

# Falcon Flyer

Falcon Primary School Community e-news



Principal: Ms Jacque Abbiss ISSUE 7 – Friday 15 December 2023

## Principal's Message



**As the 2023 school year comes to a close, it is a great opportunity to reflect not only on Term 4, but on the year that was...**

Our recent Aladdin performance last week was a huge success and I thank Mr Chaudhry for the countless hours of rehearsals that went into this very enjoyable event. It was fantastic to see so many students involved as well as parents and grandparents in the crowd supporting their children and our school. It was a fabulous way to round off the school year and in the lead up to Christmas it was so heartening to see the generosity of our parent community with their donations of toys, books, games and non perishable food items to support those less fortunate in our community.



We have recently celebrated the worthy achievements of our students at the Presentation and Graduation Assemblies in academic, sporting, arts and citizenship domains. It is very pleasing to see so many students making the most of the opportunities available to them to show their strengths and talents at Falcon Primary School.

Our 2023 Graduation ceremony coincided with a power outage, making us think on our feet as we had to adapt to a ceremony without music, a sound system or powerpoint presentation. Students entered the undercover area to a standing ovation instead of their planned music and our choir performed beautifully without backup music. Our very own GI Jane (Mrs Hennessey) and special guest Clint Benbow scrambled to set up a generator for the sound system which worked intermittently throughout the ceremony. We thank parents for their patience and understanding in these unexpected circumstances. Personally, I think that losing the power was symbolic of the amazing energy that we are losing as this vibrant group of students exit our school. We wish our graduating class of Year 6 students the very best success in their future endeavours as they head off to high school. They have been a wonderful cohort of students with so many aspiring young leaders amongst the group. They have certainly set a very high standard for the current Year 5 students as they progress into Year 6 in 2024.



The Year 6 Graduation lunch this week was a great way to send off our Year 6 students and I thoroughly enjoyed the opportunity to see students in a less formal environment as we celebrated the end of their schooling at Falcon PS.

We enjoyed some fun awards, speeches and highlights, as well as the Graduation Powerpoint, as we ate delicious meals at The Cut Golf Course.

Our Year 6s also recently had a most enjoyable camp at Forest Edge in Waroona. Students made life long memories as they participated in a range of team activities. I sincerely thank our staff, Mrs Jacque Jurewicz, Mrs Kelly Penkala, Mr Jesse Hickman and Mr Cecil Fox for organising and supervising the camp.







Our Year 6 students attended Adventure World on their very last day at Falcon PS and what a way to go out! It was a fabulous day of water fun and memory making and again I thank our supervising staff for the organisation and support of this extra curricular event.

This term saw Falcon win the Interschool Athletics Carnival in A Division. Our Interschool Team competed against Frederick Irwin Anglican School, Assumption Catholic PS, and South Halls Head PS. Several of our students took out medals – Victoria B Runner Up Champion Girl (Y3) Hudson R Champion Boy (Y3), Crystal W Runner Up Champion Girl (Y4) and Lydia D Champion Year 6 Girl. Our Interschool team did us proud. Go Falcon!

Our Kindergarten Orientation for new students in 2024 was very successful with the inception of our Leap into Learning Program which gave students and parents a taste of the Kindy program. We thank our new Kindy parents for their attendance at both the Information session and the Leap sessions as well as the very positive feedback provided. We are excited to welcome many new families to Falcon PS in 2024.

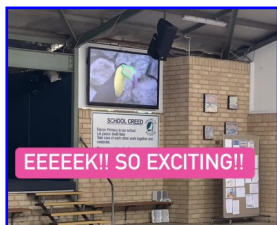


We recently held a Thank You Morning Tea to acknowledge the contributions of our parent volunteers, P&C representatives, School Board members, Award Sponsors, Ed Connect mentors and Story Dog volunteers. We have such incredible support from our wider community. We truly have a great sense of true community and support at Falcon PS. Personally, and on behalf of our school, I cannot thank our volunteers enough, for their generosity, time, energy, donations and sense of community. We are so very lucky to have their support.



We have had a range of curricular and extra curricular excursions and activities this term such as Laser Tag for the Year 4/5s, a Mandurah Museum Excursion for the Year 2s, Kindergarten and ECE end of year celebrations including a Santa Sleigh courtesy of Falcon Lions Club, swimming lessons, Silver Threads Band incursion, Water Corporation Science incursion, Interschool bowling, cricket and lawn bowls competitions, River Guardians incursions, Community Remembrance Day representation, Parliament House excursion, Year 7 Transition program, World Teachers' Day and Day for Daniel. These activities and events complement the learning program for our students and I sincerely thank staff for their efforts in organising these additional activities and events.

