Principal’s Report

Week 1 Term 1

Welcome to the 2015 school year. I would like to particularly welcome our new families and staff to the school. I hope that all students and their families had an enjoyable time together over the summer break.

We farewelled a significant number of staff who completed tenures at the school, retired from working for DECD, moved due to family reasons, have taken long service leave or left to a leadership position. I wish them every success in their new endeavours. This means that the school has gained 9 new staff. These include:

- Mick Byrne teaching Physical Education and Science for Term 1
- Katie Eden teaching Home Economics and Child Studies
- Hannah Fryar teaching HASS and Science
- Peter Gordon as our ICT Manager
- Amy Harding teaching English
- Katie Hocking teaching our Reception Class
- Andrew Lawless teaching Physical Education and Mathematics
- Jaynelle LeFeuvre teaching our Year 2/3 Class
- Andrew Moschou teaching Mathematics and ICT

Welcome to these new staff and thank you to existing staff for their collegial support.

The school’s leadership structure has changed to include a Deputy Principal, a Senior Secondary Leader and a School Counsellor. Congratulations to,

- Margaret Roads on her appointment as our Deputy Principal for the next 5 years
- Robyn Hering for her appointment as our Senior Secondary Leader for the next 5 years
- Leonie Peterson on her appointment as the School Counsellor for 2015.

At the time of publication we have 190 students. 103 students are enrolled in the R to 6 section of the school and 87 students in the year 7 to 12 section. 18 of these students are our new Reception students. This figure is very close to the end of term 4 2014 predicted number.

I would like to thank families and students for their efforts in ensuring that the full school uniform is being worn. In assembly on our first day it was fantastic to see almost all students in uniform. I remind families to familiarise themselves with the requirements of the summer uniform as per the school dress code guidelines available on the school website (http://www.ardas.sa.edu.au/) or in hard copy at the Front Office.

Implementation of the Australian Curriculum across the R-10 Year levels continues with the Arts learning area. Reports this year for the subjects of English, History, Mathematics, Science, Geography and the Arts will be referenced to the achievement standards from the Australian Curriculum. In Years 8 to 10, teachers will also implement and report against the achievement standards from the Australian Curriculum for Health and Physical Education and for Technologies. Our teachers will continue their work with the Southern Yorke Partnership on consistency of teacher judgement.

The school improvement priorities for 2015 are:

- Attendance
- Literacy, particularly inferential reading
- Numeracy, focussing on place value and mathematical literacy
- Student engagement and participation.

The agreed standards and targets for 2015 have been established through the school’s improvement cycle. They are aligned to the new Education and Achievement Standards and Targets set by the Department of Education and Child Development. Copies of the Ardrossan Area School Standards and Targets will be available at the Annual General Meeting (AGM) to be held on Monday of week 5. More information will be provided about the AGM leading up to this date.

Attendance remains on our Site Improvement Plan as in 2014 we failed to meet our 90% attendance target. While absence for legitimate illness or a significant family reason occur, there are still far too many absences that remain unexplained or are for
family reasons that are in fact days off for a birthday, shopping or to attend a concert. Thank you to those families that always notify when their child is or will be absent, and to those families that ensure exemption forms for a week or more of planned absence are completed. It would be appreciated if families could contact the school either prior to a planned absence or on the day of absence before 10:30am. If no contact is made with the school regarding absence, a text message, via the MGM messaging service, will be sent informing the parent/carer of the student’s absence and requesting contact be made with the school. Can parents/carers please ensure that the school has your current phone number/s. If your contact details change during the school year, please update them through our Front Office.

The MGM messaging servicing will also be used to notify parents/families of other events. For example, on a catastrophic bushfire day, parents/carers of students using one of the school bus runs will be informed via text message that the buses will not be running. The cancellation of the buses is a safety necessity.

The School’s Student Behaviour Management Guidelines and Procedures were reviewed and updated last year. These guidelines and procedures cover student behaviour management in the classroom and in the yard. They also outline the processes for managing harassment and bullying. These guidelines and procedures and other school guidelines and procedures are available on the school website (http://www.ardas.sa.edu.au) or in hard copy at the Front Office.

To support the belief that everyone at Ardrossan Area School has the right to participate in their learning and to feel safe, each class has been working on a code of cooperation. This code includes some across school agreements on the types of behaviours that do not support this belief. These are:

- Violence or threatening behaviour
- Wilful damage and inappropriate use of property
- Inappropriate language directed at someone
- Harassment and Bullying
- Weapons (real or created)
- Drinking anything other than water in classrooms

Each class has also developed specific expectations for their class. I encourage you to ask your child what these are for their class.

I remind families that the school day commences at 8:50am and concludes at 3:00pm. The Front Office and the yard open in the morning at 8:35am. The yard will not be supervised before 8:35am, so I ask that students not be in the yard before this time.

The theme for this year is respect, respect for self, others and the environment. I outlined to students in our assembly on Tuesday morning that to respect self means when we set goals and targets, we work toward these with the belief that ‘I can do it’. Perseverance, determination, a willingness to ask for help and act on feedback are qualities that demonstrate this respect for self. Through pastoral care, respect for self, others and the environment in which live and learn will be explored further.

I would like to take this opportunity to remind families that the best way we can support students is for effective communication between the school and home and the home and school. Please don’t hesitate to contact the school to discuss your child’s progress or to work through any concerns/ grievances you may have. Your first contact should be your child’s class or home group teacher. A good way to start this communication in 2015 is by attending Acquaintance Night on Tuesday 10th February. The night will commence at 5.30pm with a BBQ (near the Gym), followed by R-6 Classrooms opening at 6pm to 7pm and a year 7 to 12 information session at 6:30pm to 7:30pm.

A reminder that the school newsletter in 2015 will be a fortnightly publication with the exception being that there will be a newsletter this week and in week 2. After that, newsletters will be published on even weeks only. This will enable a more comprehensive newsletter.

I am looking forward to seeing families at Acquaintance Night and working with you in 2015 in what I hope will be a productive and successful 2015.

Kind Regards,
Karen Bond
Principal