Hello and welcome to our school community! We’re the Welcome Committee leads, Samantha Tunbridge (my son is in Year 3) and Carmen Schnegg (my son is in Year 2). We prepared this document as an accompaniment to the 2014 school handbook.

Our idea is to give you additional information from a parent’s perspective on the things that happen throughout the year. Of course you will receive notes from the school about all the events and activities which will give you the full details and the dates. We’ve also included contact details for extra-curricular, school holiday and family activities which we hope will be helpful if you are new to our neighbourhood. If you have any questions please don’t hesitate to contact one of us at samanthatunbridge@gmail.com or carmen@schnegg.name

The Dem P&C

Joining the P&C is a wonderful way to get involved with our school. The monthly meetings are attended by some of the executive staff and are open to parents, carers and community members. It’s always a friendly, informal atmosphere. It’s up to you if you want to commit to a particular role, these are advertised at the start of Term 1. Throughout the year other smaller roles are available for specific events. However, you may prefer to just come along and participate in a P&C meeting when you can make it. They are the forum to share your ideas, knowledge and skills to enhance the experiences of our students.

The meetings are held in the school library from 6.30pm to around 8pm on these Wednesdays: 5 February, 12 March (this includes the AGM), 9 April, 14 May, 11 June, 16 July, 13 August, 10 September, 15 October, 12 November and 10 December 2014.

Recently the Dem P&C has funded the purchase of ipads as key learning resources, smart boards for classrooms and the library, the enormous shade structure in the Pacific playground, the renovation of the little equipment, the installation of the synthetic turf on the soccer pitch and the currently in-progress upgrade of the Pacific playground. As well, they manage school fundraising and social events such as the Welcome Festivals, End of Year Festivals, Spell-a-thons, Art auction nights and Outdoor film nights. Our very popular Tuck Shop and Uniform Shop are also run by the P&C. They also organise working bees to maintain and landscape school gardens. Members also volunteer as parent representatives on the School Council and ADCOM. The Dem Directory is a very helpful resource and this is also compiled and published by the P&C. Members have been and continue to be involved in lobbying local and state governments regarding future schooling needs in our community.

For more info please go to: www.nthsyddem-p.schools.nsw.edu.au/p-c-information
Welcome back to school playdate for Years 1 to 6 - Friday 31 January 2.55pm to 4pm

Welcome to school playdate for Kindy only - Friday 7 February 2.55pm to 4pm

These two playdates are to welcome our students to the new school year, they are a great chance for students, families and carers to catch up with friends in a relaxing atmosphere. There will be fun music playing and our wonderful bubble machine will be switched on to the highest setting! Every student is invited to come along to the Tuck Shop to collect a free frozen fruit tube! You’ll be able to purchase additional frozen fruit tubes for siblings if you wish. The Tuck Shop will be open serving its regular Friday afternoon ‘Coffee Shop’ fare too. These events are hosted by The Dem P&C, they are not a school-supervised event. Therefore all students who attend these playdates need to be supervised by their parents or carers. They also must wear Stay & Play wristbands if they are on the school premises after 2.55pm. In case of bad weather this event will be postponed to a later date.

Grade information evenings
These are held once a year, early in Term 1. They are a brilliant way for parents and carers to meet each other as well as get to know all the teachers in your child's grade. You'll hear about the learning program, homework expectations and routines as well as have the opportunity to ask questions.

Parent helper workshop
If you are interested in becoming a volunteer helper at our school, you’ll find this workshop very informative.

Swimming carnival
The younger children don't go to the swimming carnival. The students who may attend are Year 2 children who turn eight this year as well as all of Year 3 to Year 6. They don't wear their school uniforms and most children like to wear some clothing that is their 'house colour'. At the Dem our ‘houses’ are: Yellow (Milson house), Green (Hay house), Red (Whitton house) and Blue (Berry house). Please note that it’s not necessary to wear house colours, whatever your child wants to wear is fine. Students attending will travel by chartered bus. Families and carers are welcome to attend, please just go straight to the swim centre.

