Dear Parents and Caregivers,

**National Ride 2 School**
Thank you to Ms Allard for organising this important event. Bike safety is really important and the opportunity to revisit safe practices is highly valuable for our students and families.

**Easter Hat Parade**
Our Easter Hat parade will be held on Thursday 28th March. All parents, carers and families are invited to attend this enjoyable event. The Easter Hat parade will begin at 10.00am and run until lunch time when parents are invited to join their children for lunch. The P&C will be selling cups of tea and coffee and a piece of cake for $3.00. These days are always exciting and I look forward to you joining us on the day.

**Preschool visits**
We start our first preschool visit on Monday 8th April at 9.30am in the school hall. There will be a brief presentation followed by a guided tour. This first session will take approximately 30 minutes. Local preschools will also be provided with this information. If you know of any students who are ready to start school next year, please encourage them to come along. We do have many families in our area who do not attend local preschools, so please on this information to any relevant families you may know.

**Staff Professional Development**
Over the last two weeks our staff have participated in the following professional development:
- Focus on Reading - where vocabulary and spelling has been the main focus and:
- **TOWN (Taking Off With Numeracy)** - all students (3 – 6) have been tested and we are now sorting out groups to determine where students are, and where to next.

This term we have focused on testing our students and finding out exactly where they sit on the Numeracy continuum.

Next term we design teaching learning programs to move our students further along the continuum. We have received strong support from Mr Maumill and a Regional consultant, Rebecca Anderson.

I look forward to seeing strong growth of our students through this wonderful program.

**Chocolate Fundraising**
Thank you to the many parents who have supported our P & C fundraising venture. Monies raised helps support the many educational programs at our school. There are still chocolates to be returned by some families, it would be greatly appreciated if they can be returned as soon as possible.

Thank you to Melissa Snedden and Karen Irwin for their efforts with the coordination of this fundraising.

Have a great fortnight.

Dave Schofield
Principal

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**Early Stage One News**

Kindergarten students are continuing to be settled and engaged learners. We have been learning lots of sounds, camera words and how to write sentences. All students have been taking home their home readers and we would like to thank you for your support for this valuable program.

We hope to see many parents and friends at the Easter hat parade later this term. This is always an exciting morning for our Kindergarten students and parents.

**Stage Three News**

As the term continues the students of Stage Three are completing many new and exciting activities. Even though there are only a few weeks remaining there are many opportunities and activities for our students.

Below is an overview of Stage Three information for this week.
Minnamurra Falls Rainforest Excursion
On Monday 25th March the students within Stage Three will be visiting the Minnamurra Falls Education Centre at Budderoo National Park near Jambaroo on the South Coast. This experience will support the learning which the students have undertaken this term allowing the students to put their learning into real world contexts by actually observing a rainforest environment. The staff of the Education Centre will conduct a presentation on rainforests prior to leading a guided tour of the rainforest.

The students will need to be at school by 7.30 am. Travel to and from Minnamurra Rainforest will be by coach (with seat belts) leaving school at 8.00 am and returning by 2.40 pm.

We look forward to an enjoyable day at Minnamurra Rainforest consolidating the learning which our students have completed this term.

High School Expression of Interest Forms
The High School Expression of Interest forms were distributed to Year 6 students on 11th March. The Expression of Interest form is an indication as to which high school you would like your child to attend next year. Below is a reminder on which options are available for your child.

Every child regardless of where they intend to go to high school needs to complete the information in Section A – student information.

After completing section A there are four options which are as follows:

1. If you would like your child to attend their local government high school, which for most of our students is Picton high school you will need to sign and date Section B.
2. If you do not wish for your child to attend their local government high school and would prefer for him/her to attend another government high school (outside of their local high school area) you are required to complete Section C. Section C is on pages 10 and 11 of the information guide. You will be required to list up to three choices giving reasons for each.
3. If your child has applied to sit the Selective high school test you will need to complete Section D. In case your child is not successful in gaining a place in this/these school(s), please also complete Section B, Section C or Section E on the expression of interest form.
4. If you intend for your child to enrol in a non-government school next year you will need to complete Section E.

If you have any questions or queries regarding the completion of the expression of interest form for high school please contact your child’s teacher or Mr Maumill Stage 3 supervisor.

Expression of interest forms must be completed and returned to Tahmoor Public School on or before Friday 22 March 2013.

UNSW 2013 International Competitions and Assessments for Schools (ICAS)
Each year the University of New South Wales conducts assessments for schools covering many Key Learning Areas. The competitions have been running for over 30 years and students participate not only from Australia but also in over 20 different countries such as Asia, Africa, Pacific Region and the USA.

This provides our students the opportunity to measure their ability in an external testing situation. All students who participate within the testing will receive a certificate and individual report on their achievements.

