Dear Parents,

A very big welcome to the 2014 school year.

I know I say this every year, (and I mean it!), but thank you and congratulations everyone on the excellent standard of uniform. We really are the envy of many schools in this regard. The kids look great. I know this can only happen with the support of both parents and students. Let’s work to keep it that way.

NO TUCKSHOP FOR NEXT MONDAY.

NO SAUSAGE SIZZLE ON FRIDAYS UNTIL A ROSTER IS ORGANISED.

THURSDAY HOT DOGS START TOMORROW, $2 EACH
Hot Dog Thursday returns tomorrow. Hot Dog orders, ($2 each) can be made before school. Volunteers will be in classrooms before school to take orders. Last year, we found that it’s a massive help getting orders in advance. However, orders are still welcome on Thursday morning.

Please understand that, for hot dogs in particular, teachers and/or volunteer students simply must not accept orders after 8:50 am. The 8:50 am cut off gives us a “chance”, (albeit small), to have money up to the office and be working in our own classroom by 8:55 am.

BELL TIMES. WHAT DO THEY MEAN?
8:55 am Move into your classroom to start work.
10:00 am Approximate time to allow students to have their fruit break.
11:00 am Teachers can allow students to start playtime.
11:30 am 5 minutes left to play. Students can leave to start eating time now if they wish.
11:35 am End of playtime. Start eating time. Go to the toilet and fill water bottles.
11:55 am End of eating time. Move into classroom to start work.
1:30 pm Start of Afternoon Tea. Go to the toilet and fill water bottles.
1:47 pm End of Afternoon Tea. Move into classroom to start work.
2:55 pm 5 minute warning bell.
3:00 pm End of school day.

STUDENT INFORMATION UPDATE
If you have changed phone numbers, emergency contacts, email addresses or work details in the past year, please send a note along to school with the new details so that we can update our emergency contact files.

COLLECTOR CARDS, TOYS AND OTHER JUNK
Collector cards, toys, novelty rulers/rubbers/brandname caps, etc are NOT ALLOWED AT SCHOOL.
A good rule of thumb is that, if an item is important to you, (or your child), and we haven’t asked for it to be brought to school, keep it at home! After all, if the item stays at home, nothing can happen to it at school.
Every year, teaching time is lost because this rule is ignored. The outcome is nearly always negative in some form.
At Sharon we expect teachers to teach and students to learn. We don’t want them spending time involved in a drawn out investigation tracking down items that shouldn’t have been here in the first place.
Experience has shown that the best solution is to confiscate valuables until the end of term when this rule is ignored. We don’t particularly like doing this, but it has proven to be the best way to stop the valuables coming which, in turn, protects our learning time.
If you bring valuable items to school, expect them to be confiscated until the end of term.

ABSENCE NOTES
Student absences must be entered into the school database and downloaded directly to Education Qld as part of our enrolment census a few times per year.
Any absence from school including late arrivals or early departures must be explained by a note from the parents or a verbal explanation by the parents.
If there is no explanation received, an “unexplained” absence must be recorded on the rolls and in the school database. If left unexplained it then becomes an “unauthorised absence”. The Principal is obliged to follow up these unauthorised absences and report them to District Office.
We’re simply not allowed to take the word of a child or sibling. We must hear it, (or read it), directly from Mum or Dad.

WANT OUR NEWSLETTER EMAILED?
If you’d like our newsletter emailed to you, please email me with “newsletter email” in the subject heading. By emailing newsletters, we save lots of paper and can be sure the newsletter will make it home.
Please keep in mind that, if I email a newsletter to you, I won’t be handing a newsletter out to your child at school.

QSCHOOLS SMARTPHONE APP
Queensland school communities can interact with their favourite state schools using the QSchools smartphone app.
ARRIVAL / DEPARTURE TIMES

Please understand that teachers at Sharon School arrive much earlier than they are compelled to, industrially. However, they do this in order to complete administrative tasks and prepare lessons and activities. Please do not interpret early arrival of teachers as a message that your children will be supervised before school.

THERE IS NO ROSTERED PLAYGROUND DUTY AT SHARON BEFORE SCHOOL.

Our bus usually arrives at 8:15 am and this considered a reasonable time for children to start arriving. ASSUME CLASSROOM DOORS WILL REMAIN CLOSED UNTIL 8:00 am.

We also have at least one teacher on duty after school until 3:15 pm. Children who have not been collected by 3:15 pm will be taken to the Macs classroom towards the back of the school where they will be supervised until collected by their parents. However, please understand that the teachers will sometimes be required to attend meetings and training sessions away from our school site. Thus I cannot guarantee that teachers will be here every afternoon to provide supervision after 3:15 pm.