English as a second language (ESL) information evening
All parents and carers with a child who speaks English as a second language will find this information evening most helpful.

Welcome festival
This is a huge amount of fun for everyone and a great chance to catch up with the other parents and carers you may chat to at drop-off and pick-up. It usually runs from 5pm to 9pm on a Friday night around Week 8 and is held on the school grounds. There are fantastic rides and yummy food stalls. The Sweet Treats stall relies on kind donations of home-made or store bought goodies. All-night rides passes are sold so children can go from ride to ride and not worry about buying a ticket for each one. A festival info pack will be sent home to you a few weeks before the event, it will provide everything you need to know as well as fund-raising raffle tickets to buy. There are two fund-raising raffles each year, this is the first one and it will be drawn at this festival. At the grade information nights a member of the P&C will let you know how you can become a Welcome Festival Volunteer and you’ll receive an info sheet then too. The festival brings out a very strong sense of community spirit and is a great way to meet other parents and carers.

Parent or carer / teacher interviews
These are the formal parent or carer / teacher interviews. You’ll hear from the school when it’s time to book your interview and you do the booking online. Interview times will be available before and after school for a specific period. During the interview you’ll spend about 10 minutes with your child’s teacher in their classroom. If you’d ever like to talk to your child’s teacher less formally at other times please ask her / him if you can make an appointment with them.

School photos
A couple of weeks before school photo day, your child will bring home an envelope showing the different photo package options and their prices. So you will receive notice of the day the school photos are being taken. Students naturally need to wear their full school uniform.

Zone and regional swimming carnivals
Students who qualify for the zone / regional swimming carnivals will be advised.
Schools clean up day
This is an umbrella event under the wonderful Clean Up Australia campaign.

Harmony day
This is an Australian Government programme and coincides with the United Nations International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination. The message of Harmony Day is Everyone Belongs. It is a day to celebrate Australia's diversity and cultural respect for everyone who calls Australia home – from the traditional owners of this land to those who have come from many countries around the world. For more info please go to www.harmony.gov.au.

Earth hour celebration
Earth Hour is the single largest mass participation event of its kind in the world. Earth Hour is described on its website as ‘the beautiful, bold idea that all of us together can inspire climate action’. For more info please go to www.earthhour.org.au

Anzac day assembly
This solemn assembly reminds the students of the role the Australian and New Zealand Defence Forces have played in our history. Sometimes we are visited by returned servicemen who speak to the children. This assembly is for students only.

TERM 2

NAPLAN reading, writing, spelling and numeracy tests
The National Assessment Program – Literacy and Numeracy is an annual assessment for students in Years 3, 5, 7 and 9. It began in 2008 and tests the sorts of skills that are essential for every child to progress through school and life, such as reading, writing, spelling and numeracy. The assessments are undertaken nationwide. For further info please go to: www.nap.edu.au

Walk safely to school day
On this day students are encourage to walk safely to school with parents or carers to reinforce safe pedestrian behaviour. Other aims include ensuring children up to the age of 10 hold an adult’s hand when crossing the road, promoting the health benefits of walking and creating regular walking habits at an early age. For more info please go to: www.walk.com.au/wstsd01/page.asp?PageID=260

Cross country races
These are held during school time and only take part of the day. The students walk from the school to St Leonards Park and back again. Families and carers are welcome to attend, please just go straight to the park on the corner of Miller and Falcon Streets, North Sydney.

Zone and regional cross country
You’ll be advised if your child qualifies for the zone or regional carnivals.

National simultaneous storytime week
National Simultaneous Storytime is an important annual campaign that aims to encourage more young Australians to read and enjoy books. It’s a colourful, vibrant and fun event that aims to promote the value of reading and literacy. It uses an Australian children’s book that explores age appropriate themes and addresses key learning areas of the National Curriculum for Years 1 to 6.

