The continuing message for Harmony Day in 2012 is that **Everyone Belongs**, which means all Australians are a welcome part of our country, regardless of their background. It's a time to reflect on where Australia has come from and to recognise the traditional owners of this land. Also, it's about community participation, inclusiveness and respect – celebrating the different cultures that make Australia a great place to live.

One way to celebrate and embrace diversity is through food. We are blessed that we have a rich and diverse range of menus and food options as part of our daily diet. Canowindra High School has chosen this avenue of cultural diversity to celebrate Harmony Day. ‘A Taste of Harmony’ coincides with Harmony Day and is a way of appreciating the foods that have been introduced to Australia. A five day menu, sourced from the continents around the world, has been developed. These foods will be available from the canteen for this week only with the regular canteen menu still available. Please support Harmony Day by recognising and appreciating the many cultures, their way of life and the contributions they have made that makes Australia the place it is today.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DAY</th>
<th>FOOD</th>
<th>COUNTRY/ CULTURE</th>
<th>Price</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Monday</td>
<td>Spaghetti Bolognaise</td>
<td>Italian</td>
<td>$5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tuesday</td>
<td>Fried Rice</td>
<td>Asia</td>
<td>$5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wednesday</td>
<td>Nacho’s</td>
<td>Mexican</td>
<td>$2.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thursday</td>
<td>Ham &amp; Cheese Croissants</td>
<td>French</td>
<td>$2.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Friday</td>
<td>Butter Chicken</td>
<td>Indian</td>
<td>$5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**A Focus on Agriculture:**

Christopher Pace demonstrating his trailer reversing skills

Yr 11 Ag students with A.I. Equipment, liquid nitrogen tank and semen straws from a limousin bull

Year 12 students checking the water quality and pH of the hydroponics tank water

Transition links—Yr 6 Primary students planting seeds in their vegetable plot at CPS
Parents want their kids to read, but many think that the only form of ‘legitimate’ reading is a print book. If you want your child to be a reader it is important to redefine your concept of what constitutes a ‘book’.

A book is many things. It is the traditional novel with which most of us are familiar, but it is also information (or non-fiction) books, graphic novels, ebooks and audio books.

Many children, particularly boys, find the idea of reading an entire novel quite overwhelming. But give them an information book on their favourite subject and they will happily sit and read. This form of reading encompasses more browsing and reading short passages of information, and is different to reading a novel. However, it is still a form of sustained reading that will engage the reader.

Many reluctant readers find the Guinness Book of Records non-confronting, as it has small passages of information accompanied by numerous illustrations. It also has a high interest level. Boys will sit, engaged, with this book for a sustained period of time. Job done. And who knows what further reading this will lead to? The most important reason to get kids reading is to develop their ability to engage in sustained periods of reading and reflection, which will ultimately develop their critical literacy skills.

Encourage reading with Graphic Novels. The Graphic Novels of today are a little more sophisticated than the comic books of our youth. They are indeed novels, with a full plot, narrative structure and character development. They deal with all topics, from superheroes to the Holocaust. There are also Graphic Novel adaptations of the many of the classics: Shakespeare, Dickens and Austen. More importantly, to the reluctant reader, a Graphic Novel may not appear as daunting as a traditional novel. They appeal to visual learners, since some have no text at all. Graphics are a legitimate form of reading, and will often lead to better things, such as reading entire novels. Popular series such as the Stormbreaker and Artemis Fowl are now being adapted into Graphic Novels. This is a great development for reluctant readers. They can read the Graphic Novel and then, similar to watching a movie adaptation of a book, they may yearn for more detail and read the novel.

If your child is a typical screenager, encourage reading through ebooks. Many ebooks for teenagers may appeal simply because they are read on a screen. Audio books will suit the reluctant reader. While listening does not bring any of the traditional benefits associated with reading the printed word, becoming familiar with the plot and characters may be an entry into reading a traditional book, making the idea of reading less daunting.

By redefining the concept of book, you are providing more options for your child. Read anything, even newspapers and magazines. As a teacher and librarian my mantra has always been “I don’t care what they read, as long as they are reading”. I know this to be true: reading ebooks, magazines, information books or graphic novels invariably leads on to bigger and better things.


Next week: Reading Rules no. 5

Want to know how to make reading work for you?

Sign up for the Reading Challenge and be rewarded just for reading. Read a book of your choice, then log onto The Reading Thing blog and write your response. How easy is that?