UNIFORM

As I mentioned earlier, our standard of uniform on the 1st two days has been wonderful. A big thanks to all of you (parents and students) for your efforts in this area. As a parent, I'm well aware that this is only possible when both parents and students make a commitment to turning up in uniform.

Sharon enjoys an excellent reputation amongst the education and the wider communities for our standard of dress and we frequently receive positive comments from visitors and “outsiders”. This has not been achieved through any special strategies or tricks, but simply because our community takes pride in their school. Once again thanks everyone!!

While on the subject of uniform, I wish to make it VERY CLEAR that “Bucket Hats” ARE NOT CONSIDERED TO BE BROAD BRIM HATS AT SHARON STATE SCHOOL. Broad brimmed school hats with either soft or hard brims are sold at the office for $8.

CALLS/VISITS TO TEACHERS DURING CLASS TIME

Being a small school promotes comfortable interaction between staff and parents. While I certainly want to encourage this relationship, I have an even greater desire to see classroom lessons go through uninterrupted. Even a one minute call or personal visit can disrupt the flow of a lesson. This impacts not only on your child, but on everyone else in the room.

Thus I'm asking that teachers be left undisturbed during teaching time (9:00 TO 3:00). If the matter is urgent, we will put you through to the classroom. However, if possible, I'd ask that you leave a message with either Sharon or Sue who will then pass the message on to the teacher during one of their many extended breaks through the day (Ha!). Alternatively you can call before or after school. Basically, we are endeavouring to keep teaching/learning time sacred. Thanks for your support and understanding here.

EARLY DEPARTURE / LATE ARRIVAL BOOK

We're required to keep a book showing evidence that parents or carers are aware if students arrive late for school or leave school early. The best way to do this is to ask parents to fill in a sheet showing the time of arrival or departure. Most schools do this at the school office. However, we believe this will only slow down the arrival or departure even further. Thus, the “Late Arrival/Early Departure” Books will be found in each of the classrooms. One for “Salt ‘n’ Preppers”, one for “Lester’s Learners”, one for “PJs” and one for “Macs”.

The students have been shown the location of the books in each room.

Although it may seem strange at first, please just fill in the information, without seeing the teacher so that the lesson is not interrupted.

3:00 PM DISMISSAL

Many people think we breathe a sigh of relief at 3:00 pm. Each day. We don't. One of the most worrying times of the day for any school is after 3:00 pm. We have children riding home, walking home, getting on the bus and walking out to cars.

We do have two teachers on duty at this time but children are usually feeling very happy and “bullet proof” at this time of day.

We have a bus turn-around area at the front of the school. This is to allow the buses turning space. Cars cannot park in this area.

Car parking is in the area in front of the tennis court.

You can help reduce the chance of accidents occurring by
1. Parking in front of the tennis court when picking your children up.
2. Walking with your child across Sharon School Road if you need to park on the other side.
3. Backing into your park (if you arrive before 3:00pm). This allows for improved vision when you’re driving away among our fearless, but much loved, children.
4. Using the “drop and go” area in the front of the old residence as a quick stop and drop off/pick up area – not park and wait.

Please don’t encourage your children to leave by either the single (bus gate), or double gate on the Bundaberg side of the old residence.

For Children being Picked Up by Car

The ONLY gate to be used (even if walking with parents) is...
the double gate in front of the tennis court. If car travellers can use the gates in front of the tennis court, we can have a teacher supervising their departure. It will also reduce the volume of fearless children moving out to cars at any one time.
Please do NOT use either of the old residence gates. Please don’t use the bus gate, (i.e. the single gate at the front of the school), unless you are using the bus.

For Children Going on the Bus
Children are to use the single gate at the front of the school.
Why are we so fussy about gates?
1. Using one gate for cars allows for a small “bottleneck” at one patrolled gate which, in turn, prevents a situation where children are running to cars from different locations which are not supervised.
2. We are occasionally asked if “so and so” was picked up by Dad or if they went home on the bus. Teachers on duty have a much better chance of remembering this if the correct gate is used.

While using alternate gates may feel safe when you are walking your children, please understand that other children feel, (quite understandably), that it's good enough for some people to use a different gate, then it must be ok for them to use it as well.

Before long we end up with a situation where teachers are supervising exits being used by only a portion of our students. Why bother?