Multicultural public speaking competition
The Multicultural Perspectives Public Speaking Competition was introduced in 1996. It aims to heighten the awareness of multicultural issues among NSW primary school students while developing their interest in public speaking and improving their confidence and speech-writing skills. It’s open to all NSW government primary schools. It has two different age divisions – one for Years 3 and 4 students and one for Years 5 and 6 students. Schools can enter a maximum of two contestants in each of the two age divisions, totalling four contestants overall.

P&C spell-a-thon
This is a really popular annual fund-raising event. The students work hard to learn the spelling words specific to their year and they collect donations from sponsors who either pay them for the words they get correct or just pledge a specific amount. There is always a working bee in the staff room during school hours to mark the spelling tests and you are most welcome to join in!
**Semester 1 reports sent home**
These reports are thoughtfully and thoroughly written by your child’s teacher. The report will include a summary of your child’s progress throughout the year to date. Also noted are how many days your child was absent. The reports are sent home to the parents / carers in a sealed envelope.

**Field carnival**
The younger children don’t go to the Field Carnival. The ones who participate are Year 2 children who turn eight this year and all the Year 3 to Year 6 students. The students travel to the field by chartered buses. Just like the swimming carnival, the students don’t wear their school uniform on this day and most children like to wear some clothing that is their ‘house colour’. Please remember running shoes are most important though! Families and carers are welcome to attend, please just go straight to the field.

**Athletics carnival**
The whole school attends the athletics carnival and it’s a fantastic day. It’s held at St Leonards Park on the corner of Miller and Falcon Streets. Everyone walks from the school and back again at the end of the day. The Kindy, Year 1 and Year 2 children who turn seven this year aren't eligible to compete in the zone or regional carnivals so they do separate activities to the older children. The Year 2 children who turn eight this year as well as all the Year 3 to Year 6 students can enter in competitive races. Same message as the Field Carnival with ‘house colour’ clothing and running shoes!

**TERM 3**

**Regional opportunity class test**
Opportunity classes are for academically gifted and talented children in Years 5 and 6. There are 75 primary schools with opportunity classes across NSW. They provide intellectual stimulation and an educationally rich environment. Successful students attend the opportunity class full-time for the duration of Years 5 and 6 at the primary school with an opportunity class. It is a two-year placement program. There is no provision to apply for Year 6 placement. Students can apply and sit for the Opportunity Class Test when they are in Year 4. For further information please go to: www.schools.nsw.edu.au/gotoschool/types/primarywithoc.php

**Schools tree day**
This is an event under the National Tree Day umbrella. Each year, around 2500 preschools, kindergartens, primary and high schools across Australia take part in Schools Tree Day. Students nation-wide have learnt how to plant, and care for the seedlings they grow. For more information please go to: www.treeday.planetark.org/schools/

**School open day**
A wonderful opportunity for parents and carers to visit their child in their classroom and see what a typical school day is like for them.

**Book week – 16 to 22 August**
This is the longest running children's festival in Australia, celebrating its 69th birthday this year. It’s a time to celebrate books and Australian authors and illustrators. The theme for this year is Connect To Reading. A highlight of the week is when the Children’s Book Council of Australia announces its Book Of The Year awards.

**Book week parade**
This is one of the most fun days of the school year. If you attended public school here in Australia yourself you probably have good memories and very funny photos of your own childhood Book Week Parades. It’s a really sweet idea – the children come to school dressed up as one of their favourite book characters. If possible they carry the book in which their character features with them in the parade. All the students and staff gather in the McHatton playground and each class takes their turn literally parading around the playground to rounds of applause. Many of our staff dress-up too – it makes for a jolly day. Some children really get into it and wear amazing costumes, others make a more minimal effort – whatever your child wants to do is up to them! Families and carers are most welcome to come along be part of the audience – whatever you do, don’t forget your camera!

