Hello parents, carers and friends,
I’m pleased to report that all full-time students at both campuses of the School of Special Education NW have settled well to new class programs and new teaching staff.
In particular, it was pleasing to note the wide smiles on the faces of students who are returning this year to access particular programs.

**Links Program**

The Links program has commenced under the leadership of Ms Cathy Bester. Students diagnosed with severe disabilities are nominated by their regular schools to receive specific assessment and intervention within a small group setting. These students are supported during the whole day Links program by a teacher aide from their school. Specific PODD strategies, signing and direct speech are modelled by Mrs Felicity Lovatt, the Speech & Language Pathologist who services both SOSE campuses. Gym and circuit activities are set up and each student’s gross motor performance is monitored by a DHHS physiotherapist. Music therapy, ICT and hydrotherapy are also included within the day’s program.

The Links program operates on Tuesdays and Thursdays at the Burnie campus and on Wednesdays at the Devonport campus.

Over the next few newsletters, I will introduce several new students who are accessing the Links program in 2010.
The Surf Life Saving Experience Day

What a fun day it turned out to be on Friday, 26th February at the Devonport Bluff. The weather was perfect for students from both campuses to fully participate in beach activities and surf boarding in the shallow water under the guidance of trained life savers.

Once again, the co-ordinator of the event, now in its third year, was Ms Sharon Kemp from the Hellyer Polytechnic College. Over 35 students with severe disabilities from SOSE NW, Reece High, Ulverstone High, the Don Polytechnic College & Parklands High took part. The needs of students with physical impairments were acknowledged with the availability of two beach wheelchairs that allowed direct access to the waves.

It was a pleasure for past students e.g. Jessica Cox Patchin to meet up friends from the Burnie campus.

The photos tell it all!

This year's experience day was financially supported by Westpac and a senior banking officer from Sydney attended and actively took part by meeting and talking with students, parents and staff members.

His camera recorded the student’s fun and active participation which will be shared in the next Westpac magazine.

Many thanks to Sharon and the team of life savers who organised this very successful event.
Workshop - Dr Richard Lueking from USA

Several staff members attended the whole day workshop entitled ‘Seamless Transition from School to Work for People with Significant Disabilities’ on Monday 1st March. I was accompanied by Mrs Bronwyn West who co-ordinates work experience and transition for students at both campuses and Mr Ted Barrance from Devonport campus. This workshop was funded by Ability Employment. Richard’s presentation confirmed that the student transition plans that are currently evolving across both campuses are modelled on the successful USA structure. In particular, we gained an insight into successful approaches with prospective employers that ensure positive work placement leading to paid work for students.

I wish you all an enjoyable and safe long weekend. School resumes on Tuesday, 9th March.

Regards,

Grace

Guitar & Bass Tuition
Experienced teacher with professional band experience is offering classes including new rock band simulation, acoustic and electric. Younger students and beginners welcome. For more information, please call John on 6427 8945 or 0403 318 944.

Northern Tas Cavy Club
Guinea Pig Fun Day
Sunday 7th March 2010
At Latrobe Memorial Hall
Starting Time 9.00

Bring your guinea pig along for some fun and great activities. There will be competition classes to enter such as Fancy Dress, Biggest ears and Pig Races.

Cost is $5 entry for competition classes Entry to venue is free.

There will also be demonstrations on Grooming, and preparing your pig for a judge as well as trimming toenails and bathing them.

Lots of prizes and raffles, come along for some fun.