Dear Families

Storms, humid days - beginning to feel like summer and Christmas in Brisbane...

I would like to take this opportunity on behalf of our staff to express our sincere thanks to each of you for supporting us throughout this year and entrusting your children to us.

As you know, this has been a very active year for us with a number of systemic requirements we had to undertake - our Teaching and Learning audit and Quadrennial School Review (QSR). As indicated last newsletter the results of the teaching/learning audit for our school are available at our website: www.redhillspecs.eq.edu.au. We undertook the verification of our QSR (2014-2017) last Friday. This has been signed off and a copy attached to this newsletter. Our school community has worked very solidly throughout the year to meet all requirements. Thank you to parents that responded to our survey. Included in this newsletter is also some information related to the School Opinion survey many of you completed this year also.

Throughout each of these systemic activities there has been representation from your P&C executive as well. The Executive, and P&C members supported by you have not only undertaken a major fundraiser again this year but given back to your children through. A few examples include:

- Financial support to school camps to reduce costs for families
- Preparation of works to demolish front garden beds and enhance play space
- Support to graduation of senior students - senior shirts and financial support to reduce graduation costs for families
- Wine & Cheese evening for families and staff
- End of year Spirit of Red Hill Award

P&C is already planning next year’s fundraiser to support activities within our school community. An evening with Matt Golinski has been finalised for May 1st 2014.

Families visiting us after the last holidays opened the door to an upgraded office area. Our admin ladies have a newly refurbished light and bright working space. It reflects the changing needs of advanced working
technology practices. The children were especially happy to see the jelly fish still here but swimming in an enclosed area of the under bench space! Much safer now too from spillages from excited little hands.........

We have had our three wonderful Danish students - Jon, Mike and Jay - with us for the semester. These three young men have taken part in all aspects of school life - camps, gym, swimming, Flipside Circus, senior graduation. They have worked positively with your children and become very much a part of school life at Red Hill. During a recent staff meeting, Jay, Jon and Mike shared with our teachers information regarding their Danish educational philosophy. We will incorporate this into our developing Pedagogical Framework which will be shared more fully in 2014. We will miss “the boys” but wish them a safe return to home and family.

School reports will be forwarded home this last week of term. In reading all reports, your children have been very active with their learning. Teachers have planned, developed programs, assessed, moderated and reviewed goals and programs with a great deal of rigour.

In 2014 we will further our literacy work, develop communication plans and ICT plans. Additionally we will continue our work in numeracy and Personal Social Development.

Soon however, we will all stop for a well - earned break. Teachers and students are tiring as the few remaining days of term are filled with Christmas excitement. I can hear many Christmas songs and even had some Christmas gingerbread baked by a junior class.

We look forward to seeing you and your children refreshed in the New Year. Term one resumes on Tuesday January 28th 2014.

For our graduating senior students and littlies moving to Prep or Year one, I wish you all the best. Remember to continue to have fun .....

To all, have a happy and safe Christmas.

Pam
Term 4 has been a busy time for us in the ECDP. We have continued to work on our 4 Blocks literacy program reading and completing activities with our books. Two of the Prep classes have enjoyed reading books about dinosaurs. We have played dinosaur games, done literacy and numeracy activities with dinosaurs and enjoyed reading lots of books about Harry and His Bucketful of Dinosaurs. We loved making Dinosaur World from play dough and toy dinosaurs.

The Pre-Prep and Playgroup classes have enjoyed reading and learning about The Very Hungry Caterpillar.

One of our classes was very lucky to be at school on the day of the whole school trip to Sutton’s beach. We enjoyed playing in the park, eating fish and chips and walking on the beach.

The other Prep class enjoyed reading The Rainbow fish and doing lots of activities related to the book and under the sea.

This is both a happy and sad time of year for the staff in the ECDP. We will be saying goodbye to some of our students who are going on to school or Prep. All of our students have worked so hard this year and made such good progress. We are
so proud of you all. We wish you well for your school life and hope you will keep in touch. For those families returning we wish you a safe and happy holiday and we will see you back for another exciting year in 2014.

**Teachers:** Caron, Jo, Jocelyn, Jill and Anne  
**Teacher Aides:** Mary, Shelley, Deb, Danya and Alicia

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### Junior 1

This term Junior 1 has been busy looking at story books to do with different Sea Animals and have chosen books around specific topics when visiting the library and have enjoyed listening to new and familiar stories both in text and multimedia form. We have started to use the internet to search for images using Google and have made large animal fact posters with pictures we have selected and added written information when looking at non-fiction books.

