**Attendance**

*Every day counts*

Our current attendance rate is 90.0% for the year. This is a considerable amount of time away from school. As we reach the middle of Term Three, parents are reminded of the importance of sending children to school every day. **Being at school every day counts**, with *one day absent each week quickly adding up to two months of missed lessons in a year*.

Unless your child is ill, it is expected that your child will be at school learning every day of the school year. More information on the importance of regular school attendance is available at [https://everydaycounts.eq.edu.au/Pages/default.aspx](https://everydaycounts.eq.edu.au/Pages/default.aspx)

**Small Schools Sports and Tara and District Athletics.**

Congratulations to the Small School Athletics Age Champions and Runners Up:

- Dan McDonald, Kristian Becker, Tiarnha Gehrke, William McDonald, and Hamish Curtis. A massive shout out goes to the students who competed at the T&D Athletics on the 22nd. Well done to Tiarnha Gehrke, Hamish Curtis, Latiesha Hatherell, Claudia Coggan, William McDonald, Chelsey Dorrstein, Alastair Curtis and Byron Frost.
Recently, Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority (ACARA) released the 2016 NAPLAN results, which show that Queensland has continued to achieve some of its best results across all year levels since NAPLAN began.

These results confirm what we have seen across many other local and state-wide indicators — the hard work of Queensland teachers and students is paying off.

Our strongest results were in the Year 3 and Year 5 cohorts, where Queensland achieved some of its highest ever rankings against the national minimum standards (NMS). Highlights of Queensland’s NAPLAN results include:
- ranking first nationally in Year 3 Grammar and Punctuation (the first time that Queensland has ever ranked first in a test area)
- ranking second nationally in Year 3 Reading and Numeracy
- ranking second nationally in Year 5 Grammar and Punctuation
- ranking second nationally in Year 7 Spelling.

There are a wide range of views about the role and purpose of national assessment, but without doubt it provides educational leaders, and society more broadly, with an idea of what effect our efforts are having on each student’s performance in skills necessary for everyday life: reading, writing, spelling and numeracy.

What NAPLAN tells us is that the leadership of principals, the dedication and perseverance of teachers and the hard work of Queensland students has been rewarded with performance gains relative to our peers around the country. Since Queensland’s relatively low baseline performance when NAPLAN began in 2008, we have travelled a steady and continuing improvement journey that now sees us as the most rapidly improving jurisdiction in the country.

I congratulate all staff and students on another year of significant and sustained improvement, which has been demonstrated not only in NAPLAN results but in many other achievements throughout the year.

Camp draft
The staff and students would like to thank and congratulate the parents of the school and Kindy P&C and parent helpers; as well as the Sports Club members for the smooth running and the excellent organisation of the food for the Camp draft. Your efforts and success are appreciated by the staff and students of the school. In addition, the SRC is incredibly grateful to the Westmar Camp Draft Committee for the generous donation of the proceeds from the Calcutta on Saturday night.
Student work
This term, students have been studying poetry. You can clearly see the students have been working on a variety of writing skills this term, particularly around the language and poetic devices of rhyme, rhythm, alliteration and developing descriptive noun groups. As we head into the independent work of this unit, you can help your child by helping build rhyming sets, and coming up with descriptive phrases for the things you see.

R and R: Repetition and Rhyme
Repetition makes books predictable, and young readers love knowing what comes next.

What You’ll Need: Short rhyming poems

What To Do
1. Pick a story with repeated phrases or a poem you and your child like.
2. For example, read:

Wolf Voice: Little pig, little pig, Let me come in.
Little Pig: Not by the hair on my chinny-chin-chin.
Wolf Voice: Then I'll huff and I'll puff, And I'll blow your house in!
After the wolf has blown down the first pig's house, your child will soon join in with the refrain.

