



MURRAY BRIDGE SPECIAL SCHOOL

RESEARCH INTO ACTION

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AN ANXIOUS CHILD IS NOT A LEARNING CHILD

Murray Bridge Special School Newsletter



Welcome Back!

Welcome back to all our precious young people returning for the 2020 school year. School staff are all so very pleased to see you again, often that bit taller and more grown up! A special welcome too is extended to all of our new families beginning their child's learning journey with us.

It often takes a significant amount of re-adjustment for our young people returning to the early morning starts and routines of school after the summer break. We know from experience that things eventually do settle, however if there is anything staff can do to assist with the settling process please do not hesitate to contact us for a chat.

Staffing News

It is with great excitement we welcome back Jackie Manly (Learning Facilitator LA5), Anne Perkins (School Services Officer LA5), Karen Meddle (Learning Facilitator LA4), Pam Dougall (School Services Officer LA4), Sam Harding/Sarah Walker (Learning Facilitators LA1), Maegan Hurford (School Services Officer LA1), Donna Sayer (School Services Officer, Administration and Special Programs), Brian Jones (School Services Officer LA3) and Chris Clothier (Learning Facilitator Non Instruction Time). We are fortunate to add to this terrific team the skills of Charlotte Wynne (Learning Facilitator LA3). Charlotte was a Learning Facilitator here with us for several years, and then left on accouchement leave. We are absolutely delighted she has returned.

Our school is small enough for us to function as an interactive trans-disciplinary team for the benefit of all our learners. Although there are specific staff allocated to each Learning Area it is important our learners benefit from the diverse range of skills and abilities of all staff.

An important part of your child's team are workers from other agencies who provide consultancy support or direct care for our young people's learning, health and personal care needs.

In 2020 we welcome:

- Child Youth Health Care Workers Dawn Treloar and Leslie Jones,
- Department for Education (the Department) consultants to our school from the Student Support Services team: Jane Bode (Special Educator), Bruce Giddings (Senior Special Educator), Tessa Bretag (Psychology Services Team Leader), and Melanie Kane (Speech Pathologist). These staff work closely with your child's school team to ensure the education and care programs delivered are of an exceptional standard and quality.
- Staff from the Department for Child Protection, Autism SA, Novita Children's Services, Down Syndrome Society of SA and Kilparrin Teaching and Assessment Unit who may work with school staff, our learners and families again this year as appropriate.

Term Dates For 2019

Term 1 – 28th January – 09th April

Term 2 – 27th April – 03rd July

Term 3 – 20th July – 25th September

Term 4 – 12th October – 11th December

Who Is Our Newsletter For?

The target audience for the Murray Bridge Special School Newsletter is our school community and other interested individuals or groups.

At Murray Bridge Special School we take the privacy and safety of our learners very seriously. Some of our learners are under a confidential court order, and for safety reasons, some families do not wish their child's image or location publicized.

As our newsletter is uploaded onto the internet it becomes available to any persons choosing to access the net. Therefore photographs of young people attending our school, and specific information which may in any way identify our young people will not be included in the newsletter in order to maintain their safety, confidentiality and privacy.

What Is The Purpose of The Newsletter?

The purpose of the newsletter is to educate and inform. Specific information about individual and/or class learning goals and activities will continue to be shared with families through access to their child's Learning Facilitator. This may happen on a daily basis through Communication Diaries, by telephone, and/or face to face contact.

Reminder School Hours

School personnel are not scheduled for direct supervision of our learners before 8.30am. School personnel are scheduled into meetings and other school business before this time. Young people are not to arrive before 8.30am as there is no appropriate supervision available. School staffs are on duty from 8.30am and learning programs are scheduled for our learners from 8.30am onward.

If your child is accessing the Department Taxi Transport Service then:

- At 8.30 taxis' begin arriving and school commences immediately for young people as they arrive.
- From 2.30 onward taxi services begin to arrive to take young people home. The last taxi departs the school at 3.10pm. The arrival to and departure from school for your child will be largely dependent on the taxi company schedule. The taxi service contracted to your child's taxi run and the school will provide more information to you once your child has been approved to access the service.

If your child is being transported to school by private transport:
School commences from 8.30am onward and concludes at 3.00pm.

Learners will not be received before 8.30 am

A later arrival time for your child may be negotiated with your child's Learning Facilitator.

