From the Principal’s desk.....

I would like to welcome everyone back to school and hope it was a great Christmas and relaxing break. Each and every student has started the year in a very positive manner and I cannot recall such a smooth start to the school year. I would like to welcome all our new families to the school and thank them for the work they have done in preparing their child for a new school. I understand that for many of our students starting in a new environment can be very daunting, but I have been very impressed in the way all our new students have made the transition seamlessly. As for our established students, they have been great in helping the new class members settle and feel welcome to their new class.

I would also like to welcome our new staff members who have also hit the ground running. I am encouraged to see their commitment to our school ethos and have shown a great deal of enthusiasm in teaching their classes. I would also like to welcome the return of our Head of Curriculum (HOC), Karlie Bulow, back from maternity leave and look forward to having her work with me in ensuring our students are getting the best education we can offer.

As you may have read recently, the State Government has allocated additional funding to all State Schools across Queensland. This is part of the Federal Governments election promise to increase school funding. We have been allocated an additional $27,600 for the 2014 school year. With this additional money comes the requirement for me to develop a strategic plan in how we will spend that money in a way that will improve student outcomes. I will be consulting with teachers and the P&C to develop an action plan that will see improved Literacy skills for all students along with a strong focus in developing communication skills right across the school. I will keep you informed in how we plan on doing this over the next few weeks.

Thank you to all those parents and carers who have volunteered time to help with the Bunnings Sausage Sizzle fund raiser this weekend. I apologise for such short notice and realise many families may have previous plans. We have more of these in the future and will give people much more notice. We plan on a parent information evening in the next couple of weeks and will let everyone know when we have settled on a date. Please feel free to contact me via e-mail or in person if there is anything you would like to discuss or seek clarification around.

Andrew Thompson
**LP1**

Welcome back to school everyone. We hope you had an excellent Christmas break. Jumping into 2014, this will be Lower Primary 1’s first year of school and, so far, so good. Over the past fortnight we have been getting to know one another and learning about what each student enjoys. It is clear that painting and water play are the top favourites! The class also enjoy collage and using the interactive whiteboard. Our first letter of the year is ‘m’ and we have been talking about all the things we know that start with ‘m’. This has been especially fun for one of our students, Maggie, who immediately recognised that her name started with this letter. As teacher of the class, I wish Lower Primary 1 a wonderful year and look forward to lots of teaching and learning.

Miss Ish, Miss Lynda and Miss Sussan.

**LP2**

Welcome back to school from Lower Primary 2. The past week we have been settling back into school. We have been enjoying sensory play - water, rice, play dough and sand - and spending time in the sensory room. We are getting really good at sitting at our desks and doing our work. This week we are learning about the letter ‘s’ and we are practising our numbers.

Miss Erin, Sue and Tracey

**LP3**

Welcome back to another great year at Ipswich West Special School. The first few weeks of the Term have been spent getting to know our new friends in our class and learning the rules and routines of the classroom and school. We have been talking about the school rules (We are Safe, We are Learners, We are Respectful) and what it means to be a safe, respectful learner and how we can display the appropriate behaviours. We have been learning about a turtle called Tucker who is teaching us what we should do when we feel angry or upset. We have learnt several things we can do when we are feeling angry. These include: take 3 deep breaths, tell the teacher, or say “stop it I don’t like it”.

LP3 have been doing lots of testing and assessing to ensure the appropriate Literacy and Numeracy plans will be implemented to suit your child’s level of achievement. We have also been assessing the goals from each child’s Individual Learning Plan (ILP). This testing will help us to see if new goals need to be made for your child, or if they need to continue to work on their current goals. Throughout Semester 1, along with Maths and English, we will be working on a Science unit as well. I look forward to the year ahead!

Please remember swimming on Fridays. Your child will need togs, towel and thongs every Friday.

Miss Kristy, Melissa and Fiona
UP1
Welcome to Upper Primary 1 in 2014! Our first week back at school has been fantastic! Our class members are James, Noah, Christopher, Bailey, Alex, and Maddison. All students have been getting along very well. Bailey and James have displayed a passion for writing and drawing. Alex, Chris and Noah enjoy learning on the iPad, while Maddison loves imaginary play! We started swimming on Monday and the class thoroughly enjoyed themselves. We showed off some skills that we learnt last year, including blowing bubbles and floating on our stomachs, we were all very brave and did a great job! We had our first Art lesson with Miss Sarah on Tuesday. We worked hard and are excited about participating in the art program throughout the year. We’ve been doing plenty of assessing for both literacy and numeracy along with practicing our handwriting and number and letter knowledge. We made our first book of the week, “Back to School” and practiced reading it to our friends. We are all looking forward to a great year in our wonderful class!

Miss Krystle, Carol & Kathy

UP2
Upper Primary 2 welcomes all families to the new school year. In our class we have Lilly, Darryl, Hallie, Aaron, Kyarna and Axel. We are getting to know each other and enjoying making new friends. In the classroom we have been establishing the classroom rules and have selected our own rewards system. As well as refreshing our knowledge of the school rules, we have also been enjoying a mini unit of work, “About Me”, to help us get to know each other. We have been creating an, “About Me” book which we will take home soon. There has been plenty of song and dance as it seems we all love music! and we also love to paint, so our classroom is beginning to look very colourful indeed!

