**Being a Good Bush Neighbour**

Last Thursday 22nd October, Year 4 students with help from groundsman ‘Mr Ben’ and Environmental Education Officers from Brisbane City Council, planted over 100 native shrubs and trees along the banks of the school oval. The following day, Year 1 students also did their bit and helped to plant a further 100 plants within the school grounds.

Year 4 students have been learning the value of habitats and wildlife corridors as part of Council’s Bush Neighbours program. In addition to last week’s planting, Year 4 students also recently visited Downfall Creek Bushland Centre and undertook a guided walk of Raven Street Reserve.

The native plants were provided free of charge by Brisbane City Council, which greatly helps the School to fulfill its ongoing commitment to be a good Bush Neighbour.
Principal’s Post

Community Award

The “McDowall State School Community Award” is presented to a member of the school community for outstanding service and contribution to our school. The recipient may be any member of staff, a parent or school community member having significantly invested of themselves, beyond that normally experienced, toward the improvement and benefit of the school, and in particular, student learning and welfare. We are all proud of our ‘Great State School’ and acknowledge that its educational influence, success and community standing is upheld by the productive partnerships and goodwill extended toward our school by key school community members.

Nominations may be made on the provided Nomination Form or be in note form, as long as the following items are included:

a) Name of person being nominated.
b) Name and contact details of the person making the nomination.
c) Statement of why this person is being nominated.
d) Statement of what influence or difference this person’s service and contribution has made to the school.

The “McDowall State School Community Award” is presented by the Principal at the Year 6 Presentation Assembly to be held on Tuesday 8th December, 2015.

Junior / Senior Badges

McDowall State School students are invited to earn their Junior Badge from the beginning of Year 2 through until the conclusion of Year 3. Students are invited to earn their Senior Badge from the beginning of Year 5 through until the conclusion of Year 6. Both badges are presented on Formal Assembly and are worn on the left (chest) side of the school uniform. The Senior Badge replaces the Junior Badge. These badges are proudly worn in recognition of student achievement and highlights an expectation that the student will fulfill and model their responsibilities within the school community.

Should a student seek election as a Student Councillor, they are required to earn their Junior Badge by the end of Year 2 for Year 3 and by the end of Year 3 for Years 4 and 5. Should a student seek election to a School Captain position in Year 6, they are required to earn their Senior Badge by the end of October, while in Year 5. For all other Year 6 positions, the Senior Badge must be earned by the end of Year 5.

New Parent School Tour

A School Tour for parents new to McDowall State School is scheduled for Wednesday 4th November, 2015 from 9.30am. This tour is for new parents who were unable to attend the School Open Morning held on Friday 23rd October, 2015. Parents are invited to assemble outside School Administration. This tour will provide a general overview of the McDowall State School and will not enter classrooms.

Tartan TAPS (Teachers and Parents Seminars)

Parent Information Seminars delivered by teachers are being made available to existing Years 2-3 parents and existing Years 4-5 parents, to provide them with a broad overview of curriculum (teaching and student requirements), events and activities, teacher insights in preparing parents, Year Level entry standards, student achievement standards, anticipated changes that developmentally affect children; and parent/teacher communication channels. Bookings are available through School Administration. (Tel: 3872 5333)

Tartan TAPS 3-4, 2016
Tuesday 3rd November - 5pm to 7.30pm - School Staff Room.
Tartan TAPS Yrs 5-6, 2016
Tuesday 17th November - 5pm to 7.30pm - School Library.

Annual Notice: Asbestos Management in State Schools

Most schools across Brisbane would contain asbestos related materials within their construction. Indeed, most houses would include asbestos related products. Asbestos related materials continued to be used within construction up until the mid-1980s. McDowall State School was built and opened in 1975. As major renovation, maintenance and building replacement occurs, over time, asbestos related products are gradually being removed from government facilities. In the meantime, the Department of Education and Training has clear procedures and protocols that apply in the management of buildings. These, along with policies and protocols are readily available for parent perusal from the Education website: www.education.qld.gov.au/asbestos. As a general rule, if you leave asbestos related products alone, they are safe.

The McDowall State School is professionally inspected by qualified contractors to advise Education Queensland on building maintenance cycles / programmes and separately on asbestos related building issues, e.g. condition.

There are currently no known asbestos related incidents requiring immediate attention within McDowall SS.

This is not to say, that during the busy activity of large school operations, wear or damage to a suspected asbestos related product could not occur between professional building audits. There is an obligation on all staff and parents accessing our Great State School to immediately report any suspected damage of school facilities to School Administration.

All work on school facilities is overseen by the Business Services Manager and all tradespeople are required to attend School Administration to receive a Work Access Permit before commencing work. If an actual or suspected asbestos-related product is ever damaged, the area is immediately closed and professional contractors are called to immediately assume responsibility for testing and repair. These repairs are performed out-of-school hours (often during a week-end). A generic departmentally produced letter is issued to parents. If it is known that a non-asbestos related product is involved, repairs will be effected within the usual school maintenance schedule.

