Where did all the time go?! One day we’re basking at the beach, the next we are getting our brains back into action as we ramp up for a new year in the Middle School. We extend a warm welcome to all students of the Middle School, especially our Year 3s (and their parents) who are now part of this exciting stage of school life.

**Settling In**

Our classroom focus for the first few weeks is geared towards helping students settle into their new class. We have been establishing routines, building relationships and developing our work expectations. Students will be asked to work independently and cooperatively using different materials, tools and technologies. Our first weeks of work are designed to support and familiarise students with these approaches.

We are establishing our classroom **norms** – students are offering their ideas about how we can all work together in a happy and supportive environment where everyone can work to their full potential. Norms will be displayed in each room in support of our classroom community.

Our Term 1 topic “Being Your Best”, will explore how students can develop themselves emotionally, physically and socially to be their best. We will be welcoming a series of incursion workshops to assist the students with exploring a range of alternative approaches to personal development: meditation, yoga, karate and healthy food choices just to name a few.

**Staying Active**

Students in the Middle School are required to participate in a minimum of 3 hours of physical activity each week whilst at school. To help our students meet this requirement, the Middle School teachers run Fundamental Motor Skills and 3/4 Sport sessions which assist the students to develop necessary skills whilst staying active and healthy. Middle School sports will take place on Mondays.

**ICT News**

This year we will be trialling the use of Edmodo in our Middle School classrooms. Edmodo is a closed online community where students can save work and post it whilst giving and receiving feedback from peers and teachers. This will provide a tremendous forum for learning beyond the classroom. The Edmodo program will also support our ongoing cyber safety initiatives over the year.

**House Swimming**

On Tuesday 10th February we will see our students compete in our yearly House Swimming Carnival at Croydon Swimming Pool. Students will swim in their age groups and will have the chance to try out for events for the school team (50m) or swim in events to gain points for their House (25m and novelty events). As it is likely to be very hot, please make sure your child is prepared by bringing a hat, sunscreen and plenty to eat and drink. Don’t forget a towel and a spare change of undies! If you are available to assist us on the day, we have plenty of jobs to fill – we need some parents to assist us marshal events and also require some additional adults to travel with us on the buses. Please let your child’s class teacher know if you are able to help!

**FRESH FRUIT & WATER!**

WE ENCOURAGE ALL STUDENTS TO HAVE A WATER BOTTLE AND FRESH FRUIT TO MUNCH ON DURING THE DAY TO SUPPORT A HEALTHY LIFESTYLE.

**HOMEWORK**

HOMEWORK TASKS WILL START COMING HOME MONDAY 16TH FEBRUARY. IN THE MEANTIME, READING DAILY IS EXPECTED FOR ALL STUDENTS.
School Photos
Our school photos will take place on March 3rd. There will be class, individual and family photos taken. An order pack will be sent home beforehand and will need to be returned by the day of the photos.

Swimming Program
The Middle School Swimming Program will be held in Term 1 from Monday 16th March until Friday 20th March. Swimming will be held at Croydon Leisure Centre. Further information about costs, times and helpful hints will be sent home closer to the event.

3/4 Camp
This year’s Middle School camp is to Camp Jungai. It will be held on the 24th-26th August. The camp supports the work that will be happening in the classroom and has a strong sustainability and Aboriginal culture focus. Of course the camp experience will assist in promoting independence and interpersonal skills as well.

Diaries
Every student has been provided with a diary to assist them prepare for projects, homework tasks, home reading, spelling words, times table work and a myriad of information that we can use in the classroom. Every student needs to take responsibility for ensuring that the diary is in their schoolbag every day and signed if required by their classroom teacher. Responsibility and organisation are very important personal learning skills and these skills will prepare students for transition into the Senior School. This year’s diary has special significance to all of us at Warranwood as current Year 5 student Chelsea was the winner of the front cover design competition last year. Take a moment to admire her great work while exploring the diary with your child.

Middle School Teachers
If you ever need to discuss an issue with us, our doors are always open before school (8.45am) and after school. We are happy to have a chat or, if needed, make appointments to spend time discussing any concerns. Please remember, that the sooner we know of a concern you or your child may have or perceive, the sooner we can resolve the problem and move on. So don’t be shy! Shane Harrop – Room 1
Anita Saliba – Room 2
Andrew Tonkin – Room 3
Katherine Darnell – Room 4
Alison McMenamin (Team Leader) – Room 6

Tissues Please
Each class requires tissues for use in the room. We would appreciate a donation of two tissue boxes per child. Hopefully that will be enough to see us through winter!

