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From the Principal

Our vision is: To provide engaging, relevant curriculum and innovative, specialized teaching in partnership with families and the community in a safe, supportive environment.

Contemporary research indicates that engagement/partnerships linked to learning generate a much greater impact on student outcomes. Michael Fullan (2000) identifies that effective schools actively seek out relationships with the community.

As a school community we are currently in the process of developing our Parent and Community Engagement Framework which seeks to identify strategies and tasks to improve our learning partnerships, community collaboration, decision making and communication.

Teacher Aide Day
Recently as a school we celebrated Teacher Aide Day. This day of recognition was a great opportunity to acknowledge the wonderful work our Teacher Aides do each and every day. Teacher Aides at MOSS are support practitioners who contribute significantly to the learning and well-being needs of the students in our care. Our Teacher Aides are highly regarded for their commitment, professionalism and care.

Individual Learning Plans
Individual Learning Plans (ILPs) are working documents, designed by teachers in consultation with parents and stakeholders. Implementation of the ILPs involves putting into practice the interventions, strategies and supports that assist students to progress towards their learning goals. All ILPs are monitored and reviewed on a regular basis, however, it is this time of the year when a more formal review takes place. Parents are encouraged to be part of this formal review process in consultation with school staff.

Our Vision Statement:
To provide engaging, relevant curriculum and innovative, specialised teaching in partnership with families and the community in a safe, supportive environment.
Continued from the Principal

Art Show
The quality of the art in this year’s Art Show was incredible. Showcasing the student’s work both at school at Mt Ommaney Shopping Centre was a wonderful opportunity to share the students’ creative talents and abilities.

Thank you to all staff who assisted with the Art Show but particularly to Jim Green, Bettina Moffatt, Helen Gilmour and Julie Crighton for all of your efforts. Thank you also to our new friends at Ray White Middle Park for sponsoring our auction.

Sports Day
The highlight of the MOSS Sports Day was witnessing the high level of student participation and enthusiasm. It was truly wonderful to see the students cheering each other on throughout the day.

This year the Yellow Team were victorious, however, in line with the spirit of the day all students were winners! Special thanks to Nicky Champeaux our HPE Teacher who organized the events and did so in a manner that ensured all students could participate at a level appropriate to their capabilities.

Thank you also to the Jindalee State School band for their ongoing commitment to our school.

Implementing the Australian Curriculum
This term we welcomed our new school based Science Coach - Kerry Hargreaves. Kerry has been working collaboratively with staff to develop our draft Science Plan for 2014 – 2016. The MOSS Science Curriculum which is based on the Australian Curriculum Units is supported by the Primary Science Connection resources has been extensively differentiated to meet the unique needs of our students. Science kits for units of work are currently being developed. Mentoring, coaching and collaborative teaching will be an integral component of the role of our science coach when supporting this curriculum implementation.

Under the leadership of our Head of Curriculum, Tracy Cronin, the curriculum team have been having rich conversations around student reading and literacy data. Students in the Early and Middle years have been streamed into reading groups. These reading groups aim to meet the unique learning needs of the students. Reading groups will commence next term in the afternoon. Parents are very welcome to join in.

Intensive Interaction
Congratulations to Ben Holt and the II team for recently being recognised by a number of paediatricians. “There has been a major improvement in his social interaction since undergoing II at MOSS.”

Outside School Hours Care
The opportunity to access quality and reliable Outside School Hours Care has been identified as a key priority for many of our families. Recently Sondra (P&C President) and I met with the area manager for Multicap. We are hopeful that ongoing discussions and consultation will achieve the desired outcomes.

Staff
This term a number of our staff have presented at conferences. Congratulations to the following:

- Sandra Schuptar - Leadership of the ECIA National Conference
- Louise Ruzic - “Intensive Interaction and Phatic Communication”
- Tracy Cronin, Katherine Johansen - “Whole School Communication Data Base”
- Chrissy Hamilton - “Understanding Sensory Processing to Promote Learning”
- Kate Troyahn, Tracy Cronin & Jim Green - “Drama as Pedagogy in Early Childhood Education”

The sharing of evidence based practices by these staff members demonstrates the schools commitment and capacity to lead the learning of others with an explicit focus on improving student outcomes.

We hope you enjoy our new newsletter format and we welcome your feedback.

Warm regards, Susan Christensen
From the Deputy Principal

We all know that schools are very busy places - it’s so obvious when we are in our classrooms; we can see it in the playground with activities like Sports Day practices going on; we see our therapists and nurses working with students, staff and families every day of every week; we can hear it when we are in the Admin building with phones going and meetings being held. Some of the “busy-ness” in schools is in relation to meeting the requirements of the Verification Process.

