



Cnr Bilberry St and Sandstone Dr
Kirwan QLD 4817
Subscribe: <http://thewillowsss.schoolzineplus.com/subscribe>

Email: admin@thewillowsss.eq.edu.au

Phone: 07 4799 1333

Fax: 07 4723 4665



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THE WILLOWS STATE SCHOOL 'YEAR OF DYNAMIC LIFT'

PRINCIPAL'S REPORT

Dear parents, friends and students

As the saying goes 'a week is a long time in politics' and with a looming election this is a timely cliché. A week can also be a long time in education especially when there is a great deal of assessment being undertaken. Over the past week and more, our students have been finalising their assessment tasks in order for the end of semester reports to be written. This has been a trying time for some, and as we continue on our journey to create assessment literate learners, many of our students have found the past week to be less stressful than in the past. There is certainly some anxiety that students experience leading up to assessment tasks, however it seems that across the school, once they begin them, the students find the tasks not nearly as daunting as they first thought because of their level of assessment literacy.

I would like to make it clear that our teachers do not teach to the test. What they do is teach what a student needs to know and be able to do in order to achieve in the unit of work. By making this absolutely clear throughout the unit of work, through having modelled responses on the learning walls, the guide to making judgements in student books and also on the walls, our student body is more informed and have

a deeper understanding of what is coming their way during assessment periods than ever before. This moves everyone towards reaching our target of ensuring that at least 85% of students across the whole school get a 'C' or above in English, Maths and Science, the three core subjects. As the major goal of our Year of Dynamic Lift, we believe we will achieve this target this semester.

A recent visit by Councillor Russ Cook has resulted in a favourable outcome for road safety around our school. Councillor Cook and I had a discussion about the driver behaviour after school, more specifically, the parking situation. Council monitored the school and observed that some parents were parking their vehicles on the nature strip and footpath. The Queensland Road Rules ban parking on nature strips and footpaths however this is ignored on a daily basis around our school. Concerned for the safety and welfare for students at our school, council has proposed to install bollards along the kerbside to the southern side of the parcel of land which also includes the bus area, to control the parking behaviour and create a safer environment for our children. This work will commence when the labour and resources become available.

Council further suggests that parking is available at the Neil Stewart Park car park. They also suggested that parents consider coming a little later to pick up their children to ease congestion along Bilberry Street. Our school day finishes at 2:55pm so you may wish to organise your child for a 3:05pm or 3:10pm pick up.

In one week's time the federal election will occur. The battle lines for both major parties have been drawn and a priority for both is education funding. In general the battle lines around this are characterised by those who view education as an investment in the social and economic future of our nation and those who focus on the cost. The funding proposal of the Gonski Review is at the heart of the political debate. If you're undecided on who to vote for, why not consider your children's

Great state. Great opportunity.



education and research the Gonski funding implementation models proposed by both major parties and then make your decision.



A few extra changes have occurred on the staffing front for next semester. The incoming acting principal for semester 2 is Mr Chris Anderson. Mr Anderson is the principal at Bluewater State School and brings enormous experience to the role. The substantive incoming deputy, Mr Chris Wicks has been asked to go to Bluewater to act in Mr Anderson's place so Mr Cameron Tod will be our deputy next term alongside Mrs Winter and Mrs Souter.

We have a number of other staffing changes and letters to classes affected by these changes have been sent.

I wish everyone at The Willows State School all the very best for the remainder of the year and beyond. The Willows is by far the best school I have had the pleasure of working in and with the quality staff and students body we have here, it will continue to be the first choice of school in this part of Townsville.

**Have a wonderful winter break,
Jeff**

ASSEMBLY

The next assemblies are Term 3.

- **Senior Assembly (3-6)** on Friday the 15th of July
- **Junior Assembly (P-2)** on Friday the 22rd of July.

