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3 December 2015

PRINCIPAL'S REPORT

Dear parents and friends,

2015 has been an exciting year of learning for students at The Willows. As the 'Year of the Active Learner' draws to a close be assured that in 2016 active student participation in learning will continue to occur. Our journey to increase the assessment literacy of our students has proven to be worthwhile, with students actively engaged in using the learning walls in their classrooms to help them better understand and prepare for assessment tasks. As we finalise our planning for 2016 over the next couple of weeks, we have decided to keep the focus on this element of learning engagement and deepen staff knowledge and skills in this area.



Our level of achievements in English, Mathematics and Science can be summarised as follows.

The percentage of students achieving a C or higher- Semester 2, 2015.

	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Year 6
English	87%	88%	79%	83%	80%	79%
Maths	92%	86%	86%	81%	87%	81%
Science	100%	95%	89%	85%	95%	88%

Overall across all learning areas, the percentage of students achieving a C or higher in Years 1-6 is 90.1% That means just over 900 children from our school are performing at the level or higher that is expected of an Australian student of the same age. This is a very pleasing result and we aim to increase that number next year.

Our reading data in the lower school is constantly improving as well with the following percentage of younger students meeting regionally set, end of year benchmarks.

- Prep - 74% at or above benchmarks
- Year 1 - Prep- 80% at or above benchmarks
- Year 2 - Prep- 90% at or above benchmarks
- Year 3 - Prep- 85% at or above benchmarks

Our support staff work with the students who are not achieving benchmark to narrow and sharpen the focus on the gaps in each student's learning to give them the best possible chance of moving into the benchmark field.

We have a number of staff leaving us to move onto new challenges. Mrs Brazzale is off to Brisbane to further her administration career and we all wish her the very best in her new school. Mrs Brazzale's dedication and commitment to the school has seen The Willows achieve great results over the past couple of years in the lower school where her focus has been. Her leadership skill set has been recognised across the state and she will now move to Brisbane to be closer to family and especially her grandchildren.

Foundation and long serving teachers, Mrs O'Farrell and Mrs Joyce are also moving on to other Townsville schools, and our loss is certainly their gain. There are parents here at our school now who were taught by these ladies during their primary schooling years and they have contributed strongly to the education scene in Townsville. Both these highly respected teachers were sought after by the schools that they are going to.

Miss Klein (Brisbane), Mrs Turner (Townsville based regional position), Mrs Moore (NSW) and Miss de Graff (Ingham) are also off to work in a range of new roles. To all of these teachers I know you will join me in thanking them for their efforts on behalf of the students from our community and wish them all the best for their future endeavours.

Our Year 6 students finalise their primary schooling years next week before embarking on the secondary journey. To which ever school those students are attending next year, I personally wish them great success in their studies, smooth transitions in their changes to the high school environment and best of luck with the new friends and teachers you will be with for the next six years of school.

Final dates for the year are:

- Tuesday 8th Dec Year 6 Graduation Activities Day
- Wednesday 9th Dec Year 6 Graduation
- Friday 11th final day of school

The 2016 school year begins on Wednesday 27th of January.

As always I urge everyone to be particularly careful when travelling on the roads this summer. Take the breaks you need as getting to your destination a bit late is better than not getting there at all. I wish each and every one of you a very happy festive season and look forward to seeing you back here in 2016.

Jeff

Student Leadership Positions for 2016

Our student leaders for 2016 were announced at Senior Assembly on the 20th of November. The 2015 leadership team will hand over the roles at the Graduation Ceremony on Wednesday the 9th of December. Student will receive their badges at the Investiture Ceremony on 12th of February 2016.

YEAR 6 CAMP FOR 2016

Letters have gone out to all Year 5 students about our Year 6 Camp to Echo Creek in 2016. Students will be away for 2 nights and 3 days and will participate in the following activities: low ropes and team building, laser tag, freshwater snorkelling, challenge course, under the stars movie night and damper by the fire. All of these activities are run by camp staff and our teachers will also do the team building and goal setting activities. Students will travel by bus and they will be housed in bunk style accommodation with meals include.

PLEASE NOTE THAT WE HAVE HAD TO CHANGE THE CAMP DATES.

This camp will be in Term 3 2016. There will be two groups going.

Group 1 – Leave 18th of July return 20th of July 2016.

Group 2 – Leave 20th of July return 22nd of July 2016.

The cost of the camp is \$240 and we must reserve final numbers with the venue before the end of this year. To assist with payment we are offering the following payment plan method.

- **An initial non-refundable deposit of \$50 was due on the 4th of December 2015. (This will secure your child's place). If you haven't returned the letter with your deposit please do so as soon as possible.**
- A second payment of \$100 will now be due on the 23rd of March 2016.
- A final payment of \$90 will now be due on the 10th of June 2016.

If you have any queries you can contact Mrs Winter in the office.

YEAR 6 GRADUATION AND AWARDS CEREMONY

What: Year 6 Graduation Ceremony/Morning Tea

Where: The Carol Buchanan Centre (TCBC)

When: Wednesday the 9th of December 9.00am sharp – 11.30am approximately

Please Note: Students **MUST** wear correct School uniform, shoes and appropriate jewellery and hair accessories

SCHOOL REPORTS FOR 2016



Reporting is part of communicating with parents and building the school-parent partnership to improve student learning. School reports provide information regarding learning expectations for all students, student achievement against expected standards, how well students are engaging in learning and how student may be able to improve their results. Our end of year reports will be given out the week beginning the 7th of December.