**Years 3 to 6 camps**
A wonderful part of being in these older years is the children attend an annual school camp.
Premier's spelling bee
This event was introduced in 2004 as a fun and educational way for primary school students to engage in spelling. The program includes activities to encourage all students to engage with spelling and to promote improved literacy in combination with the English K-6 Syllabus. There is a state-wide competition which comprises of two divisions – Junior (Years 3 and 4) and Senior (Years 5 and 6).

Art auction night
This P&C fundraiser usually happens once every two years. Each class works together under the creative inspiration and supervision of a volunteer parent or carer to produce their own group artwork which is sold on the night. Attending the event is fantastic fun! The P&C will need volunteers to work on the event in the planning stages as well helping on the night.

Zone and regional track and field carnivals
You'll be advised if your child qualifies for the zone or regional carnivals.

Kindergarten information evening
If you have another child who will be starting in Kindergarten at The Dem in 2015, you'll be keen to attend this informative evening.

TERM 4

Sports in schools sessions
Sports in schools is an external team that comes to The Dem to manage the sports program this term. Each year group attends one session per week.

Kindergarten orientations
You'll start to see the nervous faces in the playground when kindy orientations begin – and that’s just the parents and carers! The sweet little pre-kindergarten students will start coming to school from time to time during Term 4, please give them all a friendly smile and warm hello if you see them!

Year 6 fair
This is so much fun! The Year 6 students do a brilliant job putting on a fun fair for the younger children. There’s yummy food and games, the favourite is always the famous ‘dunk-a-teacher’ game. However, the most exciting is always the ‘dunk-the-principal’ round! The staff at our school are such good sports! The Year 6 students do all of this for the wonderful leadership experience as well as to raise funds for the gift they’ll bestow on the school at their graduation.

Year 6 bake stall
All the students (and staff!) love this special day. Year 6 hold a bake stall selling lots of lovely cakes and sweet treats to the younger children and staff. The Year 6 families and carers donate the goods to sell – you can bake or buy – whatever suits you best!

Sports presentation assembly
The annual sports presentation assembly is held on a school day usually during the morning. If your child is going to be presented with an award, you’ll be contacted in advance and invited to attend.

Thank you morning tea for volunteers
This annual event is held towards the end of Term 4 and is the school’s way of showing their appreciation for all the wonderful volunteer work done by parents and carers.

High school orientations
Orientation to high school for Year 6 students is an important step in helping them prepare for next year.

Talent fest
This is a fantastic student-run event and a highlight of year. Children can perform as soloists or in a group, they organise their own rehearsals, music and costumes. Naturally some participants will go to further effort than others and it is really just a light-hearted event. Parents and carers are welcome to be part of the audience.
Swim scheme
Officially known as the School Swimming and Water Safety Program, it is a learn to swim program that develops water confidence and provides students with basic skills in water safety and survival. It provides opportunities for students in Years 2 to 6 to attend daily lessons of 45 minutes over 10 consecutive days. The scheme runs in Term 4 and the children are taken by chartered bus from school to a local swimming pool. It is an initiative of the NSW state government. The participants are accompanied to the pool by school teachers, are away from school for about two hours each day. It’s not just for children who have yet to do swimming lessons, learners in the early stages are also very welcome to attend.

End of year festival
This fund-raising festival happens on a Friday night around Week 8. Just like the Welcome Festival there are the fun rides, delicious food stalls and outdoor disco. Again the Sweet Treats stall relies on donations of home-made or store bought goodies. It usually starts at 4pm with amazing performances by all of the students. Each year group presents a choreographed dance performance, they work hard together during Term 4 to learn their routine. All night rides passes are sold for this event too. The festival info pack will be sent home to you a few weeks before the event. It will provide everything you need as well as tickets you can buy for our final fund-raising event of the year, which will be drawn at the festival. If by this stage you haven’t already pledged to perform a specific festival volunteer role – you’ll have another chance to help out on the night, you’ll be able to sign up online for particular shifts a few weeks before the event.

