WELCOME BACK TO NICHO FOR 2014!

The school holidays are almost over and the time has come for all of us to return to Nicho!

In 2014, the school year for students Year 1 to Year 6 will begin on Wednesday 29th January. Kinder 2014 will come in for their Best Start Appointments in week 1 and then will begin all together on Monday 3rd February.

CLASSES 2014

As per my message regarding staffing to the school community at the end of last year, class structures have remained in draft. Since the end of last year we have had quite a number of new students seeking enrollment into our little school. As a result on Wednesday when students return, students will be placed in temporary classes. Final class structures will be determined on Friday week 1, ready to begin Monday week 2.

COMPOSITES - STAGES NOT AGES

At the beginning of a new school year, many parents might suddenly find their child in a composite class. Naturally, questions arise: for the older group - will my child be held back? For the younger group - will my child be able to keep up?

In primary schools, classes are organised in a wide variety of ways. Composite classes are one such type. Classes that are made up of children of different year levels have traditionally been called composite classes. In recent times, these classes have also

NICHOLSON VISION 2012 +

literate, creative, culturally aware and socially conscious young adults and ready global citizens

DATES

29/1 - Yr 1-6 Students return
29/1-31/1 - Kinder Best Start Appt.
3/2 - All K starts
6/2 - Swimming Carnival 3-6
6/2 - Water fun day K-2 @ Nicho
11/2 - P&C Meeting 7pm
12/2 - Meet the teacher afternoon - 5-6pm @ Nicho
21/2 - Walking Bus
20/3 - Harmony Day
26/3 - Captains’ fundraiser
31/3 - Stewart House Picky Up
31/3 - Year 6 @ Young Leaders Day
10/4 - Anzac Day Assembly
been labelled multi aged or stage classes.

There are two reasons why these classes are formed:

• Administrative - this is where there is an uneven enrolment in school years and classes need to be formed across a number of school years. This occurs in most primary schools and especially in smaller primary schools.

• Educational - where classes are formed on the basis of educational rationale as they are seen to have educational benefit for the student.

Classes are formed following either of the above criteria or a combination of these criteria.

Composite classes have been the source of much controversy over the years, with parents often believing that their child is being disadvantaged in some way by being in one. The key to understanding composites is realising that growth is determined in stages and not by ages.

Composite classes teach children who are at compatible stages - not ages. It makes sense then to group children who are going through the similar stage so they can relate, help and experience together. Even within the same class, children will be at different levels. Teachers recognise this and adjust the work given to each individual student. The class then becomes outcome based rather than competition based - this method of teaching also applies to straight classes.

The good thing about composite classes is that it draws even more attention to individual needs and development and facilitates individualised learning.

Managing composite classes requires quality teachers. Teachers at Nicho are well-versed and experienced in conducting programs in composite classes. Older students are not held back in composite classes. Programs are tailored to the individual students needs across the curriculum. Students are grouped and taught according to their stage of development.

The Department of Education has published overseas research that shows children in composite classes do no better or worse academically than their peers in straight grade class, but that, socially, their development is enhanced. They are more confident, can operate better as part of a group, are more assertive, become more independent learners and better problem-solvers. They also make friends outside of their standard age-groups.

Composite classes, also known as multi-age, multilevel, fluid or vertical groups, are viable ways of grouping students.

THE NICHOR APP

In order to better our ability to communicate we are trialling a school app. The app is only available on iPhone at the moment but will soon be available on Android also. You can download the app from the iTunes store by searching Nicholson Street.

CHANGING EDUCATION PARADIGMS

Something to think about as we start the new year. Click on the link to access the clip

>> http://youtu.be/zDZFcDGpL4U