Our interest in sea creatures culminated in a very successful day trip out to Sea World where we watched an amazing dolphin show, touched Rays and Starfish, gazed at fish and huge sharks swimming in an underwater world and laughed at the funny penguins. We also had a great time cooling off in the huge swimming pool area and loved standing under the water as it cascaded on our heads.
We have also visited Woolcock Park and met up with Junior 3 whilst exploring and developing our gross motor skills on the large play equipment. We visited the play park at Redcliffe, enjoying the challenges of the climbing equipment and then a delicious fish and chip lunch and a walk along the esplanade.

Other exciting events this term have been Maddy and Amaya going horse riding and learning how to give verbal commands and control the horse when turning to the left and right. Minseo has learnt some signs to communicate and greet his friends in the morning. Darbi has returned to school after surgery in Melbourne which has been wonderful for us all to have her back with her school friends again. Zach is now expressing himself and speaking more clearly amongst his friends and Flyn and Charlotte have achieved great praise from the physiotherapy team with their progress in their gross motor programs.

We are now enjoying preparing Christmas delights and are busy cooking, cutting, pasting and painting our way through festive papers and resources to share with you all. We are also busy practicing our song for the school concert and look forward to sharing it with you.

I would just like to take this opportunity to say a huge thank you to Aimee, Mary, Ketke, Ellie, Nic and the wonderful supporting staff who have cared and nurtured our wonderful Junior 1 students this year. Without them the progress and smooth running of the class would not have happened.

It just leaves all of the staff in Junior 1 to wish you all a Very Merry Christmas, have a great holiday and we look forward to seeing you all again next year.

Teachers: Hilary
Teacher Aides: Mary, Aimee, Ketke, Ellie and Nic
Junior 2

This term Junior 2 has been busy reading books about all things under the sea. We have read the books Smiley Shark, Sharing a Shell and The Snail and the Whale. We enjoyed the interactive stories and taking turns to touch and play with the characters from the story. We have been doing some fabulous writing about our favourite sea creatures and have these on display on our walls.

In Maths we have been learning about addition and subtraction and have been using blocks, playdough and toys to count, add and subtract. We especially enjoyed maths activities on the Interactive Whiteboard or computer and have found some new and exciting ones this term.

We have continued our regular external programs including Splitz Gym and the Library. We also continued swimming on Friday mornings.

We have been on some other excursions this term including the whole school day trip to Suttons Beach. We had a great day at the beach as the weather was nice and we enjoyed the equipment in the park. We also went to an Arts council style performance near the airport and also joined in some art activities. Some of us enjoyed the play and we all enjoyed the other activities, particularly a sculpture that we could throw balls at to try and get them into the nets.

We have had a fun and busy year where we have all worked very hard. We are excited about our Christmas concert in the final week and we have been practising our drumming! A big thank you to all those who have helped out in Junior 2 this year, especially our Danish Student Mike who goes back to Denmark at the end of this year. We will miss you very much, and have loved having you as part of our class for the last 5 months. Thank you parents for supporting your children in all we do at school and we hope you have a happy and safe holiday and we will see you again next year.

Teachers: Nicole
Teacher Aides: Alyssa, Nicole and Susan
Danish Student: Mike
Junior 3

It is hard to believe that the 2013 school year is nearly over and Christmas is fast approaching!

During Term 4, Junior 3 continued to be immersed in a literacy rich environment while reading stories about Australian Animals. We have read Wombat Stew, Wombat Went a’ Walking and Christmas stories. We have continued studying a letter of the fortnight, completing weekly writing tasks and visiting the library each fortnight to develop students’ literacy. Each student has worked hard on their individual goals and has shown improvements over the year. Leah returned from time in the U.S. and is participating and following directions in her program. Keanu has shown considerable improvement in using the computer to research areas of interest. Maisie and Madi have both improved with the use of PECS across their school day and Will has continued to develop his signing.

This term we have started visiting the Woolcock Park with Junior One. This has been such an enjoyable time for all of us where we get to socialise with other members of the school, enjoy our morning tea in the outdoor environment and develop our gross motor skills by climbing, crawling, rolling and sliding on the playground equipment. Keanu has particularly enjoyed going for long walks through the park looking for animals and creatures.

