FROM THE PRINCIPAL…

I would like to welcome students, parents and staff to the 2016 school year. I particularly welcome the new staff, students and families and look forward to their involvement and input into our school. The beginning of the year for teaching staff is a time to prepare, plan, discuss ideas and programs with colleagues, think about professional goals for the year and discuss and prepare for the individual needs of the students in their class. Also at the beginning of the year it is an opportunity to undertake professional learning. One of the areas of professional development for staff this year is Information and Communication Technologies (ICT). Tim Moore (Cycle 4 teacher) has taken on a leadership role this year to present ICT sessions to staff. We will be looking at how ICT fits into a Montessori classroom, we will analyse the Australian curriculum, reflect upon our current practice, look at programs to enhance student learning and develop ICT skills to benefit staff with the administrative side of their work. Our first ICT session with Tim was held last Friday.

On the pupil free day on Monday this week we also held a professional development session with all teaching staff in regard to a project we will be involved in this year. Our school will be part of a special project organized by the Association of Independent Schools working closely with internationally known scholar, author and speaker Professor Yong Zhao. Professor Yong Zhao is an inspiring speaker who challenges your thinking about what the future will hold for our children/students and what we as educators need to be doing to set them up for success. His ideas sit incredibly well with the Montessori philosophy, methodology and values. He believes we need to be developing entrepreneurial mindsets in our students so when they leave school they have the confidence, passion and creativity to create opportunities for themselves. He believes we need to encourage our students to take risks and engage and contribute competently not only with their own communities but with the global community.

This year staff will be focusing on developing these competencies and engaging in professional learning and conversations around entrepreneurship. If any parents know people who would be good role models of entrepreneurship I would love to hear from you! (Not only business entrepreneurs but also social entrepreneurs who apply entrepreneurial principles to achieve social change.)

I hope 2016 is a positive and fulfilling year for everyone full of wonderful learning.

Cathy France – Principal

LATE START TO THE SCHOOL YEAR

Some parents have asked about the late start to the 2016 school year. Our school follows the Association of Independent Schools recommendations regarding term dates each year. Our school opens for 39 weeks of a year as do other independent schools and adheres to the Early Childhood Services Registration and Standards Board requirements for how many hours and days a school must open.

Many independent schools now choose to have a three week holiday at the end of either term 1 or term 2 rather than starting the school year a week after DECD schools. We still choose to open the school a week after DECD schools for a number of reasons which also then keeps us in line with DECD school holidays for the rest of the year.

The potential for more high fire risk days is one of the reasons why the school Board has chosen not to open the school earlier but it is not the only reason. Many families don't want to have a three week holiday in July when the weather is wet and cold and they have to try and entertain children for three weeks indoors. There are many pros and cons to the argument!

Having talked to numerous families over January for every family that hasn't preferred the extra week there are equal amounts of families who have loved having the extra week!

We have debated this issue every few years at Board and we are happy to debate it again.

FAMILY WELCOME

FRIDAY 12TH FEBRUARY
6.00 – 7.30PM.

All families; Infant Program, Pre-school, Primary & Middle School from all Cycles are invited to come along to meet and chat with staff and other families, both new and existing. This night will take the form of drinks and nibbles in the Yultiwirra courtyard – BYO drinks and glasses and nibbles will be provided. An invite has been emailed to all families and a hard copy sent home on the first day of this term. A puppet show has been organised for the children to enjoy in the hall whilst parents mingle in the courtyard. This has always been a terrific social function and a good way to start the year.

We hope you can come along and join in!

FAMILY WELCOME NIGHT

A Puppet Show for all students!

Parent Welcome for all parents!
**Staffing News**

Welcome to the following new staff members to our school and staff team: David Coulter (Cycle 4 teacher), Lauren Kervers (PE teacher), and Kiri Lay (Wairoa Kitchen Specialist). Also welcome back to Natalie Costello (Cycle 3 teacher) who was on parenting leave in 2015.

**Farewells & New Appointments**

At the end of the 2015 school year Emma Slater stepped down from her position as OSHC Coordinator. We thank Emma for the work she did whilst in the position. Emma qualified as a teacher at the end of the year and moves on to take up teaching work. We wish her all the very best.

