2011 and such a long and busy term……..

At Day 8 (upon which staffing is determined for the year) combined enrolment of school and Early Childhood Development Program (ECDP) was 93. This has grown further throughout the term. Based upon Day 8 figures our final teacher number for 2011 is 17.1. The total teacher aide hours (inc. Special School, ECDP, Specialised Health and Respite) is 449.80 hours per week.

The significant growth in the school over the past 12 months has challenged groupings for this year. Limited classroom space has required the formation of two junior classes, three middle classes and three senior classes. Effectively this means nine classes operating in seven classrooms. In the ECDP we are operating most days with three groups across two classrooms.

With our predicted enrolment growth, submissions began early 2010 for additional class rooms. Red Hill, as you are aware, poses a challenge for any building. By the end of 2010, space on level 3 of our school was identified as a possible solution. This is home to the existing administration, staff room and office areas. Many engineers have been to the school checking suitability and structural capability. In February this year Education Qld signed off on development of two new classrooms, staff room and staff office area.

Meetings on site occurred three weeks ago between an Architect, Project Services team and me. Currently the architect is pursuing as much floor space as possible on the third floor (Admin, staff room area) to accommodate needs. We will meet with this team again prior to the Easter break. It is anticipated that new structures will extend across the current roof area from the existing staff room and above the junior class room and middle playground.

We expect significant challenges throughout this project work and are trying to hold the thought “Pain for gain”!! Ultimately the space we gain will ease the current classroom burden and present us with modern classrooms. We will keep families informed regularly throughout the
progress of this project and ask in advance, for your patience and understanding throughout.

The number of students with specialised health procedures continues to be significantly high throughout the school. Our nurses, Claire and Leila, spend great amounts of time ensuring your children, where required, have updated health plans and that staff is well trained to undertake procedures required for students whilst at school. The brief of Nurses in Education Qld, across the state, has extended to training staff of students with specialised health needs in primary and secondary schools and developing health plans for these students also. We are fortunate to have such a highly trained staff (teachers and teacher aides) which has developed expertise in supporting students with complex health needs over many years. We are also fortunate to be supported by two nurses who maintain and share their knowledge with us, whilst focusing on engagement of students in their educational programs.

Our staff has engaged in a large amount of Professional Development (PD) throughout this term. This PD has not always occurred externally to school. Five technology sessions were facilitated at school, after school hours between 3.30 and 5.30pm fortnightly, delivered by an education advisor from Disability Services Support Unit (an EQ State-wide Service). Staff has also attended sessions external to school. Predominantly this PD has centred on alternative communication skills development. For each of your children, communication is a goal. Our school has always placed an emphasis on communication skills development. We recognise that each student has different learning styles and our challenge is to stay abreast of all communication methodologies.

All professional development engaged in by staff is aimed at further developing skills and strategies to support educational programs for your children. Staff meetings attended weekly by staff often provide additional opportunities for sharing ideas.

This has been a particularly long term (12 weeks) – the longest in many years. Your children are certainly showing signs of tiring and staff also are looking a little weary. To our new families, I hope that you have felt welcomed in our community. Our parent evenings provided an opportunity to hear about your child’s programs and to meet other parents. If noise level is an indicator of the evenings, much networking was occurring .... Please feel free to drop in and say hello or arrange to discuss your child’s progress at any time.

Enjoy the break with your children we look forward to seeing very relaxed children at our doors upon return to school Wednesday April 27th.

Pam
New teachers to our school this year include, Lucy Hirst (who previously taught in our ECDP 5 years ago, prior to moving to the South Coast) and Caroline Smith — Kenyon who have been team teaching in Junior two. Caroline is reducing her time at Red Hill due to family commitments and Caroline Cooper will team teach with Lucy. We do try our best to not cause too much confusion by attracting teachers with the same Christian name!! Throughout this term the juniors have also been supported by Rachael Reynolds.

In our middle classes Kate Tynan has been appointed to our teaching team, along with Jocelyn Haycox who transferred from Tin Can Bay.

Caron Watt continued her leave this term to complete her medical treatments. Sue Slack-Smith, who had leave last year due to orthopaedic concerns, retired from Education Qld in February this year.

