Dear Parents,

We have found ourselves at the beginning of week 4 very quickly and in just three short weeks all students have settled in well and are eager to learn. Remember to check the “Things we have been learning about” board under the admin building to see samples of what we have been doing in class.

Swimming
The children had all been looking forward to starting swimming lessons in Blackwater on Friday. It was great to see so many of them at school early and ready to go. If your child is not going to swim on a Friday, please ensure that they are at school at 8:30am. Spelling tests, catch up work and reading activities are examples of things that will be done at the pool while the other group is having their lesson.

Sand Pit
A huge thank you to Tanya and Doug who spend their Sunday morning moving, shovelling and raking sand into the sand pit! I know that the children will be very excited to play in it.

Welcome Breakfast
Thank you to all volunteers that helped with the Welcome Breakfast on Monday 3rd February and Fundraising Breakfast on Monday 10th February. It was great to see so many people there!

Tuckshop
Thank you to all tuckshop helpers that have so successfully got Thursday tuckshop up and running in 2014. One of the highlights of my week was seeing the Prep children collect their tuckshop for the very first time and walk proudly with it to the eating area with a huge smile on their faces.

Parent Information Evenings
Thank you to the parents who were able to attend the information evenings. Kirsten and I hope that you found them beneficial.

Grip Leadership Day
Next Wednesday, 19th February, the year 5 and 6 students will travel to Emerald with Mrs Clanfield to attend the Grip Leadership Day. The children need to be at school by 7:30am and will be returning from Emerald at approx. 3pm. A text message will be sent out to parents to confirm the departure time from Emerald.

PD Days
On Monday 17th February, Mrs Ohl and I will be in Emerald to do the 2014 School Budget. On Wednesday 19th February, I will be at Anakie State School to attend a Small Schools Cluster Meeting. Mrs Bronwen Day will be taking the 3 – 6 class in my absence.

P&C Meeting
We had a good turnout at our first P&C Meeting for 2014. Our next P&C Meeting will be Monday 3rd March at 2:45pm. The P&C enables parents and citizens to meet together to determine the needs and aspirations of the school community. Please consider coming to next meeting.

*Due to the increase of price we can no longer keep the uniform shorts and hats at the cost of $10 each has they have been for the last 5 years. Prices are now $15 per item. Shirts remain at $35.
Great Results Guarantee
Our school, (along with every state school in Queensland) has received a grant to ensure that all students achieve the National Minimum Standard for literacy and numeracy for their year level. This funding is to be directed to the lower school and used to implement evidence-based strategies and actions to improve learning outcomes. More information is available at http://education.qld.gov.au/schools/grants/state/targeted/great-results.html Some ideas were discussed at the P&C meeting and staff meeting, including employing a part-time teacher and purchasing a reading comprehension and mathematics online program. Please come and see me if you have any other suggestions on how to maximise the benefits of this funding for our children.

Uniforms
Please remember to comply with the Bluff State School Uniform Policy.

Student Responsibilities
To comply with dress code, which includes:
- black shorts, mid-thigh length, no logos or patterns
- mandatory Bluff State School shirt
- mandatory Bluff State School hat
- white ankle socks (no writing, no patterns)
- enclosed shoes with either velcro or lace closures (joggers preferred)
- watch
- small pair of sleepers or studs
- hair accessories kept to a minimum, and of school colours

Parent Responsibilities
To make sure that their child is following the dress code of Bluff State School and to make a written request for alternative dress to staff if required.

Enjoy your fortnight and I am looking forward to seeing you at the circus on Tuesday night and the Bluff races on Saturday.
Elizabeth 😊

What's going on in the....
P-2 Classroom

Our classroom is in the full swing of learning and routines now. Students are engaged and are busily learning across all the key learning areas. History and Science is getting interesting and the P-2’s have been impressing me with their ability to recall the criteria for a living thing. Health this week focussed on learning and revising the steps in our “High 5 Hand”. Students are encouraged to use the following steps to solve problems independently: talk nicely, talk firmly, ignore, walk away, talk to a teacher.

