Wow, Term 4 has begun and we are on the home stretch. This term is a very busy one as you can see on the calendar at the end of this bulletin. Gymnastics begins next week and school photos will be the following week. Please keep Saturday 24th October free for our school working bee, our working bee last year was so successful that it has now become an annual event. This week we will also have the new bucket hats for sale for $15 (they have the school logo on them and are reversible with the sport house on the other side) and they available at the office. Please, if you haven’t already done so can you take a few minutes to complete the online survey via the link below. This is an opportunity for you to contribute to our future direction for Darlington PS. Yesterday The University of Sydney handed us a cheque for $5000 to help us with the purchase of Indigenous plants and painting of the wall, we thank the Vice Chancellor and Head of Business Studies for the donation. In the coming weeks Darlington Lane will be available for a kiss&drop at the back school gate we now have at 8:30am each morning, watch this space—I will notify you when it is open. Finally, welcome back to you all and we look forward to the next 11 weeks of the 2015 school year.

**STAR STUDENTS:**

This week our “Artist of the Week” is from the Frilled Necked Lizards class. Please check our school homepage to view the art. Each week a class updates their page on our website and this weeks class is the Scarlet Robins class, please check it out on the link below:


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**Parent Survey**

Below is a link for a parent survey, to date we have had 17 people complete the survey, could you please take 10 minutes to complete the survey as it will help us for future planning and we promise this will be the only one we ask you to complete this year!

Username – parent17881
Password – Dar1735
[https://www.tellthemfromme.com/login.htm](https://www.tellthemfromme.com/login.htm)
You’re invited to participate in the Tell Them From Me (TTFM) Partners in Learning survey designed for parents and carers. This survey complements the TTFM student and teacher surveys, which focus on student engagement, wellbeing and effective teaching practices. All Department of Education schools have the opportunity to participate if they choose.

Why should I participate?
Parents and carers are an important and valued part of the school community. Schools can use survey feedback to make practical improvements and inform school planning.

What does it involve?
This online survey takes about 15 minutes to complete. It is anonymous and voluntary. If you have more than one child at this school, and feel that your children’s experiences differ, you can complete the survey more than once.

How can I participate?
You can access the survey in your own time, between 17 August and 16 October 2015. Visit the address below and log in using these details:

Username – parent17881
Password – Dar1735
https://www.tellthemfromme.com/login.htm

More information on the Partners in Learning survey can be found on the NSW Department of Educations’ TTFM website: http://surveys.cese.nsw.gov.au/
Attendance

Darlington Public School has been reviewing our attendance policy. This policy aims to improve the educational outcomes for students and has been developed in accordance with Department of Education guidelines.

Whole day absences

A small number of whole day absences are acceptable if for example your child:

- Is too sick to go to school or has an infectious disease
- Is required to attend a serious or urgent family situation (e.g. a funeral)
- Has to go to a special religious ceremony

Partial Absences

A small number of partial (or part day) absences are acceptable if for example your child:

- Is representing the school on school business e.g. competing at a zone level for athletics
- Is attending a funeral
- Has been sent home because they are sick
- Has an appointment with a medical professional

What if my child has to be away from school?

If your child has to be away from school, parent or guardian must contact the school and provide a reason for your child’s absence within 7 days. To explain the absence parents and carers can:

- Send a note to the school or contact the school via the school’s email address, or
- Telephone the school, or
- Visit the school
- Log into the Darlington Public School’s APP

Non-Attendance which remains unexplained after 7 days will be followed up by classroom teachers and office staff who will contact parents via phone and or letters. This process is overseen by the Darlington Public School Learning and support Team.
Compulsory School Attendance
Information for parents

Education for your child is important and regular attendance at school is essential for your child to achieve their educational best and increase their career and life options. NSW public schools work in partnership with parents to encourage and support regular attendance of children and young people. When your child attends school every day, learning becomes easier and your child will build and maintain friendships with other children.

What are my legal responsibilities?