All staff review departmental asbestos management policies each January Pupil-Free Days. This article is an annual information reminder to parents.
Class Configurations For 2016
Class teachers will soon begin to review Class Lists as we progress toward the 2016 school year. Such an annual review comes about due to new enrolments during the year, student transfers, formation of Instrumental Music classes across Years 3-6, the change in teacher / student staffing ratio between Years 3 & 4; and teacher consideration of factors that may affect student learning. Eg. Retention and Acceleration. McDowall State School endeavours to maintain class sizes at 24 students (average) across P-3 and at 28 students (average) across Years 4-6. The teacher salary allocation to McDowall SS is not confirmed until Day 8, 2016. All parents / students / teachers therefore rely on parents keeping School Administration informed should a lodged Enrolment Application not remain current or perhaps due to relocation, an existing student will not continue to be enrolled at McDowall SS in 2016. Day 1 surprises may result in both Class Lists and teachers being changed following Day 8. Class Lists will therefore not be finalised until the morning of Day 1, 2016.

Should any parent believe there is information that should be considered by Year Level Teams (teachers) while Class Lists are both reviewed, rechecked and drafted toward 2016, they should firstly discuss the issue with their child’s class teacher before writing a very short note to the respective Deputy Principal. Such information will be considered within a complex context of many competing educational priorities. It is therefore not possible to satisfy all considerations.

Principal’s Gallery
Each week, classes are provided the opportunity to showcase some of their excellent student work in the “Principal’s Gallery” located within the School Administration foyer.

| 2nd Nov 2015 | SD2   | Please enjoy a snapshot of artwork featured this fortnight from classes:  |
| 9th Nov 2015 | SD1           |
| 16th Nov 2015 | PA1           |
| 23rd Nov 2015 | PA2           |

School Library News

Library Borrowing
2nd – 6th November - Last week for Library borrowing.  
Fri 20th November - All borrowed items returned to Library.

Library borrowing ends early each year to give us enough time to complete a stocktake of our resources and to organise and prepare the School Library for 2016. Thank you.

Happy Holiday Reading
While book borrowing is not available at school, we encourage you to take advantage of the wonderful public libraries in our area. You’ll be able to access many wonderful books, CDs and DVDs as well as holiday activities and events.

Closest Public Libraries:
Everton Park, Chermside, Albany Creek and Arana Hills.

Last Book Club for 2015
Orders for the final Book Club of this year have now been finalised and orders should arrive back at school soon.

I’d like to take this opportunity to thank the wonderful team of Book Club ladies, capably lead by Christine Burrows and Belinda Isaacs. We truly appreciate the time, effort and energy that goes into making Book Club an anticipated event in our school calendar and such a worthwhile project for building the resource collection at McDowall SS.

Book Fair Reminder
Book Fair (Final): Fri 20th - Thu 26th November, 2015.
The Book Fair will be open from 8am until 3.30pm, except for Thursday 26th November when it will close at 9am. Our Book Fairs are always successful because of your wonderful support, so please come and have a look. You might even be able to do some early Christmas shopping!

Inter-school Reader’s Cup
On Thursday 12th November, McDowall SS Library is hosting the Stafford District Inter-school Reader’s Cup. This is organised and run by our local Teacher-Librarian network. Our School Team consists of Olivia, Casey, Adam and Isaac from Year 5.

Students are required to answer questions about two books, the titles which have been chosen in recognition of the Anniversary of World War I - ‘Meet the Anzacs’ by Claire Saxby and ‘The Children of the King’ by Sonya Hartnett. Our students have been preparing for the competition and we’re confident they will do well.

CONTACT: Mrs Saunders - Teacher Librarian
Music News

Gold! Gold! Gold!

A very excited Wind Ensemble, Presto String Ensemble and Adagio String Ensemble performed in the 19th Annual Brisbane Schools Music Festival on Saturday 24th October. In a hotly contested competition, our students battled it out against bands and ensembles from a range of private and state primary schools from across Brisbane.

The students played beautifully and were given some lovely feedback about their performances. Some of the adjudicator’s comments are below.

“This ensemble has a very nice sound. Lovely lower brass and nice trumpet work…Some very strong percussion playing through this piece…Lots of really impressive playing.”
Heather McWilliams – Band Adjudicator – Brisbane Schools Music Festival.

“Lovely to see a group standing for the performance. This allows for so much more freedom of movement….Lovely use of dynamics throughout….Good to hear the contrast between staccato playing and legato playing…A fine performance!”
Stephen Chin – String Adjudicator – Brisbane Schools Music Festival.

