Dear Parents and Carers,

Sporting News – The Zone Swimming Carnival was held today at Mingara. Congratulations to the students who competed. Further updates will be provided in next week’s newsletter. Best wishes are also extended to the students who are attending the Zone Rugby League trials tomorrow.

Staff Training – Last Tuesday the staff stayed back for a 3 hour training session on positive behaviour management strategies and practices to be used to maximise learning in the classroom. The course was provided by two external presenters from the DEC Learning and Engagement unit who provided theoretical and practical information on this key aspect.

Clean up Australia – The students participated in Clean Up Australia Schools’ Day last Friday by cleaning up the school vegetable garden and planting autumn crops. If you haven’t seen the garden, which is located behind the library – it’s worth a look. Thanks to Mrs Voorwinde for her great organisation of this whole school activity. If you too would like to contribute to keeping our school grounds beautiful, parent volunteers are always welcomed.

OOSHC Update – A meeting was held at the school today with the tenders who are vying for the contract and DEC officials. All things going to plan, the centre should be available to the community from the start of Term 2.

Voluntary School Contributions – A big thank you to the parents and carers who have already sent in their voluntary school contributions. As previously explained, the money collected will benefit the students directly by providing them with classroom items and subscriptions to Mathletics and Reading Eggs. There will not be additional fees for these computer programs and they are able to be accessed from home for additional learning opportunities. **Families will be asked to contribute $15 per child or $25 per family.** Thanks for your anticipated support and prompt payment.

Parents and Citizens Association – A further reminder that the next P&C meeting will be the Annual General Meeting. This meeting was planned for Monday 9th March but due to unforeseen circumstances, the date has changed to Monday 16th March. The meeting will be held in the new technology lab at 3pm. All parents and caregivers are warmly invited to attend. Nominations for positions close 2pm Monday 9th March. Come along and make a difference.

Dezarae Jones 4M – Further to the note that was sent home on Monday, it is with great sadness that I must inform the community that Dezarae passed away last Sunday. Dezarae was a delightful little girl whose memory will live on in the hearts of all her many friends at Gorokan Public School. On behalf of the staff, I offer her family and friends our heartfelt sympathy and condolences at this very sad time.

Together we can make a difference.

Jesmond Zammit

Principal
Kindergarten Supervisor – Mrs K Lansdowne

Homework - Homework should be returned each Friday. Please take care of our read to books as they are shared among the Kindergarten classes.

Behaviour Cards - Behaviour cards are sent home every Friday. We ask that you sign them and return them to school every Monday.

Responsible Pet Program - A note was sent home last week about the Responsible Pet Program. There is no cost for your child to attend. We would ask that you check your child’s bag for the note and sign it and return it to your child’s class teacher as soon as possible.

Parent Interviews - Thank you to the families that have attended parent interviews over the past week. If you were unable to attend please contact your child’s class teacher so that a time can be arranged.

KE/T - Jack, Tyler  KH - Ruby  KL - Jack, Jordan  KS - Dallas, Makayla

Stage 1 Supervisor - Mrs C Behringer

Speech Pathology - A note has gone home this week regarding a Speech information session for parents to support children at home in speaking clearly, pronouncing speech sounds correctly and speaking in full sentences. The workshop will be held on Thursday 12th March from 9.30-11.00am at the school SAAC Centre.

Parent / Teacher - Thank you to all parents that have taken the time to come and see your child’s teacher. If you haven’t had the chance to come and connect with your child’s teacher there are still available appointments before and after school. Just make an appointment with your child’s teacher.

Home Reading - If you have any time at all and could volunteer even half an hour a week, we would love to hear from you as we need parent helpers in many K-2 rooms. Mostly it would be between 9.00 – 9.30 or between 2.30 - 3.00pm in the afternoon. Please let your child’s class teacher know if you could help in this way.

Text Books - Please remember to bring in the money for the Grammar text book as we would like to start using them in class as soon as they are paid for.

Stage 2 Supervisor (Relieving) - Mrs R Ranse

Rewards Day - Thank you to the parents who have kindly donated icing sugar and milk arrowroot biscuits for our Stage 2 rewards day at the end of the term.

We still need more of these items in order to cater for as many students as possible on the day. Please send all donations to classroom teachers. Thank you.

Stage 2 Showcase - A reminder that the Stage 2 showcase will be held on 24th March 2015. The showcase will include students showing some of their best work from artwork to drama performances. Parents and friends of Stage 2 students are invited to join us in the hall at 2pm for this special event.

Parent Teacher Meetings - Thank you for taking the opportunity to come up to our school and meet your child’s teacher. Feedback from the teachers on Stage 2 is that these sessions provided much needed information on students, which then helps the teacher to individually cater for your child. Don’t forget that we are here to do the best we can for your child and are always happy to meet with you at a mutually convenient time.

School Uniform - Over the last few weeks teachers have noticed how fabulous our students look in their school uniform. Thank you for your support in this area. Gorokan Public School is a brilliant school and we are all so proud of the amazing opportunities that are provided to our students. We encourage all students to be proud of our wonderful school and wearing school uniform assists with this.

Stage 3 Supervisor – Mr C Corlett

Expression of Interest Year 7, 2016 - Y6 moving into Y7 in a NSW government school in 2016 forms are due in on Friday March 13th. Please contact the school if you need any support with this.