The tests that are available this year and the associated entry fees are as follows:

- Computer Skills - Tuesday 21st May 2013 ($8.00)
- Science - Wednesday - 5th June 2013 ($8.00)
- Writing - Monday -17th June 2013 ($17.00)
- Spelling - Tuesday 18th June 2013 ($11.00)
- English - Wednesday 31st July 2013 ($8.00)
- Mathematics - Tuesday 13th August 2013 ($8.00)

Participation within these tests is not compulsory but, for those students wishing to gauge their performance by participating in an independent testing situation this is a wonderful opportunity.

For more information regarding the UNSW competitions please see Mr Booth.

Homework Tips

"Matthew, have you started your homework?"
"No, not yet," comes the reply.
Half an hour later, with a tone slightly more aggravated, the question is repeated. So is the answer. Forty minutes later, it all comes to a grinding halt. "Mum, I just need a..."

Ah - the delights of homework! Sound familiar? Hated by children of all ages, nightly homework causes stress for parents all over and yet it is an inevitable part of school life for children from Kindergarten through to Year 12.

"Ultimately, encouraging your child to have a 'can-do' attitude toward homework is one of the best things you can do for them."

Homework survival tips for the whole family

Choose the right time to get started
Sitting in a classroom all day is a big ask for kids. They need some time out after school to talk about their day, have a snack, get changed and generally wind down. About 20 minutes is generally a sufficient amount of time for this and gives kids a defined break between school time and home time.

After school snacks
TV loves to promote the idea of 'milk and cookies' as an ideal after school snack. Snacks that are full of carbohydrates, preservatives and sugar will give your kids a blood sugar 'high' that could make settling down to do homework very difficult. Why not try a high protein snack that includes cheese, a dip and crackers or a milk shake? "Brain foods" like small healthy sandwiches will fill kids up and keep their bodies on an even keel during homework time.

Have a dedicated homework area
Most children work best in an area that is free of distractions like toys, music, games, computers and TVs. This can be in a bedroom, but often the kitchen table or a study area in the family room is even more effective, as parents can ensure that their children stay on task and be on hand to offer help and encouragement.

Protect homework time
Teach your kids to prioritise what is important by having a set time each day for homework. It may be after school, after dinner - or even before school if your family can manage it. Ensure that activities like going to friends' houses, sports training and other after school activities are arranged so that your family’s homework routine is not disrupted. With the ever increasing number of activities which children participate in this is not always an easy task to achieve especially as children get older.

Rewards for completed homework can include favoured activities like watching TV, playing computer games and visiting friends. A weekly homework and activity schedule displayed on the fridge is often a good way to keep the troops on track.

Allow children to choose an easy piece of homework first
For some kids, mastering one piece of homework is motivating. It makes them feel successful. With plenty of praise from you, they can be encouraged to tackle the next, more difficult task, confident in the knowledge that that they already have one task complete.

Plan breaks
Research shows that adults can concentrate at optimum levels for about 45 minutes before their levels of application and effectiveness start to wane. Imagine what it is like for kids to work for hours on end after a long day at school! Between homework tasks, encourage your kids to do something physical for 10 minutes. Throwing a ball, practising a dance routine or taking the dog for a quick walk to the end of the street is a good way to renew energy.

Try not to take over
It would be so much quicker and easier to ensure that your children get the right answers by doing it for them, wouldn’t it? Children can become reliant upon the parent who always comes to the rescue when homework gets too tough. Learning to find solutions is an important part of development and homework is designed to teach your child to learn and work independently. It also gives teachers a good idea of what your child has retained, and so doing your child’s homework for them is not really doing them any favours.

Instead of providing the answers, try asking an open-ended question like "What information would help you?" or "How did the teacher explain it?" If your child is really struggling, consider informing the classroom teacher in a discreet way. The teacher may be able to offer some in class support or clarification that may make the task easier for your child.
When all else fails - get help for your child. Consult the classroom teacher for feedback and advice. If you do not feel confident in assisting your child yourself - find someone who can.

**Mobile Phones and iPods**

It has been brought to my attention that some students are using their mobile phones and iPods during class time. As you can understand this is quite distracting for all of the students within the class and has an effect upon their learning.

As per our mobile phone and iPod policy the use of mobile phones/iPods during class time or playtime is not allowed. All mobile phones and iPods should be turned off and kept within your child’s pocket or bag throughout the school day. The use of mobile phones/iPods to take photographs or videos is not allowed at school.

We understand that these items are expensive and as such encourage students to leave them at home unless they absolutely need them so as to reduce the risk of theft or damage. The school is not responsible for any lost or damaged phones.

Any students who do not comply with the mobile phone/iPod policy will have their mobile phone/iPod secured in the Principals Office and parents/carers will have to pick it up.

If you have any questions or queries related to mobile phones or iPods at school please see me.

