



# UPPER SWAN PRIMARY SCHOOL

An Independent Public School

1204 Great Northern Highway, Upper Swan 6069

Telephone: 9296 4622

## Newsletter

Volume 11 Term 3

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### *Our Purpose*

*We will create a caring learning environment that provides students with the opportunity to develop the academic and social skills they need to achieve their individual potential.*

**School Website:** [www.upperswanps.wa.edu.au](http://www.upperswanps.wa.edu.au)

**Editorial** If you wish to contact the Principal - [Stephen.Green@education.wa.edu.au](mailto:Stephen.Green@education.wa.edu.au)

### **Classes 2019**

After positive feedback from last year, I am again aiming to have class lists prepared before the end of the school year. If you have a preference for next year, please send me an email ([Stephen.Green@education.wa.edu.au](mailto:Stephen.Green@education.wa.edu.au)) or note by 3:00pm, Friday, September 7.

It is too early for me to tell you the exact class structure and who the teachers will be. While most teachers teach the same or similar year levels from one year to the next, there is always the possibility for change.

If you choose to make a class placement request, you need to consider all possible combinations below then list them in order of preference. Not all of these class combinations will run. They are just possibilities.

<b>All Possible Class Set Ups</b>		
Kindergarten	Combined Pre Primary / Year 1	Combined Year 3/4
Combined Kindergarten / Pre Primary	Year 1	Year 4
Pre Primary	Year 1/2	Combined Year 4/5
	Year 2	Year 5
	Combined Year 2/3	Combined Year 5/6
	Year 3	Year 6

### **Leaving at the end of 2018?**

Apart from Year 6 students; to help with class set up I need to know as soon as possible if your children will be attending another school next year. Having accurate numbers enables classes to be set in December and means I do not have to change class lists and structures in February.

Please send me an email or note to let me know if you're on the move.

### **Parent Satisfaction Survey**

The 2019 parent satisfaction survey is now available.

We are always looking for ways to improve the quality of your child's school experience. One important way of doing this is to find out what you think of our school.

Feedback from previous surveys has been used to review our behaviour management and student engagement system, student reward system and improve our communication processes. We have introduced a Drama program and changed languages to Mandarin.

We value your opinion and ideas about what we can do to make your child's school experience the best it possibly can be. It would be terrific if you could help us by taking the time to complete this survey.

**Note:** If have more than one child at Upper Swan, please base your answers on your eldest child.

The survey link is: <https://www.schoolsurvey.edu.au/s/uspsparentsurvey2018>

### Interschool Cross Country

Congratulations to our interschool team for their exceptional attitude, behaviour and effort at the cross country event on July 27. Every place counts for points, meaning every team member contributed to our school finishing in first place.

Quentin (1<sup>st</sup>), Beau (2<sup>nd</sup>), Charlie (1<sup>st</sup>), Georgia (1<sup>st</sup>), Cayden (3<sup>rd</sup>), Declan (1<sup>st</sup>) and Ashlee (1<sup>st</sup>) were awarded medals for finishing in top three.



### Students Achieving Success

If your children have success outside of school I am always happy to hear about it and let our community know.

Nicholas was successful with his audition for the WA Ballet Company's world premiere of "Dracula". Anyone who has been along to our talent quest assembly over the years will know what a talented and skilled dancer Nicholas is. Don't break a leg, Nicholas.

Seth is a moto-cross superman with state and national titles to his name. In a few weeks' time he'll be off to Victoria to represent Australia in an international competition. Go for it, Seth.



### How to talk to your kid's teacher when there is a problem at school

The text below is from the ABC News (Perth Radio). The story and link were posted on our Facebook Page. It is worth ten minutes of your reading time. This is the link.

<http://www.abc.net.au/news/2018-08-05/how-to-talk-to-your-childs-teacher-when-there-is-a-problem/10063184>

**Parent-teacher meetings can be dreaded on both sides, and in some cases can escalate into anger, blame and a breakdown in communication.**

But there are simple things you can do that can make those awkward conversations much easier.

Matt Sanders, the director of the Parenting and Family Support Centre at the University of Queensland, said parents were far more likely to contact their child's teacher about their concerns than they were 20 years ago, and that could create friction.

"These days because there are many parents who, rather than side with the school and the teacher, will assume that the school is not handling the problem in the way they would like or to their child's advantage," he said.