Semester 2 reports sent home
As discussed earlier, your child’s teacher will put alot of time and effort into the writing of these reports. They include a summary of your child’s progress this year as well as noting how many days your child was absent. The reports are sent home to the parents or carers in a sealed envelope.

Next are a few things we felt would be helpful

A request list for class supplies will come home at the start of the year from your child’s teacher containing the products he / she would like each family to please buy and donate to the class. Glue sticks, hand sanitisers and tissues are some of the kinds of items that you’ll see on the list.

Weekly timetables are prepared by class teachers at the start of each term. It is sent home so you are know what lessons and activities occur at what time on each day.

Mufti days are announced throughout the year. This means your child wears their own clothes to school instead of the uniform. A gold coin donation is requested, monies are given to a specified charity.

Class parents are an important part of our school community. One of their most important tasks is to pass information between the teacher and the families. Some like to organise class get-togethers outside of school hours too. Parents and carers can volunteer for the role at the beginning of the school year.

Car parking near school is regularly patrolled by council ranger so please be sure to abide by the street signs or you’ll risk a parking fine. There is free street parking close to the school but it all has time limitations. As well, there are some metered parking spots on Bay Road. On McHatton Street please note you can only drop your child on the school side of the street. We’d suggest if you are unfamiliar with the area, that you take a drive around on a weekend when there is less traffic to check out parking regulations. For people new to our state, please note that in NSW it is against the law to pull onto the wrong side of the road to park. Needless to say please drive with extreme caution near the school and don’t park in bus stops or our neighbour’s driveways. The staff carpark is very small and is strictly for staff use only. Please never use it as a place to drop-off or pick-up your child either.

The NSW Premier’s Reading Challenge is a fantastic event that aims to encourage a love of reading for pleasure and leisure in students and enable them to experience quality literature. It is run by Mrs Alice Bennett, our teacher librarian and goes from 1 March to 1 September this year. The aim is to encourage a love of reading for leisure and to enable students to experience quality literature. It is not a competition but a challenge to each student to read, to read more and to read more widely. While it isn’t compulsory to participate it is something that is taken seriously here at The Dem. The idea is that each child who enters the challenge reads a certain number of books. The K to Year 2 group reads 30 books – 25 from the official list and 5 own choice. Due to their varying reading abilities it counts towards their total each time a person reads a book to them as they ‘experience’ the book and they can also co-read books. The Years 3 to 4 group and the Years 5 to 6 group both read 20 books – 15 from the official list and 5 own choice.
Our library has lots and lots of the books on the PRC lists so it is very easy to borrow the required number from school.
The local libraries also have many of the PRC books on their shelves too. Some children are happy to reach the required number of books, other students get really into the challenge and read as many books as they possibly can. These additional books need to be written down on a list and handed in to Mrs Bennett by the end of the challenge. To complete the challenge you (or your child if they are able to do it) need to enter their required number of books into the PRC website. An easy way to do this is to keep the list on paper and once all the books are read, then enter them into the website at once. For more info go to: www.products.schools.nsw.edu.au/prc/home.html

Extra-curricular activities

There are a number of businesses that hire our school hall to use as the venue for their classes, please see the school office for details. Following are some other local businesses which offer classes for children.