We also have a number of new faces within our wonderful teacher aide ranks. Michelle Watt has joined the junior team full time this year along with Laura Menzies who is working three days with juniors and one with Middle. Ashleigh Sutton has joined Middle class and Michael Mortensen ECDP. Sam Shannon is working one day a week with the senior team.

Lisa Conway, one of our longest serving teacher aides, has been on leave this term undertaking medical treatment. Lisa has dropped in many times throughout the term and is looking forward to returning to us throughout the year. Lisa and Caron were both here a few weeks ago to cheer on Wendy Messer (one of our Advisory Visiting Teachers based at Red Hill) who undertook the “shave for-a-cure”.

The school again has again welcomed Danish students to the school, for semester one. There were a few glitches with visas which delayed their start but as usual everyone here is delighted to have their support. So welcome to Stina, Siri, Katrine, Sille and Mia.

We have welcomed David Oram as our Physiotherapist replacing Patrick Chen. Dave has quickly become a valued member of the dynamic therapy team. Dave has demonstrated a genuine commitment to your children and a boundless energy as he moves between programs. We have a very experienced, committed and professional therapy team which spends endless time supporting and researching ways to support your individual child’s needs to enable greater participation in their educational programs.
Dear Parents,

We now come to the end of Term 1 after a smooth running start to the school year. As always, the weeks appear to have gone by very quickly as we stop to reflect. However, we have achieved and experienced a lot in our first twelve fun-filled weeks at the ECDP.

The unit of work this term entitled “Our Wonderful World of Books” enabled the Teachers in the ECDP to choose outstanding and enjoyable children’s books, some known by the children, some unknown; and make them the focus for the units of learning.

At the AGM of the Red Hill Special School P&C in March a new executive was elected. This year we have an all-male executive and if the first meeting is an indicator for the year, a very energetic team.

President
James Donnelly (daughter in junior class)

Vice President
Stewart Shannon (daughter in junior class)

Secretary
Jonathan Walker (son in junior class)

Treasurer
Gerard Reardon (son in ECDP)

It was great to see parents from across year levels at the P&C. Please come along when able and support your P&C which is working to support development of programs and acquisition of highly specialised and expensive equipment for your child.

In the Kindy and Pre-prep groups the children have been enjoying the stories - “Spot”, “There was an old woman who swallowed a fly”, “We’re going on a Bear Hunt” “The very hungry caterpillar” and “Brown bear, brown bear, what did you see?” The children in these groups have been introduced to interactive whiteboard games and activities and have participating in and very much enjoying various teacher directed activities focusing on colours, shapes, numbers, letters and early reading skills. Comparative language skills were being extended and developed by the children bringing in items that were big/small, long/short, wide/thin; and talking about them with their peers. Some children ‘googled’ the tallest/building/man as they explored this theme. The concepts of on/off, up/down, big/small have been a focus for language games and activities. Our new interactive whiteboards have been very popular and have been used in creating and recording stories by the children, listening to books, playing interactive games, dancing and singing along to familiar songs and rhymes.

The children in the Prep Groups have been reading books entitled “Who sank the boat?” “Where is the Green sheep?” “The Rainbow Fish” and “Elmer”. The children have been
displayed their enjoyment by singing and dancing along with their favourites.

There have been many new friends to meet throughout all the classes in the ECDP and lots of new names to say and remember. All Teachers report how pleased they are with the way in which the children have settled into the programs and have adapted and adjusted to new faces, routines and timetables. Social play skills and expressive communication are encouraged and nurtured in the outdoor play areas as the children have an opportunity to meet, share and play with other children from different classes. The ECDP has been very fortunate to have been fitted with an extra gate in our play area allowing for a safe bike-riding and scooter area beside the classroom. Also, this area is ideal for sensory exploration and messy play activities to share with the Junior classes.

The children have been introduced to some new and wonderful instruments such as the over-sized drum, soft chimes and the acoustic guitar. All the children eagerly anticipate the stimulating musical experiences thanks to the weekly class sessions with our Music Specialist Rebecca. In collaboration with each Teacher, Rebecca has been developing musical experiences to address the IEP goals of each child in the class to extend and enhance the Teachers daily program.