Vehicle Users

****Please do not reverse out from the veranda area of the Special School and respect the 5km speed limit restriction when entering and moving through the veranda area****

Our young people and others in the area are put at extreme risk when adults choose not to follow these requests. The area is clearly posted as 'One Way' only. Part of the access road under the veranda area is located on Council land and owned by the local Council. This area may be monitored by Council for breaches of rules.

****Please do not allow children to disembark from vehicles until a school staff member is able to assist the young person into the school****

Please take the time to wait in queue and drive out correctly. A wait of a few minutes may prevent a devastating and heartbreaking accident.



Parking Around Schools

Due to the chaotic nature of traffic around schools at peak times, streets can be an extremely dangerous place for children.

Young children have not yet fully developed their cognitive abilities and therefore their perception, judgement and awareness of potentially dangerous situations is not adequately developed to enable them to cope with the road traffic.

Children are not easily visible and often act impulsively, which means if you are driving around a school take special care, to ensure we keep our children safe. Remember that children copy grown-ups - encourage good road sense by watching them closely and leading by example.

5 Helpful Tips for School Zones

As parents and caregivers we have a great responsibility to ensure children stay safe in school zones. We also play a key role in educating children about road safety.

Here are 5 helpful tips for safety in school zones:

1. Allow enough time to take your child to the school gate safely and without rushing.
2. Always observe parking signs and speed limits in and around school zones. They are designed to keep your child safe.
3. Talk about signs and traffic lights with your child. Identify and discuss places where it is safe to get out of the car and cross the road.
4. Teach your child how to cross the road using the 'stop, look and listen' process - stop at the kerb, look and listen for traffic and then decide whether it is safe to cross.
5. Park a few streets away and walk your child to school. This is also good exercise and helps teach your child road safety rules.

Behaviours to Avoid

- Speeding
- Double Parking
- Parking too close to an intersection
- Parking across driveways
- Parking too close to pedestrian crossings



Rural City of Murray Bridge

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Keeping our
kids SAFE



Money And Other Administrative Matters

Donna Sayer will be in the administration area Monday and Friday to manage financial issues such as monies sent in, or queries about Materials and Services Charges and School Card. If these matters could be dealt with on those days it would help the school significantly.

Payment Of 2020 Materials & Service Charges

Materials and Services Charges invoices will be sent out shortly. The 2020 Materials & Service Charge is due to be paid in full by the last day of Term 1 2020 – Thursday 09th April 2020. If you would like to make a formal payment arrangement to pay by instalments, please come in and see Donna or contact Donna directly on 85325 345. 2020 School Card - Please note applications for School Card are also due by Thursday 09th April 2020. Forms can be accessed at www.sa.gov.au or a hard copy of the form can be obtained from the school.

Everyone Is A Learner; Everyone Can Be A Facilitator Of Learning

We all appreciate as adults how much more pleasurable, exciting and inspiring it is to be in the company of positive, respectful and energetic people. The same applies to our learners. As cooperating adult role models and helpers of our learners it is important we continually focus on the positive aspects of life and learning, and promote through direct demonstration respectful and considerate relationships. As adults we are in control, and are guides for our children to model good practice and set caring and respectful expectations. I have had the pleasure of noting the wonderful interactions between families, our children, school staff and others. I thank you sincerely for this.

Female Carers Do You Need A Break?

Do you care for someone with a disability? Camp Jumbunna SA Inc runs a retreat for you. We have been operating for 25 years and hold annual retreats within a 2-3 hour drive of Adelaide.

We provide you the opportunity to rest and relax, whilst having fun and sharing experiences with others in a similar position.

Our retreats are usually held in the last weekend of October, and we would love to see you join us for this year's retreat at a lovely southern coastal town.

For more details you can visit our website www.campjsa.com, email us at contact@campjsa.com, visit us on Facebook Camp Jumbunna SA, or ring and speak to Michelle on 0432 379 741.

The Importance Of An “Engineered Environment”

Learning Researchers such as Carpenter, Barber, Nielson and McDonald, and organisations such as Autism SA and the Down Syndrome Society of SA all agree on the fundamental importance of engineering the environment to maximise learning outcomes for young people living with complex and multifaceted disabilities.

Spaces specifically designated for our young people's learning have been rigorously and critically analysed to best accommodate our learning from specific researchers and organisations who have demonstrated long term positive learning outcomes for our young people living with complex and multifaceted disabilities.

Of greatest significance is acknowledging the effect of sensory overload on our learners. Sensory overload increases anxiety. Our learners may then communicate their anxiety in a range of behaviours which may cause stress and harm to themselves and/or others.