The Verification Process occurs every year in special schools, as well as in mainstream settings where students have special needs. Some of our families have been involved with this process recently and other families will remember being involved in the past. For our new families next year, this will be something that they will also need to be involved with in the first 6-9 months of 2015.

The verification process helps to ensure that all of our students with special needs are in the best educational environment and that the programs being offered will help each student to learn. So, when families are considering enrolment, and a special school is the recommended option, we gather the team around (parents/carers, our Guidance staff, teachers, our nurses etc.) to talk, ask questions and collate information. Then, enrolments happen and school focused learning starts.

As the school year progresses, classroom teams know that the time for verifications to be completed is getting closer. This is where the support of our Guidance Officer is critical. Many of our families have met Kim Johnson and Libby Gray or have recently worked with them around identifying their own child’s needs. Guidance Officers manage the gathering of documentation around the different challenges that each child faces in terms of their Intellectual Disability, as well as how teachers are making adjustments in their classrooms to problem solve/work around those difficulties.

I help teachers to gather information about other disabilities such as Physical Impairment or Autism Spectrum Disorder. We are also very lucky to have the support of Advisory Visiting Teachers for challenges such as Hearing or Vision Impairment. Some students have a Speech and Language Impairment and these need to be verified as well, by Speech Language Pathologists. We also need to seek a confirming diagnosis from your child’s treating doctor (paediatricians, ophthalmologists, neurologists etc.) and are very grateful for families giving us their permission to make contact with hospital teams or private specialists.

The conversations, meetings, doctor’s formal diagnoses and reports etc. all need to be finished and submitted before the end of Term 3 for regional approval. In the new school year, departmental resources for teaching and teacher aide support in special schools are managed, with the previous year’s verification information as a very important guide.

So, you have a sense of how involved it is, but also, how necessary it is that we do it properly and on time. A big “thank you, so much” to all the families, teachers, AVTs, therapists, and of course our GOs, who help to make this work, year after year.

Art show

To view more of the amazing artworks from the show please view our website gallery.
From the Head of Curriculum - Tracy Cronin

National Literacy and Numeracy Week 25 – 30th of August

Literacy and Numeracy week was very successful. The school had a whole school Literacy and Numeracy day on Wednesday the 27th of August. Numeracy activities this year were based around the topic ‘Drinking Water’, students were able to try lots of Numeracy activities including: measuring, matching and numbers. The ‘Read for Australia’ book ‘Sunday Chutney by Aaron Blabey’ was the nationally designated book to read in Australian Schools. An Auslan video of the text was available on the website this was available for students to watch on the Interactive whiteboard.

Special Education Curriculum Cluster (SECC)

Over the past several years MOSS has been very involved with the organisation SECC and have worked on many projects with them. SECC is a cluster of special schools and special education programs across the whole of Queensland including schools from Toowoomba, Mt Isa, Rockhampton, Bundaberg and Mackay. This year myself and Kate Troyahn have been working on the ‘Australian Curriculum Literacy - General Capabilities Project’ for students with complex learning needs. This project has involved unpacking the language of the general capabilities extended continuum in order to create a learning expectation for individual students. The learning expectation is then monitored using a tracking tool. On Friday the 12th and Saturday the 13th of September we both attended the annual SECC conference. We were involved in a closed session where teachers from more than ten schools shared their evidence. The outcomes have been very successful and we are now planning an extension of the project to carry on into 2015. More information on the general capabilities can be found at: www.australiancurriculum.edu.au/GeneralCapabilities/literacy

Literacy Blocks

Term four will see the introduction of Literacy blocks in the Junior and Middle school. Students have been streamed into small literacy groups of three or four. In these groups students will be working on literacy specific activities from a range of resources and at their individual level. Thank you to parents and staff who have been busily covering readers and to everyone who has been creating resources for this new endeavour.

Science

Another new initiative is the introduction of Primary Connections - Science. Next term the school will begin working on ‘Physical Sciences – On the Move’. Primary connections link Science and literacy and align with Australian Curriculum Science Strands. Kerry Hargreaves, who is supporting us to create sustainable Science lessons for implementation, has been putting together interesting science kits for use in classrooms. Kerry and I are also planning a whole-school Science day for Term 4 with activities across all the science strands.
Supporting Positive Behaviour

Mt Ommaney Special School uses a wide variety of strategies to encourage positive behaviours and celebrate student achievement. We believe that by celebrating student achievement across the school, we promote and encourage positive behaviours.

One way of celebrating student achievement is through the Student of the Week awards. During Assembly award recipients are acknowledged by the whole school community and recognition of their special efforts is shared.

