Dear Parents and carers,

We are truly in the middle of winter. The sun is beginning to shine again and all the students, staff and community have the two week break to recharge. I hope you all enjoy the opportunity to spend with family and participate in some reading and catching up with friends and family. The winter break is always a great indoors family time.

**Staff presenting at a National Conference**
This July we have seven staff flying off to Darwin to participate in the ALEA conference (ALEA- Australian Literacy Educators Association). As well as enjoying the warm weather, the dedicated team will be participating in the national conference on literacy and will bring back fabulous teaching and learning ideas to all our staff. Four of the team will be presenting at the conference and sharing our expertise with Australia. I would like to congratulate in advance: Georgina Sofatzis, Rebecca Hewat, Katherine Wilson and Sylvia Headon. They are presenting on the outstanding teaching of reading and writing in Kindergarten using data to inform practice. Well done on this achievement.

Palmerston has an outstanding staff, and I know I keep saying this, but the results on student learning is increasing every year and the education at Palmerston is first class. Well done to the whole school team. Of course, we could not do this without great parent support. I would like to thank the parents/carers of Palmerston community for their dedication to the school and support of the initiatives and being on the learning journey with us.
Social Media and the school community
I came across this from the Queensland Government and thought it may be a good time to reflect on our social responsibility: ‘The internet, mobile phones and social media provide wonderful opportunities for you to network and socialise online. While these technologies provide positive platforms for sharing ideas, they also have the potential to cause pain and suffering to individuals, groups or even whole communities. Just as you would discourage your child from behaving inappropriately online, it’s important to remember that sometimes negative comments that parents and caregivers post about their school community have a greater impact than expected. Reputations of teachers, schools, principals and even parents can be permanently damaged and in some cases, serious instances of inappropriate online behaviour are dealt with by police and the court system.’ I think it is timely that we reflect on what a great school we have and how we can support each other and the children at Palmerston. The staff feels proud of Palmerston school, the students and community we work in. We know that recently some community members have used social media to talk about our school. We are models for our students and we use the school PRIDE values to hold our heads high and work with families to resolve all conflict in a timely manner. We thank you for all the support that has come flooding in from parents who love their school and the safe environment that is provided at Palmerston. If you need assistance or further information:

Australian communications Media authority (AMCMA) Cybersmart program


Bullying No Way!


Parentline


Parent Teacher Interviews
It is parent/teacher interview time again. I hope you made an appointment to discuss your child and their education and social development with their class teacher. This is important as we work in partnership with you. ‘I say to parents, come with questions and make the most of the time you have with your child’s teacher. Clarify points if you are unsure what the teacher is saying and ask how you can assist with your child’s education. Once the interview is over, consider how you will discuss it with your child in positive terms. Involve your child in discussing any plans for improvement and to achieve success.’ (Michael Gross)

Students as problem solvers
At Palmerston we focus on important attributes of great people. Being a problem solver is very important. Problem solving is a tool, a skill and a process. It is a tool because it can help you solve an immediate problem or to achieve a goal. It is a skill because once you have learnt it you can use it repeatedly, like the ability to ride a bicycle, add numbers or speak a language. It is also a process because it involves taking a number of steps.

Teaching children to become effective thinkers is recognised as an important goal of education. For students to function successfully in a highly technical society, they must be equipped with the lifelong learning and thinking skills necessary to acquire and process information in an ever-changing world. Teaching students thinking skills is therefore important. Although many people once believed that we are born either with or without creative and critical thinking abilities, research has shown that these skills can be taught and can be developed. We teach thinking skills in our classrooms, our peer support
programs and our values programs. Children need to think through the consequences of their actions and the impact on others. Thinking skills assist the children to be thoughtful and respectful. Solving problems in a supportive school environment will assist children in developing this lifelong important skill.

Family Discussion Starters
Suggestions for conversations around the dinner table at home
• What has been the hardest problem you have ever solved?
• How did you solve it?
• What do you do when a problem is frustrating and you can’t seem to solve it?