Sensory overload blocks the ability to focus. When you can't focus you can't learn. When you can't focus you can't build relationships.

The school is now deliberately and carefully structured to best meet the learning needs of our learners. The learning environment may look quite bare and empty to a cognitively average adult. This is a carefully considered and deliberate strategy based on research to assist our learners be less anxious, and focus to learn.

Our passion is our young people's learning. Our focus is our young people's learning. Therefore our school environment is shaped to maximise learning opportunities for our learners, not to be aesthetically pleasing to cognitively average adults.

A graphic example of the power of acknowledging sensory overload and shaping a learning environment to assist our young people focus to learn and be successful is illustrated below.

WHERE'S THE CHAIR?



Data, Reflection, Review and Action

We constantly review the effectiveness of our pedagogies, process and practice at school, through the ongoing collection and analysis of a range of data sets. The review includes exploring best placement of our young people to meet their learning and care needs during the school year. In week 5 Term 1 of each school year we collate initial data and begin the analysis and review. For some of our young people this may mean placement in a new learning area with a different team that has been assessed by staff to better meet their learning and care needs. Although movement of our young people into different learning areas can occur at any time throughout the year, week five and six of term one are particularly important as staff have had time to make initial assessments regarding safety, access and the learning environment.

Emergency Procedures

It is a family responsibility to provide the school with up to date emergency contacts, consent forms, medical information and court orders. Emergency Contact forms for families to update have been sent home to complete. Thank you to those families who have returned them so promptly! It is essential we are able to contact you and/or a nominated adult in cases of urgency. **The Emergency Contacts form will be sent out at the start of each term so families can update contact details.** Please contact the school if your details change any time between.

Keep your kids smiling



Dental care is FREE for ALL babies, preschool and most children under 18 years at School Dental Service clinics.

The School Dental Service is a Child Dental Benefits Schedule provider.

Call us now for an appointment!

Your local clinic is: Murray Bridge Community Dental Clinic

Phone: 8531 9300

www.sahealth.sa.gov.au/sadental

Medication Management

School staff may only store and supervise medication that has been prescribed by a doctor for the individual student, for the period of time specified. This ensures the medication is medically warranted. Analgesics and other medications that can be purchased over the counter without a prescription must also be prescribed if staff members are to be asked to supervise their use. It should be noted that analgesics can mask signs and symptoms of serious illness or injury and will not, therefore, be used by school staff as a standard first aid strategy.

It is reasonable for school staff to accept and agree to supervise only medication required during their period of supervision or care (for example, medication required three times a day is generally not required during a school day: it can be taken before and after school, and before bed). This minimizes the quantity of medication held on site.

At Murray Bridge Special School safe storage of medication requires as a minimum standard that the medication is:

- prescribed by a doctor
- provided by the parent, guardian or carer
- within the expiry date of the product
- delivered to staff as a daily supply (this might require the family to organize a second labeled container from the pharmacy for safe storage at home)
- provided with written instructions from the doctor (these instructions must match those printed on the product packaging)

School staffs are generally trained to supervise oral and measured dose inhaled medication. They are generally not trained, and so cannot be expected, to administer medication taken by other routes, for example eye and ear drops and ointments.

A student can-not take his or her first dose of a new medication at school. The student should first be supervised by the family, guardian, carer, or health professional in case of an allergic reaction.

It is not the role of school staff to interpret behaviour in relation to a medical condition. Nor can they be expected to monitor the effects of medication. If staffs are concerned for any reason about a student's health, their first aid training requires them to enact standard first aid emergency procedures.

A Medication Plan must be filled out by a doctor when medication is prescribed. Doctors have access to the required forms online. It is essential the doctor completes these forms at the time of consultation if medication is required.

If you have any queries at all concerning Medication Management at school please contact us.

Ambulance Cover

If any staff are unsure or uncomfortable about the health of any of our young people, and assess the situation to require medical assessment and/or intervention an ambulance will be called immediately.

Then the process of notifying the family of the school decision will begin. The school staffs have basic first aid training only. Staff will call an ambulance to health situations families may feel comfortable and knowledgeable in managing themselves. An ambulance will always be called rather than waiting for a described pattern of recovery that may not occur. Paramedics will make an assessment as to whether the young person requires further medical assistance such as hospitalisation. The Ambulance service will send the account to the family of the child. We encourage all families to have Ambulance Cover. However if you are not covered notify the school and we will send you a form so you can apply to have the account paid by other means. Attending to our young people's health, safety and wellbeing is our major concern.

