Dear Parents, Caregivers and Community Members,

2019 has flown and I can’t believe that I have already been at the school for a full year. This time last year I was preparing for my interview for Hambledon!

I am very excited with our planning for 2020 and believe that Hambledon SS will continue to be grow and improve as the school of choice for everyone in the area.

With a week to go, I thought it timely to look back at the activities we participated in this year and some of the work we have done. We have participated in discos, Bravehearts, Wonder of living program, kitchen garden, prep open days, swimming, cross country, sports day, leadership camps, year 6 camps, writers’ camp and Reef Guardian activities. We celebrated and acknowledged: Day for Daniel, R U OK Day, Kindness day, NAIDOC Day, transitions to high school and from kindy to Prep. We have experienced gala days, musical showcase evening, and the Eisteddfod. There have been excursions, breakfasts, Public speaking competitions and award ceremonies. Students participated in Opti-minds, Spelling Bees, Readers Cup, Deadly Leaders and so many more.

Our big focus areas this year were on: Reading, writing, attendance and behaviour. The data in these areas has improved right across the school. Next year we will continue our unrelenting focus on these areas as there is still room for growth.

Our continued focus on improving our NAPLAN data will also continue next year. While we made some considerable gains across all of the areas tested, we also know that we can do better. With the continued support from our new Head of Curriculum, Sharon Baker and Andrew Lamond we will make sure that the best practices and resources occur in each classroom every day. Next year NAPLAN will be online which will provide another level of experience for our students.

This year we continued our focus on attendance. As mentioned in every newsletter and on every parade – **attendance is the key to success.** If your child is not at school, then we can’t teach them. They miss out on valuable concepts which in turn will hinder their opportunities in the future. Our goal this year was have a 2% increase in our attendance data. We have fallen a little short of this but have still made some great gains.

I hope you all make the most of a well-deserved break and we will see you all in the New Year to go through the cycle once more!

While this is the last newsletter of the year, we will be posting items in our Facebook page to keep you up to date.

I would like to wish you all a fantastic and safe summer holiday.
Thank you

Thank you all for your support in 2019. Special thanks must also go to the following people - to my fantastic and hardworking ladies in the office – Teresa, Krisi, Sheryn and Shelley - for their continual assistance and support each week, to our lovely cleaners who ensure that our school is always neat and tidy at the start of each day, to Bart for ensuring our grounds are well maintained on the limited budget we have, Michael, for providing tech support, to each and every one of my wonderful staff – Teachers and Teacher Aides. Last but least to my Leadership team - who work so hard to ensure that our students have the best outcomes possible in all areas each and every day. Your efforts are never unnoticed.

A few staff are leaving us at end of the year. I wish to thank them for their efforts throughout the year. All the best to those who are transferring, moving interstate, overseas, retiring, having babies or just taking leave. Thank you to each and every one of you for contributing to our school and ensuring our students have had the wonderful learning opportunities that they have had.

Volunteers

A very big “thank you” to all of the parents, grandparents, friends and family who have volunteered a most “precious” commodity - their time - to support our students and our school this year. Support has been offered in the tuckshop, classrooms, at special events, in gardens, on excursions and camps and with many P&C and student council activities. Your efforts have been very much appreciated and have certainly made a positive difference to our school. Great schools are made up of great people who are prepared to give that little extra and many of you do just that. Thanks heaps!

P&C

Special thanks to our P&C team who have worked hard this year to support our school. Members have regularly attended meetings and managed general P&C business. They have hosted the discos as well as other fund raising activities including Mothers’ Day and Fathers’ Day stall. Your efforts are very much appreciated!

Volunteers Morning Tea

Last week we will be held our annual Volunteers’ Morning Tea. Without the support of the many volunteers we have at our school, we would not be able to provide the many opportunities that we do for our children. On behalf of our school community, I would like to thank every volunteer we have had at our school this year and for the contributions you have made to our school community.
School Watch – working together to protect schools

With the holidays fast approaching, we need you to look out for after-hours crime in our school. If you do see something suspicious, please do not attempt to intervene.

Please keep watch over our school and help safeguard against vandalism, theft and arson. LOOK, LISTEN and REPORT any suspicious activity outside of school hours or during school holidays.

If you see anything irregular or suspicious, report the issue to School Watch on 131 788. If it’s an emergency, call Triple Zero (000). Remember, we can all help to keep our school safe.

School Speed Zones

Council is considering a change to the standard school zone times in Cairns to better align the before and after school high activity periods with slower vehicle speeds. It is hoped that a change to the school zone times will result in improved traffic flow and compliance with speed limits whilst maintaining safety for school children during peak school times.

