



Pilliga Public School Newsletter

The little school that's BIG on learning

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Week 3, Term 1

Welcome Back!

2017 is here and we are now back at school!

We had both a relaxing and busy holiday catching up with our families back on the East Coast of NSW, as well as getting stuck into planning and programming for our year ahead. As always, the calendar is filling up, and we have already held our Swimming Carnival!

Last week we welcomed our new Kindergarten students; Claire, Tyleena and Waylen, as well as Bridie (year 6) and Charlotte (year 4) to Pilliga Public. It is fantastic to see our little school growing.

Term 1 is always a hot and enthusiastic term. Students are eager to get out and play with each other despite the heat. We prefer that students bring only water to school, and save their poppas for when they get home. The benefits of water are huge especially in this weather, and most people (adults and children) don't drink enough of it.

As mentioned at Presentation Night last year, the School Captain Assembly is to be held early this term. It will be great to see our Junior Leaders from last year, who demonstrated their leadership qualities at many school events, step into a more senior role. We are fortunate this year, to be able to have a leadership team which will consist of two School Captains and two Vice Captains, and we know that together this team will represent our school well.

COMING UP:

- 21/2 Parent Meeting @ 2.45pm
- 22/2 Zone Swimming Carnival @ Narrabri
- 23-24/2 Mr Lord @ Art of Leadership Seminar
- 3-4/3 Mr Lord @ Principal Conference in Dubbo



Homework

Homework is ALWAYS a contentious issue amongst parents, teachers and students. Many studies have been conducted and the consistent finding has been that homework in primary school is rarely beneficial, and in many cases is actually detrimental.

Despite these findings, many parents (and some teachers) would still rather their children have homework, if for no other reason than 'I had to do it, so they should too'.

As we all know, times have changed.

This is evident the moment you walk into both the infants and the primary classrooms at our school. We, along with many schools all over the state have moved away from the traditional '*sit in rows, don't talk, and copy what I write*' style that has dominated teaching for hundreds of years, and into a 21st Century Classroom where learning is fluid, student-centred and at point of need.

The goal of this style of education is to ensure all students foster a **love of learning** and this is then able to grow into **self-motivation** and the knowledge of how to access the information they need to solve problems both in the classroom and in the outside world.

As classrooms have changed with proven results, and as the studies have shown: Homework needs to change as well. It shouldn't take long, it needs to be **positive** and it should be a **shared experience** with the parent and child.

Your child spends all day at school working hard. We plan in five-weekly blocks that allow a mid- and end of term analysis before further planning is done. This means that learning is always student specific and as a result, our expectations are high. To go home and battle with parents about finishing homework on an already frazzled brain is detrimental both to the parent/child dynamic, as well as to the love of learning that we are trying to build at school.

Reading is the absolute best thing you can do WITH your child. That doesn't mean, send them off to read for half an hour. It means you share the experience. Listen to them read. If they are tired, read TO them (yes, even your year 6 students). Have a discussion about what you are reading. Link it to real life (even with Kindergarten).

Finding the balance between the home and school learning connection (which is important) and the negative impact of homework is difficult, though we will attempt to bridge it:

- Students in Mr Lord's Class will have discussion questions to have with parents to enhance discussions at school based on our Novel Studies.
- Mentals worksheets that are to be completed in a set amount of time to encourage quick thinking in Maths (not laboured working out) will also be sent home.
- Competitions for drawing, writing, designing, Science etc. may be sent home as optional homework at times.
- Home Readers and Sight Words will be given to students in K-4.

Cultural Walk-Through

Our Cultural Walk-Through was completed on the last day of Term 4. It looks fantastic and is a wonderful addition to our school. Students got straight into it at the beginning of term, choosing to sit on the animals for a chat, walk along the path, or do some imaginative play with our toy animals and insects. For a project that spent a few years in the planning/discussion process, it came together perfectly. A huge thankyou to Steve from Play Scape who worked through some very hot days to get it done for us by the end of last year.



School Facebook Page

Last year we started the Pilliga Public School Facebook page. It provided us the opportunity to showcase our talented students, our local area and school events on a scale that we previously hadn't reached.

Please sign the 'Media Consent form' attached to this newsletter to give permission for your child to be photographed and displayed on Facebook.

The school Facebook Page will continue to run as soon the Media Consent is given.



Parent Meeting

A parent meeting will be held at the school on Tuesday of next week: **Tuesday 21st of February @ 2.45pm**. Please inform the school office if you are unable to attend.

Swimming Carnival

We held our Swimming Carnival at Baradine pool on Friday, and as we do with all of our carnivals, we combined with Gwabegar Public School. The highlight of the day was the level of Participation all students demonstrated. Participation is one of three Positive Behaviour for Learning (PBL) goals that our school focuses on and one that was definitely evident on the day. Congratulations Pilliga Public for getting in there and having a go!

Our School results were: Jordan Pagett (Junior Boy Champion), Bridie Wilkins (Runner-up, 11yrs Girl Champion), Samuel Pagett (11yrs Boy Champion), Ilesha Gray (Senior Girl Champion), Jordan Mitchell (Senior Boy Champion).



The **Zone Swimming Carnival** will be in **Narrabri** on the **22nd of February**.
Notes will be sent home for students who qualify.