Townsend Buses certainly treated us this year with a day out at Sutton’s beach. We all enjoyed the beautiful weather, a long walk by the beach, the playground and of course the delicious fish and chips and Milo ice cream! Thank you so much Townsend Buses!

A highlight of the term though was our visit to Lone Pine Koala Sanctuary. While at the sanctuary the students were able to hold a koala, feed the kangaroos, touch a snake and look at a diverse range of other creatures. It was a great day out where students were able to touch and see the animals that we had been reading about in books. Keanu was definitely the bravest of us all daring to hold a python!
With Christmas fast approaching we have been preparing for the festive season by reading a number of books about Christmas and singing lots of Christmas carols in Music sessions. We have all been busy decorating our beautiful classroom Christmas tree and creating gifts for family members! We are all very much looking forward to entertaining you with our item at the Christmas concert. Thank you Clancy for helping us prepare for the concert!

A massive thank you must go out to the teacher aides of Junior 3- Jenni, Holly, Alicia, James and Michelle. You assist with each day running smoothly and ensuring that each student gets the most out of their day at school. Without your hard work, support and enthusiasm the students would not be able to make such notable development. Thank you!

I cannot forget to thank each of the parents of Junior 3 students. Thank you for your support this year. It has been such a privilege to work with your child and see their progress over the year. From all of us in Junior 3 we would like to wish you a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year. May this season be filled with joy, laughter, good food, presents and precious times with your family and friends!

Teachers: Amanda
Teacher Aides: Jenni, Holly, Alicia, James and Michelle

**Junior 4**

We have enjoyed another productive term in Junior 4. Through the students engagement in the curriculum we have been exploring our senses. This has included messy play, music, movement activities, fun with food and storytelling.

We have enjoyed reading ‘Dear Zoo’ and the sights and sounds of the various animals in the book. The students show their enjoyment of the story by being attentive to the visuals in the book while it is read to them.

We continue to participate in our weekly programs such as swimming, visits to the park, technology sessions, music therapy and communication sessions. Students enjoy engaging and exploring various materials, objects and sounds while participating in these activities.
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Teachers: Caya
Teacher Aides: Michele, Sonya, Criddy, Tim, Christine, Michelle and Caitlin

Junior 5

It is really hard to believe that the end of the year is upon us already! It feels like just last week that the school year was beginning and we were throwing ourselves into a fun-filled year of discovery and learning.

As we wind down for the end of the year, the students are showing signs of fatigue after a busy year. All students have worked very hard throughout the year and deserve a good break. I would like to thank both the staff and students of Junior four for a fantastic year. It has been such a pleasure to work with James, Abbey and Hannah to progress them towards their curriculum and IEP goals. I have enjoyed the smiles, giggles and chats! I couldn’t have done it without the amazing team of teacher aides and therapists working with us. Thank you to Amelia, Sharon, Michele Watt, Michelle Connell, Tim, Criddy, Ketki and Caitlin. Thank you also to the wonderful team of therapists Dave, Kath and Mellissa. Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year to all!

We have enjoyed having Haelee with us this term; she is a welcome addition with her cheeky giggle and beautiful smile.

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It was lovely to sit down recently and look over all of the video and photos that we have taken throughout the year, and to see the progress each of the boys has made. We have all thoroughly enjoyed sharing and celebrating the success and exciting events that have occurred for the boys and their families over the course of the year.

Just a few of the happy events we have had in our class have included Corey getting a new wheelchair AND a new baby sister within the space of a couple of weeks; George and Fred learning to follow their schedules, Fred continuing to dazzle us each Friday with his trendy horse riding threads, Matty re-joining us at our weekly horse riding sessions, Corey and George becoming the best of friends, Fred wowing us all with his beautiful talking, and George drinking water as well as preparing and drinking his own banana smoothies. We have also had lots of fun singing, dancing, playing and exploring around the school and beyond. In particular we have enjoyed the opportunity to participate in huge sensory play sessions with the other Junior classes, continuing our weekly trip to Woolcock Park and our swimming and music lessons with Junior Four, spending a lovely day at Sutton’s Beach and exploring the wonderful equipment in our multi-sensory room.

While it might all seem like fun and games, it must also be said that we have done lots of hard work too. The boys have all put in a solid effort to work towards their curriculum and IEP goals and we have all been blown away by the motivation and
persistence they have shown throughout the semester. It is fair to say that they have all earned their Christmas break!