Gr8people.com.au

Problem Solver phrases and sayings
• Make amends, not excuses
• We all make mistakes. It’s whether we learn from them that counts
• You are what you choose to be

On Monday we were lucky to have Susan Berran, an author visit and present educational sessions on writing. This Friday we are very lucky at Palmerston to have Philip Green present an Indigenous Science Show. I would like to thank the P&C for their assistance with costs allowing us to bring quality learning to our school.

Have a great winter break and enjoy reading a book or two.

Melissa Travers
Principal

Ramadan
“I extend to Muslims in Australia, and throughout the world, best wishes for the holy month of Ramadan, which begins this week. Ramadan is a time for reflection, spiritual devotion and renewal. Muslim families around the world come together this month to celebrate their faith and their communities. By fasting, and through acts of charity, Muslims also remember those less fortunate than themselves...Ramadan offers a message of tolerance, compassion and hope - a universal message that everyone can share. Ramadan Mubarak.” Julie Bishop is the Minister for Foreign Affairs in Australia’s Federal Coalition Government

Message from the Director-General

I would like to thank Melissa and her staff as well as the school community for providing excellent education in a very supportive environment.

I recognise the past couple of weeks have been challenging and I appreciate the way you have dealt with this.

We know there is a lot of great work being done at Palmerston and our students are achieving excellent results, both academically and socially.

The teachers and support staff do a fantastic job and we are also really lucky to have a strong school community that is focused on our children.
I hope you enjoy the break over the school holidays and come back ready to continue the great work.

Diane Joseph
Director-General, Education and Training Directorate

P&C News

School holidays are nearly upon us. I look forward to having a few sleep in’s until at least 7:00!

Thank you
Thank you to the parents who have volunteered their time in the classroom, at events and in helping providing great services like banking and book club for our children.

Well done to all the teachers and other staff for another great semester of learning. My children especially enjoyed all the extra curricular activities and excursions that as a teacher I appreciate take a lot of time to organise. The P&C was pleased to support a number of these events.

Spring Fair
Spring Fair – Save the date - Saturday 29. Next meeting is Wednesday 16th July @ 7pm in the regular location. Please contact Edwina on 0422 006 142 or via palmpandc@hotmail.com if you wish to attend. There are large and small jobs. We’d love to know the talents of the new parents too!

Chat-about – FRIDAY 4 July
Join us for a coffee/tea and chat on the last day of school from 9:00 in the library resource room. I would love to see some parents come for a cuppa to show their support for the school. This is not a meeting, just a chance to meet and catch up with other parents or ask the P&C questions.

School Community
There has been recent publicity in the local media about the way the inappropriate behaviour of some students has been addressed at Palmerston Primary.

Speaking broadly from the P&C’s point of view, the P&C is supportive of the school’s Student Wellbeing Procedures and the way teachers and support staff follow the actions included in this document.

If you would like to talk about any concerns you or your children have, we encourage you to first speak to your child’s classroom teacher and then the school’s executive staff.

If you would like further support, there are parents on the P&C, the school board and the wider parent body who can help you. Please come and chat or email (privacy is promised). Concerns can also be raised at P&C Meetings on behalf of parents.

I encourage parents to take part in this anonymous Australian School Climate Measurement Tool survey to provide feedback to the school, especially around - What are the things you like about this school? What are the things you would like to see changed?
Canteen
Thank you to all the volunteers that are running the Palm Café. Stay tuned for the updated menu for next term.

Enjoy the holidays!
Many thanks,

Jo Prezzi
P & C President
0409 565 895
joprezzi@hotmail.com

Friendly Schools Plus & Everyone Everyday Programs
As part of Kids Matter in 2014, we have implemented Friendly Schools Plus across K-6. This falls under the social and emotional learning of the Kids Matter umbrella. Students will continue to take part in a range of learning activities to develop social skills, friendships, emotions, conflict resolution and building a community of happy learners. It is recognised nationally and internationally as a successful whole-school evidence based bullying prevention program. The Friendly Schools Plus program will continue on a Friday across our school. Every second Friday students will participate in learning about ‘Everyone, Everyday’ Disability Education lessons educating our children about inclusion of all students both inside and outside our school community.