I am pleased to announce that Sammi Rolt has been appointed in the position as the new OSHC coordinator. Sammi is well known to our school community having worked in our OSHC program for 4½ years. We congratulate Sammi on her new role. She is passionate about the OSHC program and her work and we look forward to her continued input.

At the end of the 2015 school year, Di Thompson our Business Administrator also stepped down from her position. Di had worked in this role for nearly 3 years and we greatly appreciate all that she achieved in this time. We wish her well for the future. The Board staffing panel has just completed the process for appointing a new Business Administrator. I am pleased to announce that Paul Noon will take on this role starting next week. Paul comes to our school with a wealth of experience having worked previously in the same role in a large college in Adelaide and also as a practicing accountant and financial manager prior to his work in schools. We welcome Paul to our staff and school community and look forward to his input and involvement.

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_Cathy France - Principal_

**Transport to & From School**

Primary students who will be travelling regularly on a bus service from school or walking or riding their bike home must fill in a **Travel Arrangements Form** with parents giving consent and details of the arrangements made for their child. We will send forms home to anyone we currently know who catches the bus or walks home; however if you do not receive one of these forms this week please come to the office to complete the required details.

**Private Music Tuition**

The school has arrangements with specialist music teachers to provide private music lessons for primary/middle school students during school hours for Piano, Guitar or Ukulele, Voice or Flute. Lessons will begin next week.

If your child would like to commence learning an instrument, please collect a form from the school office.

**Information Nights**

**Wairoa Campus Information Night will be held next Wednesday 17th Feb**

**Yultiwirra Campus Information Night will be held on Wednesday 2nd March**

At Information nights teaching staff provide parents with vital information covering their program and plans for this year, expectations of the classroom and cycle, and characteristics of the particular age group. Parents will also have the opportunity to ask questions concerning the routines and practices of their child’s class. We seek the support of parents on these nights and hope that you will find these sessions beneficial. We believe a strong partnership between the school and parents is crucial in establishing a successful learning environment for your child.

**Letters about both the Wairoa Campus Information Night and the Yultiwirra Information Night will be sent home soon!**

A crèche for your child/ren (3 years and over) will be provided at the Yultiwirra Information Night while parents attend the meeting/s. Please convey whether you require this on the tear off slip and return it to the office to assist us with our planning.

We have endeavoured to allocate times that will not clash for too many families. However, if you find this is the case, please approach your class teacher/s.

We urge all parents to attend these important evenings.

**Parent Volunteers**

Volunteers can make a significant contribution to the life of The Hills Montessori School by sharing their time, interests and expertise to complement programs offered by the school and adding to the range of learning experiences available to the students.

In order to comply with the Child Protection Act and our school procedures parent volunteers who regularly work with students in classrooms are asked to undertake a **Police Check** and attend a Volunteers training session. If you are interested in assisting in your child’s classroom a **Volunteer Training Session** will be held on **Wednesday 24th February 9.00am**. Please register your interest at the office.

We encourage parents to become actively involved in the school in whatever way they are able. Please refer to our **Parent Involvement Brochure**, which is being sent home with this Newsletter for further details about the many ways in which parents are able to participate in our school’s operations.

**Parent Get Togethers**

Parent get together (coffee mornings) will continue this year with two being scheduled for each term. This is an opportunity for parents to meet, mingle and chat. One get together will be held at Yultiwirra and one at Wairoa campus. But all parents are invited to both occasions no matter which campus your child attends! The “**Wairoa Café**” is a great opportunity to visit the Wairoa campus where the adolescent students will be providing coffee & cake as part of their economic enterprises.

- Monday 29th Feb – 9.15am – Yultiwirra Campus
- Friday 8th April– 9.15am – Wairoa Campus

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FIRE PROCEDURES
The Fire procedures are included as an insert in this Newsletter to inform families of school procedures in the case of a bushfire. Please read the procedures carefully so you are well informed. We hope this prompts you to review your own family Bushfire Action Plan taking into consideration the school’s plans.

Please note: The school is closed on a day with a Fire Danger Rating of Catastrophic for the Mt Lofty Ranges.

