Greetings All,

Congratulations everyone on completing what has been a very busy term. So many things on the go from Viking Feasts to Bollywood Dancing, the music festival, community markets, singing, dancing, building, creating, learning and so much more.

I can hardly believe that six months has gone by and my time at Briar Hill has come to an end. The past two terms have been challenging and rewarding.

As I reflect I look back proudly at the work that has happened. The staff have been working really hard to look at the two curriculums and blending these, they have been involved in discussions focused on the content of the Steiner Curriculum and what to teach as well as the teaching and learning that is presented in depth in the new Victorian Curriculum. I have uploaded to the school website the first draft of the Speaking and Listening Curriculum. Work will continue on this throughout the term and from there reading and writing will be mapped.

The Occupational Health and Safety audit that the school recently went through has highlighted a number of things to work on. The staff worked together to thoroughly assess the risks associated with the Winter Festival so that we can hold this event knowing that we are as safe as possible. As you can imagine 220 children and their families with candles, in the dark spiralling around the oval/basketball court and dragon does present a number of safety issues. Jason Hemmingway from the DET led the risk assessment which is now a part of the captured memory of this event. Please know that all possible safety measures are being taken. I have added the risk assessment to the website for those interested in looking at the depth we took when considering the safety of this event. The staff will risk assess the use of candles in the classroom and a number of other things to ensure everyone is safe at all times.

The website has been edited over the course of the term, thank you to the teachers for their contributions to classroom aesthetics, instrumental music program and the calendar. Work will continue on the site as a way to communicate to you all. You will notice that the newsletter no longer has a sushi order form or a De Tuckshop order form. These are now available on our website http://www.briar-hill-ps.vic.edu.au/page/167/Order-Forms We have done this to reduce the amount of paper, being kind to the environment. It is easy to access, if you need a form, just edit it online and print. The home page has a tab called Order Forms.
Bente and I have met many families and spent considerable time with many of you as we work through a number of your concerns and challenges. As a result many children have formal goals and strategies for achieving these, children have individual learning plans, individual behaviour management plans, and we have regular structured support meetings for social, academic and behavioural reasons. All of which takes time and considerable effort for all involved. I am most proud of this work.

We welcome Jane Gourlay as our new Educational Psychologist. Jane comes to us with a plethora of skills and knowledge, and has been a part of very lengthy discussions and strategic planning sessions with Bente and myself to work in our school as productively as possible one day a week. Jaclyn Georgiou continues to work as our DET speech therapist and has worked closely with the children, their families and with me, thank you Jaclyn.

The new fence, car park and little green gate have all added to the safety of the school and made many things easier for families and staff alike. Thanks for your patience as these things were constructed they not only look great but they are safe and very functional as well!

The Kindness Framework is something quite unique to Briar Hill Primary School. I have included it in the newsletter as something you can talk about and share at home. The framework underpins a lot of our work at school and is something we can use to refer back to when looking at our behaviours. Remember what it stands for and remember to be kind to self, kind to others and kind to our environment.

The refurbishment plans are now complete and work will begin on this in September. The plans include the foyer, main offices, the teacher resource room, the sick bay, disabled toilet, the staff room, conference room and the hallway outside of the library past the staff room. Towards the end of term three there will need to be some changes to where people are located, resource location etc. We will give you more information as this becomes available. It is expected that the works could take up to four months to complete.

I would like to warmly welcome Sue Young to the role of Acting Principal for terms three and four 2016. Sue has had a thorough hand over having been at the school for two days and attended both a school council meeting and the risk assessment staff meeting.

At the beginning of the year Natalie was going to reduce her time fraction to 0.6 given the unusual start to the year with the employment of teaching staff she kindly maintained full time status. I would like to thank Natalie for this and I wish her well as she reduces her time fraction to 0.6 from the beginning of term three. The selection process took place last week and we have provisionally appointed Juliette Keam to the position of 0.4 in Natalie's class for the remainder of the year.

I had the absolute pleasure of joining the Briar Hill Trillers at the Victorian School Music Festival last week. Mary led our team of extremely talented students as they played three pieces of music in the very beautiful and grand Hawthorn Town Hall. The Trillers were excellent as they played and delighted the audience. The adjudicator awarded them a silver medal with the following comments:

‘Congratulations on your performance today. Be careful that you don’t rush your pizzicato and always listen so that you can blend/tune your intonation. Don’t forget to fill the hall with your sound – be brave! Use the weight of your bow arm and play closer to the bridge. Well done!’

‘Very lovely playing today. Keep remembering to know what your role in the ensemble is and whether you need to ring out your part more or less. Well done.’

I would like to acknowledge the hard work, dedication and support that Bente Stock has provided our beautiful school this term. Bente has been working hard with the staff, parents and students on a number of things and has put in place many strategies, resources and plans to help our Briar Hill Community. One such plan is for the preps to be combined. Mara, our expert Steiner prep teacher, will team teach with Lauren. This means that both teachers will be responsible for all the children. Thank you Bente you have given so much and your work is highly valued. We wish you well as you enjoy a wonderful time on long service leave.
Finally I want to thank the students. You are an absolute delight to be around each day, you make me smile, you share wonderful stories, you give freely of your time, your art work and I love watching you share your work with me. I will miss you all very much. Remember to smile often, to aim high, to be the best you can be and to live your life to the fullest.

Thank you all.

My kindest, most sincere regards,

Sandra

Sandra Bishop
Acting Principal
Briar Hill Primary School
COMMUNITY NOTICES

If anyone is looking to build or fill up their sandpit I have 1-2 metres of washed river sand (from a deconstructed sandpit).
Please leave a message for Danielle at the school office to arrange collection.