3. Read slowly, and with a smile or a nod, let your children know you appreciate their participation.
4. As children grow more familiar with the story, pause and give them the chance to "fill in the blanks."
5. Encourage your children to pretend to read, especially books that contain repetition and rhyme. Most children who enjoy reading will eventually memorize all or parts of a book and imitate your reading.

When youngsters anticipate what’s coming next in a story or poem, they have a sense of mastery over books. When children feel power, they have courage to try. Pretending to read is an important step in the process of learning to read.

Please find attached to the end of this newsletter some samples of student alliteration, cinquains, limericks, and haikus.

Writing questionnaires
Thank you to those parents who have returned the writing surveys for the Semester Two meetings. We will be using your information to help drive your student’s writing goal for the rest of this term.

Pre-Prep Transition
Westmar SS and the Kindy are about to start our formal transition program for incoming Preps for 2017. Transition practices currently include the invitations to fundraiser and “fun” events; invitation to assemblies in Terms 2 and 3; whole school and kindy transition days in Term Four; Information sessions to new parents; and inviting Kindergarten staff to any relevant or pertinent professional development opportunities.

We are currently seeking some feedback regarding these events. At the end of this newsletter is a transition survey. We are seeking information from any parent who wishes to provide feedback about their student’s transition, particularly from parents of students in Prep or Year One this year. If you would like a hard copy of this survey, please do not hesitate to request a paper version via text or email.

You Can Do It!
With the great success of Gabby Get-along at Westmar, the students have been introduced to Ricky Resilience. We know that being resilient is about knowing your own emotions, and about how you can choose to react in a tricky or frustrating situation. The great thing about being resilient is that it links really neatly to how we already talk about our feelings in the Zones, at school.

I know that a lot of parents read with their children every night (to help them achieve 250 points to win the Smiggle voucher at the end of the semester); so I’ve attached some questions you might ask your student when reading with them, to talk about Getting Along and I’ve also attached a list of books (that cover a variety of authors from early readers, through to young adult) that demonstrate Resilience and Getting Along in literature.

Further to this program, the school will host an information session about the YCDI program, and the two key skills that are being covered this term. If parents are interested in hearing more about this program, they are welcome to attend:

3:15 pm on Thursday the 1st September, after Assembly, at Westmar State School

Alternatively, I am happy to host this information session AFTER the P&C Meeting on the 30th. Please RSVP with a preferred date.
On the 1st September join us for book week at Westmar State School. The Westmar Kindergarten will be joining us.

Come to school dressed as your favourite book character.

IMPACT – Round 3!
The Write On Project encourages students to extend their creative writing knowledge and skills. They explore the creative writing world from planning to publishing and learn more about planning plots, developing characters and dramatizing dialogue. The Write On Project also provides a great opportunity for your child to experience online learning.

The project also includes the chance to connect and collaborate with like-minded students from other schools, an online teacher from BSDE and staff from the Arts Faculty at University of Queensland. Your child will attend one web conference per week during school time as part of our timetabled day. Each web conference goes for approximately 60-70 minutes and is delivered by an online teacher from BSDE, with support from staff at our school.

Your child is also encouraged to engage in learning activities in their own time, for at least 20-30 minutes each week. These activities can be accessed, once the project begins, via the website www.elearn.eq.edu.au. The students are starting their first lessons this week, with Mrs Matthews. Engaging in these activities ensures that your child gets the most out of the project, so they are highly recommended. Many students can complete these activities at home, if internet access is available, however we will provide some class and lunch time for students who are interested.
Parent Card
Building Understandings About Different Types of Writing

Every piece of writing has a purpose and an audience. Your child needs to be clear about the purpose and audience of a piece of writing as this will have an impact upon the decisions your child will make about the way the text is organised, the structure, and the type of language used.

The following are some suggestions to help you support your child to develop their understanding about different types of writing.

