



PARENT BULLETIN

WESTERN AUTISTIC SCHOOL

18 DECEMBER 2018 NIDDRIE CAMPUS

www.westernautisticschool.vic.edu.au

Dear Parents and Carers, Namaste, Selamat siang, Xin Chao, 你好Bonjour, Guten Tag, Mahlaba, Ciao, Kia Ora

We had a wonderful week of celebrations this and last week with musical concerts and family end of year group parties. It was great to see so many parents, siblings, family and friends enjoying the performances and digital stories and seeing how much the children have developed this year. The individual achievements and cooperative group work was on display for all to see. Congratulations again to all our 100 students (approximately) who are graduating from WAS this year.

It has been a highly productive year and a lot has been achieved. Some of the key highlights of 2018 were the Premier's announcement of \$7.3M to rebuild the Niddrie campus as a state of the art early learning facility; the redevelopment of the Wattle Building to house five purpose built classrooms for early years student including new play ground works at Laverton; \$2.4M for the Autism Teaching Institute to deliver a state wide inclusive practice professional learning program for School Leaders in mainstream schools and regional Student Support Services personnel including new websites for the ATI and the school. Congratulations to all the wonderful staff and to school council for the exceptional outcomes achieved at WAS again this year.

Next year is the final year of our current School Strategic Plan 2016-2019. The final elements of the four year plan will be implemented in the 2019 Annual Implementation Plan. The School Review will take place later next year. An important part of the review are parents' voices in the school's development. The self evaluation process will involve wide consultation with the school community. More information will be available next year on how you can have input.

To you and your families our very best wishes for a happy and safe holiday season. We look forward to hearing how the children moving on from WAS settle into their new schools, and to seeing the children and families who are returning to WAS in the new year.

Merry Christmas and Happy New Year.

Mary Thomson
College Principal

Wattle Education Intervention Program Update – Sam Hindes

The Wattle program has continued to develop the Flemington Road campus with a kitchen gardens, a space for chickens in 2019, and some new technology for student learning. At the end of the year a number of students will transition to VCAL options and secondary school. Congratulations to Lachlan M who successfully completed VCE Yr 12 English this year.

Autism Teaching Institute – Sarah Turner Course Coordinator

ATI Graduate Diploma Program – 2018

In Semester 1, 2018 we had 23 teachers complete their Graduate Diploma of Teaching Students with Autism Spectrum Disorder. These teachers were each supported in their classrooms by a trainer/assessor. The achievements of these teachers was celebrated at a Graduation Ceremony in November.

In July 2018 a new cohort of students began, with 40 teachers receiving scholarships from DET, and a further 5 from Catholic Education. Of the 40 teachers, 9 are from WAS, and one is currently employed as a Regional Autism and Inclusion Consultant. In 2019 we also have 2 past students returning to join this cohort to complete their studies.

In September 2018 the ATI's new website went live. The website will streamline some administration processes. Further enhancements are underway including the development of Professional Development certificate generating feature, discussion forums, and Alumni client management system.

The ATI is looking forward to an even busier 2019 anticipating further scholarships to be offered for a mid-year intake.

REMINDER TO PARENTS RE THE END OF TERM/YEAR

School finishes at 1.00pm on Friday (21/12/18). Could families please ensure you are waiting at your child's bus stop 2 hours earlier than normal.

Students returning to WAS start school full time on Wednesday the 30th of January 2018 for term 1. For prep entry students, school starts in February. Please check the website for the dates for prep orientation visits and dates.



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END OF YEAR CONCERTS NIDDRIE



Bikes for free to WAS families

We have a small number of bikes available for free to children at our school, sizes 16 inch and 24 inch. Most do not have training wheels but they are all in working order. Please contact John from maintenance on 0419 259 998.

SENSORY SANTA – BRIMBANK SHOPPING CENTRE

Sensory Santa is for families with special needs children who find it hard to see Santa in the regular shopping hours. Families can book in a 10 min time slot to see Santa. The link to our web site and booking page is below. Once you are there scroll down to follow instructions.

<http://www.sensorysouls.com.au/sensory-santa/bookings/>

SERVICES OF POSSIBLE INTEREST FOR FAMILIES

RESPITE NORTH AND WEST - CARERS AUSTRALIA VIC

1800 242 636 www.carersvictoria.org.au. This website is designed to improve communication and access to information for people interested in disability respite living in the north and west of Melbourne.

AMAZE VICTORIA SERVICE INFORMATION

- If you need immediate crisis counselling, please contact Lifeline (131 114) or Parentline (132 289) Support Groups can be a place to meet others and get support from people who understand. You can find a list of [Support Groups here](http://www.amaze.org.au/victorian-support-groups/) <http://www.amaze.org.au/victorian-support-groups/>
- Local councils offer services and support. To find out what is offered by your council, [contact your local council](#) and ask for the Metro or Rural Access Officer. For respite options in your area, contact the [Commonwealth Respite & Carelink Centre](#) on 1800 052 222 for support during business hours. Should you be in need of emergency respite or need support outside standard business hours call 1800 059 059.
- [Carers Victoria](#) offer advice, information and support for carers to improve their health, wellbeing, financial security and resilience. They also offer up to 6 free counselling sessions. Contact the Carer's Victoria Advisory Line on 1800 242 636
- **PARENTLINE VICTORIA - SUPPORT FOR PARENTS AND CARERS**
Parentline is available 8am to midnight, 7 days a week. Parentline is a confidential phone counselling service for parents and carers of children. www.education.vic.gov.au/about/contact/Pages/parentline.aspx [Headspace at headspace.org.au](http://www.headspace.org.au) Kids Helpline 1800 551 800 LifeLine 13 11 14