Palmerston PRIDE Awards
Congratulations to the following students who received a PRIDE Award at assembly on 20 June:

PARTICIPATION – becoming involved, “having a go” and cooperating with others

Finn (5/6ML), Brodie (5/6ML), Mari (5/6JM), Cohen (1VS), Eric (KFC) and Renee (5/6JH),

RESPECT – respect for self, others and their property

Lily (4CC) and Amelia (5/6ML)
**INTEGRITY** – being honest, fair, responsible and loyal

Deacon (4CC), Julia (5/6JM), Andrew (2VS) and Tilli (5/6JH)

**DETERMINATION** - being persistent and resilient

Abbas (KGS), Ani (KFC), Evya (KFC), Oliver (KGS), Muneeb (2HS), Alex (3/4EW), Amna (1VS) and Anthony (5/6JH)

**EMPATHY** – understanding and supporting others, regardless of our differences

Brendon (2HS) and Kiana (3/4EW)

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**Writing Awards**

Congratulations to the following students who received writing awards for achieving their goals on Friday 20 June:

Andy (5/6ML), Abdullah (5/6ML), Bailey (5/6ML), Jacquie (4CC), James (3/4RH), Morsa (3/4RH), Keona (3/4RH), Madeleine (3/4EW), Kiana (3/4EW), Ibrahim (5/6JH), Mason (5/6JH), Saint (5/6JH), Louie (5/6JH) and Renee (5/6JH).

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**Preschool news:**

Communication between the home and school is paramount in education. Effective communication allows for staff and families to have a shared understanding of the needs of the children at Palmerston as well as ensuring that your children get the best start in school life. Last week and this week we have engaged in another mode of communication, that being the After School Interviews. Thank you to parents for supporting our valuable interview process, this is such an important time as we get the opportunity to celebrate and discuss student’s work and achievements.

Outcome 2 from the Early Years Learning Framework is titled: Children are connected with and contribute to their world. This term we have been learning about part of our world, Australia and have also looked at Indigenous Australia. To complement this work, last week the children attended an excursion to the National Museum of Australia. They thoroughly enjoyed their visit. There are so many fantastic icons, pictures and resources relating to Australia. It was wonderful to see that the children could recognise images and models of landmarks and artefacts that they had explored during class time. Thank you to Leanne for organising this.

It isn’t too late to order tea towels as a reminder of your child’s time at preschool. We have had an overwhelming response. Families have talked about using the tea towels as Christmas gifts for
grandparents as well as keeping a spare tea towel for when their child is older. If you would like to order a tea towel please see your child’s educator. Thanks to Jenni Palombi for organising this.

It’s hard to believe that it is week 10. The term has flown and to say that we are already half way through the year is amazing.

Wishing you all a happy and safe holiday,

Kate Flynn.

Kindergarten Transitions - 2015

During semester two we will be looking at transitions into Kindergarten for 2015. This is an exciting time for the children and will prepare them for the transition from preschool to Kindergarten in 2015. This program is a wonderful initiative that allows the preschool children to get to know the Kindergarten routine, the current Kindergarten teachers and children, as well as the whole school environment.

To assist us with this process we ask families to notify the front office staff as soon as possible if your child will not be attending Palmerston Primary School in 2015.

Thank you in advance for your assistance,

Kate Flynn,

(Executive teacher)

Years 3-6 Author visit – Susan Berran
The FREAKY Series By Victorian based author Susan Berran

All the senior students of Palmerston District Primary School participated in a fantastic author visit. Author of *Splinters*, *Toe Jam* and many more, Susan Berran inspired many young writers to follow their dreams, and not let anything get in their way.

While explaining strategies to write better stories and books, she told everyone her life story. That you should never let anything stop you achieving your goals, no matter what it is.

The author visit was a highlight of the week and inspired many children to pursue their dreams.