Our masterpieces
Michele, Angela and Kylie

UP3
Students in UP3 have settled back to school. We welcome a new student to the school Thomas Frost. We have already started our swimming programme on Monday afternoons. Please can students bring a pair of flip flops to wear to the pool. The students are completing English and Math assessments this week and will start their units of work week 3. All students need to have a hat for playtimes, this should be clearly labelled with their name in case it gets lost. I look forward to meeting parents over the next few weeks for the ILP meetings.

Sarah, Anthea, Margaret and Susan
UP4

Welcome to UP 4!

Debbie, Gwen and I are excited to be working with a class of just boys. We intend on making learning fun and enjoyable by incorporating things young boys like such as sports, excursions and lots more. All the boys have made friends, are keeping in accordance to our school rules of being safe, respectful, learners and have settled in well. This semester we will be looking at a unit on Transport and the history of it. We look forward to a successful and fun filled year ahead.

Neve, Debbie and Gwen

LS1

Welcome back LS 1 students! A special welcome to Taniela and Benjamin who have joined our class this year. We also welcome Ms Suzanne and Ms Kylie our 2 teacher aides. The students seemed to have enjoyed their summer vacation and had some interesting stories to share. Work is in full swing. Data is being collected in Numeracy, Reading and Spelling. This information is necessary to plan each student’s learning program. I look forward to meeting parents/carers to discuss your child’s ILP (Individual learning program) during the next week.

Mrs Singh, Suzanne & Kylie

LS2

Welcome back everyone!! 2014 is looking jam packed full of fun and learning down at the Oval Office. This year LS2 is a class of 9 classy young ladies Vanessa, Stephanie, Kimberley, Keeley, Tiffany, Kea-Lee, Courtney, Sheridan, Monique and three fabulously, fun and funky teachers Miss Kathy, Miss Sheryl and Miss Laura. This “all girl’s” class has eased into class routine and are becoming familiar with their classmates as well as worked learned last year. This first week of school we have started to revise telling time and money. We believe that these are very important strands to learn in maths as this will help us in everyday living. The girls also put their thinking caps on for a revision test on essential spelling words and have done really well. We are slowly getting back into the swing of things when it comes to writing such as sentence structure and have already incorporated ICT into the mix. This being our second week back at school, we only have more fun and learning to look forward to. Stay tuned.

Miss Kathy, Miss Sheryl and Miss Laura
**LS3**

It's good to be back at school and Lower Secondary 3 is off to a great start! We have begun our learning by focusing on our classroom routines and school rules. There are heaps of things to learn but, so far, LS3 has been up to the challenge. Our school rules -Safe, Respectful, Learners- have also been a learning focus for us so far. Over the coming week we will be constructing eBooks about how to follow our school rules. We have also spent time completing maths and English assessments. We have adopted a pet yabby named Captain Claw. The students will take it in turn to care for Captain Claw, making sure he's fed and performing basic maintenance, such as checking the water temperature and changing the filter. LS3 have also started a fishing program. We will spend the next several weeks rebuilding some fishing rods and reels, as well as a tackle box. We will then practise our casting and conduct internet research on some local fishing spots. As a culmination of our learning, and a reward for following the school rules, LS3 will hopefully embark on a fishing trip at the end of the term. LS3 has settled in well and we are looking forward to a great year. There are many adventures ahead!

Mr. Tom, Miss Justine, Miss Margaret

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**Art**

2014 is set to be a big year for the Art students of Ipswich West Special School!! We have set aside a date for our much anticipated "Art Auction" that will celebrate and showcase all of the creative efforts of our talented students. It will be held on the evening of Friday the 23rd of May. So please mark it on your calendars!! Invitations will be sent out to families in the next couple of weeks. I would like to welcome the new students to our School. We look forward to creating some wonderful Artwork with you all this year. We provide an opportunity for students to engage in a variety of projects, including painting, sculpture, mosaics, mixed media, drawing, construction, and printmaking techniques to name just a few!

From the staff of the Art Studio, Sarah B, Justine and Sheryl

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**Therapy**

Hello from the therapy team, hoping everyone had a safe and relaxing holiday. Ipswich West Special School is home to a number of therapists who work both within IWSS and schools in the surrounding areas: Melanie Stoakes is our physiotherapist who works both at Ipswich West Special as well as a number of other schools; Kara Spaulding is our new physiotherapist based at Ipswich West and will service schools in the Ipswich area. Physiotherapists work with students who may have problems with posture and movement, which affect their access and participation at school. Amanda Budge is our Occupational Therapist for both Ipswich West and surrounding schools. Occupational therapists assist students to develop functional skills for everyday life including student/work skills (eg handwriting and computer skills) as well as activities of daily living (eg eating and dressing). Camilla Macuga is our new Speech Therapist who will be working with students at Ipswich West special every Wednesday to work on their communication and language skills.