See the Library staff for details

Open Touch Football

On Thursday 15th March Mrs Balcombe and Miss Davis took the Open Boys and Girls to Blayney to play the first round of the state schools knockout competition. Both teams were victorious with the Boys winning 7-3 and the girls 6-1. Tries were scored by Kain Earsman 2, Brayden Cassidy, Talby Upton 2, Jayden Brown, Tim Middleton, Jess Fisher 2, Madie Vitnell 2, Taniel Thornberry and Brittany Wilson. Thank you to the parents that drove, the coaches and especially to the senior boys for their exquisite taste in 80’s music.
Canowindra High School P & C Association News

It is with regret that at the next P&C Meeting, which will also be our AGM, we will farewell 2 of our committee members, Cathy Ellis and Angela Thornberry, who after holding various positions over a number of years have decided to step down. They have done a wonderful job and we thank them both for all of the time and energy they have so generously given to the P&C.

As a result, it means that we will have a couple of positions that will need to be filled at our AGM which will be held on 17th May. For those of you who don’t know, the P&C is an important part of Canowindra High School. Without a P&C we would have no canteen, no Deb Ball, no sausage sizzles, no cake stalls or raffles, no school gardening days etc. It also means that the P&C funds are not there to support additional school purchases like the mulcher which are not covered by normal school funds. This said, the P&C cannot operate without an executive committee, so we would love to hear from anyone who might be interested in taking on a role. You will be supported in every way and you don’t need to have experience, just be willing to have a go! For more information you can contact the school or Cathy Ellis, President, on 63441560 A/H.

We also know that whilst it is not always possible for parents to attend the monthly meetings, many would still like to help out at times. It is with this in mind that the P&C is hoping to put together a list of parent names and contact details along with an area that they may like to help with. It might be helping to cook the BBQ at the yearly Parent Teacher nights, or it could be volunteering in the canteen on a red day. It might be baking a cake for a cake stall or selling raffle tickets down the street occasionally. All efforts are really appreciated by the school, the other parents/families and especially the children. More details regarding this will be in a future newsletter.

School Social report

Last Thursday night the SRC ran a social and it was a huge hit.

There was a great turn out from the student body and lots of people supported the theme of THE LETTER M. The SRC judged the best participants and those went to Rueben Bondareff as ‘The Masked Marauder’ and Tannaya Stokes-Hicks as ‘Minnie Mouse’. Special mention goes to Marcel Marcou (Ms Davis) an the lovely Marilyn Monroe (Mrs Burn). The lucky door prizes went to Blake Cramer and Tabitha Searston.

Annie Elliott
Official reporter/photographer

Principal’s News

Thank you to all Year 11 Parents/Carers who are having interviews with their child, Mrs Curtis, Mrs Taylor and myself. It has been a great opportunity to work towards planning for your child’s post-HSC plans and implement strategies to improve their current learning needs.

Well done to the many staff and students who have been involved in numerous activities in the last week. The Social was a great success and the SRC and Mrs Myers did a wonderful job organising it.

Congratulations to our boys and girls touch football knockout teams, led by Mrs Balcombe and Miss Davis that had a win in Blayney and now move on to the next level of the competition.

This week’s newsletter includes an information flyer for parents and carers on ‘Regular School Attendance’. It is important that parents and carers understand their responsibilities in ensuring that their children attend school every day. Please be aware of that reasons for absences such as shopping, birthdays and minding younger siblings are not justified reasons. Please keep us informed by note, phone call, email or by visiting the school if your child will be absent.

School begins at 8:48am and all students must be there on time each day.

Congratulations to Alexandra Stoimenoff and her family who won the $50 school voucher in the Priority Schools Program (PSP) survey draw!

Nicole Bugeja
Principal (Rlg)
What's On

Week 9B
Monday 19 March Year 11 Interviews
Tuesday 20 March Year 11 Interviews
Wednesday 21 March Year 11 Interviews
Thursday 22 March SRC Video Conf 12 - 2 pm
Friday 23 March AFL Trials - Forbes

Week 10A
Monday 26 March Yrs 11 & 12 ArtExpress VC
Wednesday 21 March Canteen Red Day
Thursday 22 March 15's & Open League - Blayney
Friday 23 March Term 1 Assembly - Period 2

Assessments Due

Week 9
Year 12 - Biology 2, D & T 2, Physics 3, Visual Arts 2
Year 11 -
Year 10 - Agriculture 1, PASS 1
Year 9 -

Week 10
Year 12 -
Year 11 - Agriculture 1, Primary Industries 1, Senior Science 1, Visual Arts 1
Year 10 - History S1 1, Farm Tech 1
Year 9 - Agriculture 1, Farm Tech 1, PDHPE 1, Art 1

Cowra Rugby Union Needs you!