It may be the child is not doing well at something or is not selected for something or has problems with peers. You can get parents becoming quite upset quite quickly over what they see as unfair treatment or perhaps the school not responding to something they have identified as quite important.

Jo Hine, the principal at Kyilla Primary School in Perth, said parents were take far more interest in school life than when she began her career. "I've seen parents become a lot more involved with their children's schooling; 25 years ago parents dropped their kids at the gate, that was it,"

she said. "Where the tension comes in is usually where there is a misunderstanding, so then the parent comes down hoping to clarify that."

### ***Check out the story***

If your child has come home from school and reported something that concerns you, try to clarify what has happened as much as you can before approaching the school.

This might mean asking your child for further information or checking it out with another parent to see if their child is describing a similar experience.

"The parent should be clear about what has been relayed to them," Professor Sanders told Nadia Mitsopoulos on [ABC Radio Perth](#).

### ***Talk to the right person***

"The parent has to determine who the appropriate person to speak to is, and the general advice would be the child's teacher," Ms Hine said. "The parent who jumps straight over and goes to the principal rather than the most important person in the child's school life is making a mistake."

### ***Don't barge in or fire off an email***

Arrange a time to speak to the teacher face to face, and don't try to chat in a busy classroom at drop-off or pick-up time.

"We always encourage our parents to make a time," Ms Hine said. Emailing the teacher can be an OK first step, but it's not a great way to have a conversation and resolve problems. "As soon as you get into the email wars about complaints, you are creating a paper trail that gets in the road of open communication," Professor Sanders added.

**AJ:** "A teacher at my daughter's school had a bit of a breakdown. He moved from a remote Wheatbelt school, where there was little interaction with parents, to our inner-city school, where he was swamped by well-meaning but demanding parents. Sometimes parents need to give some space and trust their teachers. This poor fella was getting bailed up by parents for an hour after school each day."

### ***Write down your concerns***

"Prepare an agenda of what you would like to speak to the teacher about," Professor Sanders said.

"If you narrow it down to a particular set of issues to discuss, it's much easier to get a resolution that if you use the opportunity to bring up 10 issues that you can never get through."

### ***Stay calm***

Talking about their children, especially when it comes to bullying, behaviour problems or poor academic performance, can be enormously stressful for parents but it's important to try to stay calm.

"Don't allow yourself to become angry where you are feeling anxious in a situation where you are trying to advocate for your kids," Professor Sanders said.

"You will have a more reasoned discussion, you are more likely to be listened to and to get another person's perspective, and you can avoid the blame game. "If teachers are under attack, it's not surprising that these conversations can go a bit pear-shaped."

### ***Be thoughtful about what you share with your kids***

If your child knows you have had a meeting with their teacher, they will likely ask you what was said, but that doesn't mean you should tell them everything. "Parents need to use common sense and good judgment here," Professor Sanders said. "There are some things that might be said about other children, events that have occurred and what teachers are dealing with, that is not appropriate to share with kids, particularly if it is then passed on to anyone else."

### ***What about teachers?***

Both experts agree that the overwhelming majority of parents want to have good relationships with their child's school. "I think as educators, if you come to the table with a solutions focus and

believe in resolving the problem in a positive way, there are not many problems you can't resolve," Ms Hine said.

It can be hard for teachers when parents are demanding, entitled, pushy or very angry, Professor Sanders said, but it was important to keep listening.

"Teachers can misinterpret things — they will see an angry parent but miss the fact that this is a tremendously worried and anxious parent as well," he said.

"Become a really attuned listener and then clarify what the parent is actually referring to."

**Lis:** "I taught public for almost 50 years. I never fell out of love with the job, the kids and mostly the parents. Some just want to blow. I let them. Listen quietly and respectfully. Parents would tell you that their child "never does that at home". After lengthy conversation, they'd admit that their child "often does that at home" and you'd part company good friends with some mutual strategies and support."

**Janine:** "As a teacher I feel it's important that from day one you need to develop a strong relationship with parents. This is easy to do when you are very open with them. The best time to start is your parent meeting at the beginning of the year."



## Free Laptop Bags

We currently have 30 new HP laptop bags that are 28cm x 39.6cm. These bags are provided to us when we purchase laptops but we do not have a use for them. It is a first in first served basis. Unfortunately we will not be able to hold any. Please come and see Miss Black after school if you would like one.

