What a successful start to the 2015 school year our students have had. It has been a very positive start with students settling into new classes and routines very nicely. Our students have returned with such a positive attitude towards learning and our data has shown a sharp increase in the amount of positive rewards given and a very sharp decrease in negative behaviour referrals, particularly in the playground. Great job Riverstone!

Our achievements in the first few weeks of this term have been of a very high standard. Our PSSA sport team representatives have been chosen after a lengthy selection process, our Swimming Carnival was a huge success with some outstanding results.

Our new Community Kitchen made the front page of the Hawkesbury Courier and planning is well underway for the grand opening at our Easter Hat Parade at the end of term. Thank you to the parents and family members who attended our Meet the Teacher sessions last week. Most were well attended and it was lovely to have an informal opportunity to catch up with parents.

Our kitchen rules

On occasion, your child may need to be absent from school. Following an absence from school you must ensure that the school is provided with a verbal or written explanation for the absence.

Please note, that "Exemption" can no longer be granted for Students travelling. Absences will be recorded as "Leave". This includes family holidays and other extended travel.

Late Arrivals
We have quite a few regular late arrivals to school each morning. From time to time this is unavoidable; however it has a big impact on student learning and school routines. Please aim to have your child in lines for the morning assembly at 8.55am. If you require assistance to set up a morning routine or additional support from school to encourage your child to be ready on time in the mornings please speak to your child’s teacher.
Swimming Carnival
A huge congratulations to all involved in yesterday's swimming carnival. The students had a great if exhausting day and all ran very smoothly. Results from the carnival will be posted in the next newsletter but those students who qualified for the Ridges Carnival will receive a note in the next few days. An extra big thank you to Mrs Plummer and her helpers for the organisation of the carnival and the entertainment provided.

L3 Comes to Riverstone PS
What is Language Learning and Literacy (L3)?
Language, Learning and Literacy (L3) is a program for Kindergarten and Year 1 students. Mrs Azzopardi and Miss Smigliani will participate in training to learn how to use this program in their classrooms. L3 focuses on providing rich literacy experiences to assist all children to become successful readers and writers. L3 occurs as part of the daily literacy lesson within the Kindergarten and Year 1 classroom.

Your child and L3
During the literacy session your child will be taught in small groups of three to four students. While each group is being given short, explicit lessons in Reading and Writing, the rest of the class will complete carefully selected activities to extend their literacy learning. Your child will also listen to the reading of stories, poems and songs in small groups. This will build their knowledge of sentences, letters and words to help their reading and writing.

What is being taught?
Children will be taught all parts of the English K–6 Syllabus through L3 lessons.

All children will take home reading books that they have read during their literacy lessons at school. Books are selected so you can provide praise, and encourage all the efforts your child makes when reading and writing.

If you would like to read more about helping your child at home you can log on to:

Interactive Learning Spaces
I am sure all parents of students in KA and 1L have been made aware of our new class furniture. Not only is it bright and fun but it will be utilised to develop cooperative learning spaces and to assist us to create 21st Century learning environments. This will assist us in all areas of the curriculum but particularly during L3 implementation.

Staff News
Our classes and staff have settled well into the new school year, however it is with some sadness that I have received the retirement notification of Mrs Krumins who is currently on leave. Mrs Krumins will not be returning to us but has assured me she will be dropping in to say goodbye to the staff, students and families. We wish Mrs Krumins all the best in the next phase of her life and thank her for the time and energy she has given to Riverstone Public School over the years.

Emma Thompson
Principal

Back to school - a dangerous time for children with asthma
Now that the holidays are over and the kids are back at school, it’s important that you are aware this can be a dangerous period for children with asthma. We are strongly urging all parents and carers to familiarise themselves with asthma signs and symptoms, as well as asthma first aid.

