Principals Note
I would like to take this opportunity to officially welcome Mr Michael Chadbone to our school. Michael and the students of 2,3,4 class have settled into their little room very nicely.

Clean up Australia Day
A big thank you and congratulations to the students who participated in ‘Clean-up Australia Day’ it is great to see students of Bluff State School helping to keep our community clean and tidy.

Arts Link
‘The Three Endangered Animals’ was fabulous. The students and staff enjoyed it very much and a bit of learning went on as well. Three Endangered Animals were highlighted the Bilby, the Dugong and the Cassowary. The students learned about their diets, habitats and reasons for their endangered status and then what we might be able to do to help.

Every Day Counts
Incredibly we have some students who have already missed quite a number of days this year. If students miss four out of 12 days, that’s a third of learning time missed. How can children keep up with their learning with such high levels of absenteeism? Every day, every minute counts. Absences are recorded and reported to the government on compulsory returns. Please be aware that some absences are recorded as unauthorised. This code is used when absences are not deemed as acceptable reasons for being absent. This might include family holidays, parent or student birthdays, moving house, etc. your child’s future study and employment pathways are strongly linked to what he/she does now. In the past I have watched as students who have been allowed to develop poor attendance at school from an early age fall behind and eventually become anxious and school reluctant. Please do not let your child fall into this trap.

Manners
We expect our students to use great manners. This is evident in how they speak to people during the school day, before and after school. We are pleased to report that even our youngest prep students are using great manners with ‘please’, thank you’ and ‘excuse me’, great to see. Please reinforce this positive message at home.

Crazy Hair Day
Student council held a crazy hair day to raise funds for the leukaemia foundation. The students had a fantastic time and lots of photos were taken, we have sent some into the local newspaper.

Bluff Showcase
Bluff CWA is holding a showcase to highlight all the wonderful things available to us here in Bluff. It’s on Wednesday 20th at the CWA Hall from 6 to 9pm. When I was approached for the school to participate, I jumped at the change. What a fantastic way for the parents and community to see what our students have been doing this term. I hope to see you all there.
Principals conference
A week ago, I joined 1238 other state school Principals for a conference with senior officers of the education department. This event was extremely successful and informative. The two main messages from the conference was the expectation that each school have a pedagogical (teaching) framework in place by the end of the year. Bluff has had one in place but we will ensure that it aligns with the expectation of the department.
The second key message was about the importance of parent engagement with schools. I attended two workshops that showcased other schools who do this very well. It is always good to be reminded about how successful our students can be when parents understand the expectations of the school, participate in the events and support students in their learning. To highlight this message, I have included a link to a news article (below) published by the Courier Mail at the end of 2012. At the conference, the key speakers spoke about a range of research to support parent engagement.
Here’s a couple that I noted;
‘The purpose of school is to help a family educate a child’ Don Edgar.
A parent has 5 times more effect on a student’s achievement than teachers.
The levels of attendance in Prep– Yr.1 has a direct impact on students success throughout all years of schooling. In other words, the more students attend (especially in the primary years) the greater chance they have of success in later schooling and careers.
Another interesting piece of research was the role that board games can play in family life. Apparently, those families that regularly play board games together have better family bonding. These board games also increase social skills, critical thinking, spelling, maths, cooperation, communication skills of children and help them to cope with failure. We should all break out the monopoly!!

Does your child know how to use this strategy to assist in the playground?
At Bluff we try very hard to encourage our students to take responsibility for their actions and to communicate well with peers. We use the five finger strategy shown above to encourage assertive play. How do we use this strategy?
The message should be delivered clearly and without a smile. Delivering a message like ‘Stop it. I don't like that!’ is an important job and if this message is not respected, students can either move away from the child or report the incident to the nearest teacher.

Harmony Day – Thursday 21st March
The school is holding an open day of fun filled activities where students can learn and experience different cultures. We have arts, games, cooking and much more. If you can help out on this day with one of the activities please let your teacher know. I look forward to seeing you there.