There is always a purpose behind behaviour. Both passive and withdrawing behaviours and overt disruptive behaviours can at times interfere with student learning and the learning of others. Mt Ommaney Special School has a strong commitment to Student-centred planning and least restrictive practices.

Student personal needs including sensory and communication needs are always considered as a high priority. The physical environment is also adjusted to meet the specific needs of individual students e.g. staff assess the impact of environmental factors on the occurrence of student behaviour and make adjustments to meet the unique needs and sensory preferences.

Teachers provide access to quiet space environments and ensure each student has some level of choice making regarding their learning environment.

Staff at Mt Ommaney Special School are currently in the process of reviewing school wide expectations. Parent and community involvement in this process is encouraged and welcomed.

School Discipline Audit

Mt Ommaney Special School recently completed the Discipline Audit process. A range of data and information about school wide practices and procedures was collected by the auditor. This data was then used to map where the school is in accordance with the Audit Tool. A comprehensive Executive Summary and five page profile of the audit results are located on our school website. Below are some of the commendations:

The Principal and school leaders have accepted personal responsibility for ensuring a safe, supportive and disciplined learning environment. They demonstrate a strong conviction that student engagement and regular attendance are keys to improved student learning.

Staff members are effectively using a range of proactive reward systems across the school such as, Positive School Designed Certificates and class rewards for students nominated by the class teacher to affirm behaviour and effort success.

The embedded whole school Developing Performance Framework approach adopted with staff members includes regular annual reviews involving the Leadership Team.

The strong and embedded links with businesses, agencies and governmental departments to build parent and community capacity is evidenced by: Intensive Interaction, Regional Showcase 2014 winner The Song Room Drama Program, Complete Performance Solutions Gymnasium Program, MyTime and Men’s Shed. These programs are innovatively enhancing student engagement.
From the Early Childhood Development Program

Term 3 for the ECDP has been wonderfully exciting.

We welcomed 12 new families into the Early Childhood Program and provided the children with assorted art experiences that produced beautiful and creative art pieces that were all sold at our recent auction.

And perhaps the highlight of the term was the 11th Biennial ECIA National Conference that was held at the Brisbane Convention and Exhibition Centre at South Bank from 27th – 28th August 2014.

The ECDP teaching team spent 2 years planning and organising this conference which attracted over 458 registrations from all over Australia and included a significant number of international delegates.

Our international keynote speakers were inspiring and stimulating:

- Professor Barry Carpenter (UK) presented research on the prevalence of Fetal/Foetal Alcohol Syndrome in the UK and Australia. He also shared important findings in reference to the development of premature babies.
- Manfred Pretis: (UK) shared his work on the classification of functioning, disability and health in children and youth in early preventives services and in particular his family intervention strategies.
- Mark Innocenti (USA) presented the PICCOLO (Parenting Interactions with children: checklist of observations linked to outcomes.

Our teaching team are excited about the research and will be exploring ways of implementing many of the things we have been developing over the coming year.

I recently received an email from Professor Barry Carpenter (one of the keynotes)

“I think I am running out of superlatives to describe the ECIA conference. Rarely have I been at such an event where the energy has been maintained throughout. We all ended on a high; full of enthusiasm and a renewed commitment to our field. The organisation was impeccable. Well done to you and your team. You have made such a difference at this time of uncertainty for so many in the field of ECI in your country.”

You can be proud of your early intervention team here at Mount Ommaney Special School. The commitment and dedication of Katie Bartholomaeus and Melissa Farrell is exceptional. These ladies went above and beyond to ensure this conference is recognised within the National and International Early Childhood Intervention Family as being an outstanding representation of the research being conducted around the world for

I also wish to acknowledge the work of Julie Crighton (T/A) who helped us put together the ‘Wave Wall’ that was developed at the conference. This ‘wave wall’ was created to provide the delegates with a visual representation of the key words/phrases that were highlighted during the keynote presentations.

Finally, the staff of the ECDP wish to sincerely thank the members of the P&C for their kind contribution of $1,000.00 as one of the major sponsors of this event. We are thrilled and thankful for the support of the Mount Ommaney Special School P&C.

Sandra Schuptar - Head of Special Education Services
From the Early Years Sector

“We are all unique and beautiful but together we make a masterpiece”

Term 3 has been full of non-stop action. From being scientists, to film stars, to Sports Day athletes, our students have been unstoppable. These are just a few events which have taken place over the term.

Our curriculum focus for this term has been on Science and our senses. Each class has individually explored their senses by engaging in science experiments, cooking and art. Every second Friday the early years classes came together for further exploration, learning and sensory play. This involved materials ranging from slime to sand, goop to shaving cream and music to bubbles. The students have absolutely loved working with their peers to explore what sometimes seemed like the unknown. As the weeks progressed the students overcame their anxieties and were able to engage and participate in a safe learning environment. These sensory play sessions have been a great introduction into our Song Room drama program presentations.