In Maths, Preps have been exploring same and different, sorting similar objects and identifying the rule, and are now learning about number and counting. Year 1 students have been learning about skip counting (counting in tens seems to be a hit) and are now learning about teen numbers. Year 2 students have been looking at numbers to 1000, placing numbers on number lines and showing the value of numbers.

In English, Year 1 & 2 students are exploring emotions in stories and have been learning how to write a short summary of a story. Prep students have been learning how to do a retell of a story and will start learning Jolly Phonics next week. This program teaches students about letter names, sounds and related words.

Thankyou to all those parents/grandparents who attended the parent information night in week 2. I ran through our classroom routines and explained in more detail, some of the important aspects of homework, home reading
and how we teach units. A reminder that Music and PE is Monday; Library and Parade is on Tuesday; Homework is due Friday and Home Readers will be due Wednesday and Friday.

Our first swimming lesson went well, with all students having a great time. Please encourage your child to practise dressing/undressing themselves and how to pack their belongings away. With such a large group, especially the preps, any extra practice at home will only benefit your child at the pool. On Friday, the girls beat the boys with their changing time by a long shot! The challenge has been issued to the boys for next week. Also please remind your child that learning to swim is a skill that requires practise. Several students across the school were reluctant to practise, if they weren’t successful the first time.

3-6 Classroom

In the past fortnight, we have had the commencement of a few exciting activities. The year 6 students have begun Japanese lessons, delivered as a web conference by a Japanese teacher. This provides students with an excellent opportunity to experience online learning. The year 5 students have begun Project 600 – an online learning program that develops and extends the literacy skills of selected students. The aim is to work with students who are already very capable at reading and help them go “from good to great”.

In English, we have been planning our stories and writing sizzling starts. We have also been adding adjectives to sentences and learning about plurals. In Maths, the 3/4 students have been learning about time – digital and analogue. The 5/6 students have been working on understanding fractions. In Science, we have been looking at the characteristics of living things and identifying living and non-living things in different habitats.

The seven characteristics of living things: (MRS GREN)

Students of the Week

Faith set a fantastic example for her peers. Charli always listens and contributes in class. Darbee settled in well and adjusted to classroom procedure well. Liam displayed enthusiasm and worked extremely hard in our new Japanese program. Well done kids and keep up the fantastic work!
Student Council News

Student Council has commenced for 2014 with our office bearers being elected at the first meeting. This year Brock has been elected as President to lead the committee throughout the year and Will supporting him as Vice-President. Rory has been elected as the secretary. Bailey and Clay will take care of the finances as they have been elected as treasurers. Student council meetings are held on Tuesdays at first break with all students from year 4-6 welcome to join.

This year they have chosen 1 charity to support each term. They are also enthusiastic about hosting a number of events throughout the year to entertain the children and raise funds for their committee. Funds raised each year are spent on projects chosen by the committee which benefits the students and Bluff State School as a whole. Discussions are being held in regard to the projects that they would like to support during 2014.

Congratulations to our new committee for this year, we wish them all the best with their fundraising ventures and hope for them a little bit of learning and a whole lot of fun along the way.
Social media
and the school community

This guide offers some information to parents and caregivers about how to use social media in relation to comments or posts about their school community.

The internet, mobile phones and social media provide wonderful opportunities for you to network and socialise online. While these technologies provide positive platforms for sharing ideas, they also have the potential to cause pain and suffering to individuals, groups or even whole communities.

Reputations of teachers, schools, principals and even parents can be permanently damaged — and in some cases, serious instances of inappropriate online behaviour are dealt with by police and the court system.

Just as you would discourage your child from behaving inappropriately online, it’s important to remember that sometimes negative comments that parents and caregivers post about their school community have a greater impact than expected.
How do I report inappropriate content?

