Hi All
Welcome to Week 8. I hope everyone had a great long weekend and enjoyed the Queen's Birthday holiday.

Reports
Teachers are in the process of writing Semester One Reports. These documents are a quick snapshot of your child’s progress in the first half of the year. Reports will be sent home in Week 10.

Facebook Page
Our Facebook page Hunter River Community School - education is reaching more people each week. Last week a post about work experience reached over 39000 people: that's a lot of people gaining an understanding of the programs that we offer.

If you haven't signed a permission note for Facebook permission, and would like stories about your child to feature on the page, please complete the attached permission slip and return to school. The page is very strictly monitored and administrated and our philosophy is to promote the school and raise awareness of the ABILITIES of our fabulous students.

Skoolbag App
Our school’s “Skoolbag App” trial has finished and the licence for the product has been purchased. This means that the App is now available for smart phones including Android devices. To download the app, go to the App store on your phone and locate “Hunter River Community School”. This app will allow you to receive newsletters, complete absentee notes and download permission slips for activities. It will also provide alerts for upcoming events.

Attendance Requirements
As you are aware there have been recent changes in regards to Attendance in NSW Schools. New policy requirements focus on family holidays and extended absences during the school term. I have attached the “compulsory school attendance” information for you to read. While families are encouraged to travel in school holidays, we understand that it is not always possible and opportunities arise during school time. If travelling during the school term is necessary, please make an appointment to come and complete a “Travel Form”. Unfortunately justified leave for holidays during the school term will be unable to be granted.

What should I do if my child arrives late to school?
Lateness is recorded as a partial absence and must be explained by families in the same way as other forms of absence. Frequent late or early departure partial absences may be flagged with the Home School Liaison Officer.

Sick Leave
Exemptions may be granted for students who have been ill and have a Doctors Certificate. When notifying the school of your child’s absence, inform the staff that you will be requiring an exemption on the grounds of illness and have documentation to support the application. A form requesting an exemption will be sent home.

These new guidelines are a requirement of the Department of Education. Further information can be found on the Department’s web page. While the Principals are unable to grant justification leave for personal holidays, please don’t hesitate to make an appointment to complete the Travel Request Form.

Tracey

Tracey
Room 8 is a busy room with Liv, Carolyn, Suzanne, Claire, Bryton, Billy, Jessica, Connah, Travis and Isaac.

We have been busy learning about products and services that are available in our community. With the recent floods in our local area we have learnt the importance of the wonderful services like ambulance, police, fire and rescue services.

For our mathematics unit we have been learning about the value of money. As a reward system in our class Students earn dollars to spend in Room 8 shop at the end of the week to purchase items.

The students have loved ‘purchasing’ the different items on offer!
Compulsory School Attendance
Information for parents

Education for your child is important and regular attendance at school is essential for your child to achieve their educational best and increase their career and life options. NSW public schools work in partnership with parents to encourage and support regular attendance of children and young people. When your child attends school every day, learning becomes easier and your child will build and maintain friendships with other children.

What are my legal responsibilities?

Education in New South Wales is compulsory for all children between the ages of six years and below the minimum school leaving age. The Education Act 1990 requires that parents ensure their children of compulsory school age are enrolled at, and regularly attend school, or, are registered with the Board of Studies, Teaching and Educational Standards for homeschooling.

Once enrolled, children are required to attend school each day it is open for students.

The importance of arriving on time

Arriving at school and class on time:

- Ensures that students do not miss out on important learning activities scheduled early in the day
- Helps students learn the importance of punctuality and routine
- Give students time to greet their friends before class
- Reduces classroom disruption

Lateness is recorded as a partial absence and must be explained by parents.

What if my child has to be away from school?

On occasion, your child may need to be absent from school. Justified reasons for student absences may include:

- being sick, or having an infectious disease
- having an unavoidable medical appointment
- being required to attend a recognised religious holiday
- exceptional or urgent family circumstance (e.g. attending a funeral)

Following an absence from school you must ensure that within 7 days you provide your child's school with a verbal or written explanation for the absence. However, if the school has not received an explanation from you within 2 days, the school may contact you to discuss the absence.

Principal may decline to accept an explanation that you have provided if they do not believe the absence is in the best interest of your child. In these circumstances your child's absence would be recorded as unjustified. When this happens the principal will discuss their decision with you and the reasons why.

Principals may request medical certificates or other documentation when frequent or long term absences are explained as being due to illness. Principals may also seek parental permission to speak with medical specialists to obtain information to collaboratively develop a health care plan to support your child. If the request is denied, the principal can record the absences as unjustified.

Travel

Families are encouraged to travel during school holidays. If travel during school term is necessary, discuss this with your child's school principal. An Application for Extended Leave may need to be completed. Absences relating to travel will be marked as leave on the roll and therefore contribute to your child's total absences for the year.

In some circumstances students may be eligible to enrol in distance education for travel periods over 50 school days. This should be discussed with your child's school principal.
My child won’t go to school. What should I do?

You should contact the principal as soon as possible to discuss the issue and ask for help. Strategies to help improve attendance may include a referral to the school’s learning and support team or linking your child with appropriate support networks. The principal may seek further support from the Home School Liaison Program to develop an Attendance Improvement Plan.

What might happen if my child continues to have unacceptable absences?

It is important to understand that the Department of Education and Communities may be required to take further action where children of compulsory school age have recurring numbers of unexplained or unjustified absences from school.

Some of the following actions may be undertaken:

- Compulsory Schooling Conferences

You may be asked, along with your child, to attend a Compulsory Schooling Conference. The conference will help to identify the supports your child may need to have in place so they attend school regularly. The school, parents and agencies will work together to develop an agreed plan (known as Undertakings) to support your child’s attendance at school.

- Application to the Children’s Court – Compulsory Schooling Order

If your child’s attendance at school remains unsatisfactory the Department may apply to the Children’s Court for a Compulsory Schooling Order. The Children’s Court magistrate may order a Compulsory Schooling Conference to be convened.

- Prosecution in the Local Court

School and Department staff remain committed to working in partnership with you to address the issues which are preventing your child’s full participation at school. In circumstances where a breach of compulsory schooling orders occurs further action may be taken against a parent in the Local Court. The result of court action can be the imposition of a community service order or a fine.

What age can my child leave school?

All New South Wales students must complete Year 10 or its equivalent. After Year 10, and up until they reach 17 years of age, there are a range of flexible options for students to complete their schooling.

Working in Partnership

The Department of Education and Communities recognises that working collaboratively with students and their families is the best way to support the regular attendance of students at school.

We look forward to working in partnership with you to support your child to fulfil their life opportunities.

Further information regarding school attendance can be obtained from the following websites:

Policy, information and brochures:

The school leaving age:

Do you need an interpreter?

Interpreting services are available on request, including for the hearing impaired. The Telephone Interpreter Service is available 24 hours a day, seven days a week on 131 450. You will not be charged for this service.

For further advice and questions contact your educational services team
T 131 536

Learning and Engagement
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© February 2015
NSW Department of Education and Communities