From the Principal’s desk:

This year is Furlong Park School’s 30th anniversary on the Furlong Rd site. Of course, those who have been around from the beginning of the school, will know that it actually started as an annex at St Albans Special School (now known as Jackson School). We intend to acknowledge and celebrate this milestone later in the year and will be asking all our current and past families and staff to join us in the celebration.

Auslan has started the year with Maria and it is a great start to have so many families participating and learning how to communicate using the Auslan language. The Auslan course being offered by the Auslan Company at the school on Monday evenings will now be run at VU in Sunshine.

Swimming went extremely well last year. All the children who had participated in other years were able to assist the younger ones to understand and follow the routine, even though it had been 2 years since they were last in the pool with the school. It is great that all the children are attending the pool this year. Remember to send bathers, towel and lunches on Fridays in term 1. It is also a great idea to name all clothing especially uniform items. When there are more than 20 red T-shirts in the change rooms, it is very difficult for the children to find their own or the staff to help, without names.

This year we started with a few staff changes. Lisa Coughlan resigned for personal reasons and Dianne Herrmann was offered a teaching position at Forest Hills Secondary College. This meant a few class changes were put into place the week before school started. Pip Risby took on a double Prep group with a few students moved to a different class and Deb Moloney was moved to cover Dianne’s group. To support these moves, we have employed additional Educational Support staff-Clayton and Kayla. The staffing will be assessed during this term and a decision made as soon as possible for Term 2. In the Early learning Centre, Andria Mavrikakis is still on leave and we are hopeful that she will return in Term 2. During Andria’s leave, we have employed Stephanie O’Hanlon and Tammy Jong as teachers and Kayla as additional support.

Last weekend, the school was broken into and at least one digital camera was stolen. The police have attended and are investigating. During the school holidays, we also had our water meter stolen. Again, the police were involved but they rely on people reporting suspicious cars and people. If you see something odd around our school, let me know or call Sunshine Police on 9313 3333. Thank you.

Anne-Maree Crivelli
TERM DATES 2016

Term 1
Thurs 28 Jan-Thurs 24 March (early finish at 2pm)
Easter 25-28 March

NB: Preps do not attend on Wednesdays in February. First year ELC group (3 and 4 yo) transition starts 15 Feb

Term 2
11 April-24 June (early finish at 2pm)

Term 3
11 July-16 September (early finish at 2pm)

Term 4
3 October-20 December (early finish at 1pm)
(Last day for students 19 December 2016)

Excursions and incursions coming up:

Fridays Term 1
Swimming Program-all school area students attend pool

Thursday 18 Feb
Responsible Pet Ownership Whole School-no cost

Tuesday Mar 8
Taster Day @ Sunshine College Year 5 & 6 Students

AUSLAN classes
Maria Burgess will be teaching parent Auslan in 2016.
We look forward to seeing all attendees again in 2016 plus many new families.

Classes run Thursdays at 9.00am

Camps and Excursion Fund - CSEF-are you eligible for this grant?
Do you hold a Health Care Card in your name? If so you may be able to claim the Camps Schools Excursion Fund which will give your child a payment to be used for camps and excursions.

Please note that the Health Care Card must be in your name and also your child must have turned 5 by 30 April. We have attached a copy of this form for completion. Form must be completed and returned to our office together with a copy of your Health Care Card by Fri 26 February

Coffee Mornings at Furlong Park - Starting Wednesday 17 February 9.00am
Come along and join in our coffee mornings at Furlong Park School on Wednesday mornings at 9.00am.
Please join myself and other parents for a tea or coffee and a chat.
Look forward to seeing you

Trish O’Loughlin
To start off our **Festivals** theme for this term, we made pancakes for Shrove Tuesday. We learned that it is also known as Pancake Day or Fat Tuesday! We also found out that the biggest pancake ever made measured over 15 metres long - we went outside to form a circle to try and imagine what that looked like. We made different coloured pancakes, using our PBS values! We had a great cooking experience.

**RM5 Rachelle**

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**Parents and families welcome to join—WHAT IS SIGNPOSTS?**

www.signposts.net.au

Signposts is a program for parents to develop strategies for managing challenging behaviours in children

It runs for 6 weeks - 1 session per week for one and a half hours

Parents will be given an information booklet for each session as well as a workbook and a DVD

The person running the course is Dr Frank Muscara from the Royal Children's Hospital

The program will probably start on Wednesday 10 March. We will confirm starting date in our next newsletter.

