Dear Parents,

As I write the final newsletter for 2015 amongst the hustle and bustle of Term 4, it is difficult to believe that the school year is almost over and Christmas is nearly here.

Bluff State School is a truly wonderful small school. We have very dedicated staff who give everything to ensuring that your child is provided with the very best education. Often our teacher or teacher aide to children ratios are as low as 1:3. This means that your child is receiving differentiated and individualised teaching and learning. Education is the main job of our school and we will continue to work hard at this every single day. Please remember that I am always open to feedback about how our school can continue to improve.

 Semester 2 Report Card writing has been completed and I would like to congratulate all students of Bluff State School. It has been very exciting to support and encourage children to improve throughout the year. All students should be proud of the efforts they have put in this year and the marks they have achieved.

The high school transition day and prep transition day last week were a huge success. The year 6 students are familiar with High School and looking forward to it – they are definitely ready for the next chapter in their lives. The year 2 children enjoyed being in the 3-6 classroom and participating in activities in preparation for next year. The 2016 prep children had a great day working with the current prep and year 1 children and certainly settled in quickly.

Bluff Giving Tree
Thank you to the families who supported the Bluff Giving Tree initiative, you have brightened Christmas for many other families/children. Sister Carmel and Sister Colleen will be distributing the gifts to families in the local community who can’t afford much this Christmas. The donation of gifts certainly highlights the meaning of Christmas.

Swimming Carnival
Congratulations to all students who competed in this year’s swimming carnival and well done to those students who won age champion. Thank you to everyone for displaying excellent behaviour and great sportsmanship. Congratulations to Bluff on winning the aggregate trophy. A very big thank you to Mrs Ohl for all of the organisation that went into the swimming carnival and all staff and parent helpers who took on jobs to ensure the day ran smoothly.
**Student Resource Scheme**

Student Resource Scheme information was sent home a few weeks ago. Parents have the option of paying $100 for all stationery items and books or purchasing items themselves. The P&C has very kindly purchased all text books for students next year. Please see myself or Mrs Ohl if you have any questions.

**Report Cards**

Report Cards will be available from the office on Wednesday 9th December. If they are not picked up by Friday, they will be posted.

**End of Year Learning Celebration**

This is an important time to recognise the successes and achievements of our students for the 2015 school year.

Dress: Students must wear their full school uniform on the night.

Date: Tuesday, 8th December

Time: 6pm start, students to arrive from 5:45pm

Place: QCWA Hall, Church Street, Bluff

Food: Please bring a plate to share. If your child is in Prep – Year 2, please bring something savoury. If your child is in Year 3 – 6, please bring something sweet.

**Year 6 Graduation**

The Year 6 Graduation dinner will be held on Wednesday night at the Bluff Hotel. This is a very special occasion for our year 6 students, their parents and the staff of Bluff State School who have supported them throughout their primary school years. The evening will begin at 6:30pm.

**Party Day**

On Thursday we are going to have a party day at school. We will clean up, play games, watch a movie and play with water in the afternoon. Thursday is also going to be a free dress day. Please send along spare clothes or togs and a sun shirt for students to get wet in, a towel and a plate of food to share – please no food with nuts due to allergies.

**Clean-up Day**

Friday is clean-up day. Students may wear free dress clothes suitable for cleaning and must still bring their hats and wear closed in shoes. Students will need to bring morning tea and lunch.

**P&C Raffle**

Please return all P&C raffle tickets to school by next Tuesday 8 December. The raffle will be drawn at the End of Year Celebration.

**In the event of a natural disaster - Access to school closure information**

**QSchools app**

The QSchools app will provide up-to-date information about school closures, in the event of a natural disaster causing damage to the school or preventing access to the school.

Visit the department’s apps page for more information and all the features: [http://deta.qld.gov.au/about/app/](http://deta.qld.gov.au/about/app/)

The QSchools app is available for free download through iTunes, Google Play and the Window’s store.

**Websites**

Up-to-date information about school closures can be accessed on the following websites.

School Closure Website: [http://esc.eq.edu.au](http://esc.eq.edu.au)


School Watch
During the holiday period, schools provide an opportunity for criminal activity, becoming targets for unlawful entry, arson, stealing, graffiti and property damage – all of which become a cost to the community. The School Watch Program is a partnership between Education Queensland, the Queensland Police Service and the State Government Protective Security Service. It aims to reduce criminal activity in Queensland schools and encourages everyone to look out for after-hours crime in our schools. If you see anything suspicious, please don’t attempt to intervene. Call the School Watch number – 13 17 88
Let’s work together to help create safer school communities.

Date claimers for this term
December
8 Tuesday End of Year Celebration (Please bring a plate to share)
9 Wednesday Year 6 Graduation (Year 6 students and parents only)
10 Thursday Party Day and Free Dress Day
11 Friday Clean Up Day and Last day of school

I would like to wish you all a very Merry Christmas and Happy New Year. I am looking forward to working with you and your child again in 2016.

School resumes on Wednesday 27th January.