2023 has been another great year for Falcon Primary School and we have many things to celebrate. We installed a new sound system and screens in the undercover area worth in excess of \$30K, with a generous donation of \$6K toward this from our P&C. We also purchased new chairs for the undercover area, again with funding from our amazing P&C. Our reprographics room was converted to include a private meeting room and our admin area received a paint refresh. Two of our Pre Primary classrooms received new furniture and the Science Lab has new stools. Our Art room is currently undergoing a full refurbishment with new benching, tiling and flooring. It will also be kitted out with new furniture. Over the vacation period we are having a range of games painted on the concrete in the ECE and Year 1 playgrounds to provide additional activities for students. We installed 3 new touch screen panels to classrooms as we move away from projector screens and over the break we also hope to have a new PA system installed that plays music instead of a siren. These upgrades in 2023 are symbolic of our school revitalisation efforts and I look forward to bringing about further improvements to our learning environment in 2024.







We have made significant progress with our PBS (Positive Behaviour Support) program in 2023 with the inception of our school wide behavioural expectation matrix, PBS characters and school wide PBS lessons and videos. We also implemented a new behaviour management strategy via 1,2,3 Magic and Emotion Coaching with whole staff training in this program. We look forward to continuing our PBS journey in 2024 with a new reward and incentive scheme, a new App to monitor and record positive behaviours and new Honour Certificates based on our PBS expectations which incorporate our fabulous PBS characters.

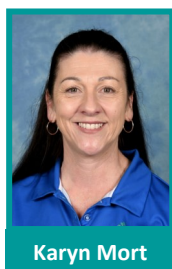
Mrs Annels has led the Environmental Science program in 2023, acquiring a grant to improve our garden area as well as achieving recognition for Falcon as a Waste Sorted School. Falcon PS was acknowledged by Local Member for Dawesville Lisa Munday at the recent community Environmental Expo to which Mrs Annels was invited to present at with several of our fabulous Eco Warriors. Mrs Annels initiated Waste Free Wednesdays and established a team of student Eco Warriors who have been passionate about improving the school. The Eco Warriors have worked together to enhance the school garden, planned, set up and monitored Falcon's Waste Station and worked with staff in the ECE area to set up a worm fridge, composter and garden of their own. The Eco Warriors are also responsible for teaching one student from each of those 5 ECE classrooms every Friday how to look after their worms, process the scraps, water and maintain their garden and composter. We are excited to continue these initiatives into 2024.



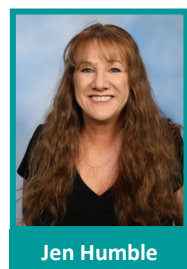
Our recent Public School Review acknowledged our strengths in the Learning Environment, Relationships and Partnerships and Use of Resources domains. Teaching Quality, Leadership and Student Achievement & Progress domains require greater focus and we will be operationalising a range of strategies to ensure significant improvement in these areas. I look forward to strengthening our focus on Teaching Quality and Leadership in 2024 as we implement Talk 4 Writing, modify our approach to teaching mathematics and document our agreed approach to explicit instruction.



Vic French



Karyn Mort



Jen Humble



Leanne Northey

I am excited to announce a new leadership team of staff who are taking responsibility in key areas including Literacy (Mrs Vic French), Numeracy (Mrs Leanne Northey), High Impact Instruction Y3-6 (Mrs Jen Humble), High Impact Instruction K-2 (Ms Clair Foulkes), Student Support (Mrs Karyn Mort). Teaching and learning is our core business and I look forward to a greater focus on supporting our teachers to improve their practice via

professional learning, demonstrations and coaching, as well as supporting students in Literacy, Numeracy and expanded Intervention programs.



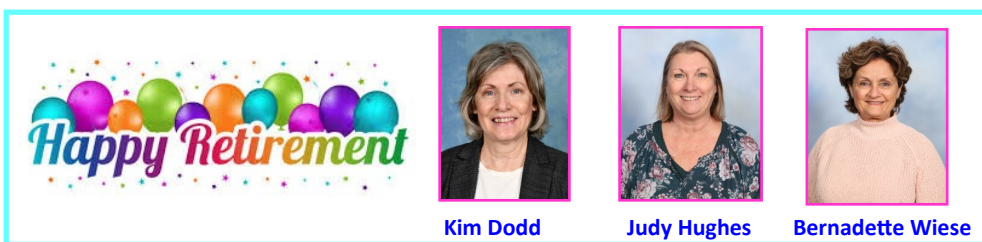
Our wonderful P&C facilitated a range of fundraisers in 2023 including the Cold Play ticket raffle, raising significant funds to direct back towards our school. Our P&C has struggled for numbers over recent years. The P&C relies on volunteers and they are seeking as much additional support as possible to sustain the second hand uniform shop and their many other fundraising endeavours. If you have even just one hour per week to spare to give back to our school, please let our President Caroline Cassidy or the school office know of your availability to help. We will be calling for class representatives in 2024 to boost our parent numbers on the P&C.