The Foundation is issuing this warning following recent statistics from The Children's Hospital at Westmead, which shows a significant increase in children being admitted to the emergency department during the back to school period. The Children's Hospital at Westmead, said it is widely recognised that there is a spike in admissions to emergency departments when children go back to school after the summer holidays. “This is largely driven by infection due to kids being in close proximity with each other and meeting new friends with new viruses,” he said. Professor Fitzgerald said the majority of children with asthma that are admitted to hospital are under the age of five. “Parents and carers of children with asthma should be aware of the possibility of them having an asthma attack.
after the school holidays when coming back to day care, preschool and school," he said.

Asthma Australia CEO, Mark Brooke, said there are a number of ways to make sure your children stay well during this period. "Parents should ensure their child's asthma is reviewed by a GP when going back to school, but if you haven’t done this yet, now is as good a time as any," Mr Brooke said. “During this period it is absolutely vital that children take their preventer medication regularly as prescribed, and carry reliever medication at all times if permitted,” he said. “It’s also important you provide the school with the revised asthma action plan and keep an eye out for asthma symptoms, including wheezing, shortness of breath, tightness in the chest, or persistent coughing.”

What you can do
There are ways you can ensure children with asthma stay well during the 'back to school' period including:

- Have their asthma reviewed by a GP and provide the school with an up-to-date asthma action plan.
- Advise school staff if your child needs help with taking medication.
- Ensure your child takes their preventer medication regularly as prescribed.
- Make sure their medication is in date and provide a spare reliever (and spacer if they use this) to the school in case they leave theirs at home.
- Keep an eye out for asthma symptoms especially in the first few weeks after school goes back.
- Familiarise yourself with asthma first aid.

Our App is up and running again.

Username: community
Password: riverstone

The simplest way
...to make a healthy breakfast.

We recommend eating two serves of fruit and five serves of vegetable every day.

Why? Because fruit and veg are packed full of nutrients and vitamins that give you energy, keep you healthy and help prevent diseases like cancer.

Try to get your family eating fruit and veg with breakfast – it will help all of you have more energy throughout the day.

You might like:
- wholegrain toast with avocado and tomato
- sliced banana on Weetbix
- frozen berries blended with reduced-fat milk and yoghurt for a smoothie.

For more information visit www.eatittobeatit.com.au or join us at facebook.com/eatittobeatit

Nutrition Snippet

Dad & Kids Workshop
In partnership with Bunnings Warehouse Rouse Hill

Dads, Grandfathers and carers, bring along your kids (aged between 4-12 years) to a FREE workshop facilitated by Bunnings Warehouse!

Tuesday 3rd March 5-7pm
Riverstone Public School, Elizabeth St

Together with your child you will create and build a toolbox of your very own to take home, all for FREE! Light refreshments will be available Bookings Essential.

Wesley Family Centre, Riverstone
Contact: Simone or Kim 9627 3511
www.facebook.com/RiverstoneFC

"It takes a village to raise a child"
Hello Parents, Carers and Friends of Preschool

Wow! What a busy couple of weeks it has been in preschool. A sincere thank you to our parents and friends for supporting the staggered start times for your child. The multiple start times ensure every child is provided with the opportunity for one on one time with their teacher to:

- Explore their new learning environment
- Build positive relationships
- Become familiar with routine — where to hang their bag, how to unpack, and an introduction to his/her personal name tags.

Starting preschool can be daunting for the child and those involved especially when you are handing care over to someone else for the first time, so it is extremely important that the child starting preschool and their family are provided with support during the transition phase to alleviate any anxiety.

If you do have any other concerns or issues you would like to raise or discuss, please feel free to contact our school office on 96271517 to make an appointment with Mr Wall (Jellybeans class) or Mrs Chivers (Smarties class). Appointments are necessary to ensure we do not take time away from your child’s learning. Alternatively if it is a quick question regarding routine or structure Mr Wall and Mrs Chivers are available at the end of each session. Thank you for your support and cooperation.

Warmest Regards
Preschool Team
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)

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 fulfill their life opportunities.

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

Policy, information and brochures:
toolbox/standards/attendance.php

The school leaving age:
ngschool/index.php

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 130 450. You will not be charged for this service.

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

Learning and Engagement

Student Engagement & Interagency Partnerships

T 9244 5129
www.dec.nsw.gov.au