Social media providers may remove content that contravenes their terms of service and/or acceptable use policies. Most websites and apps have a 'report/block this person' or 'report/flag content' function.

Common links
for reporting social media content

Facebook
www.facebook.com/safety

Instagram
www.help.instagram.com

Google
including YouTube
www.google.com/support/go/legal

Tumblr
www.tumblr.com/help

Twitter
www.support.twitter.com

Further information

Australian Communications Media Authority (ACMA) Cybersmart program

Bullying No Way!

Google
www.google.com/goodtoknow

Parentline

Young and Well Cooperative Research Centre
www.youngandwellcrc.org.au

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For updated copies of this document, and other cyber safety resources, please visit

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General tips

Being aware of a few simple strategies can help keep the use of social media positive and constructive:

- Before you post something online, ask yourself if the community or individual really need to know. Is it relevant, positive and helpful?
- Remember that what you post online is a direct reflection of who you are. People will potentially form lasting opinions of you based on what you post online.
- Be a good role model. If things get heated online consider logging out and taking a few moments to relax and think. Hasty, emotive responses could inflame situations unnecessarily.
- Be mindful when commenting, try to keep general and avoid posting anything that could identify individuals.
- A few years ago parents may have discussed concerns or issues with their friends at the school gate. Today with the use of social media, online discussions between you and your close friends can very quickly be shared with a much wider audience, potentially far larger than intended.
- Taking a few moments to think about the content you are about to post could save upset, embarrassment, and possible legal action.
- As a parent you have a role in supervising and regulating your child’s online activities at home and its impact on the reputation and privacy of others. Parents are children’s first teachers — so they will learn online behaviours from you.

Is it appropriate to comment or post about schools, staff or students?

- Parental and community feedback is important for schools and the department. If you have a compliment, complaint or enquiry about an issue at school, the best approach is to speak directly to the school about the matter, rather than discussing it in a public forum.
- While many schools use social media to update parents of school notices, the department prefers that parents contact schools directly with a compliment, complaint or enquiry due to privacy considerations. Imagine if your doctor, accountant or banking institution tried to contact you to discuss important matters via Facebook.
- If you have raised an issue with a school or know that another person has, consider refraining from discussing those details on social media, particularly the names of anyone involved.
- Keep comments calm and polite, just as you would over the telephone or by email.
- If you encounter negative or derogatory content online which involves the school, hinders a child’s learning and/or affects the school community at large, contact the school principal.
Possible civil or criminal ramifications of online commentary

A serious instance of inappropriate online behaviour may constitute a criminal offence and become a police matter. For example, online content may substantiate the offence of “using a carriage service to menace, harass or cause offence” (Criminal Code Act 1995 (Cth) s 474.17).

School staff may contact their union or obtain personal legal advice if they feel that online content seriously impacts their reputation. Defamatory online content may give rise to litigation under the Defamation Act 2005 (Qld).

What about other people’s privacy?

If you upload photos of your children, be mindful of who might be in the background. You might be happy to share your child’s successes with your friends and family via social media, but some parents are not.

If you are tagging or naming students, consider that other parents may not want their child’s name attached to images online.

Get to know social media

Take some time to research online networks and mobile apps, in particular the:
- terms of use
- common features and terminology
- policies for the removal of content
- privacy settings.

Search online networks for useful links such as safety centres, forms for reporting inappropriate content and terms and conditions. It may be helpful to bookmark these pages.

What if I encounter problem content?

Taking the following steps may help resolve the issue in a constructive way:
- refrain from responding
- take a screen capture or print a copy of the concerning online content
- if you consider problem content to be explicit, pornographic or exploitative of minors, you should keep a record of the URL of the page containing that content but NOT print or share it. The URL can be provided to the school principal, or police, as needed for escalation of serious concerns
- block the offending user
- report the content to the social media provider.