Principals Report

What an exciting week we had last week—our book/movie character parade, the special literacy rotations, the Fence Friends project and the Emmi Memorial fun run. The activities for Literacy week extended beyond our school gates and involved the entire community. We have dedicated a page of this newsletter to some of the wonderful moments we were able to capture over the week. I want to thank all the families who were able to support our Fence Friends Project and assist their children and other students in making their friend. We have some truly amazing artists amongst us. As well as this, many families supported our special days and helped serve morning tea and the sausage sizzle. This certainly helped make our literacy week successful. A special thanks also to the Bielenberg family for their support of the fun run.

Congratulations Petria on making the Central Queensland Athletic Team. Petria won her high jump event at the Capricornia District Championship and will now go on to represent the region in Cairns. Well done Petria and we wish you every success.

As a school we have a focus on reading and comprehension this year. Data the teachers have collected throughout the learning program indicates our reading and comprehension levels are improving. We are having success with our Cars and Stars program, which scrutinises the strategies students use to comprehend what they read. Parents can assist in building these skills by spending time reading with their children each night and asking the students to talk about what they have read. I have included below some attitudes and behaviours you might expect to see in a good reader. This list is not exhaustive but may help you with some ideas on what to look for, to assist your child in becoming a good reader.

Good readers

1. display positive attitudes to reading including self-motivation, confidence and a love of reading.
2. connect prior knowledge and experiences to the ideas presented in the text.
3. skim through the text before reading and/or read the blurb, author’s notes and dedications
4. make predictions about the text related to the preview.
5. employ effective decoding strategies and read fluently.
6. create visual images of the ideas represented in the text as they read.
7. develop a love of words and word meanings and constantly expand their vocabulary knowledge.
8. focus on meaning at word level, sentence level and at whole text level.
9. use the three cueing systems (graphophonics, syntactic and semantic) to maintain fluency and comprehension. This means students use their knowledge of sounds, sentence structure and meaning of words.
10. reread when meaning is lost. If students don’t understand something they reread the text.
11. explain the reading strategies that they use.
12. self-question and seek answers as they read.
13. independently engage with the visuals (including graphs, illustrations, labelled diagrams etc.) to support or confirm text comprehension.
14. decode visual language using features of the text such as colour, style, mood, position, camera angles.

Your support with your child’s reading program will assist them to become good readers and will bring life-long benefits to your child.

“The really great man is the man who can make every man feel great” G.K. Chesterton

Girl Life

This week at Girl Life we did modelling and photo shooting. It was loads of fun!! We did beach scenes, outback scenes and pyjama scenes. We also did a catwalk. There were rows of seats and a runway. We had to pose three times as we walked up to the camera.
The 4-7 class has been adapting to some new routines over the past few weeks. A new form of rotations has started which involves the children completing four different activities across a week. Three out of four of these activities meet our school literacy focus while the fourth cements maths knowledge across a variety of concepts. Each week student results are tracked; individually, within the rotation group and across the class. Tracking this information allows the needs of students to be constantly met and ensures that learning is focused and constantly being adapted. The class has settled into these new rotations really well and are enjoying the activities. It is exciting to see the support and guidance roles some of the 6/7’s have been taking on with their peers during this time.

At this stage of the year, I am encouraging a lot more independent work and problem solving. Asking a peer, having a go and using a dictionary are just some of the problem solving skills that students are encouraged to use. For the 6/7’s in particular, learning these skills are vital for the transition into high school. While for the 4/5’s, using strategies other then immediately asking the teacher, allows them to develop skills that transfer into other areas of life.

On another note, it was amazing to see all the parents and family members supporting the students with their Fence Friends and Fun Run last week. I enjoyed getting the “Bluff Tour” on the fun run, from my very own tour guides – Erin, Celine and Michelle! All of the students enjoyed showing off their town and are very proud to be part of the Bluff community!

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**Student Council News**

Thankyou to everyone who has supported the student council by buying lunch today for Fun Food Friday. A huge thankyou especially to all the parents who volunteered their own time to make all of the amazing food! A shout out also must go to Mr Bulger for taking charge of cooking the sausages and pizzas. Also thank you to everyone who supported Daffodil Day. We raised $253 for the Cancer Council. Well done to those students who were selling the merchandise.

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**News from the P-3 Classroom**

One of the highlights last week in the classroom was making our indigenous shelters. After viewing and discussing traditional housing for aborigines, the children designed and made their own. They collected natural resources to use as construction materials. Natural clay was used to hold different parts of the shelters together. All students did a great job and this task will go towards part of the students SOSE and technology assessments.

We are having a fairly concentrated effort on learning different diagraphs (2 letters that make 1 sound). The Preps and Grade 1s are learning basic sounds such as oo (in moon and look); a/ai; o/oy; e/ea (long e sound). The 2s and 3s are learning the 3 different sounds of ‘ea’ as in steak; beach; bread. The children must learn to visualise the digraph letters in these words to be successful in spelling them. That is why it is important for the children to look at their words every night. You can assist the children by helping them develop a word list with other words that have these same letter patterns.

In maths the Gr3s are working on learning and measuring time, and the Gr 2s on measurement, including weight, area and capacity. The Preps and 1s are counting on 1 and 2 up to 100. They have used number lines to help them understand this concept. All teachers and teacher aides are using the new interactive projectors to good use in teaching the children these math concepts. The students have engaged extremely well with this extra use of technology in the classroom.

In English we have completed narratives and are now looking at procedural texts. The children are learning how to write using the correct structure for this type of text and have learned about command verbs. Over the next few weeks we will be looking at recipes, instructions and directions. This unit will involve some cooking as the children study recipes. The students will write a procedural text as part of their English assessment at the end of this unit. Exposing your child to recipes and instructions around the house will assist them to see how these texts are part of everyday life.

In health the children have been introduced to Poppy Puppy. This week he taught the children how to be brave and how to effectively deal with anger. They have learned it is okay to be angry but they must be able to deal with their anger in an appropriate manner and in a way that hurts no one. The children are really enjoying the health unit and are currently involved in creating a Happiness Flower, which displays where and how a child can find a happy place to be. As a teacher it was a wonderful thing to hear the children discuss this and see so many children choose school on their flower, as a happy place to be.