Wednesday 13th February, 2013

Dear parents

It is with heavy hearts that we write to inform our school community of the passing of John Terlikar late yesterday afternoon. John had been ill for some time and as we informed the Year 1 parents at the start of the year, his health had rapidly deteriorated in late January. John and Linda joined our community last year when their children, Jessica and Jackson began in Prep. They immediately became active school community members attending Working Bees and heavily involved in the Fete planning and organising.

John and Linda have been very grateful for the support from the school community and we know this will continue as Linda, Jess and Jack rebuild their lives without John. We have seen the Surrey Hills community rally behind those in need before, and it is with great confidence that we know that through Linda and John’s friends in the community, support both practical and emotional will be offered and available over the years to come. As Linda has done over the last few weeks she will be keen to return to the school community knowing that people will respect her desire to prioritise the children and therefore keep conversations appropriate for their ears.

Jess and Jack are home with Linda and their family today and may or may not return to school this week. They shared a lovely time with Linda saying their goodbyes to John yesterday with Linda expressing that it could not have been more beautiful for them all. Linda expects the service will be on either Monday or Tuesday and we will let the community know once this is finalised.

The teachers have not informed the students today as we believe it is best for you as their parents who know them best to tell them as you see best. There is an excellent publication on the Whole School page of the website from the Cancer Council regarding talking to children about cancer which we would highly recommend. This will not only help you talk with your child but also has some excellent advice about your conversations with Jess and Jack. Please ensure your children know not to be approaching Jess and Jackson and plying them with questions or comments. They will talk as needed with their friends

Should you need any further advice or support contact the office or the phone number on the back of the publication. Hard copies are available from the office. The staff have been fully informed throughout the term and support and planning has been in place in advance. This said, understand that we too are sharing the grief as you are. The teachers, particularly Year 1, will use Circle Time and individual conversations with the students as required. Should they be concerned about any students, they will immediately contact the parents.

Yours sincerely

Marg Staley