Of course none of this could have happened without the help from our team of wonderful teacher aides. A HUGE thank you must go to Steph, Michelle, Sonya, Christine, Susan and Tim who have all been absolute champions in helping the boys to work towards their goals. It is so wonderful to have such a happy, supportive, hard-working and dedicated team working to ensure each student gets the most out of their days. The rapport between staff and students is wonderful, and I’m sure the boys will miss them over the holidays (and vice versa of course!). Another huge thank you must go to our wonderful volunteer Alistair who once again has helped us out with our horse riding program this term. It is a big job to get our crew out to the McIntyre Centre each week and having Alistair’s assistance has been invaluable!

As the year draws to a close we find ourselves busily preparing for our end of year Christmas concert, which is shaping up to be a very entertaining day. We have had a lot of fun making and decorating our own class Christmas tree and the carols are in full swing. There is certainly a very festive vibe in our classroom. We are also very busy working on some top secret Christmas business which we hope our families will enjoy!

It has been a wonderful year and I know I speak for myself and all of our staff members when I say that it has been an absolute pleasure to be a part of Junior Five in 2013! Please allow me to take this chance to wish you all a very happy and safe Christmas. I hope that you are able to get some relaxation and rest in amongst all the festivities and I look forward to seeing everyone around the school in 2014!

Teacher: Kate
Teacher Aides: Steph, Michelle, Sonya, Christine, Susan and Tim
Middle 1

Is it even possible that the 2013 school year has come to an end so quickly?! It is hard to imagine that the Christmas break is just around the corner!

We had a fun and very successful Term 4. As always we have been busy bees working towards individual student goals and a positive end to the year. Along with our regular specialist programs the students continued to work on consolidating the literacy, numeracy, communication and daily living skills they learnt throughout the year. They have continued to participate in shared and guided reading sessions, group circle time and one on one interactive story sessions, where opportunities are provided for the students to, experience story time through various sensory elements. We also successfully filled all of the hallway walls with our great art posters, which represent our story of the fortnight. It has definitely made walking down to the classroom in the morning a little brighter and visually stimulating.

This term we made a change to our community access program and introduced the students to Sporting Wheelies. The aim of the program was to further develop the individual motor/gross motor skills of the students, as well as, to assist with satisfying some of the student’s high sensory/movement needs. Although small, the sporting wheelies is a specifically designed gym which provides full access and has a wide range of equipment and program for people with disability. The boys were all a bit hesitant and slightly overwhelmed to start but as our visits increased, so did their confidence. We have also kept fit with our new movement and stretching program, specially designed by Dave (our physiotherapist).

The return of the multi-sensory room and weekly visits was very welcomed by all the boys. It is amazing to see each student interact and respond to the different resources in their own particular ways. Overall, I think the smoke machine and lasers closely followed by the UV room may be the class favourites.
The boys have also been busy little elves preparing for Christmas. This included completing many Christmas craft and cooking projects that were enjoyed by all. I’d also like to send out a huge thank you to our fabulous staff. Thank you for coming along for our adventure and helping make this year what it was. It just wouldn’t have been the same without you. We are so fortunate to have such experienced and dedicated teacher aides who come to school each day with amazing attitudes and smiles.

Finally, has been so lovely to work with and watch each student’s progress throughout the year. They have all been a pleasure. Each and every one of them has been a valued member of the Middle One team.

I wish you all a happy, safe summer and restful Christmas and New Year’s!

**Teacher:** Casey

**Teacher Aides:** Megan, Sam, Seb, Alicia and Christine

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This term we have had a few excursions to highlight aspects of the books we have done, all by one author, Julia Donaldson. We’ve been to Wynnum to look for snails and whales, to Ironbark Gully to find a gruffalo, and to Walkabout Creek to learn more about nocturnal animals for our story Night Monkey, Day Monkey. We have worked hard on identifying the characters in the stories.

Over the course of the year we have witnessed improvements or we’ve been a part of positive interactions with each student, and some important milestones have been achieved. Troy joins in well in all group time and mostly tries at table tasks, and he makes his needs known more positively by choosing a symbol. Will is our best dancer, is great at trying new foods, is getting better at using a spoon and fork and is our Mr Social. If Will is Mr Social, then Lily is Ms Social. She has been very happy, willing to have a go. Seth has learned to transfer to and from his chair himself, has learned to balance with the noodle and move forward instead of backwards in the pool, and has learned to walk on his knees with a walker!! Darah has been much more attentive in group time and can make definite choices. She has made some great inroads in learning safety skills in the pool.