Education in New South Wales is compulsory for all children between the ages of six years and below the minimum school leaving age. The Education Act 1990 requires that parents ensure their children of compulsory school age are enrolled at, and regularly attend school, or, are registered with the Board of Studies, Teaching and Educational Standards for homeschooling.

Once enrolled, children are required to attend school each day it is open for students.

The importance of arriving on time

Arriving at school and class on time:

- Ensures that students do not miss out on important learning activities scheduled early in the day
- Helps students learn the importance of punctuality and routine
- Give students time to greet their friends before class
- Reduces classroom disruption

Lateness is recorded as a partial absence and must be explained by parents.

What if my child has to be away from school?

On occasion, your child may need to be absent from school. Justified reasons for student absences may include:

- being sick, or having an infectious disease
- having an unavoidable medical appointment
- being required to attend a recognised religious holiday
- exceptional or urgent family circumstance (e.g. attending a funeral)

Following an absence from school you must ensure that within 7 days you provide your child’s school with a verbal or written explanation for the absence. However, if the school has not received an explanation from you within 2 days, the school may contact you to discuss the absence.

Principals may decline to accept an explanation that you have provided if they do not believe the absence is in the best interest of your child. In these circumstances your child’s absence would be recorded as unjustified. When this happens the principal will discuss their decision with you and the reasons why.

Principal may request medical certificates or other documentation when frequent or long term absences are explained as being due to illness. Principals may also seek parental permission to speak with medical specialists to obtain information to collaboratively develop a health care plan to support your child. If the request is denied, the principal can record the absences as unjustified.

Travel

Families are encouraged to travel during school holidays. If travel during school term is necessary, discuss this with your child’s school principal. An Application for Extended Leave may need to be completed. Absences relating to travel will be marked as leave on the roll and therefore contribute to your child’s total absences for the year.

In some circumstances students may be eligible to enrol in distance education for travel periods over 50 school days. This should be discussed with your child’s school principal.
My child won’t go to school. What should I do?

You should contact the principal as soon as possible to discuss the issue and ask for help. Strategies to help improve attendance may include a referral to the school’s learning and support team or linking your child with appropriate support networks. The principal may seek further support from the Home School Liaison Program to develop an Attendance Improvement Plan.

What might happen if my child continues to have unacceptable absences?

It is important to understand that the Department of Education and Communities may be required to take further action where children of compulsory school age have recurring numbers of unexplained or unjustified absences from school.

Some of the following actions may be undertaken:

- Compulsory Schooling Conferences

You may be asked, along with your child, to attend a Compulsory Schooling Conference. The conference will help to identify the supports your child may need to have in place so they attend school regularly. The school, parents and agencies will work together to develop an agreed plan (known as Undertakings) to support your child’s attendance at school.

- Application to the Children’s Court – Compulsory Schooling Order

If your child’s attendance at school remains unsatisfactory the Department may apply to the Children’s Court for a Compulsory Schooling Order. The Children’s Court magistrate may order a Compulsory Schooling Conference to be convened.

- Prosecution in the Local Court

School and Department staff remain committed to working in partnership with you to address the issues which are preventing your child’s full participation at school. In circumstances where a breach of compulsory schooling orders occurs further action may be taken against a parent in the Local Court. The result of court action can be the imposition of a community service order or a fine.

What age can my child leave school?

All New South Wales students must complete Year 10 or its equivalent. After Year 10, and up until they reach 17 years of age, there are a range of flexible options for students to complete their schooling.

Working in Partnership

The Department of Education and Communities recognises that working collaboratively with students and their families is the best way to support the regular attendance of students at school.

We look forward to working in partnership with you to support your child to fulfil their life opportunities.

Further information regarding school attendance can be obtained from the following websites:

Policy, information and brochures:


The school leaving age:


Do you need an interpreter?

Interpreting services are available on request, including for the hearing impaired. The Telephone Interpreter Service is available 24 hours a day, seven days a week on 131 450. You will not be charged for this service.