- When your child is reading, discuss the purpose of the text, i.e. why do you think the author wrote this text? As there are many different purposes for writing, your child will discover there are texts where the prime purpose is to:
  - entertain, e.g. poems, jokes, cartoons
  - recount, e.g. journals, retells
  - describe, e.g. contents pages, simple reports, labels
  - socialise, e.g. SMS messages, emails, invitations.
  - explain, e.g. classroom rules, tables
  - instruct, e.g. directions, road signs, rules
  - inquire, e.g. interview questions
  - persuade, e.g. brochures, catalogues.

- Discuss the audiences of different texts. For example, have your child collect the junk mail and then discuss which audience they think the advertisers are targeting. You might like to discuss how the choice of words will be different depending on the age of the audience.

- Have your child collect different forms of text, e.g. a letter, a recipe, a list, a book about Ancient Greeks, a short story. Talk about how the layout is different. Remind your child to think about how they need to organise their text when they are writing.

- Different forms of text will have different organisational features. When reading, draw your child's attention to:
  - headings and subheadings
  - captions
  - diagrams and other visual aids (photographs, graphs, tables, cross-sections)
  - tables of contents
  - bolded or italicised words
  - computer menu

Discuss the inclusion of these organisational features, where appropriate, in your child's own writing.
Definition of Emotional Resilience:
Young children who are Emotionally Resilient can calm down soon after being extremely upset (down, worried, angry) without needing the immediate help of an adult. They can also control their behaviour (not fighting, returning to work or play within a reasonable time) when they become extremely upset.

Examples of Emotional Resilient Behaviour in Your Child:
- Stays calm and does not fight with a friend who will not share his/her toys
- Stays calm and does not fight when someone says something mean to him/her
- Stays calm and does not fight when a sibling pushes him/her
- Stays calm and does not worry when something is hard to do
- Calms down within a reasonable period of time when someone acts unfairly toward him/her
- Stays calm and does not worry too much when waiting to be collected by his/her parent/carer
- Does not appear overly worried if he/she does not understand how to play a new game at a friend’s house
- Does not appear extremely worried when parent asks him/her to talk to another adult he or she does not know.

Ways to Praise Your Child for Emotionally Resilient Behaviour:
- “I can see that even though you are a bit nervous, you are going to try to do it anyway.”
- “Even though you are finding this hard, you are not getting too sad about it.”
- “I can see you are choosing not to get into a fight.”
- “Good for you. You didn’t let yourself get too angry.”
- “You’ve learned how not to get too worried.”
- “You see, you can get through something that seems scary.”
- “Even though you didn’t know how to play that new game, you didn’t worry and kept on trying.”

Teach Your Child the Following Types of Thinking (Self-Talk):
- When I am upset, it is good to find someone to talk to.
- When I am upset, it is good to find something fun to do.
- When I am upset, it is good to think “calm down” and to take three big breaths.
A skinny sister

Who likes to eat Nutella

Lots of LOVE for me

Zoe Anderson

Haikus are so hard

But sometimes they are funny

Haikus are silly

By Tiarnha Gehrke
Angry alligators ate Alastair.
Thomas McDonald

Cheeky Charlie chucked chickens.
Olivia Leonard

Nipper nips noosh nuggets.
Zoe Anderson

Royal Roxy rapidly runs round the roundabout.
Chelsey Dorrstein

Awful Alastair ate all the apes.
Hamish Curtis

Westmar wins with windy weather.
William McDonald

Baby brother bites branches.
Alekaera Wilson

Terrible Trevor took the truck.
Tiarnha Gerhke

Chester chases chickens cheerfully.
Latiesha Hatherell

Miss C munches marshmallows.
Samantha Burke

Silly Sam slapped Sally stupidly.
Alastair Curtis

Cheater Trevor trotted through the trees.
Byron Frost
There was a young girl of Westmar
Who liked to play the guitar
She learnt a new cord
Drove her mum over board
The poor little girl of Westmar
By Samantha Burke

There was an old man called Roger
And he liked to ride a mini dodger.
He went to speed past
he was going too fast
and he crashed his old mini dodger.

HAMISH CURTIS
## Term Three

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