Cowra Rugby Union are taking registrations for the 2012 season.
They are desperate looking for u/17 boys interested in playing.

If you would like further information please contact
Chris Brown 0428637255 or see Ms Troy at school.

WANTED: PLASTIC CONTAINERS

The Food Technology department would now like donations of plastic storage containers. If you can spare any ice cream, margarine or other plastic food containers please leave them at the office.
Regular School Attendance

Information for parents and carers

All children have a right to an education. Only by regular school attendance can children make the most of educational opportunities, leading to greater social and economic outcomes.

Schools play a vital role in the social and emotional development of children. Regular attendance enables students to develop a sense of belonging to a peer group and assists in building important coping and friendship skills. Confident children are less likely to engage in anti-social behaviour.

If students miss out on the basic skills in the early years of school, they may experience learning problems in later years. Ultimately, unsatisfactory attendance at school may affect the awarding of the School Certificate.

Schools, in partnership with parents, are responsible for promoting the regular attendance of students. While parents are legally responsible for the regular attendance of their children, school staff, as a part of their duty of care, monitor part or whole day absences. Parents and schools have specific responsibilities concerning children’s attendance at school.

Responsibilities of the principal

Principals are legally responsible for maintaining accurate records of student attendance. When reasons for absences are provided to the school by parents, principals are accountable for their decision to record a student’s absence as justified. Principals may decline to accept as satisfactory an explanation for an absence and will record that absence as unjustified.

Principals may request medical certificates or other documentation when absences explained as being due to illness are frequent or prolonged.

Responsibilities of parents

The Education Act 1990 requires that parents (including carers) ensure that children of compulsory school age are enrolled at and regularly attend school, or are registered with the Office of the Board of Studies NSW for home schooling. The New South Wales Department of Education and Training may take legal action against parents and carers who do not send their children to school without a valid reason.

What is a justified reason for being absent from school?

Justified reasons for absences may include the student:

- having an unavoidable medical or dental appointment (preferably, these should be made after school or during holidays)
- being required to attend a recognised religious holiday
- being required to attend an exceptional or urgent family circumstance (such as attending a funeral)
- being sick, or having an infectious disease.
Head lice infestations can be a common occurrence, particularly in primary schools. Parents should check their child’s hair regularly for head lice and undertake treatment where eggs or lice are identified. Information on how schools can support parents to manage and prevent the spread of head lice can be accessed from the student health section of the Department’s website at http://www.schools.nsw.edu.au/studentsupport/studenthealth/conditions/headlice/index.php. Advice from NSW Health indicates that there is no need for students to be sent home or excluded from school because of head lice. Having head lice is not a justified reason for prolonged absences from school.

Absences for reasons such as some of the following may not be justified:

■ Shopping
■ Sleeping in
■ Working around the house
■ Minding younger siblings and other children
■ Minor family events such as birthdays
■ Hair cuts.

It is important to realise that parents (including carers) may be prosecuted if children have recurring unjustified absences from school.

Keeping the school informed

If your child has to be absent from school, it is important to tell the school and provide a reason for the absence. To explain an absence parents and carers may:

■ send a note, fax or email to the school
■ telephone the school, or
■ visit the school.

Whenever possible, parents and carers are encouraged to provide an explanation for absences before the absences occur. The principal of the school has the right to question parents’ requests for their child to be absent from school. They may also question an explanation given for a child’s absence from school.

Holidays

Parents and carers are encouraged not to withdraw their children from school for family holidays. If this is necessary parents should discuss these absences with the principal and may be requested to apply for a Certificate of Exemption from attendance at school. This will ensure that these absences are not permanently recorded as unjustified.

When considering applications for Certificates of Exemption, principals may consider a variety of factors. These may include compassionate reasons, family reunions, the educational merits of the holiday and agreement for the student to complete assignments while on holiday. In some cases application for Distance Education may be more appropriate than seeking an exemption from school attendance.

Arrival on time

Arriving at school and class on time:

■ ensures that students don’t miss out on the important learning activities scheduled early in the day when the students are most alert
■ helps students learn the importance of punctuality and routine
■ gives students time to greet their friends before class and therefore,
■ reduces the opportunity for classroom disruption.

Lateness is recorded as partial absence and must be explained by parents or carers in the same way as other forms of absence.

Must my child attend all activities, including sport?

YES. Sport and other physical activities help the healthy physical and mental development of children. Sports and sports carnivals are normal school activities and students must attend.