WET DAY DISMISSALS
It is truly amazing the number of times that rain begins to fall at 3:00 p.m. Please be very patient and understanding with us on these days.
With impaired vision, excited children, slippery ground and a general feeling of “urgency”, the chances of an accident (which are already bad enough!) increase significantly.

Children Travelling By Car
We will gather children under the old building at the front of the school. Yes, this does slow down the rate of children leaving – which is exactly what we’re trying to do!
We dismiss children when parents come in to the school to walk them out to their car. As the crowd thins over time, we will also look for cars and send children out.
Please understand that the delay caused here is intended to make leaving as safe as possible for you and your child(ren).

DURING WET DAY DISMISSALS, IT IS PREFERABLE TO LEAVE THROUGH THE BUS GATE IF CHILDREN ARE WITH THEIR PARENTS.

Children Travelling By Bus
Once again, we gather these children under the old building at the front of the school. We then walk them in small groups out to the bus. This may mean they get a little wet. However, the only first aid required is a towel and change of clothes when they arrive home.

Children Travelling By Bicycle/Walking
Unless I hear otherwise from parents, children are asked to wait until someone collects them or until the rain eases off. We’ve found in the past that these children are usually collected. We’re able to lock bikes up inside classrooms if needed.
Students will NOT be given permission to ride or walk home during electrical storms.

As a parent, you are your child’s first teacher and it is important to encourage your child to read outside of the classroom.

Our school is asking all parents to help their children to improve their reading skills. You can do this by:

- visiting the local library – this is an economical way to provide access to different kinds of books and learning materials and allows children to borrow from a wide range. Your library may also offer a reading program which makes reading an exciting experience and allows them to mix with other children
- asking ‘why’ questions as you read a book or story together to help your child understand and asking them to think about alternate endings to make much-loved books even more interesting
- reading to your child(ren) as often as you can and by trying to carry a book with you when away from home
- letting your child hold the book and turn the pages when you are reading together – this lets your child join in and allows you to talk about the pictures
- congratulating your child on their reading – this will encourage them to enjoy the reading experience
- pointing out words as you read them, especially long or interesting words – this will create a word bank or a spelling list which will help your child with their writing
- making a message board or space at home and encouraging your child to read and leave messages for other family members – this will also give them an important job in the household.

For more tips and online resources about literacy and numeracy visit www.education.qld.gov.au/parents/map/

RED CROSS BLOOD DONATION
Just thought I should get the word out that, if you happen to donate blood, you might think about letting reception know that you are from Sharon State School. There are no prizes but the Red Cross keeps a record of the number of donations from different groups and how many lives have been saved. You can see our current record at http://www.donateblood.com.au/who-can-give/club-red/view-group-tally?group_id=6401

Kind regards,
Our AGM will be held at 7:00pm on Thursday, 13th February.

All positions will be declared vacant and we will need to fill the positions of President, Vice-President, Secretary & Treasurer.

In the past, our P&C has provided funds and equipment for the school such as subsidies for bus trips, funding for interactive white boards, IpadS and air conditioning in our classrooms. Lunch on break-up day, souvenirs for graduating students as well as organise social functions such as movie days and discos for our children are all part of what our P & C can and have provided.

This is also a great way to meet other parents and students whilst helping your child's school. Please come along and join us and find out what is happening and what is planned for the coming year.

We welcome all new ideas and suggestions.

The general monthly meeting for February will follow the AGM immediately.

BUNDEBERG ZONE PRIMARY SCHOOL SPORT

BOYS TOUCH 2014

Nominations are being called from all schools in the Bundaberg Zone, for boys to attend the 2014 boys Touch Trials.

EVENT - Boys Touch Trials

ELIGIBILITY – Boys born 2003 or 2002

TRIAL DATE – March 6, March 7

TIME – 4:00pm – 5:30 p.m.

WHERE – Bundaberg Touch Association grounds

WHAT TO BRING - school sports uniform; touch shoes & socks; hat/cap; sunscreen; water bottle and completed Zone nomination form

TRAINING – dates will be confirmed to players upon selection in the team.

PARENTS PLEASE NOTE - Boys touch is an extremely popular zone sport. Please send only those boys who display a high level of skill and have a good understanding of the game. Keep in mind we are only selecting one team of 12 players.

NOMINATIONS-Please nominate through your school. Do not just turn up on the day. Your school will email names through so that selection sheets can be done ahead of the day. This will save valuable time on the first day.

All boys must bring along a completed Zone Nomination Form to the trial.

David Bonser - Boys Touch Coach
Gooburrum State School 4159 9296