During the filming of the drama presentations each class did their own interpretation of “Sensory Dispensary”. Throughout the filming the students were able to showcase their achievements, their preference for a preferred activity and their engagement through drama.

The early years students have also participated in Sports Day, the annual Art Show, Literacy and Numeracy Week just to name a few. The 2014 Sports Day was a raving success and a first for a lot of our new preps. Team spirit was showcased by face paint, team colours, streamers, dress ups and sportsmanship throughout the day. The students loved participating in running races, bike races, obstacle course and field events – water bomb shot put, ten pin bowling and basketball; they were all winners. The Art Show was another opportunity for students to showcase their artistic flare and to explore their sense throughout the process. This year the wider community were invited to the Mount Ommaney Centre to participate in the public auction.

Overall it was an exciting term with lots of accomplishments by our students. The Early Years staff are all extremely proud of our learners and their efforts this term and what they have achieved. We wish everyone a safe and happy holiday. We look forward to seeing everyone recharged for what will be another busy term.
From the Middle and Senior Years Sector Leader

Term 3 has been a wonderfully busy time full of rich engagement and lots of learning from the students. We are fortunate to have such an energetic and inquisitive cohort who makes teaching to them a pleasure. Being part of the learning journey with these students is a joy and privilege and one that we do not take for granted. Thank you to all the families who support us by ensuring your child is ready to learn when they arrive at school, who celebrate achievements with us and support the school through attendance at events when available.

Below is a brief summary of some of the highlights of the term.

Sports Day - All our students had a ball on Sports Day. Their efforts, behaviour and engagement impressed everyone. The senior students were particularly impressive with our team captains playing an important role. Joshua as the captain of the mighty Yellow team accepted the winning trophy after the scores were tallied.

Excursions - The senior students were fortunate enough to visit the Yatala Fun Day, getting a taste of the EKKA thanks to the generosity of the Showmen’s Guild. The students are to be commended on their ability to cope with a crowded and noisy environment. Well done team.

The Middle School students have been on two excursions recently. The first to the Ipswich Little Theatre to view a performance titled ‘Trouble in Story Book Land’. This excursion was designed to enhance learning in our literacy unit which has been focused upon text appreciation. The teachers were most impressed with their skills as an audience, sitting quietly and attending well throughout the play. The second excursion, thanks to the generosity of the Tyrrell family, was designed to support learning in our science unit. We visited the Queensland museum and encountered creatures from the deep dark parts of the world in the deep oceans installation. The students had a wonderful time and also displayed great social skills eating at the café afterwards.

The Song Room drama program - Both the senior and middle sectors of the school have been in a frenzy of preparation and rehearsal getting themselves ready for school performance filming by the Griffith Film School students. We have been exploring the senses using natural environments as a focus. The senior students have brought the rich sensory experience of the rainforest to life, while the Middle School brought a garden to life using a variety of spices, sounds and visual elements to build a scene.

Literacy Week - Literacy and Numeracy Week activities were very exciting for our students. They enjoyed listening to an interactive story and participated in a variety of different whole school activities. The Middle School has also implemented the ‘Four Blocks’ literacy program this term. The students have shown great interest and we can see their progress too. We are reading, writing and working with words each day. We have developed many books to create personalised resources for further reading.

We would like to thank our volunteer, Jackie, for her one-on-one reading with the students and helping them to create books.

As well as these one off highlights the children are engaged each day in dynamic classrooms abuzz with learning, fun and laughter. The students are always encouraged to take steps forward, no matter how small, along their education path. It is hard to believe that we are already planning for the last term of 2014. We look forward to working hard with the students next term.
Term 3 was a busy time for all our Intensive Interaction (II) classes. In addition to the great work being accomplished on a day-to-day basis, the II team have also been part of the recent Numeracy day activities, an excursion to Neal Macrossan Park, the school Art Show and preparing for the II sports day (a special day in its own right) leading up to the whole school sports day.

These activities are opportunities for our students to be immersed in shared experiences from which Intensive Interactions can be developed. The focus is not so much on the activity, but how each child chooses to interact with the people and other stimuli around them.

This approach to learning supports our students across the wide variety of skills and abilities present in our five classes, from experiencing different sensory stimuli and responding or ignoring; to developing and enhancing early symbolic knowledge.

**Numeracy Day** - Numeracy Day was a chance for our students to engage with concepts of fill, empty, pour, mix, count, more, less and equal (just to name a few). For some, this was simply knocking over a full cup of water and realising the same splash of water doesn’t happen when the cup is empty. For others it was making up a cup of Milo by pouring in, mixing up etc. For others it was using one or two symbols to build the association between a picture of a drink and a cup to drink from.