Kind regards,

Michael Maumill
Assistant Principal

**SPORT**

It has been a busy week on the sports field for our athletes.

**RAZORBACK & SSW NEWS**

Congratulations to Clive Haselhuhn for his selection into the Razorback Opens Rugby League side. Congratulations to Wil Holz & Karis Flores for their selection in the Razorback AFL side.

Well done to Stephanie Nellestein and Krystal-Lee Holdsworth for representing Tahmoor at the Girls Soccer Trials. Congratulations to Krysta for her selection in the Razorback Soccer side.

Well done to Dane Arnold and Lachlan Kennedy who represented Tahmoor at the SSW Tennis trials. Both competed extremely well on the day and are to be congratulated on their sportsmanship.

Congratulations to Lachlan Coleman who represented Tahmoor at the SSW Swimming Carnival on Tuesday. Lachlan did a fantastic job improving his times from the previous carnivals. He swam a personal best time in the 50m freestyle to finish 4th and just miss out on swimming at the State carnival. He finished 10th in the 100m freestyle and 8th in the 50m backstroke.

Congratulations Lachlan on an outstanding effort.

**PAUL KELLY CUP**

Our Paul Kelly Cup AFL teams went away to Kirkham Oval on Tuesday. The boys team won two games and lost one game to just miss a spot in the final with the girls also winning two games and losing one to also just miss a spot in the finals. These results were a tremendous effort considering most boys come from a league or soccer background and most girls have never played AFL before.

Congratulations to the following students who were our Paul Kelly Cup representatives -

- Wil Holz
- Karis Flores
- Clive Haselhuhn
- Tyler Darby
- Tom Lachlan
- Dane Haselhuhn
- Ethan Oddy
- Meredith Kennedy
- Tom Harrison
- Arnold Smart
- Tom Aird
- Lachlan Riley
- Hall Tabitha
- Stephanie Nellestein
- Tom Jefferies
- Lachlan Marlli
- Paige Wells
- Sherratt Kyla
- Emily Nellestein
- Moroz
- Holdsworth
- Hall
- Wilton
- Chloe Chalker
- Paige Alana
- Sade Georgia
- Jefferies
- Williams
- Sargood
- Tapp
- Marlli
- Klaudia
- Sade
- Tylah
- Chalker
- Humphries
- DuBois
- Tylah

**CRICKET GALA DAY**

Notes have been sent home to 20 students attending the Cricket Gala Day on Friday, 5th April, 2013. Please ensure that your child returns their note and money ($8.00) by Wednesday, 3rd April, 2013.

**STATE KNOCKOUT RUGBY LEAGUE**
We have been fortunate to secure a coach from Country Rugby League to assist with the coaching of our State Knockout Team. Trials will be held on **Friday, 22nd March**, on the back oval from 3pm until 4 - 4.30pm. Interested students have had a note sent home with them and the permission note must be returned to Miss Allard by Friday.

Yours in Sport  
Miss Allard

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**P & C NEWS**

We have still not received all the money from our chocolate fundraising this was due on the 6th March could you please send this money in ASAP as we need to finalise this fundraiser.

The P&C are also having a morning tea stall at the Easter Hat Parade we will be selling tea and coffee with a piece of cake for $3.00.

P & C meets every 2nd Wednesday of each month in the Teacher’s Centre at 9am.

Commonwealth Dollarmite Banking is Wednesday mornings. If you would like your child to participate please pick up an application form from the front office.

**Uniform Shop Opening Hours**

Monday 2.15 - 2.45  
Wednesday Mornings 8.30 – 9am  
Friday 2.15. – 2.45pm

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Tahmoor Public School will be celebrating **National Ride2School day on Friday 22nd March**, along with thousands of other schools around the country. We encourage students and their families to leave the car at home on this day and get a taste of the benefits, ease and fun involved in choosing to walk and wheel to school.

We support our students to walk or wheel to school because:

- Students feel fresh and alert at the beginning of a school day.
- There are fewer cars around the school which eases 'drop off congestion'.
- Students are more likely to reach the recommended 60 minutes of physical activity they need each day.
- Students feel happier, healthier and perform better in the classroom.

**All students on wheels are required to wear helmets** *(this includes skaters and scooters)*. Bikes, scooters and skateboards will be stored in the teacher's car park, which will be locked, to ensure security and safety.

There will be a number of competitions running throughout the day including –

- A "Decorate your bike" competition - Prizes will be awarded to the best decorated bike, scooter or skateboard for K-2, 3-4 & 5-6.
- A "Design logo or emblem" competition for a bike helmet - Prizes will be awarded to the best design logo or emblem for K-2, 3-4 & 5-6.

We look forward to your support and involvement in encouraging this endeavour.

Miss Allard  
Sports Co-ordinator