Also this term some of the children in the ECDP have experienced the sheer joy and physical freedom of swimming sessions with their Teachers. The children have been experiencing new bodily sensations such as floating on their backs and in the prone position assisted by our recent purchase of new pool equipment such as floatation collars, coloured noodles and pool toys.

We would like to take this opportunity to wish all our ECDP Parents, Children and families a very safe and relaxing Easter break and look forward to all our new learnings and experiences in Term 2.

**Teachers:** Kate, Hilary, Jill, Jane, Jenny & Jo  
**Teacher Aides:** Mary, Shelley, Deb, Christine, Tamara, Michael & Danya  
**Danish Students:** Mia & Katrine
Welcome back to another year at Red Hill! This term has been busy, exploring our Wonderful World of Books. We have looked at books such as Brown Bear, brown bear what do you see?, Spot, Polar bear, Polar bear what do you hear?, Where is the green sheep? and Rosie’s walk. Within these books we have had a focus on learning or exploring our colours, numbers, animals, and all of the sensory experiences we can create!

As well as looking at our books, we have also been continuing some other fantastic programs. Both classes have been swimming each Tuesday, participating in Music therapy with Bec on a Thursday as well as enjoying some of our new gross motor equipment. Junior One have been participating in a Gymnastics program at Splitz gym on a Monday, which is great to see the kids rise to the challenge of some of the different equipment they can access whilst at the gym. Junior Two have continued accessing Horse Riding at RDA Pinjarra Hills- this is a highlight for all students and it is lovely to see the big smiles on their faces!

This term we welcomed some new students to the Juniors. In Junior One we welcome Maisie, Will, George and Harry from the ECDP as well as Harrison from Interstate. These students have joined together with Leah and Oka to form Junior One. In Junior Two, we welcome Matthew and Archer from the ECDP, Abbey from a different school and Gus returning from overseas. These students have joined Lily and Darah to form Junior Two.

As well as several new students, we also welcome several new staff to the Junior Team. These include Lucy and Caroline as the teachers in Junior Two, Michelle, Emma and Laura as the teacher aide’s and Stina our wonderful Danish Student. Junior One consists of Libby as the teacher and Holly, Danya and Jenni as our teacher aides across the week.
Over the last few weeks, Junior One have been fortunate to have Karol in our room. Karol is a trainee teacher in Germany and has come to Australia to volunteer and see some different settings. We will miss Karol very much when she goes!

We hope you all have a safe and happy holiday, and that the Easter bunny finds you all safe and well. We look forward to seeing you all again next term,

**Teachers:** Libby, Rachael, Lucy & Caroline  
**Teacher Aides:** Holly, Danya, Jenni, Michelle & Caitlin  
**Danish Student:** Stina

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**Middle 1**

The students and staff of Middle One have had a lovely start to the year, learning about each other and the people in our school community. The theme for the semester is ‘Our Community’ and we have been interviewing one another to learn more about each other and the roles of different people in our school community. This has developed our language & conversational skills & has been evident through the independent commenting & questioning of those around us.

We continue to participate in many of our weekly activities such as music therapy, swimming, cooking & our sports program. These programs have provided each and every student the ability to develop new skills & enhance ones they have already learnt.

We have begun our community access program which involves travelling to and from the local shops to purchase our cooking ingredients. Students are also able to purchase their own morning tea from the local bakery. These outings provide the opportunity for students to develop various skills such as travel training, communication and money skills. To develop our literacy skills further we have also begun visits to the library in Southbank. It is a lovely opportunity to travel to Southbank, which we do on the council bus, and enjoy morning tea followed by a visit to the library.

We have made our new classroom a comfortable and welcoming place for students and staff to enjoy the school day. We have been fortunate enough to welcome Siri, a Danish student working with us in our classroom. She
has developed a great working relationship with students and staff and we have enjoyed getting to know her.

The middle one classroom is a fun and lively classroom enjoying various activities & programs that enhance our abilities and help us in learning valuable skills as lifelong learners.

Middle One team – Caya, Trevor, Deb, Christine, Siri & Sheena.