End of Term Excursion
Our end of term excursion has been finalised. We are off to the Heritage Village in Rockhampton on Wednesday 27th March. The Heritage Village fits in very nicely with our History units. A note will be sent home soon with further information.

Assessment
Over the coming weeks assessment will be happening in all classes across the school as we finish our units of work. It is very important that students attend school every day as to not miss these assessments.

P&C
Our next P&C meeting will be held on the 26th March. I look forward to see you there.

Where has the term gone! I wish you all a very happy and safe Easter.
Student Council is busier than ever. It is such a popular place to be that our meetings are struggling to stay within the confines of our 45 minute lunchbreak! A big welcome to all our new members - I lost count of how many students attended our Tuesday meeting, it seemed like most of the school!! Thankyou to all those who participated in crazy hair day on Thursday. It was a huge success and it was great to see everyone involved. The final count of money raised for the Leukaemia Foundation is yet to be done, but the amount collected looks very impressive! Friday afternoon icy cups are selling well and Wednesday sporting activities are continuing to be a big hit, especially with the younger children. So far this term, students have raised approximately $400 for the student council from all their fundraisers. Students are eager for this money to be used to purchase equipment for the school or to go towards upgrades to the forts. Thankyou so much to all that support the student council!

Reminder: Easter Egg Guessing Competition starts Monday before school. $1 per guess. Look with the eyes only, not the hands! The winner of the competition will be announced on parade on the last Tuesday of term, the 26th March.

Congratulations to Ty, Preston, Ayzlin, Mia Brant and Kayden who were our students of the week for week 5 and 6

The PCYC Markets will be held on the Sunday 14th of April from 8am – 12 noon. You’ll find tonnes of bargains underneath the May Day Shed. All stall holders are welcome. $10 a site and BYO tables etc.

For more enquires call: PCYC: 07 4982 5228

Skating is back Friday nights from 6:30pm to 8pm.
The P1 classroom is as busy as ever, with everything starting to come together for the assessment of concepts, topics and units. The whole class has been working well, with the year 1’s eagerly taking on leadership and role model positions in the classroom. Our history unit has been a hit. The children are fascinated with seeing and discussing photos of “olden time things” (their words, not mine!). The washing machines and cameras from the past have been of particular interest. Our grass heads are growing like mad and several children have offered to give them some friendly ‘haircuts’. The children have a deeper understanding of how things grow now and are enjoying learning about the plant lifecycle.

The preps are continuing to study their numbers, with 6 being the focus this week. Some of their artwork surrounding numbers is being sent home over the coming week. It is great to see the focus and determination being displayed, for some children this is a long way from the “it’s too hard” cries heard in the early parts of the term. The oral language program is going strong and it is great to see the children developing concepts such as positional language and using it in their conversations.

The year 1’s have been working hard on number lines, sequencing and rainbow facts. They are in the middle of assessment at the moment and will spend the last few weeks reinforcing the concepts covered this term. Persuasion is the focus in English for both grades, so don’t be surprised if you find yourself being convinced to do or buy something!

Please come in and see all the work displayed in the classroom and in your child’s books. The children and staff are very proud of all the learning that is occurring and it is rewarding for your child to see you appreciate and comment on their hard work. I look forward to seeing you in our room before or after school….. Miss I

The year two students have been learning about place value in maths, making groups of ten and seeing how many left over. Year three and four students have been practicing multiplication strategies and making number stories.

Our art work on Thursday focussed on Crazy Hair Day. The colourful and imaginative paper collage crazy hair designs were matched only by the colourful and imaginative designs in our own hair. The artwork along with work from many other subject areas will be on display at the Bluff Expo. I encourage all families to get along to the expo and see the wonderful work our students have been doing.

On Wednesday I will be attending a Professional Development workshop in Rockhampton. The focus is aimed at nurturing and flair in students’ persuasive writing, the workshop will help me best prepare the year three students for the NAPLAN writing task and assist students with writing in general. This workshop is highly recommended by the Assistant Regional Director for Central Queensland. Mrs Wood will be taking the class during my absence…… Mr Chadbone