

Dear Parents and Carers,

It is hard to believe that this is the first newsletter of the year because so much has been happening over the first couple of weeks. From the start of year activities to Kinder's first day to staff changes and building development, it has been quite a hectic time. In brief though, some of the highlights and points to remember from the past ten days:

- On the last Friday of the holiday break, it became obvious that we would require not just one new class but two to be able to cope with the influx of students. We had approximately twenty more enquiries in the first week and made the decision to restructure our teaching and our classes. They have settled in beautifully, even with all the changes, and the school has been a joy to be in. We start the year with 17 mainstream classes and 1 support class. Our enrolments into Stage 1 (Years 1 and 2) and Stage 2 (Years 3 and 4) are now closed to out-of-zone applicants and a waiting list is in operation. Our student numbers are at 439. It has been quite the growth spurt.
- We were likewise notified in the last week of the holidays that Staffing had made determinations around several positions. We welcomed a new permanent teacher in Mrs Leanne De Luca and a new temporary teacher in Mrs Hayley Goff. I know they will enjoy their time here at Maitland Public. We also have various temporary appointments filling vacant positions too with Miss Bousfield and Mr Jackson here for the first term before new permanent teachers are appointed to start in Term 2.
- Our buildings have been gutted as part of our future-focused learning spaces project. We have been presented with several brilliant new learning spaces – modern art within a heritage setting – but, while we have the spaces, we do not yet have the paint, carpet, wall linings and furniture but will be working through that this term. It is our expectation that this will be a “new” place to begin next term. Many thanks to those who have been displaced through the works so far, especially our IM class (in the library) and Stage 2 in the hall. They have adapted brilliantly and we are even looking at ways we might use the same format again in the future to foster new friendships and a great start to the year. This project will deliver new spaces for learning for our school and new ways of learning for our students. It is very, very exciting.
- We are upgrading some aspects of our security to ensure the continued safety of our students being in the middle of town. We will be replacing fences, introducing an electronic entry to the front gate, using security doors to manage access to the school proper through the office and upgrading our office area. We are also working with the School Security Unit to install a new alarm, bell and security system.
- Our canteen is currently CLOSED. We will open up soon for purchasing and limited lunches and are currently managing a tender process to lease the canteen to a supplier, thus providing consistency of management and delivery five days a week. Thank you for your patience through this. Our limited access to areas of the school has meant it has taken a little while to set up. It will be up and going in the near future.
- And, finally, we welcome Mr Davis as Assistant Principal and congratulate him on his appointment. He will be working as Assistant Principal – Stage 3 and has hit the ground running in his new area (McKenzie), new room (upstairs – Mrs Robins' old space) and new teaching partner (Mrs Macpherson in a full team-teaching structure).

It is nice to start learning new names and seeing familiar faces. With about 120 new students to start the year it is a different place but definitely retains that calmness and engagement that makes people want to be a part of it. Look after each other. Looking forward to a great year.

Kevin Greaves

Kevin Greaves (Principal)
Maitland Public School
February 15, 2018