Council’s preference is to change the standard school zone times as follows:
• 1.5 hour in the morning (7.30am – 9.00am)
• 1.0 hour in the afternoon (2.30pm – 3.30pm)

Given that your school’s start and finish times align with the above school zone periods, it is expected that the safety of school children would not be compromised. Motorists would be expected to travel at the reduced speed limit of 40km/h past the school during both school zone periods when children are entering and leaving the school.

Message from Adopt-a-Cop on Bicycle Security

Police are encouraging bike owners to follow these security tips and ensure that bicycle particulars are immediately recorded upon purchase. Free bicycle ID forms are available from your local police beat or police station or email a request to DCPCCairns@police.qld.gov.au

• never leave your bike unattended and unlocked
• secure your bike with a quality lock to something solid
• If it’s easy, remove front wheel and secure it to the rear wheel
• Remove accessories from your bike e.g. lights, helmets and pumps
• Keep your bike locked and secure at home too

In the unfortunate event that your bike is lost or stolen REPORT IT TO THE POLICE – 131 444. Police recover stolen bicycles on a regular basis. If you’ve completed your bicycle ID form that information can assist in the recovery of your bike.

Stay cool and protect your health this Summer

Queensland Health is urging families to take care of their health as the state heads into summer holidays. Measures such as staying indoors or in the shade in very hot weather, taking cool showers or baths, limiting strenuous outdoor activity and drinking plenty of fluids can help to prevent heat-related illness. It is equally important to monitor family, friends and neighbours who may be more prone to heat-related illness. These include the elderly, infants, overweight and obese people, pregnant and breastfeeding women, and people with some pre-existing health conditions.

Queensland Health is also urging families to avoid any summer tragedies by remembering how quickly the temperature inside a vehicle can rise. If you have to leave the car always take children and/or animals with you. For further information on staying healthy and safe during hot weather visit www.health.qld.gov.au
Visit by Registered Nurse for Free Prep Vision Screening

Good vision is important for a child’s educational, physical and social development. Vision screening is therefore vital in early childhood, particularly for conditions such as ‘lazy eye’, which if not detected early can lead to blindness.

A Registered Nurse will be visiting the school in 2020 to commence vision screening for all Prep Year children. If you wish to have your child participate in this free vision screening program, please complete and sign the consent form sent home which will be handed out next year. You will be advised in writing of the outcome of your child’s screening.

Please note that if your child has had a vision assessment in the past 12 months it is not necessary for him/her to participate in this screening program. If this is the case, please complete the consent form and indicate that you do not wish for your child to participate, and ensure that you follow the schedule of reviews recommended by your eye health professional.

Building Resilience

Children and young people frequently are placed in situations that are not to their liking. They may have a teacher for a year that they do not enjoy; play in a sports team that always loses; or eat food they are not used to on school camp. Some children are adept at pestering their parents to rescue them or change a situation so that it suits them. This is okay when a child’s physical or psychological safety is at risk, or if long-term harm is imminent if no change is made. If not, then it is better for kid’s resilience that they learn to cope with these situations themselves. Kids, when left to their own devices usually develop their own coping mechanisms, and will usually adapt their thinking or their behaviour to deal with the situation. Help your child to adapt to tricky situations, rather than changing the situation to suit them. Flexibility rather than rigid thinking is needed here. This may cause some discomfort for both of you in the short term, but boost resilience for you both in the long term.
ANXIETY ‘a feeling of worry, nervousness, or unease about something with an uncertain outcome’

With a definition like this who doesn’t get anxious?

Did you know....
Sometimes it can be helpful to have some level of anxiety. It helps us get ready for exams, and motivates us to perform. It helps us avoid dangerous situations or reminds us to prepare for new situations. It helps us to be prepared and often to do our best.

If you are feeling anxiety you might feel uncomfortable, physically unwell (butterflies in your stomach, heart racing, wanting to vomit or go to the toilet). You might feel overwhelmed, frightened or even a sense of panic (this can be very useful if that assignment is due tomorrow).

All these feelings are normal and most of us experience them at some time in our lives. Don’t panic if your child is demonstrating these symptoms especially at the end of term, while having to speak in public or when awaiting his report card.

When does anxiety go beyond the norm??
If you are seeing anxiety that is ‘excessive or unreasonable, marked and persistent’ and interfering significantly with one’s normal routine’, then it is time to consider whether the anxiety has reached the level of a disorder.

When feelings and thoughts become: more intense and overwhelming; thoughts are unhelpful or irrational and unable to be controlled; and the person is unable to do what they need to do; and these thoughts and feelings are interfering with relationships, then anxiety becomes a disorder, and it is time to seek help.

Anxiety is a part of life but it should not become your life. There are many causes to anxiety of which familial history of anxiety is often a common element, but anxiety can occur for lots of reasons. One in six people experience anxiety so it is a common issue.