Pranati 5/6SL
Defence News

It is that time of year again, when for military families, talk about end of year postings starts to occur. Children react differently to adults when a posting occurs and their reactions to moving will change each time. Some children view a move as a positive experience, the chance to see new places and meet new people, most have concerns and worries about losing friends. Even if they have been to the locality before, things will be different each time. To ensure that I can support the children as much as possible with an upcoming posting, I would like to ask that you let me know as soon as possible after the posting is confirmed. A message can be left at the front office, or drop me an email at marina.pilicic@ed.act.edu.au.

Regards,
Marina Pilicic
DSTA

Science Fairs and Competitions for our Students

There are Science activities open to all our students and we hope, this year, many will take the opportunity to enter.

ACT Science Fair is run by the Science Educators Association of the ACT. Last year some of our students won prizes – money prizes – in this Science Fair. This year, it will be held at Canberra Grammar Junior School and entries are due on Friday 29 and Saturday 30 August.

Judges read the reports the students have written and look at the diagrams or photos to understand the process they have followed and determine which will be the prize winning entries in each section. Reports should state the aim of the investigation, the method followed, the results and conclusion. All the entries are displayed for the following week in the hall at that school and a prize presentation evening is held after that.

Palmerston Science Fair will be held in our own MultiPurpose Room in the week beginning 15 September. All our students are winners, so everyone wins a prize, but it’s not money. As with the ACT Science Fair, students decide to investigate something that interests them, something that makes them say “I wonder...”

Students who have prepared a project for the ACT Science Fair can display it at our Palmerston Science Fair instead of preparing a new one.

Young Scientist of the Year Award. The National Association of Testing Authorities encourages students to look at the impact of Science on people’s lives. The school will select from projects entered in the Science Fairs to enter this event, but it is fine for anyone to prepare an entry or even more than one entry.

During these school holidays, it would be good if you would discuss with your children what their entry might be for the Science Fairs, thinking about the things that interest them. In our library and at Science club, we have lots of books and magazines with ideas and children are very welcome to come and have a look.

Holiday time is a good opportunity to get started on doing the experiment. Can you cook egg white with a magnifying glass?
School Banking and Book Club – volunteers needed

Both the Commonwealth School Banking and Scholastic Book Club bring funds into our school and provide a great service for students. We are looking for volunteers for term 3. The new banking day is Monday. Banking starts at 9am and only takes about 20 minutes. Please see Jasmine if you can help.

Bronwyn and Sandra have been running the book club again this year. If you are interested in finding out how you can help with the Book Club email your interest to palmpandc@hotmail.com.

School Uniform Shop and Lost Property

The uniform shop is open Monday mornings from 9:00am - 9.20am.

Please label all clothing as the lost property box will be cleaned out at the end of every term. All labelled items will be returned to students. Those not labelled are cleaned and sold in the uniform shop.

Community News

Get Active Sports – Soccer for Juniors
Soccer for juniors in Gungahlin starting 2 August. For more information email rego@getactivesports.com.au
A Message from the Minister

Parental Engagement A Priority

During Public Education Week at the end of May, it was very good to see the achievements of our students, schools, teachers, and staff showcased and celebrated. On show were so many examples of where you and your communities are actively involved with your children’s schools; through different activities and programs.

I will continue to focus on putting children, parents, carers and communities at the centre of our education system and will be looking at further ways of communicating the values of the public education system.

For example, the online enrolment system has simplified processes for parents and carers, and we have also launched the ‘Parents and Students At The Centre’ page on our website, which features stories of parent-school engagement, including one about how ACT public schools are increasingly using Facebook and Twitter to enable parents and the community engage and stay up to date on their activities and achievements.

Other initiatives include the ‘Fresh Tastes’ program which encourages learning about nutrition and healthy food and drink choices in schools and we have also launched a series of fact sheets for parents and carers of gifted and talented students.

I also recently launched the ‘100 Stories: Celebrating public education in Canberra’ book which features fascinating stories of people who have influenced, or have been influenced by our public education system.

Have a great run-up to the end of term and stay warm!

‘100 Stories: Celebrating public education in Canberra’ can be viewed online at www.det.act.gov.au.

Joy Burch MLA
Minister for Education and Training