The water theme was really well suited for our cohort and everyone had a great time engaging with the activity in their own way. A special mention to Quoc and Ally who were determined to empty the large water tub all by themselves.

**II Excursion** - Our II excursion for Term 3 was held at Neal Macrossan Park at Paddington. Nathanael had some graduation photos looking very ‘streetwise’ at the skateboard bowl. Michael and some others practiced balance and mobility skills on some of the ramps. Aviv and Nic just loved the swings, each trying to go higher than the other. Bernard amazed us with his exploration of the environment and came back covered in sand and leaves.

**II Sports Day** - For the last two years, the students in the Intensive interaction classes have had their own tailor made sporting events aimed to meet their specific learning needs. The students had the opportunity to experience a range of sensory and stimulus materials in a fun, non-competitive environment. Everything from throwing balls out of a ball pit to squeezing water balloons and playing with musical instruments was included in this special II sports day.

**Special Mention** - In this edition of the II news, we applaud Brandon’s efforts in following directions. Brandon was able to put a toy away in the cupboard when asked. Great job Brandon.

We look forward to reporting back in our next edition. Until next time, The II Team.
Student Awards

Below is a list of the students who have received special ‘Student of the Week Awards’ at Assembly recently...

Adela... for problem solving about how to make the wheelchair swing work in the big playground (Critical and Creative Thinking)

Archer... for using his “First and then” symbols to eat a piece of toast at each lunchtime before his own food choices (Personal and Social Capability)

Ben... for trying LOTS and LOTS of different foods (Personal and Social Capability)

Brandon... for putting his toy away when asked, after playtime (Personal and Social Capability)

Camy... for holding her head up so well, bike riding with a smile (Personal and Social Capability)

Izzy... for using her Proloquo2Go independently to ask for time to sit and play with friends from different classes (Literacy and Communication)

Maryam... for using her words in difficult, preferred situations (Literacy and Communication)

Sarah... for using good manners, remembering all her shops and walking up the steps so well on her community newspaper delivery (Personal and Social Capability)

Tim... for being responsible for looking after the position of his head in his wheelchair, when delivering papers on his community newspaper program (Personal and Social Capability)

Student... for independently wheeling himself up the ramp to his classroom (Personal and Social Capability)
2014 SPORTS “WEEK”

Did you know that we actually start a week before Sports Day with suitable activities, almost daily, that allow every student to participate at their own level of ability? This year the Intensive Interaction group kicked off Sports Week with a morning of fun filled activities which were innovatively designed to encourage interaction, enjoyment, initiation, participation and more. The water activities are always a big hit.

Then we had the school bowling competition for those students who are more physically challenged. Let me tell you though, they still show their competitive spirit and never fail to amaze us with their personal best efforts and smiles.

Over the next two days the Senior/Middle school and the Junior/Early Years students had their bike and walking/running races. Again, every student tried their hardest with some so motivated to race they just kept racing! We saw some lovely team spirit with students cheering for the other team, hugging friends, waiting for friends in races and just enjoying the activities.

A great end to the Sports Week was Sports Day which started off with all the students and staff, led by the team captains, parading in a very colourful march past. The Jindalee State School band accompanied the march with some great, lively music. A group of visitors from the neighbouring retirement village, Little Kings, Men’s Shed, including parents, siblings and carers, looked on in wonderment as the students set off to run/walk or independently wheel their cross country races.

A highlight for the race this year was those students who have now cast aside their walkers and are walking independently, with just some assistance now and again. We also had a “first ever” with 2 of our Early Years students racing independently in their wheelchairs: one motorised and carefully steered by a very competitive young lady and the other independently wheeled down and up the hill by a very strong young man. We think the windmills that were attached to the front of his chair and whizzed round madly in the wind helped him to fly!!

We have students who find changes to daily routine, new activities, crowds and noise so challenging that it is very difficult for them to manage. Now, sports activities tick all of those boxes! However, our focus is to allow students to join in at their own pace. It was so encouraging to see one little person, who can get quite distressed with all of the above and who was allowed to watch on with no expectation, eventually take herself to the start line of the obstacle course and complete the race, not once but twice and the second time with a big smile lighting up her face. Some students who we had predicted wouldn’t cope and had made alternative arrangements for, actually joined in beautifully with the cross country races. Their courage is amazing!

We finished the week/day with relays and the trophy was presented to the YELLOW team who only just managed to beat the GREEN team.

Thank you to families, staff, volunteers AND of course our wonderful students for making SPORTS DAY 2014 another success. For more photos please go to our website gallery.