There are 5 types of anxiety disorders:
• Generalised Anxiety Disorder (GAD) – excessive worrying about many aspects of one’s life
• Obsessive Compulsive Disorder (OCD) – Thoughts and fears are obsessive and rituals are performed in order to cope eg. continually checking if the iron is off; excessive hand washing
• Panic Disorder – panic attacks are periods of intense fear or anxiety even when there is no good reason. Symptoms may include sweating, breathing difficulties, loss of control
• PTSD – Post traumatic stress disorder – A disturbing event may trigger this and the person may have flash backs, disturbed dreams and mood changes. Many soldiers or refugees experience this, but a single incident can trigger this for anyone
• Social Phobia – fear of being humiliated, embarrassed or criticized and may affect one’s ability to speak or eat in public, being assertive and sticking up for oneself
• Specific Phobias eg intense fear of spiders, the dark, injections. One or more can occur at the same time

If you believe that the feelings of anxiety are ongoing, and affecting day to day living, and are unable to be controlled, then you or your love one needs to seek help.

Tips to help along the way
• Talk to someone eg the Guidance Officer, the doctor, a friend or family member
• Stay physically healthy – eat healthy food, drink water, exercise daily
• Work out ways to minimize the stresses in your life without having to avoid them
• Have a massage, yoga, facial or other treats

Who better to look after you than yourself but be open to help if you need it. Often others see our needs before we do!

Lifeline 13 11 14
https://www.lifeline.org.au/
Kids Helpline 1800 55 1800.
Beyondblue 1300 22 4636
https://www.beyondblue.org.au/
Tips for going back to school after the December/January holidays

After the December/January holiday period, children may experience many different emotions about returning to school. Children may feel:

- stressed or anxious
- excited about seeing friends again
- sad the holidays are over
- concerned about keeping up with school work and the curriculum

Prior to the start of school, it can be helpful to create a countdown planner. At the beginning of the holiday period, you could sit down and mark upcoming activities on a calendar to help students prepare for the school year. The activities or experiences you select could incorporate goals you are currently working towards and other school like activities.

Complete as many or as few activities you feel your child needs and your family can accommodate.

The following example of a calendar countdown is provided below for a student attending their first year in Prep.

In this example, the family has identified skills, routines and experiences their child needs to learn and become used to. These include using public toilets, eating from a lunchbox, identifying belongings, putting on shoes, wearing the uniform, wearing a hat, and walking from the car to the classroom. The family has worked to focus on several activities or skills at once, for example, when they go to the park they will work on playing with a hat on and using the public toilet.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week and Day</th>
<th>Monday</th>
<th>Tuesday</th>
<th>Wednesday</th>
<th>Thursday</th>
<th>Friday</th>
<th>Saturday</th>
<th>Sunday</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>7 (December)</td>
<td>17 Practice eating out of a lunchbox</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>20 Drive past the school</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>22 Read “My new school”</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 (December)</td>
<td>24 Practice putting on shoes and going for a short play or walk</td>
<td>25 Christmas Day</td>
<td>26 Boxing Day</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>28 Go to park – practice playing with a hat on and using public toilets</td>
<td>29 Read “My new school”</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 (January)</td>
<td>31 Practice eating out of a lunchbox</td>
<td>32 New Years Day</td>
<td>33 Practice putting on uniform, driving to school and walking to gate</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>35 Read “My new school”</td>
<td>36 Practice eating out of a lunchbox</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 (January)</td>
<td>3 Go to park – practice playing with a hat on and using public toilets</td>
<td>9 Practice putting on shoes and going for a short play or walk</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>11 Play game identifying belongings from a pile</td>
<td>12 Read “My new school”</td>
<td>13</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 (January)</td>
<td>14 Practice putting on a uniform, driving to school and walking to gate</td>
<td>15 Go to park – practice playing with a hat on and using public toilets</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>17 Play game identifying belongings from a pile</td>
<td>18 Practice putting on shoes and going for a short play or walk</td>
<td>19 Read “My new school”</td>
<td>20 Practice eating out of a lunchbox</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 (January)</td>
<td>21 Practice eating out of a lunchbox</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>23 Go to park – practice playing with a hat on and using public toilets</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>25 Play game identifying belongings from a pile</td>
<td>26 Practice putting on a uniform, driving to school and walking to gate</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 (January)</td>
<td>28 Australia Day</td>
<td>29 1st day of school</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Congratulations Piccone Award Winners

Last week we held our annual Piccone Community Awards ceremony at school. It was fantastic to see 175 children from our school receive these awards based around citizenship and community participation. This was an increase from 108 the previous year. I would like to thank parents and carers who were able to support the children in a range of out of school activities so that they could achieve this award. These awards are a great initiative to encourage children to be active members of the community. Thanks also to the Piccone family for their continued support in these awards.

John Schilling and John Piccone with Platinum Award recipient, Harley.
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