YEAR 6 CAMP

Our camp numbers have now been finalised. Please ensure that if you have any outstanding camp forms that they are returned to teachers as soon as possible. Students will receive details of departure and arrival times on the first day in term 3. Our camp theme this year is "It's a jungle out there". Students will be looking at goal setting and wellbeing. They will be enacting "Acts of Random kindness" and enjoying their last 6 months with the cohort and The Willows State School.



RSPCA DRIVE

REMINDER THAT WE ARE STILL COLLECTING FOR THE RSPCA and this is finishing at the end of this week. If you have not donated something and would like to, please hand your donations in to the office. Did you know that the RSPCA relies on donations and community support to fund 99% of their annual costs? Every year our student council run the RSPCA food drive which delivers much needed resources. This year we have made a great start with donations coming into the office. Please keep your donations coming.

LIFE EDUCATION

This year we are again offering students the option of engaging with Life Education "Talk About it" program regarding puberty. The school recognises that you are the primary educator of your child on issues surrounding their sexuality, however we believe we can work together to help children stay safe by encouraging healthy attitudes. The TALK ABOUT IT program by Life Education includes information on puberty incorporating physical growth and emotional changes, relationships and the concept of self. It is designed to help students understand and cope with this important phase of development. The lesson being conducted will focus on the physical, social and emotional changes experienced during puberty, and helping students understand and cope with this important phase of development.



Define puberty and its significance in sexual maturity
Identify and label external sex organs
Describe the physical changes that occur at puberty
Describe the emotional changes that may occur at puberty
Recognise that puberty occurs at different ages and in different stages for each person
Examine products that assist in the management of puberty (girls and boys will be split for this part of the lesson)

This program will be run on the 29th of July through to the 2nd of August (Week 3, 4 Term 3). The lessons will be taught by an experienced educator from Life Education. The classroom teacher will accompany their class and will also be present to assist. All students will initially be together and then boys and girls will be split to discuss more specific issues relating to the management of puberty. The cost of this program is **\$6 per student**. Life Education has also offered to run a **free Parent Workshop which will be held in TCBC Conference Room on Thursday the 28th of July at 5pm.**

LOCKS FOR SCOOTERS AND BIKES

Unfortunately we have had some scooters stolen from our school over the last couple of weeks. We are attempting to catch these people but they are definitely keen to take scooters that are not locked up. As a result we have been speaking to all of our students about ensuring that they have locks for their scooters and bikes so that they can be locked to our bike racks. Many students are instead choosing to bring their scooters to the classrooms for safekeeping however this is becoming a problem as we do not have the space in classrooms to store them. Teachers are patiently accommodating these requests as families purchase locks. Please ensure that your child has a lock for term 3.



PREP ENROLMENTS 2017

Prep Enrolment Packages will be available for collection from the office commencing Monday 11th July. For siblings of existing students, only a Birth Certificate is required to be presented. For all new families to the school, a Rates Notice or Lease Agreement (in the parent's name) is required AND a Birth Certificate for the enrolling student. NO ENROLMENT PACKAGES WILL BE GIVEN OUT WITHOUT THE AFOREMENTIONED DOCUMENTATION.

AUSTRALIAN EARLY DEVELOPMENT CENSUS

In 2015 our Prep students participated in the nationwide collection of data called the Australian Early Development Census (AEDC). This census occurs every three years, and first occurred in 2009. It will occur again in 2018. Nationwide 302 003 students took part in the census last year.

The data collection involves teachers completing individual questionnaires (of 100 questions) for each student about their development across 5 domains:

- Physical health and wellbeing
- Social competence
- Emotional maturity
- Language and cognitive skills (school-based)
- Communication skills and general knowledge

The results of this data collection have been reported by grouping students according to the percentile that they fell in. Students are considered:

- *Developmentally vulnerable* if they fall in the bottom 10%
- *Developmentally at risk* if they fall between 10 and 25%
- *Developmentally on track* if they fall in the top 75th

At The Willows State School 111 children took part in the census in 2015.

