

BLC YARNS

Barwon Learning Centre

“Some trees need more water than others.”

Lot 269 Carol Avenue
Moree NSW 2400
PO Box 1485
T 02 6751 1573
F 02 6751 1569
E barwonlc-s.school@det.nsw.edu.au

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Principal's Message

Spring has arrived. I must admit it is my favourite season (except for the magpies swooping!).

Last Friday, our school community proudly supported Northcott's "Walk With Me." Those in attendance would have been impressed with our Barwon boys performing a traditional dance. I have had lots of positive feedback from members of the Moree community, congratulating our talented performers.



It is with great pride that I announce that we have recently acquired a class set of didgeridoos, made by John McGregor of Walgett. Beyond Empathy have arranged for Donovan Munro to teach our boys to play the didgeridoo. This Thursday afternoon will see the first classes begin.

I am also very happy to report that Beyond Empathy have arranged for Kutcha Edwards to return to BLC, commencing Monday, 14th September to support our students' song writing talents.

Excitement is running high at Barwon Learning Centre with the Moree Boomerangs qualifying to play in the Grand Finals in both First Grade and Reserve Grade next weekend. Most of our students aspire to play with the Boomerangs when they are older.

This week, our students are using their morning literacy sessions to write letters of support to the Boomerangs.

We will be having a special Presentation Assembly this Wednesday, 9th September at 11:30am. Chris Binge and members of the Boomerang Football teams will be presenting awards to our students.

A highlight of this assembly will be the presentation of medals to members of the Barwon Learning Centre who were winners of the George Rose Shield at Walgett.

Members of our school community are invited to come to this assembly and join us for a barbeque lunch.

That evening, parents and students of Year 7 2016 are also invited to a comprehensive meeting coordinated by Moree Secondary College. It will be held at the Carol Avenue Library at 6pm and dinner will be provided. Uniforms will be available to pre-order on the evening and full details regarding next year will be issued.

All staff at our school are continually reflecting on our performance and practices, as we seek to support all our students to reach their potential.

Professional development is one of the strategies we use to keep up to date with new policies, initiatives and research. This week, I will be attending the Barwon Network Principals' Professional Learning Days (half a day on Wednesday, and all day Thursday).

Steve Sampson, our Assistant Principal, is always on the lookout for opportunities for our Barwon students to showcase their various skills. He has entered our students into a Touch Football Carnival at Narrabri on Thursday, 10th September. Information will be sent home with permission notes.

It is pleasing to see the majority of our students coming to school every day. Regular attendance gives each student the best chance of reaching their potential.

Please do not hesitate to come and talk with us if we can be of assistance.

Yours in Unity,

Margaret Hayes

Margie Hayes
Phone: 0411 316 200



Piglet:
"how do you spell love?"
Pooh:
"You don't spell it,
You feel it."

Is your child making friends at school?

Kids who get on at school tend to be more engaged in learning. Here are some ideas on how to help your child with social skills:

<http://www.schoolatoz.nsw.edu.au/wellbeing/development/how-friendships-boost-your-childs-learning>

Cathrine Neilsen-Hewett, a child development expert at Macquarie University, says if children are happy socially they tend to be more engaged in their learning.

"If you speak to any Kindergarten child, one of the most important things for them is having friends and having people to play with," Cathrine says.

She says children who are on their way to developing a healthy social life and good learning strategies:

- have good self-control skills such as sitting still and listening quietly
- work easily in small or large groups
- follow directions and cooperate with others.

Social self-control

An important factor in helping children to be happy socially is guiding them to control their impulses. At the end of preschool, children can sometimes still act out their frustrations or wants by hitting or through verbal aggression, however by the end of the Kindergarten year, "children who are still playing like that are the ones who are at risk of being rejected by their peer group," Cathrine says.

"Children very quickly develop reputations, so you want to step in as soon as you can and develop those appropriate social skills. You don't want your child to be known as the one who hits other children, or the one who doesn't share. You want to cut that off as soon as you can in Kindergarten and really work on that."

Role modelling at home

Cathrine suggests using opportunities at home to model good social behaviour, such as teaching your child to take turns, share their toys and even give attention to others.

"Children who are more popular are those who ask a question of another child and then listen to their responses. It's modelling that at home when they're interacting and talking with each other, and it's about how to engage peers in conversation and pay compliments to their friends, 'Gee, I really love that picture'. That success in terms of peer interactions is critical," she says.

Inviting children over for play dates in small groups on the weekend and monitoring their interactions is also helpful because you can see how your child is interacting, and guide the behaviour if need be, Cathrine adds.

Connecting with your school

If your child's behaviour at school does become a concern it's important to approach the teacher.

"Effective learning is all about partnerships and having a sense of connection between the home

and the school environment. When there is a sense of disconnect that's when children are at risk. It's about being connected to your community, to other parents as well as the teachers and the children," Cathrine says.

Social butterfly or seeking one best friend?

Not all kids feel comfortable in a big group and many will choose to have just one special friend. It can be hard for very social, extroverted parents to relax when their child doesn't seem to have many friends, but it may genuinely be what your child prefers.

If your child is a "harder to get to know" type, it could be they find it difficult to break the ice with other kids. Social entry skills are still being developed in early primary school.

You can help by encouraging play dates with specific children. Volunteering for an hour or so a week in the classroom with give you the opportunity to meet all their classmates (and even have a quiet word with the teacher) so you can suggest possible play mates to your child.

Perhaps you can organise an after-school coffee at a local park with one of the other parents, to give both children the chance to get to know each other one-on-one, with the added security of having you nearby.

Helping your child make friends

- Talk to your child at home each night about who they are playing with. Ask specific questions like "What games did you play at lunchtime today?" "Who else was playing too?"
- Discuss with your child what makes a good friend.
- Suggest things they might do, like taking a ball or toy (nothing too big or valuable) to school and asking a classmate to join them in a game.
- Choose a possible classmate and ask your child to find out one thing about them. For example, "Does Sophie have any pets?" It can spur your child to be curious about their peers and gives them a question to help break the ice.
- Make an appointment to speak discretely with your child's teacher if you feel your child is having trouble making friends. The teacher will probably observe your child's interactions at recess and lunch and also pair them with different classmates during classroom activities to help break the ice.

Around the Classroom

