Welcome back to Term 1 2016.

I hope you and your family have had a great holiday... full of fun and relaxation. I spent some time with my family and friends at the beach which was perfect!!

The staff and I are back and ready to engage and inspire your children. It does take a few weeks for classes to settle and get to know each other and of course get to know their ‘new’ teacher.

In 13 plus years of education, your child will eventually find themselves in a class without their close friends. It’s normal for them to initially feel a little anxious about this, so how should you handle it?

Tempting as it may be to request a class swap (which can be a logistical nightmare for schools and not always possible), here are some important things to consider first.

*School is a place where our children learn important social skills as well as academic ones. Finding their place and making friends in a new group is a vital skill to develop and one they’ll rely on their entire lives. The classroom is one of the gentlest places to start learning this.

*Teachers turn a “bunch of kids” into a team every year. They keep an eye out for students who aren’t mixing in, and create opportunities to pair them up with different children.

*There’s still lunch and recess to play with their friends.

*It’s also a great opportunity for them to learn about separating social time and work time.

*Lots of their classmates are in the same boat.

*Everyone is starting a new year, with a new teacher and a new classroom and many will be looking for new friendships too. Some kids choose a new “best friend” in every class they have, which builds a rich network of friendships over the years.

*Children learn different skills from different classmates.

*These days there are lots of opportunities for group work in class, when students team up and work through tasks together. Unlikely pairings can produce excellent workmates, who share a common language of learning and help each other along.

If you are able to spend some time in your child’s classroom (for example, by helping out with reading or maths groups) you’ll meet the other children and be able to suggest possible friends to your child. Your child will be thrilled to see you in their classroom and it also seems to fast track their sense of ‘belonging’.

Encourage play dates with classmates.

Veteran parents and teachers tell us that more likely than not, your child will be absolutely fine and will have developed a new level of resilience from spreading their wings a little.

2016 will be a great year!

Fiona Paine

From the Principal

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New Staff

We welcome two new staff members to Katoomba Public School in 2016. Ms Angie Wilson our new Assistant Principal and Mr Wayne Donges, classroom teacher.

Hi, my name is Angie Wilson. I am so excited to be joining the Katoomba Public School community as Assistant Principal Welfare. I have a Masters Degree in Education and have specialised in Child Mental Health. This is now my 12th year teaching and I have taught across a range of settings including Behaviour and Mental Health, Learning and Social Skills support, Outreach support for teachers and I have been lucky enough to work across both High and Primary School settings. I have also been fortunate to have had the opportunity to teach in Welfare schools in Northern Thailand and most recently the Himalayas in India.

I love doing what I do, I love working in the Upper Mountains community and most of all I love seeing young people realise their potential. At KPS I will be taking part in the schools Welfare and Wellbeing programs including Kids Matter and PBL, the Transition to High School program and of course I will be teaching a class of amazing Stage 3 students amongst all the other fantastic activities and happenings at KPS. I’m looking forward to getting to know the KPS community so please say hi if you are around, or if there is anything I may be able to help with we can meet for a longer chat. Bring on a fantastic 2016.

My name is Wayne Donges and I have been appointed to Katoomba Public School in 2016. I have been teaching for 20 years in the Mt Druitt and Penrith districts. In 1999 I was appointed to Emerton Public School and predominately my teaching experience has been on Stage 2 and 3 classes. During my time at Emerton I was heavily involved in the sport programs. At KPS I will be teaching the fabulous 3/4D.

My interests include spending quality time with my partner, my six children and their respective ten children (yes I am a grandfather), working on our two properties, wandering through the beautiful walks of the Blue Mountains and keeping myself fit enough to participate in some trail running events such as the Woodford to Glenbrook Classic.

As I grew up in the mountains from the age of ten, I am particularly looking forward to returning to and working in my backyard, in getting to know the wonderful staff and students of Katoomba Public School, to making a difference in the lives of students at Katoomba Public School and in being an excellent facilitator of learning for students.

Back to School Checklist

- Life seems to go from zero to one hundred during the first few weeks of school. We’ve pooled our years of experience to bring you some suggestions to make the rest of the year run more smoothly. Good luck!
- Check the school has all your contact information including daytime phone numbers. Have you changed address or phone number since last year?
- Have you nominated a current emergency contact – someone who would be able to come and collect your child if you weren’t available? After you check with them, supply their details to the school.
- Medications that are kept at school. Are they up-to-date with complete, current instructions for use? Have you supplied any ‘consumables’ necessary for administering the medication to your child?
- Label uniforms, lunch boxes, bags etc. clearly (this will save you $$)$!
- Buy a large pump pack of sunscreen and keep it somewhere visible and handy. Get into the habit of slathering your child’s face, neck and limbs before school each day.
- Introduce yourself to the teacher early in the year. Please come along to ‘meet the teacher’ night.
- Connect with at least one other parent in the class and exchange contact details – it’s great to have someone to double check with when you’re not sure about class events etc.
- If you can find some time to volunteer at the school it’s really worth the effort. Your child will love having you in the school, helping with reading, art or covering books in the library! It helps you get to know the teachers and you’ll get know your child’s classmates a little better.

If you have any more tips for other parents, share them with me. All advice gratefully accepted!
Meet The Teacher Evening

Meet the teacher evening

When: Tuesday 16th February

5.00pm School Hall – Meet the staff

5.20pm Classrooms – Program Overview*

6.00pm Finish

*This is not an interview time: if you need to speak specifically about your child please make an appointment for another day.

If you do have more than one child at the school, we suggest you choose one classroom to visit, and make an appointment for another time (if need be) with the other teacher for an overview of their program.

2016 Classes

KB - Mrs Baird
KG - Mrs Galbraith
1/2C - Miss Charlton
2W - Mrs Wallace
3/4D - Mr Donges
4/5K - Ms King
5/6A - Ms Abbey
5/6W - Ms Wilson

1S - Mrs Snow & Ms Dare
2/3N - Ms Campbell-Neale
K/6N - Mr Nicholson

Learning & Support Teachers - Mrs Barrie and Mr Gero
Librarian & Reading Recovery - Mr Lehman

Swimming Carnival

The school swimming carnival will be held on Thursday 11th February for students in Years 3-6 (as well as any 8 year olds in Year 2 who can swim 50 metres). Notes have gone home to the students with full details.

P&C News

The next meeting of the P&C will be held on Wednesday 10th February at 7.15pm in the Staff room. Everyone is welcome to attend. We look forward to seeing you there!