If you would like to know more about what this data means or how it is used you can visit

<http://www.aedc.gov.au>

STUDENT MENTORING

This term some year 6 students have been assisting the Prep and Year 1 students to successfully participate in games of soccer during first break. Students from all of our year 6 classes have been involved but a special congratulations goes to **6AND** who have had the **most students** volunteer to be involved in the program.

A special thanks goes to **Paije W** and **Holli D** who have given their time every week to assist the Prep and Year 1 students.

LIBRARY NEWS

North Queensland Readers' Cup – 2016

Readers' Cup competitions challenge students to read widely, work collaboratively in a team and continue developing a love of reading. It allows readers to compete at a regional and state level similar to sporting competitions and to meet other students with an equal passion for books.

Thirty schools from around the region competed in this annual event. Congratulations to Ashleigh D, Cameron F, Ally Q, Bella V, and Catherine M who won the cup last Thursday night by one point. We wish them every success at the state final to be held on the 8 September in Brisbane.

SCHOOL OPINION SURVEY

The annual *School Opinion Survey* will be conducted 11th July to 29th July 2016. All families, school staff and a random sample of students will be invited to participate. We encourage you to take this opportunity to have your say about what this school does well, and how this school can improve. More information about how to complete the survey will be sent home Week 1 Term 3.

DENTAL VAN

Prep dental checks will soon commence. Parents are invited to attend with their children for this examination. The dental van has available times during week 1 of the school holidays. Please phone 0418 155 562 to book a time, otherwise children will be examined in class groups in term 3.

P&C NEWS

We have a P&C meeting tonight 7pm (23/06/16) at the OSHC building.

We are still looking for volunteers to help out through the day at the sausage sizzle on Election Day 2nd July. If you can help, please see Rosie at the tuckshop.

We have some great things coming up with the "Fun Fair" & "Fathers Day". We are looking for volunteers help for both.

The Father's Day stall will need an organizer. If that's something you think you'd like to do, don't be shy to put your hand up.

Next term a letter will come home with all the information about the Fun Fair on Friday 26th August 5pm- 9pm.

The P&C has a vacancy for a tuckshop assistant. It will be a casual position to begin, with the possibility of becoming permanent part time.

Hours: Mon – Thurs 8.30-12.30 and Fri 8.30-2.15

Duties: Pick up bread order, food preparation, filling orders, cleaning & other tasks as assigned by the Convenor.

Requirements:

- Enjoy working with children
- Blue Card
- Ability to work unsupervised and as a member of a team
- Good communication skills
- Understanding of WPH&S & Hygiene Standards relating to food preparation

Forward resume to damiennic1@bigpond.com or leave at school office addressed Attention: Nicky

Applications close 4pm, Friday 24th June 2016

**Have a great school holidays, travel safe and enjoy.
Your P&C committee**

DEFENCE AND MOBILE FAMILIES

Welcome to All Families,

The end of term is finally here. No more school lunches for two weeks! To celebrate, L Pod will be open for an afternoon tea on Friday 24th

June from 1.45pm. So come inside to enjoy coffee and cake before picking up the kids from school. If you are so inclined, please feel free to bring snacks. This will be a relaxed event to celebrate surviving the first semester!



RAAF TOWNSVILLE DOGS DAY OUT – Friday 22nd July 7.30am – 9.00am Soroptimist Park. Please support this great cause and give a rescue dog a great day out. See flyer for further details.

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

KIDS CLUB

Students have been enjoying moulds, TMNT craft and much more. It is held every Monday and Tuesday during **FIRST** break on the verandah of the Outside School Care building. Kids Club is filled with exciting activities ranging from colouring in, board and card games, trucks and cars, and various craft activities each week.

Kids Club is a great way for children to get to know each other in a friendly, supervised environment. Please encourage them to come along and have some fun. They are welcome to bring a friend with them.

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 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.

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
www.dva.gov.au/vvcs

DFA Defence Families of Australia – 1800 100 509
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 lwhit325@eq.edu.au or Correna Wheeler cwhee36@eq.edu.au

**Kind Regards,
Louise White and Correna Wheeler**