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We have been fortunate to have Jon, a student from Denmark helping in our class for the last 2 terms. He has been a pleasure to have in class and has taken a personal and active role in assisting the children in their goals, particularly with Seth’s knee walking. We wish him well in his further Australian adventures before he returns home in late January. You will be missed!
I’d like to thank my wonderful teacher aides, Belinda, Deb, Sonya and Christine. I tell you all the time, but you’re all so willing to try new things with the students and to assist one another. You are such good team players and have been a wonderful support to me, thank you. Thanks also to the admin’ team, who are always there for advice or assistance when needed.

To the families of my students, thank you also. I have enjoyed our communication book and personal chats and getting to know you all. Whenever I have wanted to discuss an idea with you, you’ve all been willing to carry the ball. Thanks. You’re all good value. Together we make a difference for your child.

On that note, I hope you all have a terrific holiday, and see you at school next year.

Teacher: Nicki
Teacher Aides: Belinda, Christine and Sonya
Danish Student: Jon

Senior 1

This semester has seen our Senior 1 students engage in many and varied learning experiences with so many pleasing results. We have taken part in Flipside circus activities (our circus artists in residence). We have been on our senior camp to Caloundra for a week of fun. We have engaged in a variety of community access activities, ridden on the Brisbane Wheel at Southbank and caught public transport out and about. This semester we bid a fond farewell to three of our graduating students, Ethan, Bonnie and Maddy and wish them well in their post school lives.

Throughout the semester, we have continued to focus our learning experiences around literature. We have learnt about personal care in our book ‘Looking Great’. We have engaged in community access throughout our study of the book ‘Out to Lunch’ and finally we have learnt all about our wonderful country that we live in through our book, ‘Where The Forest Meets The Sea.’. The students have enjoyed being exposed to books. Our shared reading experiences and follow up sensory activities have been rich and colourful and most importantly, assisted us in developing a further love of literature.

We continue to work on our individual communication systems and this is something that permeates every learning experience that we engage in.
The students have also enjoyed the gross motor and physical movement sessions throughout the semester, from swimming, to bike riding, walking to the park and getting out and about in the school environment.

Throughout this semester each student has developed as an individual and we have enjoyed being a part of their journey. We would like to extend our thanks to our wonderful teacher aides and support staff. Our programs would not be a success without them.

May we take this opportunity to wish you all a Merry Christmas and a wonderful, healthy and happy new year. We thank you for your support this year and we most especially thank you for entrusting your children to us. It’s been a privilege to work with them, assist them and watch them grow and learn. Best wishes for a happy holiday.

Teacher: Therese and Rachel
Teacher Aides: Jenne, Lisa and Christine
Danish Student: Jay

This semester Senior 2 has continued with our literacy focus, reading books that relate to our everyday lives such as Community Signs, Going Shopping and It’s OK to be Different. We all enjoyed finding links between the books and our everyday life experiences, such as the main character in Going Shopping who wears AFO’s and uses a wheelchair.

We have continued to improve our circus skills with Flipside Circus, which has been coming to Red Hill this term. Every week we have great fun practising our tricks and learning some new ones. Senior 2 camp was 5 days at Golden Beach in Caloundra. Whilst on camp we engaged in activities such as walks by the lake and beach, a motorbike ride, swimming in the beach pool, and dinner and dancing at Caloundra RSL Club. We also had a ‘ghost’ visit us in our apartment on the night of Halloween...
On Sunday 24th November Dylan Smith graduated alongside his friends Bonnie, Maddy and Ethan at the Broncos Leagues Club. Dylan looked handsome in a tuxedo and his parents and family were very proud of him. Dylan has been visiting Ablecare each Wednesday this term. He has thoroughly enjoyed his time there and will be attending Ablecare for 5 days a week next year. He will be missed at Red Hill and we all wish him the best of luck in his future.

Have a great holiday!!!

Teacher: Lisa
Teacher Aides: Julie, Tim, Sonya and Glenis

General News

Graduation

On the 24th November, we had a very moving graduation ceremony at the Broncos Leagues Club. Our graduating students this year are Bonnie Day, Maddison Robinson, Dylan Smith and Ethan Swenson. Each student with their families, friends and staff, celebrated in style the completion of their schooling. Many happy memories were shared through video presentations. It was truly a wonderful occasion and all involved thoroughly enjoyed themselves. All at Red Hill Special School would like to wish Bonnie, Maddy, Ethan and Dylan all the very best in the future. We hope you keep in touch.