience & Hunter Dental Group team.
Child Dental Benefits Schedule

Financial support for basic dental services for children aged 2–17.

Eligibility basics

- children aged between 2–17 years on any one day of the calendar year
- receive, or their family, guardian or carer receives, certain government benefits such as Family Tax Benefit Part A for at least part of the calendar year
- are eligible for Medicare

Eligibility

Eligibility for the Child Dental Benefits Schedule

From January 2014, eligible families, teenagers and approved care organisations will receive a letter to confirm eligibility.

A child's eligibility is assessed at the beginning of each year and lasts the whole calendar year. A child is eligible if they are aged 2–17 years for at least 1 day of the calendar year, are eligible for Medicare and are either part of a family receiving Family Tax Benefit Part A or one of the following Australian Government payments:

- Youth Allowance
- ABSTUDY
- Disability Support Pension
- Parenting Payment
- Special Benefit
- Carer Payment
- Double Orphan Pension
- Veteran’s Children Education Scheme, if the child is 16 or over