Parents received notification this week that Semester 2 reports are available via email. Having seen quite a few reports at the time of writing, it is pleasing to note so many successful students. There are however, a small number who may be disappointed with their results. In almost every case this is the consequence of not applying themselves; and/or not completing class or assignment work; and/or not attending school regularly. If your child has under-achieved in their results for 2023, please have a look at the percentage attendance figure shown on the last page of the report. If the attendance is less than 90%, not only is your child attending school less regularly on average than their fellow students but they are also placing themselves at risk of under-achieving. Success at school and attendance go hand in hand so please look at what you can do as a parent to get your child to school for an average at least 90% in 2024. I promise you that their performance will improve if they attend and complete their work.

As we move into 2024 we have some staff changes. Miss Emily Boyle leaves Falcon Primary School to take up a fulltime position at Oakwood Primary. Ms Sue McLaughlin leaves us to take on a new role with ALCOA, Mrs Christine Lynn finishes a fixed term contract supporting us with a part time position in Year 2, Mrs Campman Withers leaves us for a year of deferred salary leave and Mrs Rachel Kelly leaves us for 6 months to take on a Deputy Principal position at Armadale Primary School. I wish these staff the very best for 2024 and beyond.



We also have several staff who have announced their retirements. Mrs Kim Dodd has had a 30 year career with the Department of Education, 13 of which have been at Falcon Primary School. Mrs Dodd has been a much loved teacher by students and parents as

well as a highly regarded colleague. She will be sorely missed. Mrs Judy Hughes has had a 41 year career with the Department of Education, 28 of which have been at Falcon PS. We thank Mrs Hughes for her contributions, in most recent years to the Japanese language program, as well as her many years as a classroom teacher. And Mrs Bernadette Wiese, although we celebrated her retirement earlier this year. I'd like to acknowledge her 36 and a half years with the Department of Education and the last 19 years at Falcon PS. Another stayer! Mrs Wiese we thank you for your contributions in the classroom and beyond with your ICT role at our school in the latter part of your time here. On behalf of staff, students and parents I sincerely wish you all a wonderful retirement.



Finally, Mr Peter Randall our School Board Chair is leaving us after several years on our School Board, leading our meetings, representing the Board at significant events such as Presentation and Graduation ceremonies, being our conduit to the wider community and giving back to our school constructively and positively. Peter you will be truly missed and leave big shoes and empty coffee cups to fill! Rhys Williams, City of Mandurah Mayor and School Board Member replaces Peter as Chair of our School Board. We also congratulate Simone Weinman and Caroline Cassidy on their elections to the School Board as parent representatives, and Ms Michelle Kelly, Mrs Meridith Lake, Mr Jesse Hickman and Mr Ab Chaudhry as our newly elected staff representatives.

We welcome some fabulous new staff to Falcon PS in 2024. Jane Lyon-Giles is returning to Falcon PS and will be taking a position in Pre-Primary. Hugh Ellard joins us as Japanese Language teacher. Julie Anne O Donoghue joins us in Kindergarten. Leanne Northey joins us as a Year 3 teacher. Jen Humble joins us in Year 4/5. Sophie Tonks joins us in Year 3. Clair Foulkes joins us in Year 2, Caylee Osborne joins us as a Special Needs Education Assistant in Term 1 and Sharon Meredith joins our staff as Library Officer. I look forward to the strengths our new recruits bring to our staff in 2024 and beyond.







Whilst I am looking forward to new challenges in 2024 as we strengthen our focus on Teaching Quality, I know that the staff and myself are also very ready for a chance to rest and reset over the vacation period. Please allow all staff time to rest over the vacation period. The school office reopens on January 24 for general enquiries, Executive staff return on 25 January and teachers return to school on 29 January. Please set yourself a reminder to contact staff after, not before, their date of return.

In closing, I wish the entire school and wider community a very Merry Christmas and a safe and happy New Year. I sincerely thank staff, students, parents and the wider school community for your support throughout my first year as Principal at Falcon Primary School.



## 2024 Important Dates !

- Wed 24 Jan** Front Office Opens 8.00am-4.00pm
- Wed 31 Jan** Students Return to School