Art Smocks Needed

MIDDLE SCHOOL INDUCTION EVENING
Monday, 16th Feb@ 8pm
This year instead of the traditional chat forum to kick off the year we intend to hold a series of learning sessions to simulate the types of approaches and work that the students will be experiencing so parents can feel more in tune with what is happening in the classroom. Please come along and try your hand at maths games, some shared writing or even a spelling challenge.

Classroom Assistance
We know how hard it can be to make a commitment to assist in the classroom. Never fear! You may be able to assist every week, once a fortnight or once a term during literacy or numeracy activities. There are also excursions, swimming programs, Class Rep, camp and other ways you can be involved. Each class will ask for assistance at different times so be on the lookout for forms or on the classroom window asking for help. Of course, many of you help in the canteen and this benefits everyone so don’t just think that working in the classroom is the only way you can help your child!
Timetable changes in place for 2015

The start of 2015 has seen the change to a different timetable model for the students. The day now runs from 9-11am with recess until 11.30. Then the second session is from 11.30-1.30pm and lunchtime until 2.30 leaving a one-hour learning block in the afternoon. This new timetable arrangement is one that is in use across many schools in Australia and will support our school focus to further support the literacy development of our students. Please see the Connect for further info regarding the changes to our school timetable or speak to your classroom teacher.

FRESH FRUIT

With the slightly longer learning sessions in the mornings it is recommended that students bring one or two pieces of solid fruit to munch on and hold in one hand whilst they work from 12.30pm. This will assist with adjusting to a slightly later lunchtime and mean that concentration focus is maintained. It is also encouraged that students have a solid breakfast to support them with their critical literacy learning times in the first part of the day while they are fresh and focused and be at their best. (Please avoid messy and container type fruit options for a mid session snack as these can be used at recess or lunch).

Gay and our Health Centre

Please remember to update any medical details with Gay at the Health Centre and ensure ventolin, preventers and spacers are renewed if necessary. It is important that student medication other than ventolin is logged into the office and distributed via Gay and not self medicated by students from their bags in the room.

Important Term 1 Dates

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tuesday 10th February</td>
<td>House Swimming Sports at Croydon Pool</td>
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<tr>
<td>Monday 16th February</td>
<td>Middle School Induction Evening @8pm</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tuesday 17th, Wednesday 25th February</td>
<td>Life Education Program- Schoolwide</td>
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<tr>
<td>Monday 23rd and Tuesday 24th February</td>
<td>GTKY Interviews</td>
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<td>Tuesday 3rd March</td>
<td>School Photos</td>
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<tr>
<td>Monday 9th March</td>
<td>Labour Day Holiday</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mon-Fri 16th-20th March</td>
<td>Middle School Swim Program at Croydon</td>
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<tr>
<td>Friday 20th March</td>
<td>National Day Of Action against Bullying Activity</td>
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<tr>
<td>Monday 23rd-27th March</td>
<td>Planning week</td>
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Josh and Matty on the attack in a game of battleball.

Bases loaded and ready to head for home
CAFE Reading is here.

Café is an acronym for.. Comprehension Accuracy Fluency Extension of vocabulary.

As mentioned in many Connect articles last year we will be focusing on our whole school approaches to the teaching of literacy and one of the tools we will be using to achieve this is the CAFÉ reading model.

In short students will be asked to nominate topics that they are interested in to find articles, books, magazines, comics and online documents to read each day for a period of time. This will be accompanied by a range of activities to support their reading for pleasure and interest. Of course formal teaching and instruction will accompany this free reading and importantly a common set of language and understandings will be instilled in the children to enhance their participation in learning of core reading and comprehension strategies. Keep an eye on the Connect newsletter for more information or of course chat to one of us if you have any questions. Even better come along to our Induction evening and get a taste first hand! See you there.

**TIPS FOR CHOOSING THE PERFECT BOOK**

Study the cover and title.
Read the back cover or the summary inside the book’s jacket.
Read the chapter headings or table of contents.
Browse through the photographs or illustrations.
Look for books about your hobbies, interests, or favourite sports.
Explore other books written by an author you enjoyed.
Ask friends, classmates, your teacher and the librarian for recommendations.

Sam slogging his team to victory! If Clarkey doesn’t pass his fitness test Sam could step in.

Ella working in defence with Mckayla to prevent a goal. Socceroos here we come!