Y6 Surf Fun Day - The Surf Fun Day is this Friday at Toowoon Bay. Students do not need to wear school uniform this day. The bus leaves at 9am and will return by 2:45pm. Students are required to bring with them a hat, swimmers, recess, lunch and drink and sunscreen.

Behaviour Cards - Please remember to sign behaviour cards weekly and send them back in with your child at the start of the week and to continue to encourage your child to read daily.

Canteen News

Canteen Roster 2015 - Week 6 Term 1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Canteen Officer</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Thursday 5th March</td>
<td>Vicki Smith, Paul Tydeman</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Friday 6th March</td>
<td>Tina Jones, Shayne Dodds</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monday 9th March</td>
<td>Belinda Bermingham</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tuesday 10th March</td>
<td>Deborah Bryce</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wednesday 11th March</td>
<td>Vicki Smith, Collette Edwards</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thursday 12th March</td>
<td>Paul Tydeman, Tammy Antow</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Friday 13th March</td>
<td>Susan Cheney</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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Parents and Citizens Association – the next P&C meeting will be the Annual General Meeting and will be held on Monday 16th March.

Book Club - Scholastic Issue 2 brochures have been sent home. Orders with money should be returned by Monday 16th March, 2015.

Easter Guessing Competition - This fundraiser is an annual event where we ask each family at the school to donate Easter eggs or other related goods to go towards the Easter Guessing Competition. These goods can be left in the basket located in the office foyer. Tickets for this competition will be sent home this week for the children to sell to their family and friends. Tickets are 50c each and should be returned by Friday 27th March, 2015. Prizes will consist of a variety of hampers. The draw will take place on Tuesday 31st March and the winners will be notified that day.

Free Parent Workshop - In 2014, Gorokan PS participated in Speech Pathology Sessions for students from Kinder to Year Two.

This year, the school would like to continue this initiative and provide a Free Speech Workshop for Parents to support their children at home regarding: speaking clearly, pronouncing speech sounds correctly, overcoming speech sound errors, talking in full sentences, using correct grammar & vocabulary skills, attention & concentration skills, following directions & understanding concepts. In the Speech Workshop, the Speech Pathologist conducting the session will be sharing lots of practical ideas to help support your child’s speech and language development.

The workshop will be held on: Thursday, 12th March from 9.30-11.00am at the school in the SACC Centre.

Please return the below form to your child’s teacher by Monday 23rd February. We look forward to seeing you there.

Name/s of person/people attending __________________

Child’s name: ________________________________

Email Address: _______________________________

Mobile Number: ______________________________

Notice: The information collected will be used for purposes of the P&C meeting and the Free Parent Workshop only.
How to Help Your Kids Cope When Someone Close to Them Dies

When somebody close dies it can be difficult to help your kids cope with their grief, especially as you struggle to work through your own. What kids understand about death depends on how old they are, what they have experienced in their life, and also their personality type.

In all cases though, death must be explained in a child's terms, and you must be honest with them and encourage them to ask questions, even though you may not have all the answers.

The following practical tips and ideas will help you to help your child cope when somebody close to them dies:

- When discussing the death with your children, it is important you let them know you are there for them and that there is no right or wrong way to feel. You should also explain that everybody deals with death in their own way.

- Any spiritual beliefs you have around death, can be shared at this point. This can provide some comfort to the child.

- Until they are around five or six years old, a child views the world quite differently to you. So when explaining that somebody has died, you could simply say that the loved one’s heart stopped working and the doctor wasn't able to fix it, or something like that to help them understand what has happened.

- It is difficult for children to understand that all people will eventually die and never come back, so be patient with them if they continue to ask when they are going to see them next, or when they are coming back.

- Kids are very curious creatures and may want to know where the loved one is now. If they have been buried, your answer may simply be “At the cemetery”, and of course if your spiritual beliefs include the existence of heaven or something similar, then you could tell them that they are now in heaven.

- As your kids get older and in particular into their teens, they begin to gain a full understanding of what death means, so you can talk to them quite differently – more at your level – about the death.

- Whether it is okay to take your child to a funeral or not depends totally on the situation surrounding the death, and how you and your child feel about them attending. No child should be forced to attend a funeral if they really don't want to.

- You should talk to your child about the funeral beforehand, explaining to them what will happen, such as seeing the casket, and of course the fact that there will be people there who may be crying.

- If you are worried about letting your kids witness your own grief, don't be. Allowing them to see your pain allows them to see that crying is a natural reaction to losing someone close. It will also make them feel more comfortable in sharing how they feel.

While children will not show their grief in the same way as an adult, they will grieve in their own way. A teen may not be comfortable confiding in you, but will be able to talk through their grief with a friend, but whatever their reaction you should not take it personally.

It is important at this point to watch for any signs that your child is not coping with the loss. Any significant behavioural changes such as anger, being withdrawn, being extremely anxious or even a dramatic reduction in their grades at school should be taken seriously, and you should therefore seek professional help.

Grieving the loss of a loved one is a gradual process, and it is important you remain patient with your child as they learn to deal with losing someone they love. By offering them support and encouragement, they will be able to cope in their own way.