St Gabriel’s News  
A school for students with hearing impairment  
and other special needs  
within Edmund Rice Special Education Services

Newsletter No: 4  
Date: 5 April 2011  
Term 1 Week 10

Diary

**Wednesday, 6 April**  
6.30pm Parent Evening

**Friday, 8 April**  
12.00pm End of Term  
Assembly followed by picnic -  
Parents welcome  
Students last day of Term 1

**Thursday, 28 April**  
Students return for first day of  
Term 2

**Tuesday, 3 May**  
10.00am Excursion - The  
Night Zoo - Riverside Theatre

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**PARENT EVENING**

All Parents are invited to attend a Strategic Planning Evening to discuss how we can make St Gabriel’s the very best School and Community we can over the next 3 years.

Where: St Gabriel’s School  
When: Wednesday, 6 April  
Time: 6.30pm-8.30pm  
RSVP: Val - 9634 2367  
Supper provided

**Happy Birthday**  
To  
Ali  7 April  
Thomas  10 April  
Scott  19 April  
Kian  22 April
Children's Awards

The following awards were presented at our school Assemblies:

**Week 8 - 25 March 2011**

**Student of the Week: **Dominic

Try your Best Award - Evi
Care and Share Award - Asher
Uniform Award - Emma
Be Safe Award - Blake

**Class Awards**

Junior N - Jack for counting really well.

Middle L - Corey for excellent work in counting and adding + 1 in maths.

Upper W - Blake for good sounding out of words he didn’t know.

**Week 10 – 4 April 2011**

**Student of the Week: **Melanie

Try your Best Award - Tom
Care and Share Award - Dion
Uniform Award - Aaron
Be Safe Award - Miguel

**Class Awards**

Junior N - Aaron C for great counting.

Middle L - Evi for folding her arms in class.

Upper W - Ryan for great work in maths.

**HEAD LICE ALERT**

There has been an infestation of head lice in the school. Please ensure that you check your child’s head for lice and treat accordingly to prevent them spreading.

Thank you.
The children have had two wonderful weeks watching the chickens hatch from their eggs and then grow very quickly. The children all had an experience of holding or petting the chicks and we were all very sad to see them go.

The Rowe family adopted 6 of the chicks so we look forward to hearing how they progress and lets hope there are not too many roosters!!
As we near the end of the term, I am reminded of the friendships that have blossomed over this term amongst all of the children. I am on duty a fair bit throughout the weeks and I never tire of seeing the children greet each other in the mornings, play together in the playground and share joy and negotiation skills around a common interest!

The many ways they use to communicate with one another reminds me too that children speak with many ‘voices’. In schools and sometimes at home we tend to expect our children to ‘receive’ instructions, to listen to us and to do as we say. While receptive language and good listening are vital skills for success at school, let’s not forget that children are people first and foremost and they are actively engaged in exploring the world around them and trying to make sense of it – and that they want to communicate their unfolding understanding to us, the significant adults in their lives.

Even without language, children communicate expressively through facial expressions, gestures, walking us towards objects of play and want and through their own jargon as well. I see them on the playground using their bodies to say ‘let’s play’ or using their faces and eyes to communicate their intent. Of course, we’re about helping them to be more conventional in their language so others in their widening communities can communicate with them too. But in the process we need to remember that everything is valid and that we are the adults in their world, here to help interpret their intent and to supply more conventional uses of language as they grow and mature. We’re also here to ‘be’ with them in the communication process – we nod, they gesture, we say ‘ahhh’, they smile and so on: it’s first about the interactions we have with them (back and forth) and, as I said, everything ‘counts’!

It’s all communication – when they repeat what we and others have said, we can build on that and help them to expand their communicative repertoire. When they act out, out of frustration or anger or fear, we can name it for them and show them we understand their feelings, that we’re in it with them. When they point out the McDonald’s sign, they’re ‘saying’ something that we can expand on: ‘we went there last week, didn’t we?’ or ‘oh, are you hungry?’ or ‘look it’s another McDonald’s’ etc. We can even draw conversations together, using stick figures on a page back and forth (and lots of laughs in the process!)

Throughout these holidays, may you experience many opportunities to build on the communication opportunities you have with your children and, from all of us here, we wish you many warm moments of enjoyment together!

Dianne
Visit by Year 9 Oakhill College

On Monday, 21 March a group of eight Year 9 Oakhill College students visited St Gabriel’s School as part of their Community Service Program.

The Oakhill students spent time in each class and also set up an obstacle course for our students which they all enjoyed.

Thank you to all who supported Bandaged Bear Day. St Gabriel’s School raised $103 which will be donated to the Children’s Hospital at Westmead Appeal.

DATES FOR THE DIARY

Parent Evening - St Gabriel’s Parent Discussion

Wednesday, 6 April 6.30pm

Student term Dates for 2011

Term 1 - Autumn
Monday, 31 January - Friday, 8 April

Term 2 - Winter
Thursday, 28 April - Friday, 24 June

Term 2 - Spring
Monday, 18 July - Friday, 23 September

Term 4 - Summer
Monday, 10 October - Tuesday, 13 December

It is the policy of St Gabriel’s to distribute information when requested regarding activities and information concerning deafness and other matters. This does not imply that St Gabriel’s endorses these activities or the information contained therein in any way.