Warm regards,
Elizabeth Webb
Principal

Students of the Week
Left.. Lane is always being responsible and Curtis has shown a huge improvement with his attitude to school.
Right.. Kayden has a great attitude while Will is busy being helpful to his classroom peers!
In Term 4, the Prep – 2 class have enjoyed learning about:

Sam: Playing shops with money.
Olivia: Having fun with playdough.
Xander: Weighing objects in maths.
Bridie: Using Reading Eggs.
Emily: Making an Australian flag.
Mack: Making Christmas craft.
Lane: Addition and Subtraction in maths.
Darbee: Making reindeer hand art.
Levi: Doing craft activities.
Kody: Making Christmas posters.
Rori: Working on Maths Mentals.
Koda: Making Santa’s.
Belle: Learning new songs in Music.
Will: Learning about different countries.
Reagan: Going to swimming lessons.

Make an Australian flag.
Addition and Subtraction in maths.
Making Christmas craft.
Making reindeer hand art.
Doing craft activities.
Making Christmas posters.
Working on Maths Mentals.
Making Santa’s.
Learning new songs in Music.
Learning about different countries.
Going to swimming lessons.

We have reached the end of our school year. Although we are so busy creating Christmas masterpieces, practising our end of year performances and wrapping up the year, I wish we could slow down this week. It’s our Grade 6s last week of primary school. For three of them, Bluff State School is the only school they have ever attended and each of them have a parent that attended our small school too. I would like to say a huge thank you to this year’s Year 6 Students. They have made my first year a little easier. They have supported me and helped more than they realise. I wish them all the best in the future. They will be missed immensely.

MERRY CHRISTMAS

Merry Christmas to all of my students and their families! You have all worked so hard all year and should be very proud of your efforts. Enjoy your well-deserved break and I can’t wait to see you all in 2016! The students have put a lot of hard work into their end of year practises, they are fantastic. Students must have their costumes to school as soon as possible if they do not already. On Tuesday night please make sure you send a water bottle with your student.

Don’t forget to read over the holidays……
How to raise a child to be a giver

Michael Grose highlights why it is so important to teach your child to be a giver not a taker, and gives five practical ways to develop a sense of generosity in kids.

Young children are egocentric by nature. As any three-year old knows only too well the world revolves around them. “I want…” “Give me…” “It’s mine!” and other variations are the mantras for this age group. This self-centredness is developmental, which means its something they grow out of… or they’re supposed to.

But some kids never bridge the gap from self-centredness to generosity. They become takers with an inflated sense of entitlement rather than givers who do all they can to accommodate the needs of others. While it can be argued that some children maybe self-centred by temperament I’m not convinced that we can blame Mother Nature entirely. There is no doubt that parenting impacts enormously on a child’s propensity to give rather than take.

In the eagerness to get kids off to a good start in life, a spirit of generosity is one quality that parents can easily overlook. Developing children’s personal competencies tends to be higher on most parents’ wish lists for their kids than developing a generous spirit.

But developing a sense of sharing in kids has plenty of positives. Children who are able to share their time, their space and themselves generally have more friends and experience more success than those who are self-centred and mean-spirited.

Quite simply, they are leadership material!

Like most facets of child rearing developing a community ethos in kids can be a frustrating task but perseverance, modeling and expectations are parents’ greatest allies when it comes to things that really matter.

Here are five practical ways to develop a sense of generosity in kids:

1. **Expect kids to help**
   With families shrinking, kids get fewer opportunities to help at home than before. With this in mind expect your kids to help without being paid. Regular chores and activities that benefit others such as setting the meal table or helping a younger sibling get dressed teaches them that their contribution is valuable and very much required.

2. **Think ‘gang’**
   It’s a quirk of modern life that parenting is an individual endeavour. “What’s in the best interest of my child?” has replaced “What’s in the best interest of the family?” as a key parenting principle. Encourage children to make allowances for each other which may mean everyone watches a sibling’s special concert rather than some children missing it because “it’s boring!”

3. **Don’t let them get away with meanness**
   Children wear L-Plates when it comes to behaving generously. They don’t always get it right, which means that parents as the wise adults need to remind children when their words and actions are intolerant or mean-spirited, or when they need to put their own needs behind the needs of others.

**more on page 2**
... How to raise a child to be a giver ...

1. Develop a sense of other
   Children and teenagers don’t live in a bubble. The socialisation process demands that kids be accountable for their poor behaviours. “What does this social situation reasonably require of my child at his or her age and stage of development?” is a great question to ask yourself to develop a sense of other, rather than entitlement in kids.

2. Encourage giving
   During the Victorian bushfires a few years ago I heard the story of a nine-year old whose mum went into his bedroom to growl at him for being up too late. She found him busy emptying his moneybox into little plastic bags, ready to donate at the school bushfire appeal next day. There were plenty of stories like this showing the generosity of Australian kids, we just need to encourage them in everyday life, rather than wait for a tragedy, to give their generosity a kick start. You can begin by encouraging them to give toys, books and clothes away when they have finished with them, or doing a good deed by a neighbor or friend.

The skills that kids need for future success are changing as technology, greater flexibility and mobility, and new economic forces are transforming workplaces at an astonishingly rapid rate. But the basic attitudes and character traits needed to succeed such as teamwork, initiative and generosity haven’t changed too much over time. Ask any employer and I’m sure they’d say they’d hire a giver over a taker any day as they are just so valuable to have on a team. Hopefully they are not becoming a rarity as well!

Michael Grose

Want more ideas to help you raise confident kids and resilient young people? Subscribe to Happy Kids newsletter, my FREE weekly email parenting guide at parentingideas.com.au. You’ll be so glad you did.