Coronavirus

SA Health has changed its advice to us in relation to Novel Coronavirus after the Federal Government issued an updated alert late yesterday.

The updated advice is that:

- Students/children and staff who have travelled to Hubei Province in the last 14 days should not attend school/preschool and isolate themselves in their homes for 14 days after leaving Hubei Province.
- Students/children and staff who have travelled to mainland China, not including Hubei Province, are able to return to school/preschool unless they are contacts of a confirmed case, or they have symptoms consistent with the virus.
- All students and staff who have travelled to mainland China should monitor themselves for the 14 days from their departure from mainland China for symptoms of Coronavirus.

Symptoms may include fever, cough, and shortness of breath, fatigue, and sore throat. People who have travelled to China and have these symptoms should see a doctor or attend a hospital and call ahead so they can prepare.

The latest information is available on the Australian Government Department of Health website. www.health.gov.au/health-topics/novel-coronavirus-2019-ncov

The South Australian Department for Education has indicated that it and SA Health will be providing us with further information as necessary, including advising us if there are any known specific risks to our school community.



North School Playgroup

Murray Bridge North School and **Learning Together** run a playgroup for families with young children. Come and meet with other parents while your children play and make friends.

In the OHSC room

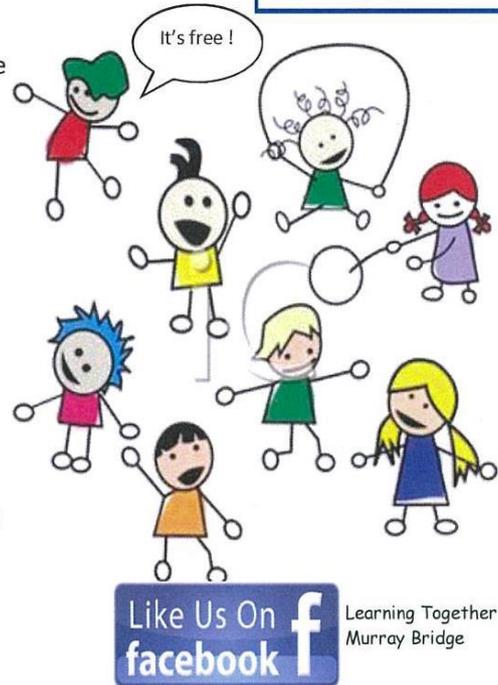
Every Tuesday during school term

9.30am - 11.30am

- Healthy snack provided
- Suitable for babies to kindy age
- Art and craft - music and dance

The playgroup program is supported by Early Childhood Educators with a focus on children's play and learning. There is no need to book, just come. We look forward to seeing you there.

For more information contact Learning Together on 0423 020 991



Murray Bridge North School OSHC

Before School, After School and Vacation Care Programs. Catering for your needs on your local school site. **Open daily 630am and close 6.30pm.**

This service will operate a 6am start if there is a demand. Please contact the service or school to register your interest. Quality care, competitive prices, fun activities, friends to be made, games, arts, crafts, good food and special events all in a home like environment.

Contact OSHC 08 85310179 or 0417825455

Student Illness

Over the 2019 school year a number of our young people had viral infections and/or other contagious illness. It has been noted the majority of young people were being kept home while they were unwell, or recovering from illness. **Thank you for keeping your child home while they are unwell or in recovery. The school is not equipped to provide appropriate duty of care and the direct, intensive nursing and personal care a sick child requires and is entitled to.** Our duty of care to our other young people means staff cannot be released from direct facilitation of learning or supervision duties to care adequately for a sick child while waiting for them to be picked up.

All of our children have very specific health care needs. Many have fragile health, so we do our very best to protect them at school from illness. By keeping your child home when they are unwell or recovering from illness you are assisting in the prevention of illness spreading to perhaps our most vulnerable young people. No one enjoys seeing our young people unwell, especially from illness spread by an infected child continuing to attend school. Thank you for caring for the welfare of all of our young people – we appreciate that.

Court Orders

It is the responsibility of the family to inform the school immediately if their child is under a Court Order and provide a copy of the Order to the school. It is also the custodial parent's responsibility to keep the school updated to any changes that have occurred to the Order.