For further advice and questions contact your educational services team

T 131 536

Learning and Engagement

Student Engagement & Interagency Partnerships

T 9244 5129

www.dec.nsw.gov.au

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NSW Department of Education and Communities
Is it a safe place for our kids?
A guide for parents.

As a parent or carer you play an important role in making sure your kids are spending time in places that are safe. This guide will help you look out for ‘child safe’ places.

What is a ‘child safe’ place?
Child safe means making sure the place where our kids spend time is safe from neglect, physical, sexual or emotional harm or abuse. A child safe place will have rules that are set up to make sure our kids are kept safe.

Parents have a right to know who is working with their children.
It is your business to know who is working with your children. Every day kids around NSW spend time with adults outside of their home. This can be at places like a sports club, youth group centre, or a drama studio. As a parent or guardian you need to understand what organisations should be doing to keep your child safe.

It is the law that people who work with your children including many tutors, nannies, coaches and counsellors have a current Working With Children Check. However, there is much more an organisation can do to keep kids safe.

Understanding the Working With Children Check.
In NSW all people who are working with your children (as well as a number of volunteers) need to have a current NSW Working With Children Check clearance number.

Some people don’t have to get a Working With Children Check number, such as a parent that volunteers in an activity that involves their own child e.g. a sports coach. The Check provides either a clearance or a bar to work with children. It is a crime for a person with a bar to work or volunteer with children.

How do you know they have a Check?
Parents and guardians are now able to ‘verify’ if the person working with their child (under 18) has a Working With Children Check. When we say ‘verify’, we mean parents can check online.

By checking online you will instantly see if the person is allowed to work with your child. Also, if they become a ‘barred’ person we will let you know. You will however need to know their details, including their name, birth date, application or clearance number.

What parents can do.
Employers and organisations can check or verify online that their workers or volunteers have a current Working With Children Check clearance number. So you don’t need to check a person who is employed but if your child has a coach or tutor that you pay directly you can go online to verify a Working With Children Check.
How to verify a WWC online

To verify, follow these simple steps:

**STEP 1**  Ask the person who works with your child for their surname, date of birth and WWCC or APP number.

**STEP 2**  Go to [www.kidsguardian.nsw.gov.au/check](http://www.kidsguardian.nsw.gov.au/check) and click on this blue button:

![Start Here](image)

**STEP 3**  Under Verify, click the Individuals (e.g. parents) Verify button.

**STEP 4**  Complete the form, including the reason why you are checking the person (e.g. sports coach, dance teacher etc)

**STEP 5**  Click Submit.

**STEP 5**  You will receive the outcome by email.

What should I look for when choosing a safe program for my child?

It’s always good to become familiar with the places where your children spend time. A Working With Children Check is important but it’s only one part of what should be done to make a place ‘child safe’. When choosing a service or program for your child it’s important to ask questions of those in charge so they can tell you what they do to keep kids safe.

For example, do staff have the right qualifications and training? What type of training, ongoing support and advice do workers receive about creating a child safe environment? Does the organisation involve the parents and children in the decisions that affect them? How does the organisation respond if there is a complaint or allegation?

It’s also important to ask your children about their experiences and let them know you are interested in what they do. Talk about safe behaviours and teach them to talk to you so they can tell you if they ever feel scared, worried, upset or uncomfortable.

Some questions that may help to start the conversation include:

- What do you like most about the service?
- What don’t you like?
- Does anybody make you feel happy?
- Does anybody make you feel sad?
- What makes you feel safe?
- What makes you feel scared?

To find out more about child safe organisations go to:


or contact us on (02) 8219 3600
Have a great week and remember:

“The more that you read, the more things you will know. The more that you learn, the more places you’ll go.”  - Dr Seuss

Liz Sinnott
Principal

PLEASE VISIT OUR SOCIAL MEDIA PAGES:
Facebook:  https://www.facebook.com/darlington.ps.3
Twitter:   @DarloPS
Email:    darlington-p.school@det.nsw.edu.au
Website:  http://www.darlington-p.schools.nsw.edu.au/home
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