Teachers: Caya
Teacher Aides: Trevor, Deb, Christine, & Sheena
Danish Student: Siri

Middle 2

Hi all,

What a fantastic first term we have had. This term the Middle 2 class has been working on the theme of ‘Our World’. The students have been learning about themselves and their family members. They have learnt about their likes and dislikes, favourite foods, family members and pets, and favourite family outings.

We are now starting to learn about the community and are planning to go to Woolcock park and shopping at Ashgrove shops next term which we are all looking forward to. Thanks to our very helpful and enthusiastic staff Megan, Jillian, Sandra, Ashley, Michael and Gareth. A big warm welcome to our new Teacher Aide Ashley who will be working with us most days throughout the week. We would also like to thank Gareth for helping out during Jocelyn’s absence.

We wish you and your families a very Happy Easter and a safe and relaxing holiday. We look forward to an eventful and enjoyable term two.

Teachers: Jocelyn & Gareth
Teacher Aides: Megan, Jillian, Sandra & Ashley
Middle 3

We’ve had a great start to the year in Middle 3. All of the students have settled in very well to the routines of the classroom and we have had some wonderful experiences across the term.

Our theme for the semester is ‘The World Around Me’ and we have begun looking at this topic from an inside-out perspective. This term we began with exploring ‘Me and My Family’ and we are currently looking at ‘My Community’ before we look at the broader topic of ‘The World’ next term.

We’ve spent a lot of time determining what makes each of us unique, and have participated in many activities that allow us to explore our likes and dislikes. Our activities have been based around the five senses, so we have done a lot of smelling, touching, tasting, listening and seeing this term.

We are very excited to have an Interactive Whiteboard in our classroom this year, and we’ve spent lots of time practicing using our fingers to move objects around the screen. It has also been used to enhance our Interactive Stories as we can now incorporate images, sounds and video into our adventures!

Our swimming program is well under way and all of the boys have enjoyed their weekly sessions in the pool. It is wonderful to see how the confidence of each student in the water is growing week by week. We’ve also had a lot of fun participating in our weekly cooking session— we hope the families have enjoyed sampling what their masterchefs have prepared each week! Our music therapy sessions are always enjoyed by all. All of the students have also been working very hard on their communication, turn-taking, fine motor, gross motor and self-help skills this term.

We were very excited to welcome a new student to our class recently. Kodey joined our class in Week 8 and has settled in extremely well. We were also excited to welcome Sille, our Danish exchange student into the class. Sille will spend the next few months working in the classroom and it is wonderful to have her with us!

It is hard to believe that the first term is almost over already, but we are looking forward to Term 2 and all the fun and learning it will bring. Next term we are hoping to begin weekly outings as we look further into what happens in
Hello from the seniors at the end of a busy first term. This year is certainly flying by and it’s hard to believe that Easter is almost here.

This term we started a new unit of work called *My World- Pathways and Places*. In this unit senior students are engaged in meaningful dialogue about their world through relationships, leisure activities, social interests and community involvement. During the term some students visited Woolcock Park, some students attended horse-riding sessions at Brookfield, some students made play-dough and cooked sausages to sell as part of our Enterprise project, most students swam at least once each week in the school pool and all students completed a variety of daily jobs. This unit of work will continue in term two and will finish with a student presentation at a whole-school assembly and a seniors’ celebration lunch in Woolcock Park.

This term we welcomed a Danish student, Katrine Petersen to our class. Katrine is studying Social Education and will spend three days each week working with the seniors. We all hope that Katrine enjoys being at Red Hill and has a happy time in Australia.

From all of us at Middle 3, we hope everyone has a wonderful, restful Easter break. See you next term!

**Teacher:** Kate  
**Teacher Aides:** Sheridan, Nicole & Laura  
**Danish Student:** Sille

Finally, thank-you to our very special classroom aides for their ongoing help and support in making the seniors such a good place to work.

**Teachers:** Tracy, Therese, Lisa & Carmel  
**Teacher Aides:** Paul, Carol, Christine, Glenis, Julie, Jillian, Trish, Jenny & Sam  
**Danish Student:** Katrine

**Seniors**

Happy holidays to all.