Cost is $60 per session and parents can claim half of this back on Medicare through a structured Health Plan-available through your local doctor.

For more information see Trish O’Loughlin on Wednesday/Thursday or call the office on 9312 3244

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Last year a number of parents of children at Furlong Park attended these sessions and they were very positive about how it changed their thinking about helping their child.

Want to talk with one of the parents who did this course last year? Speak to Trish and she will connect you.

**Trish O’Loughlin**
Auslan news from Maria

The junior classes have been discussing their pets and family members, spurred on by a book called “Fetch”. From the images, they constructed a story line and acted out the different characters parts in small groups. From there they came together and retold the story including key Auslan signs focusing on different elements of space and handshapes. They also signed a song about opposites called “Hello Goodbye” written by the Beatles. The seniors reviewed this song too.

Shown here is some of the notation that the senior students have been creating and using when examining different elements of signs when under the microscope. They have been noting changes in handshapes and movements and learning to describe the differences between 2 very similar signs. They are learning a song “Sing, Sing, Sing”.

The first Thursday morning Auslan Community class was held last week. A great turn out of around 15 people who have children or grandchildren at our school or who are just interested in Auslan, came along and began learning how signs are created and modified. Although its early days, we are beginning to learn the building blocks of Auslan grammar and the intricacies involved in creating single signs. Most members of the class have never learnt Auslan before, so we are starting from scratch. For those who already have some signing experience, the fun songs and activities will lead to broadening overall language skills, so that all levels can effectively be catered for. Please register + come join us.

Auslan Classes run Thursdays at 9.00am with Maria
**Community News**

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**SUNDAY 21 FEBRUARY:**
**FREE TENNIS DAY AT TENNIS WORLD MELBOURNE PARK**

Join us on Sunday 21 February at Tennis World Melbourne Park located Batman Ave. Melbourne. Sunday 21 February a free day sponsored by Tennis Victoria. The day is the registration day for a new tennis club offering clinics and social tennis from 10.30 – 12.30 on every third Sunday in the month. The club dates are March 20, April 17, May 22, June 19, August 21, September 18 and November 20.

For the year, the fee is $16 per month or casual monthly visit is $25. The Club is for young people and children 7 years and older, coaching lessons will be available for all standards. There will be support from qualified DTA coaches including former international tennis champion Peter Thrupp. The whole family can get out on the court and have a hit together. The club provides opportunities to have fun, develop tennis skills and meet other families. The club welcomes the kind support of Tennis Victoria, Deaf Tennis Australia (DTA) and Deaf Children Australia.

**RSVP:** Pete Folan E: [peter.folan@deafchildren.org.au](mailto:peter.folan@deafchildren.org.au) by **Wednesday 17 February**
Every year at this time, all schools start to organize their new School Council. We have been very fortunate to have had a small group of dedicated parents who have worked hard for the school to improve the facilities and to provide opportunities for the all the children to experience high quality learning.

School Council has provided lots of facilities over the past few years, including part of the bike/walking track (total cost $40,000), our brand new seating outside the Multi Purpose Room ($3700) and all of the interactive whiteboards in each of the classrooms ($40,000) plus purchasing computer technician time to support our technology ($10,000 each year), our sensory room and gardens. The money raised comes from Bunnings sausage sizzles, our raffles, Mothers and Fathers Day stalls and special lunches. School Council can also choose to spend some of the school investments on facilities, activities and classroom supplies. School Council has supported many excursions and incursions and Camps to make all of these more accessible for all children. Thank you in advance for supporting all of our fundraising activities over the coming year.

Please consider nominating for a position on the School Council. Lisa Brown is retiring from School Council this year as her son, Kade, has moved to secondary college. Therefore, there is at least one vacancy for a parent to join. The time commitment is one hour per month for the meeting and then any extra involvement is up to you. The parents usually have a special lunch twice per term and we have 2 sausage sizzles across the year where we need to have people organizing the day with the support of the school office and myself. Other activities include the Mothers and Fathers day stalls and occasionally a raffle. 2016 is also the school’s 30th anniversary on the current site so we are planning a bit of a reunion later in the year and parents will be invited to assist with the planning and organization of this celebration.

Attached to this newsletter is more information about the School Council and how to be involved.

If you are interested in joining School Council, just contact myself or Janine Comte, our Business Manager, at the school and we will help you with the paperwork.