Keeping Our Young People Safe

The safety and wellbeing of our young people is an absolute priority in our school. Therefore it is necessary to ensure safeguards are in place to protect them from harm as much as practically possible. This means all adults arriving and departing from the school acknowledge this at the front office. Depending on the purpose of the visit, and activities occurring across the school, the visitor may or may not be accompanied by a staff member through the school. When the front office area is unattended you can directly contact your child's learning area by using the telephone available in the foyer. The number for each learning area is clearly displayed. When the office is unattended, it is because staff will be in a direct learning facilitation and/or support role with our young people. It may mean you are not attended to instantly, so your patience is appreciated.

Child Safe Education and Care Environments: Responding to Abuse and Neglect

At Murray Bridge Special School we believe all young people have the right to be emotionally and physically safe at all times. Our learners are so precious. It is our responsibility as adults to ensure we provide the best possible life experiences for them. In South Australia a wide range of people are legally required to notify the Department for Child Protection of cases where child/young person abuse and/or neglect is suspected.

Below are examples of the range of people obliged by law to notify the Department for Child Protection if they suspect on reasonable grounds a child/young person is at risk of, has been, or is being abused or neglected, and the suspicion is formed in the course of the person's work (whether paid or voluntary) or in carrying out official duties.

- medical practitioner;
- pharmacist;
- registered or enrolled nurse;
- dentist;
- psychologist;
- police officer;
- community corrections officer (an officer or employee of an administrative unit of the Public Service whose duties include the supervision of young or adult offenders in the community);
- social worker;
- minister of religion;
- person who is an employee of, or volunteer in, an organisation formed for religious or spiritual purposes;
- staff in an educational institution (including a kindergarten);
- an approved family day care provider;
- any other person who is an employee of, or volunteer in, a government or non-government organisation that provides health, welfare, education, sporting or recreational, child care or residential services wholly or partly for children, being a person who—is engaged in the actual delivery of those services to children; or
- any person who holds a management position in the relevant organisation the duties of which include direct responsibility for, or direct supervision of, the provision of those services to children

Failure of these people to notify is an offence under the Act and carries a penalty fine.

Most importantly early identification of stresses on families or suspected abuse and neglect can enable relevant agencies and workers to provide appropriate intervention and services to families and assist them in their responsibility for the young person's well-being and safety. Failure to notify suspected cases of child abuse and neglect may result in the abuse or neglect of the child continuing, and/or the death of the child. Abused children may carry the trauma associated with their experiences into adulthood unless appropriate treatment, assistance, and support are provided.

If you would like more information about the schools responsibility regarding reporting suspicion of child/young person abuse or neglect, or you would like more information as to the services which are available to support families, please do not hesitate to contact us.

Attendance - All Day Every day!!!!

We strive for all learners to attend all day, every day. Our learners need to attend school regularly in order to engage fully in the curriculum and gain maximum benefit from schooling. Regular attendance enables our learners to access all areas of the curriculum provided, enabling them to reach their full potential.

Did you know missing one day of school a week adds up to almost three years by the time your child finishes school. Every day matters!

We also acknowledge learning will only occur when certain physiological and psychological needs are met. Our learners may have fragile unpredictable health concerns or require frequent ongoing medical assessments or appointments. It is important our learners attend only in appropriate circumstances. For example if a learner is unwell or significantly stressed; is recovering from a recent illness; has had recent surgery or hospitalization, or requires a standard of health or psychological care outside of the duty of care abilities of teaching or school support staff, then it is not in the learners best interests to attend.

Bearing in mind our learner's complex health and care needs, our goal is to eliminate any 'unexplained' absences for our learners. An unexplained absence is 'a learner who is absent without explanation by parent/guardian or school or other authority (e.g. Department for Child Protection)'

If your child is unwell or unable to attend school please contact us directly as soon as is practically possible so we can provide any support you may need.

If your child is continuously absent without explanation after 3 days you will be contacted by the school to see if we can assist in any way.

As adults let's work together for your child to attain maximum attendance for maximum outcomes!!

"When little people are overwhelmed by BIG emotions it's our job to share our calm, NOT to join their chaos" L.R Knosk Child Development Researcher U.S.A

Enjoy Every Precious Moment Together!



Warmest Regards Always,

Vicki Smith

Principal

January 2020

Murray Bridge Special School

Principal – Vicki Smith

January 2020

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We acknowledge the Ngarrindjeri people as the traditional owners of this land on which we meet and work. We respect and acknowledge their spiritual connection as the custodians of this land and that their cultural heritage beliefs are still important to the living people today. Nguldi Amdu (Welcome)