Nicky Champeaux (HPE teacher)
From the Support Services (Chaplain)

As I come to the end of my first term at MOSS I would like to say a huge thank you to students, staff and families who have welcomed me into this wonderful community. This term I have had the privilege of attending excursions, helping out at sports day and coordinating MOSS’s involvement in the Lions Children of Courage awards ceremony. The ceremony was very encouraging as we recognised two MOSS students - Mason and Nathanael and a sibling Samara. These awards endeavour to recognise the courage and bravery shown by children and their families every day.

I wish to again offer my thanks to everyone who continues to make the culture at MOSS so warm and welcoming and has integrated chaplaincy into the school’s support services. If you have any questions or would like to say hi, you can reach me at hholl0@eq.edu.au

I look forward to meet you,

Hollie Bailey – Chaplain

From the Support Services (Guidance Officer)

Intellectual Disability: promoting daily living skills in children and adolescents

It was lovely to watch the ABC's program, "Dreamhouse" over the last few weeks. It was great to see a small group of young adults move to more independent living and reminded me again of the challenges ahead for our young people.

During the early years, self-care, play and academic skills are important parts of children’s development. Children usually learn self-care skills in the home environment before starting school but with children with an intellectual disability there may be delays in learning these skills and they often need some support both at home and at school.

You may be concerned how to help your child become more independent. While other children may learn by watching others, children with an intellectual disability may need more specific assistance and opportunities to practise and learn these skills, particularly to use these skills in many different environments.

The support needs of a child may vary according to the nature of their disability, the task and their environment. While some children need little help, others will need considerable more and others will need help with certain activities all the time.

It is important to involve your child in daily living activities around the house because it encourages:

- The learning of new skills on the journey towards greater independence
- Feeling valued, useful and respected
- Being an active participant in whichever way, big or small.
- Communication around everyday things/routines
- Exploration, choice and increased self-determination.

Example of Daily living skills

Children may be expected to independently carry out these kinds of daily living skills:

- Use the toilet
- Wash and dry their hands
- Undress or dress themselves (although they may need help with zips, buttons or laces)  Wash themselves in a shower or bath tub (perhaps with some prompting)  Use a knife and fork  Pack up toys after playing.
- Learning a new skill
ACTIVITIES FOR SCHOOL HOLIDAYS

Holidays are upon us. Yeah – sleep-ins and family time. As well as relaxing with your kids, did you know there are loads of things to do this holiday that may be free or cost very little? Remember: Doing fun things will create life-long memories for you all, as well as give your child/ren experiences that they can talk to others about (and write about when back at school). Here are some ideas:

`BRISBANE KIDS' TOP IDEAS FOR ENTERTAINING YOUR BRISBANE KIDS THESE SCHOOL HOLIDAYS:

1. Head to South Bank and enjoy the sunshine- grab an icecream or hot chips or check out their designer markets on Friday Nights and Saturdays
2. Dinosaur and bug fun at the QLD Museum – and it’s FREE!
3. Take a drive up to Mt Cootha to check out the view FREE (pick up a McDonalds cheap soft serve cone on the way as a treat!)
4. Plaster Fun House at Belmont where pieces start from only $3
5. Tiddlywinks at Nundah for daily disco and indoor playground
6. Bricks N Fun for an indoor Lego building playcentre
7. Victoria Park Golf Course for Mini Putt Putt or one of their golf camps
8. Go roller skating like at Albany Creek Skateaway or Digi Roller Skating Rink
9. Take a City Cat Ride or Cruise the Brisbane River
10. Head to Bribie, Redcliffe, Wynnum or the Gold Coast for a twilight fish ‘n’ chips on the beach or a picnic FREE
11. Take a train ride or check out our guide to Trains, Trains, Trains for more themed locations – kids love to ride on trains!
12. Write up a scavenger list of natural items (or print one of ours for free!) and go on a Scavenger Hunt Adventure FREE
13. Check out any of the playcentres in Brisbane for some indoor, air-conditioned fun
14. Visit one of the 140+ WOW playgrounds on our website FREE
15. Head to your local library for their FREE holiday events for kids (see the Brisbane Kids Event Calendar for more info)
16. Go fishing at our list of recommended places
17. Go for a bushwalk or picnic in the great outdoors FREE. We have a whole host of places under our Explore Brisbane category and Day Trips pages
18. Check out Aussie World who have low-cost entry and over 30 rides
19. Visit Daisy Hill Koala Centre for a picnic and viewing of the Koalas FREE
20. Go strawberry picking at one of the many strawberry farms around Brisbane
21. Visit Maleny Dairies for a real life dairy tour
22. Check out Robelle Domain in Springfield – with lots of water fun and a cafe for parents in the middle
23. Make a kite and go and fly it FREE
24. Go to Lone Pine Sanctuary for a day amongst the animals
25. Check out the Workshops Rail Museum at Ipswich for their regular holiday activities
26. Find a local river or creek with kids and have them build a dam, catch guppies in a bucket and enjoy Brisbane FREE
27. Visit the Maritime Museum at South Bank
28. Head to Queensland Zoo – to see the animals, the Big Pineapple and to have a picnic
29. Go to Mount Glorious for a picnic, child friendly bushwalk and scones with Jam and Cream on the way down
30. Head out to the Abbey Museum in Caboolture for some history and wonder
31. Take a trip to Springbrook for a glowworm tour
32. Go to the beach- collect shells and build sandcastles FREE
33. Head to New Farm Park to let the kids climb the trees or Scarborough Beach Park if you are closer. Climbing trees is good for the soul. FREE
34. Have an icecream for lunch- head to anyone of the best icream shops in Brisbane, as nominated by you!
35. Check out the Model Boats at the Boondall Wetlands on Tuesdays and Sundays- it’s a great picnic spot and has a playground for the kids FREE
36. Check out your local [Bunnings](http://www.bunnings.com.au) for **FREE** holidays activities for kids and the [Bunnings Playgrounds](http://www.bunnings.com.au)
37. Go for a drive up to [Mount Tamborine](http://www.mounttamborine.com.au)- take in the views- pack a picnic – enjoy the fresh air **FREE**
38. Head to one of the many zoos in and around Brisbane> Brisbane Kids offer great deals and discount [here](http://www.brisbanezoo.com.au)
39. Saturday market idea- Robelle Domain for fresh produce...Sunday Markets> Check out the Eagle Farm Markets for some gourmet food and offering, Caboolture for produce and nick nacks- also kids rides
40. Go for a bike ride on one of Brisbane’s awesome kid friendly cycle paths. Better still. If you can… drive with your bikes to somewhere lovely like Redcliffe and go for a ride or a skate if you roller blade **FREE**
41. Visit the fantastic Indoor Skate ramp on Brisbane’s South Side
42. Go camping... and for us chickens.. camp in your backyard! **FREE**
43. Head to lunch at the [Everton Park Hotel](http://www.evertonparkhotel.com.au) for their million dollar playground **FREE** or to the Mango Hill Tavern Indoor Playground for **FREE**
44. Take a visit to [Old Beenleigh Town](http://www.oldbeenleightown.com.au) on the southside (or Old Petrie Town on the northside) over 20 restored buildings.. good for little historians – small cost
45. Head to [White Cedar Creek](http://www.whitecedarcreek.com.au) for a day trip **FREE**
46. Head out for a picnic at the [Cleveland Lighthouse](http://www.clevelandlighthouse.com.au) **FREE**
47. Take your Brisbane Kid indoor rockclimbing at [Rocksports](http://www.rocksports.com.au)
48. Take a trip to your local creek, collect river stones and paint them- either stories or pet rocks **FREE**
49. Contact your local gallery - lots of them will offer kids holiday programs
50. Head to the new [Imagine That Playhouse](http://www.imaginethatplayhouse.com.au) down at Robina
51. Head to Toowoomba to check out the [Carnival of Flowers](http://www.carnivalofflowers.com.au)
52. Head to the [Glass House Mountains Lookout](http://www.glasshousemountainslookout.com.au) for a picnic **FREE**
53. Take your Brisbane Kid indoor rockclimbing at [Rocksports](http://www.rocksports.com.au)
54. While you are at Springbrook, have a picnic at [Apple Tree Park](http://www.apple treepark.com.au) **FREE**
55. Head to a playground at the Gold Coast, guided by our sister website all about [Gold Coast Kids](http://www.goldcoastkids.com.au)
56. Check out [Queen Mary Falls](http://www.queenmaryfalls.com.au) on an awesome road trip with the family **FREE**
57. Go to the movies and check out the the new movies that are released for kids every school holidays
58. Take a day trip to the [Darling Downs Zoo](http://www.darlingdowns.com.au)
59. Head out to the [Wivenhoe Dam](http://www.wivenhoe.net.au) on a day trip **FREE**
60. Check out one of Brisbane’s **FREE** water parks or [Swimming Pools](http://www.swimming.com.au)
61. Check out the Eumundi Markets on a Wednesday or Sunday or another awesome attraction of the Sunshine Coast.
62. Visit [The Corner](http://www.thecorner.com.au) in the QLD State Library **FREE**
63. Check our Slaughter Falls for a swim and a BBQ **FREE**
64. Check out Bellingham Maze for a day out with the family
65. Feed the ducks in your local area **FREE**
66. Go to a Theme Park
67. Check out Calamvale District Park for their AMAZING slide and draw bridge **FREE**
68. Visit the Sir Thomas Planterium and see a show
69. Complete a Laser Tag mission, ride the bumper cars and play the arcade games at [Laserzone](http://www.laserzone.com.au) in Lawnton


