It was great to see the enthusiastic faces as our Kindergarten students started school last Monday. They completed their Best Start assessments last Friday. The teachers were so impressed with the confident and enthusiastic manner in which the children completed the assessment tasks and many did not want to go home. I would like to thank the parents for their patience and support during the implementation of the testing process. The information gained by the teachers enables them to provide explicit teaching and learning programs for students. This week has been very busy in Kindergarten. I have been so impressed with how well all Kinders have settled in and developed routines. Teachers have been busy helping students learn our school rules and discussing important safety issues such as the use of crossings.

Walking around the school it is wonderful to see how well the students in Years 1 to 6 have settled in and teaching and learning is well underway in all classes. At this stage our numbers are still uncertain but we will have a better idea of whether we will reach our sixteenth class by next Wednesday. Should we make the numbers to form another class, parents will be informed of any children who will be involved in changing classes.

We had a fantastic day yesterday at the swimming carnival - despite the weather. Our students were exemplary, the staff outstanding and the parents were wonderful. As we know, events like our annual swimming carnival don’t happen without lots of planning and hard work. Thank you to Mrs Sue Kelly for her organisation and all the staff and parents who helped out on the day as well as all the children who participated in the carnival and the sportsmanship displayed by all. It was also great to see the fantastic house spirit that was generated by all the house captains to support their competitors.

This week some of our students started or resumed music tuition in the school from private music teachers outside the school. The school strongly supports the opportunity for students to learn and instrument and develop a love of music and provides learning spaces for the teachers and students. I would remind parents who wish their children to take part in music lessons during school time that it is important to negotiate the lessons with teachers as children who leave the classroom for lessons will miss what is being taught. All lessons should be after 11.30am to avoid disruption to the Literacy and Numeracy programs that are planned for the morning session. Teachers cannot be expected to help students make up lost lessons and children who miss specific subject areas each week will find this reflected in their reports.

A few reminders for the start of the year. I would like to remind parents that they are required
by law to provide an explanation for their child's absence from school.

This week attached to the Blue and White you will find attendance notification slips. Please keep these in a safe place and return them to the school with your child when they return after an absence.

The law clearly states that children should attend school every day that lessons are provided unless a suitable explanation is provided. Parents are reminded that it is their responsibility to provide the school with a suitable explanation for all absences within seven days of the absence. Failure to provide a suitable explanation will result in an 'Unexplained Absence' being recorded against your child's name. If more than three unexplained absences are recorded in any three month period the school is obliged by law to refer the matter to the Home School Liaison Officer. This can lead to the child being put on an attendance improvement plan and possible prosecution of the parent/carer.

Students arriving late to school are required to report to the office for a 'Late Note' to take to class. This note requires that the child gives an explanation for their late entry into school. Students being collected from school at any time during the day before the finish of the school day are required to be signed out at the office by parents before leaving the school.

I would also like to remind all parents that all institutions that work with children including schools are mandatory reporters of anything that would lead us to believe that a child may be at risk of harm. A child or young person is at risk of harm if current concerns exist for their safety, welfare and well-being. These can include: basic physical or psychological needs are not being met; lack of medical care being provided; child is at risk of being physically or sexually abused or ill-treated or a child is at risk of serious physical or psychological harm.

At times parents may need to speak to their child's teacher but I would ask that you please contact the school by phone or send a note to the teacher to make an appointment so any issues can be discussed appropriately. The morning time before school is used by teachers for meetings and classroom preparation and is not the best time to talk about important issues which concern your child.

A reminder that the school's Mobile Phone Policy sets out clear guidelines for the use of mobile phones in the school. Children who bring phones to school are required to leave them at the front office during the day. The office ladies log the phones into a register and the student can collect them at the end of the day. This procedure ensures the safety of all phones.

Parents who need to contact their child during the day can do so through the front office.

Our first meeting of our P&C is tonight at 7.30pm in the library - all parents are welcome.

Parent/Teacher Information Evenings have been planned for Thursday 21 February. This evening is an opportunity for parents to meet other parents and meet their child's teacher. All details of times will be in next week's newsletter.

Congratulations to our newly elected Sports Captains and Vice Captains:

- **Mitchell**
  - Captains: Darcy Barker
  - Vice Captains: Sarah White, Faith Hall

- **Sturt**
  - Captains: Josh Coghlan, Alyssa Armstrong
  - Vice Captains: Morgan Woods, Flynn Christie

- **Oxley**
  - Captains: Chloe Kirkwood, Sam Tombs
  - Vice Captains: Sophie Hamilton, Luke Shirlaw

- **Cunningham**
  - Captains: Sha Talkes, Kymani Quaife
  - Vice Captains: Imogen Bradley, Sam Watson

  Cherrie Paterson
  Relieving Principal

**BOOK CLUB**

Order forms for Issue 1 for 2013 have been distributed. Orders are due back to the Front Office by Wednesday 20 February 2013. Please send orders in a clearly marked envelope, do not include money or notes for any other activity. Cheques need to be made payable to Armidale City Public School. All orders earn points that can be used to purchase items for our Library.

**LIBRARY**

All students need to have a Library Bag to help protect the books that they borrow from the Library. This will prolong the life of our valuable resources.

Library Days this year are currently:

- Monday: 3/4BT, 3/4T, 1/2S, KB, KR
- Tuesday: 5/6R, 1/2P, 1/2K (odd weeks)
- Wednesday: 3/4J, 3/4R, 5/6K, 1/2W
- Thursday: 5/6Mac, 5/6J, 1/2T

Judy Docksey
Librarian
Hey from 1/2 K!

Welcome back everyone to a brand new school year! 1/2K has had a fantastic start to the term and are excited about what is planned. We are reading the Gruffalo and have some great Gruffalo resources in our room…..Have you seen the Gruffalo’s foot prints? We are also having our very own Safari during Literacy, we are learning about a fussy Zebra called Gus, about Giraffes who can’t dance…… or can they? As well as learning some amazing facts about animals in Africa. Wishing you all a wonderful term! Mrs McGrath, Mrs Schultz and the fabulous 1/2 K.

Hey from 1/2 K!
Some very cute smiles from a few of our new Kinders.