The school also reserves the right to close on a Severe or Extreme Fire Danger day if deemed necessary. Parents will be notified of this decision and be given as much notice as is practicable. It is up to parents to check the Bureau of Meteorology website (www.bom.gov.au) for the forecast and Fire Danger rating issued after 4pm each day.

If you have any concerns or further questions please do not hesitate to speak with Cathy.

FAMILY DATA BASE CHECK – WHOLE SCHOOL
During January all families were sent a link to their Parent Portal to check their child’s and family data. Families are able to make any changes necessary and update their data and then submit it to our admin staff for checking prior to it entering our database. This is another new technology that we have implemented and in the future, if and when your contact &/or health information changes you can submit updates online throughout the year.

It is vital that we have up to date contact & health information for each student.

We also use this data to prepare the School Directory. If we haven’t heard from families we will assume your information has not changed and this will be printed in the school directory in the coming weeks. Please make this a priority if you haven’t checked your details.

FOOTWEAR & SUN HAT PROTECTION
Please ensure that your child wears appropriate footwear & clothing to school particularly on the days they participate in PE or fitness activities. Check with your child’s teacher as to which days these sessions occur. Thongs are not appropriate footwear for school as they provide little protection for children whilst they are playing in the bush.

Please remember that we are a Sun Smart School and all students are required to wear a broad brimmed hat and appropriate clothing to protect the skin when going outside for any activity. Sun block is provided by the school and appropriate clothing is the best protection for children who are left in the classroom. Please ensure that your child has a named sunhat that can be kept in his/her bag or on the hat stand in the classroom.

School sunhats with the school logo are available for sale from the school office, in navy or bottle green: slouch $13 and legionnaires $11.

WELCOME TO NEW STUDENTS
We welcome the following new students and their families to our school as well as some new Infant & Transition Program families.

Cycle 1 primary: Jet, Elizmari & Elinne
Cycle 3: Max & Jorja
Cycle 4: Adele, Sebastian, William, Hunter, Samuel, Merran & Harrison

VACATION CARE NEWS
Over the holidays we held Vacation care for a week and a half before Christmas and then for four weeks in January. Numerous families used this service and the children who attended enjoyed a diverse program. Thank you to Terri Ross for overseeing the program whilst we were in the process of appointing a new OSHC Coordinator. Thank you to the OSHC staff for providing a wonderful program and for their sense of fun, kindness and care they shower those children who attend.

Children enjoyed activities such as:
- Excursion to the movies, the SA Museum, Hahndorf Farm Barn, Aldgate Vet, watching the Tour Down Under
- Cooking
- Treasure Hunts
- Wheels Day
- Puppet Making
- Games Day, Dress Up Day
- Arts & Crafts
- Science experiments

Quotes from children who attended Vacation Care:
- “I liked playing table soccer with Satine.” Sophie
- “I enjoyed going on an excursion to the movies. We saw Alvin & the Chipmunks.” Amelia
- “It was a lot of fun when we went to the Aldgate Vet.” Michael
- “I enjoyed doing felting with Lucy. We made puppets.” Feiya
- “It was fun when Henry brought in bits of a photocopier and we took it apart.” Darcy
- “My favourite day was Dress Up day. I dressed up as a Dalmatian!” Macy Mae
- “I enjoyed coming to Vac Care and seeing my friends.” Bibi
- “I liked water play with Hope. She is my best friend.” Charlie
- “I liked going down the bush.” Billy

“IT was fun when we went to the museum.”
Ashleigh

BIRTHDAY CELEBRATIONS
Birthdays are very special events in a Montessori classroom, and the occasion is marked with a unique celebration. As part of this celebration, parents are invited to bring food for the children to share, and we encourage parents to adhere to the school’s guidelines on healthy eating when making their choices.