CONGRATULATIONS TO OUR GRADUATING YEAR 6 STUDENTS



I would personally like to congratulate our Year 6 students and wish them all the best as they continue on to high school. I believe that here at The Willows State School we have prepared you all for your next learning journey. This year our focus was on active learning and taking ownership of your education. As you further your education

we hope that you continue to be engaged, seek assistance and act on feedback to better your results. We are very proud of every one of you and the academic growth we have seen this year. I know that your teachers have worked very hard as a team to provide flexible differentiated learning situations. The biggest message I can send you comes from a well know quote:

“Education is our passport to the future, for tomorrow belongs to the people who prepare for it today”. (Malcolm X)

Good luck to you all and don't forget to proudly say, “I was a student from The Willows State School”.

Mrs Winter
Deputy Principal

SUPPORT A STUDENT

Daniel Wright is a Year 6 student at our school. A fundraising page for the family has been set up. Follow his story at:

<https://www.gofundme.com/57awhd64>

EFT PAYMENTS

The last day for EFTPOS payments will be 4pm Monday 7th December.

MEDICATION

All medication held at the school needs to be collected by 3pm Friday 11th December.

LOST PROPERTY

Any lost property from the office and classrooms will be placed outside the tuckshop on Monday 7th December. Any lost property remaining will be given to a charity.

STUDENT BANKING

Just a reminder that there will be no student banking next week. We will advise in the next year when banking will re-commence.

DEFENCE AND MOBILE FAMILIES

Hello to All Families,

Over the next couple of weeks we will be saying farewell to those students posting to a new adventure. Students on the whole have been very positive about moving and hold their fond memories of their time at The Willows closely; this is really great to see. We will miss each of you very much and wish you all safe travels and an enjoyable posting.



To all our other families, we hope to see you next year after a well-earned break.

We wish you all a very Merry Christmas and a safe and happy holiday.

NORTHERN CONNECT

Northern Connect are pleased to offer more FREE courses to Defence families. Please see the attached flyer for further information.

KIDS CLUB

Kids Club is held every Monday and Tuesday during **FIRST** break on the verandah of the Outside School Hours Care building. Christmas craft is going full steam ahead; the students enjoyed making reindeer biscuits and eating them for morning tea. They were delicious!

Kids Club is a great way for children to get to know each other in a friendly, supervised environment. Please remind students of the change and encourage them to come along and have some fun.

GARDEN CLUB

We are cleaning out the pots to get ready for replanting next year. Digging and ripping out the garden is always lots of fun. The passionfruit are still growing wildly, fingers crossed they survive the Christmas holidays.

DEPLOYMENTS AND ABSENCES

Please make sure you let your Teacher, the Office and DSTA know if you have a member away. We like to ensure all students are supported during what can be a challenging time and allow them the chance to share their experiences with other students going through similar events. Additionally, if you are having difficulties or would like a chat, come in and see us or contact us via phone or email.

Your Defence Aides are located in L Pod behind the Outside School Hours Care Building and families are most welcome to drop by any time for a chat. The lovely ladies at the office can direct you or give us a call if you would like our assistance. Again, please make contact as we are here to help in any way we can.

TUTORING

Education Allowance Scheme – Remember it's never too early to begin tutoring, you have 18 months from your posting date to take advantage of the Education Assistance. Don't leave it until it's too late. **Tutoring can begin at any time of the year for students so be sure to take advantage of this scheme before your 18 months ends.**

Well done to all those students who have got straight into tutoring, we know you will be well rewarded for all your hard work. Remember to get tutoring started soon so you do not miss out on entitlements. This assistance is very valuable for your children. Most children find it builds confidence and they enjoy it very much. This scheme is aimed at minimising the disruption to a child's schooling, caused as a result of a defence posting. Reimbursement can be provided for tuition for primary and secondary students within the first 18 months of enrolment at the new school. The entitlement is 14 weeks at 1 hour per week per subject. Forms are available online or from the DSTA here at school. There is a list of teachers available for tutoring before and after school. Please ask your teacher or email your DSTA for further details.

CONTACTS

Defence Community Organisation is available to all Defence members and their families. Contact can be made on 1800 624 608 24 hours.

Veterans and Veterans Families – 1800 011 046

<http://www.dva.gov.au/vvcs>

DFA Defence Families of Australia – 1800 100 509

<http://www.dfa.org.au>

National Delegate for Northern Queensland - nth.qld@dfa.org.au

Remember Louise and Correna are available morning and afternoon. Parents and students are very welcome to stop by L Pod or contact us via email or phone as listed below.

The Office on 47 991 333 or via e-mail - Louise on lwit325@eq.edu.au or Correna Wheeler cwhee36@eq.edu.au

Kind Regards

Louise White and Correna Wheeler

P & C UPDATE

On behalf of our committee, I would like to wish all members of The Willows State School community a safe and happy festive season. Thanks once again for your support during the year, and we look forward to welcoming along a few new faces for our first meeting on Tuesday Feb 09, 2016 in the OSHC. Come along and help us boost our numbers and make a valuable contribution to your child's schooling!! A huge thanks to the teachers at our school for their efforts with our children, to the admin team for their invaluable help with all of our fundraising ventures, to our wonderful tuckshop helpers, and to our small but hardworking committee!!!

BOOK PACKS

Don't forget to collect your book packs in K POD (access this building from Sandstone Drive) between **Tuesday 8th December – Thursday 10th December from 3.15pm – 4.30pm or on Saturday 12th December from 8.30am – 11.00am**. Your patience during this time will be appreciated by all volunteers assisting with the process of distributing these packs. If you have missed ordering a pack and want to support our school, you can pick up an online order form from the office and place your order with Kookaburra Educational Resources.

Regards

Kylie Allison

P&C President

WANTED TO BUY

If you have a second hand 25 note Glockenspiel to sell please phone Andrea on 0432864817.