A hearty congratulations to all the students in the three ensembles, you’ve worked so hard this year. A big thank you to Mrs Gyte and Mrs Payne for their dedication and hard work in preparing our students for this competition. Also thank you to Mrs Anderson for her piano accompaniment during the String Ensemble’s performance. To all the Mums and Dads, a big thank you for supporting your child’s musical development – it is very much appreciated.

CONTACT: Ms Crowhurst – Head of Curriculum

Come Celebrate With Us!!!!!!

This year, for the first time the McDowall State School Music Department will be presenting two Celebration Concerts. The concerts aim to showcase the wonderful talents of the many students who make up the McDowall SS Instrumental Music Immersion Programme and Choral Programme.

Wednesday evening 25th November we will present our end of year Celebration Concert featuring the following ensembles and choirs:

- McDowall SS Wind Ensemble
- Junior Stars Band
- Stage Band
- Honours Choir
- Senior Choir
- Adagio Strings
- Presto Strings

The concert will commence at 6.30pm sharp in the School Hall and should run for approximately an hour. A letter with further information including ticketing, uniforms and student meeting times will be coming home soon.

On Thursday 26th November, students from the Instrumental Music Immersion Programme will perform in a special matinee concert. Please note the change of date for this concert. The incorrect date was printed in the last Tartan Times.

The following ensembles will feature in this matinee performance:

- Year 3 Combined Bands
- Year 4 Band
- Year 5 Band
- Tremolo Strings
- Dolce Strings
- Junior Choir

A letter with further information about this concert will be coming home soon.

All our students are looking forward to performing and showing off their skills and talents. We hope to see you there!!!!
Sports News

State Athletics Carnival

The above students recently travelled to Townsville to compete in the State Athletics Carnival. They all had a great time and said it was tough competing against the best athletes in the State. Well done team!

Orienteering

Years 4-6 students have been participating in orienteering activities in their PE lessons. This combines map reading and cross-country running. Students are enjoying the challenges of this unique sport. If your children would like to continue developing their orienteering skills, there are a number of clubs that operate in our local area.

CONTACT: Mr Henderson - PE Teacher

P&C Association News

www.mcdowallss.com

Update from the Executive

So, why is the P&C Association so important? The P&C Association is critical for "putting the CREAM ON YOUR CHILDREN’S EDUCATION". The School is funded to deliver the Australian Curriculum to all enrolled children (8 learning areas, 7 capabilities, 3 cross curriculum priorities).

However, the funding is not usually enough to cover the costs of the type of education many of us here, want for our children. Great outdoor play equipment, well maintained grassy play areas, more teachers’ aides, more technology in classrooms and buildings that provide modern spaces for learning.

The School does not need the P&C Association to deliver the Australian Curriculum but it does need the P&C Association to add the ‘bells and whistles’ that has probably made McDowall SS stand out to you as a great option for your children.

We know that many of you are challenged by busy schedules and childcare arrangements, however we encourage all of you to try and contribute ONE thing PER TERM to assist the P&C Association continue to add the CREAM ON YOUR CHILDREN’S EDUCATION.

P&C Association Key Contacts

President
Soraya Bews
president@mcdowallss.com

Secretary
Amanda Ferguson & Jodie Muller
secretary@mcdowallss.com

OSHC
Roxanne Fitzgerald
admin@mcdowallss.com
3353 5755

Tartan Tuckerbox
Anelle Moller
tuckshop@mcdowallss.com
3872 5304

It's Mango Season!!

Mangoes are back at McDowall State School. You can order as many boxes as you like (14-20 mangoes per box depending on the size of the mangoes) for $25 per box. For more information contact Julie Wilson in OSH on 3353 5755.

Annual Parent Survey

Click here now to take this 10 minute survey if you are an existing family at the school.

So far, 150 families have responded to the P&C Annual Survey. However, we need an additional 95 responses to ensure we have a statistically representative sample.

Year 1 parents are clearly in the lead with the highest response rate of more than 40%, while only 11% of Year 6 parents have completed the survey.

Welcome To Our New Families

Quick shout out to all the new families getting ready to attend McDowall SS next year. It’s a time of mixed emotion for everyone. Take advantage of the TAPS and TADPOLES programs as they will make your transition to school life so much easier. As they say, “Knowledge is Power”.

Get Ready For Next Year Now

Remember to get your order forms in for next year’s supplies by Friday 30th October 2015.

Voluntary Positions Vacant

Would you like to:

- Better understand how McDowall SS functions?
- Meet new people and learn new skills?
- Contribute within the school that is educating your children?
- Actively make a difference to not only your child’s educational outcomes but also the educational outcomes of all children enrolled at McDowall SS?

If so, consider taking on one of the five P&C Association roles that will become vacant in 2016. If you have the skills required and are interested please contact Soraya Bews, P&C Association President at president@mcdowallss.com.