Please refer to flyer insert included with this Newsletter.
**TERM 1 DIARY DATES**

**Friday February 12**
Family Welcome – 6 pm – 7.30pm
Yultiwirra Campus  All Welcome!

**Tuesday February 16**
Facilities Meeting – 8 am Yultiwirra campus
Year 8 Immunisations
Finance Meeting – 6.00pm

**Wednesday February 17**
Fundraising Meeting 9.15am All Welcome!
Yr 6 Student Leaders Day
Wairoa Welcome & Information Evening – 6pm

**Tuesday February 23**
Executive Meeting – 6.00pm
Board Meeting – 7.00pm

**Wednesday February 24**
Volunteers Training session – 9.15am

**Monday February 29**
Parent Morning Tea & Get Together – 9am
Yultiwirra Common Room – All Welcome!

**Wednesday March 2**
Yultiwirra Information Evening – 6pm

**Thursday March 3**
OHS&W meeting – 4.00pm
Policy meeting – 4.30pm

**Friday March 4**
Schools Clean Up Day

**KEY DATES FOR TERM 1**

**Week 6**
Interview week @ Wairoa

**Friday March 17**
Sharing Assembly – Yultiwirra Campus
9.30am – Parents Welcome!
Parent Education evening – 6.30pm
‘Introduction to Montessori Philosophy’

**Tuesday March 22**
Open Day – Yultiwirra Campus 10am – 12 noon

**Wednesday March 23- Thursday March 24**
Adolescent Orientation Camp

**Friday March 24**
Community Breakfast – 8.15am
Yultiwirra Campus – All Welcome!

**Thursday March 31**
Festival of Arts evening – Yultiwirra Campus

**Week 9**
Interview week @ Yultiwirra

**Tuesday April 5**
Open Day – Wairoa Campus 10am – 12 noon

**Friday April 8**
Wairoa cafe – 9.15am ‘Come along for a cuppa!’
Wairoa Campus – All Welcome!

**Wednesday April 13**
Sharing Assembly – Yultiwirra Campus
2.30am – Parents Welcome!

**QUOTE OF THE WEEK**

“The human hand allows the mind to reveal itself.”

*Maria Montessori*

**TERM DATES 2016**

**TERM 1:** Tuesday 9th February - Friday 15th April
**TERM 2:** Tuesday 3rd May – Friday 8th July
**TERM 3:** Tuesday 26th July – Friday 30th September
**TERM 4:** Tuesday 18th October – Wednesday 14th December

**NEWSLETTER DISTRIBUTION**

School Newsletters are distributed to the eldest child in each family **each fortnight** on a **Wednesday**.

Newsletters are a vital link between school and home and an invaluable source of communication with the aim of keeping you informed of current and upcoming events and highlights of school life, so please take the time to read them carefully.

*Please ensure that you obtain your Newsletter each fortnight* – if you do not receive your copy, please ask your child’s teacher.

*Also check that you receive all inserts as listed.*

Newsletters will also be emailed to school families who have provided an email.

You can also find the Newsletters online at our website [www.montessori.sa.edu.au](http://www.montessori.sa.edu.au)

**CHESS CLUB**

‘Chess is not for smart people, chess will make you smart!’

The weekly Chess Club is starting again after school on Thursday, 18th February from 3.30 – 4.30pm with David Koestler from SA Chess Assoc.

Chess is so much more than a game. It helps develop creative, strategic, and forward thinking. It is a great tool to increase mathematical skills and develop concentration.

Cost is $45/term (9 classes) plus $15 per workbook which lasts approx. 2 terms.

If you would like your child to do chess - please collect a flyer from the school office.

**CHANGES TO LUNCH ORDERS**

This year Lunch Orders at Yultiwirra will be supplied by *Maria’s Kitchen* on Tuesday, Wednesday & Friday.

Please note:

- Orders close at 9.15am on Tuesday & Wednesday.
- Friday orders need to be placed in the box by close of school Thursday.

Orders will no longer be taken by office staff, instead there is a box in the school office to place you order in a lunch bag which needs to be clearly written on with the student’s name & teacher’s name. (lunch bags – 10 in a bundle are available for $1)

Please ensure that all coins are Australian Currency as foreign coins cannot be accepted.

A copy of the Lunch Menu is included with this Newsletter.

Yultiwirra Campus - 12 Anderson Road, Aldgate  SA  5154
Wairoa Campus - 142 Mt Barker Road, Aldgate  SA  5154
Tel: (08) 8339 6842 Fax: (08) 8370 9538
Email: enquiries@montessori.sa.edu.au
Web site  [www.montessori.sa.edu.au](http://www.montessori.sa.edu.au)