Big Blue Swimming, their closest pool is located at Monte St Angelo school, North Sydney
www.bigblueswimming.com.au  Tel 9400 9413

Badger Swim School, they run classes at North Sydney Olympic Pool, Milsons Point
www.badgerswimschool.com  Tel 9966 1551

Willoughby Swim School, it’s a little further away at the Willoughby Leisure Centre
www.willoughbyleisure.com.au/swim-school/  Tel 9958 5799

River Road Tennis Centre, it’s in Lane Cove but they provide a bus to pick-up and drop off Dem students
www.riverroadtenniscentre.com.au  Tel 9428 3336

Love and Deuce Tennis, St Leonards and Naremburn, they coach pre-schoolers and primary age students
www.lovendeuce.com.au  Tel St Leonards 9901 3144  Tel Naremburn 9437 6138

North Sydney Tennis
http://nstg.com.au/sports-for-kids  Tel 9929 7172

North Sydney Pirates Junior Rugby Union
http://www.northspirates.rugbynet.com.au/  Email northspiratesjrc@gmail.com

North Sydney Bears Junior Rugby League

Willoughby Wildcats Junior AFL
http://www.wildcats afl.com/  Tel 0408 407 928

North Sydney Bears Junior Soccer Club
http://www.northsydneyunited.com.au/  Email clubadmin@northsydneyunited.com.au

North Sydney Bears Baseball
http://www.northsydney.baseball.com.au/  Email andi@druckman.com.au

Northern Suburbs Basketball Association
www.nsba.com.au  Tel 9906 7877

North Sydney Netball Club
www.northsydney.netballclub.com  Tel 0403 300 992

North Sydney District Cricket Club
http://www.northsydneycc.com.au/junior_cricket.html  Tel 9489 4290

North Star Martial Arts, classes for children aged 3 to 13 in North Sydney
www.northstarmartialarts.com.au  Tel 9810 5790

4 Cats Art Studio, a short walk away from The Dem in North Sydney
http://www.4cats.com/northsydney  Tel 8084 8396

Evolution Performance Centre, a variety of dance classes as well as singing and acrobatics in Crows Nest
www.evolutionpc.com.au  Tel 0433 124 068
Sydney North Dance, Checchetti ballet classes in Crows Nest  
www.sydneynorthdance.com.au  Tel 0410 964 198

North Shore Drama School, a range of acting and drama classes in Crows Nest  
www.northshoredrama.com.au  Tel 9404 5193

Centre Stage Academy, dance tuition for all ages in North Sydney  
www.centrestageacademy.com.au  Tel 1300 322 243

School holiday activities

North Sydney Council Vacation Care
This is managed by KU for North Sydney Council and provides care for Primary School children during the school holidays. Vacation care activities include art, craft, sport, games, music, excursions, visiting entertainers and more. For more info please go to:  
http://www.northsydney.nsw.gov.au/Community_Services/Children_Youth/Vacation_Care  Tel 0409 831632

North Sydney Council School Holiday Activities  
http://www.northsydney.nsw.gov.au/Community_Services/Children_Youth/School_Holiday_Activities

Local family activities

North Sydney Twilight Food Fair – known as the Noodle Markets, located in front Stanton Library  
Very popular with North Sydney Dem families, it’s a hot food market with good music. Bring a rug and you can of course bring food and drinks from home too. The Fair operates in the warmer months only.  

Northside Produce Market – located at Civic Park in front of Stanton Library  
Held on the mornings of the third Saturday of the month, it has a wonderful convivial atmosphere.  

North Sydney Market – also located at Civic Park in front of Stanton Library on Miller Street  
It’s on the second Saturday of each month, 9am to 3pm (except January) and hosts over 100 stalls.  

Sunset Cinema, enjoy a wonderful program of outdoor movies at North Sydney Oval, only in late summer  
www.sunsetcinema.com.au/northsydney  Tel 9029 5745

Good sources for children’s events and activities


www.sydney.com/things-to-do/family-holidays/top-attractions-for-kids

www.sydneyoperahouse.com/about/program_kids_at_the_house.aspx


www.au.timeout.com/sydney/kids

www.sydneyfestival.org.au

www.sydneyschild.com.au

Well, that’s it for the parent-to-parent handbook. We hope it has been helpful and we wish you all the best for a happy time at The Dem. Please contact us if we can be of help with anything.

Samantha and Carmen