**ALL THE BLUE SECTONS ARE HYPERLINKS**
From the P&C

Vacation Care
UnitingCare Community (UCC) will be operating a vacation care program at MOSS during the upcoming school holidays. I am happy to receive any feedback about the program, which can be emailed to me at pandc@mtommanespecs.eq.edu.au. A representative from UCC is likely to attend our next P&C meeting to discuss the current program and future changes.

Outside School Hours Care (OSHC)
Susan Christensen and myself recently met with Multicap again to discuss getting an OSHC program up and running. The response from Multicap is positive but there is some work to be done. Further information will be provided to families as soon as possible.

Art Show
Thank you to everyone who placed bids at the Art Show. Once again our students did an amazing job and produced some wonderful art.

Christmas Cards
The P&C will be selling Christmas cards again this year, featuring some of the students’ art work which was displayed at the Art Show. The cards are being ordered and will be available well before Christmas.

Family Fun Day
We hope that all our families, and especially our dads, enjoyed themselves at the Father’s Day Family Fun Day. A special thank you to Jen McDonald and Stu Havill for the loan of their Harley Davidson and to Pete Schuptar for taking the children for rides around the school grounds. This was a huge success!

It was wonderful to see so many dads volunteering themselves for a GymZOOnasium program health check with Emma. The GymZOOnasium program focuses on increasing awareness of the importance of wellbeing among the entire school community. As you can see Emma kept it nice and light hearted…it was Father’s Day after all!

Baby & Kids Market
The next Baby & Kids Market will be held on Saturday 1 November. The P&C would love to receive donations of good quality baby clothes, toys and equipment which will be sold at the P&C table. Donations can be left at the school office. The P&C’s fund raising efforts are currently being used to purchase equipment for our students, as requested by our therapists.

The next P&C meeting will be held on Monday 13 October at 6:30pm in the Staff Room. All welcome.

Regards,
Sondra Vandeleur - President
pandc@mtommanespecs.edu.au
**Parent and Community Engagement**

“Stronger relationships with parents and the community improve student achievement”

Four staff members recently attended a two day workshop, ‘Action Teams for Partnerships’, aimed at increasing opportunities for family engagement in schools. Research tells us that students achieve more when schools, parents and the local community work together. Our aim is for families to feel empowered to become actively involved in student learning.

Our ‘Action Team’ is currently drafting the school’s Parent and Community Engagement Framework. The framework will then be shared with school staff and the P&C for consultation, prior to its release. The document will identify strategies to increase opportunities for collaboration and information sharing with families and the community. Recommendations will be implemented throughout 2015. We welcome any input from families throughout this process.

**Facebook and QSchools App**

“Facebook allows the school to lower the barriers to participation for members of the community”

Our newly launched [Facebook page](https://www.facebook.com/MountOmmaneySpecialSchool) has already gained 190 likes. The page is proving to be an excellent communication tool that delivers student achievements to families and the community as they happen. Furthermore, the page is providing an avenue for two way communication and we have been able to respond quickly to parent requests that have been posted on the page. Please like the page if you haven’t already done so and feel free to share with family friends.

The recently launched [QSchools app](https://www.qschools.com.au) can be downloaded to your mobile device and provides instant notifications whenever a news item, newsletter or calendar item is added to the school website.

**School Performance Filming**

Our Song Room drama program has been focusing on science and the production of the 2014 school performance ‘Sensory Dispensary’. Students from Griffith Film School have been onsite over the past couple of weeks filming each group as they create imaginative drama lessons based on their explorations of the 5 senses. The film will be launched at the end of year Christmas party and shared with the wider community on social media. This annual showcase of student achievement is only made possible thanks to valuable ongoing partnerships with both The Song Room and Griffith Film School.

**Art Show and Auction**

Over the last few weeks we have proudly displayed our students’ art to the general public at the ECIA national conference and at the Mt Ommaney Centre. Last week many pieces went under the hammer at a public auction. Many thanks to Susan Bardon and her team at Ray White Middle Park, Simon Cudmore, our friendly but persuasive auctioneer, and Michelle Stone and the team at the Mt Ommaney Centre for their support with this event. Also, thank you to staff and families who attended, and particularly those families who went home with multiple pieces. The art auction raised over $3,500 for the P&C and, importantly, showcased the creativity and independent abilities of our students to thousands of community members. Congratulations to all involved.
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