

# NEWSLETTER TERM 2 2026

## Principal Judy's Term Two Reflections

Thank you for joining us as we continue our journey to becoming a Global Centre of Excellence in Alternative Education! Your children – our students are being encouraged to build on their understandings, knowledge and skills to enable them to become world leaders, peace makers and change-makers.

They are learning how to be empathetic, resilient, (with The Resilience Project) environmentally responsible, ecologically aware and compassionate. We continue to support your children as they develop the important skills of determination, creative and critical thinking, solving complex problems, how to collaborate and to communicate effectively. Such brave hearts!

What a busy term this has been! Busy with the ANZAC march and ceremony, The Maleny Show art displays, the Waste Action Maleny (Wam) community screening of the brilliant and inspiring 'Future Council' documentary, Café Night and our annual Solstice Lantern parade. A special thank you to all the hard work and long hours put in by Alieta and Soul!

Our Creek~ulum program has been a great success and our thanks to Alieta for running it. Students continue work on their ASDAN portfolios and most students have had the opportunity to complete the following challenges...

1. Fundamental First Aid for the Tinkering shed, Loose Parts, fire lighting and whittling.
2. In the Tinkering Shed, Jaro has worked tirelessly with those students who want to experiment with electromagnetism. We have also built battery operated boats! Thank you so much, Jaro! We love and appreciate you!
3. In the Loose Parts, we have had a huge amount of soil, water and mud play learning!
4. Learnt how to start a fire using a flint.
5. Learnt the essentials of whittling.
6. Made and cooked pizzas, ANZAC biscuits and damper.
7. Used the Indoor Theatre for plays, dress ups, café and family play.
8. Took advantage of our Arts and Craft resources to learn to knit and create works of art, separate to the awesome work Alieta and Soul do with the students in the Art Shed.
9. Practiced our entrepreneurial skills with the 10% Markets which included donating 10% of our profits to their chosen cause: A local Wallaby Sanctuary.



Word is out that we are planning to personally take our completed ASDAN portfolios to England next September (2027). This means it's time to start saving! The onus is on the families to raise enough money to fund themselves, however, we will be working hard to fundraise to reduce the burden. We will probably be the only primary school (at least in Australia, if not globally) to complete the ASDAN Life Skills Award!

In class this term, the students have split time between explicit teaching and learning indoors and outdoors, and down at the creek. To assist our students literacy and numeracy skills, we use the multi-award-winning, subscription-based digital literacy and numeracy programs; Reading Eggs, Literacy for Kids and Maths Online. Although we do use laptops for research and document production, we also value the huge importance to the brain of handwriting.

I want to thank the most dedicated, professional and amazing staff that we are blessed with at The River School! The work you all do with the children is unique, exquisite and the subsequent results are simply remarkable.

I'm so very grateful for all your advice, love and support.

Thank you too, to the families who continue to give of their precious time and energy to support our school in so many ways.

Please have a well-deserved and safe holiday and I look forward to welcoming you back next term.

We are planning to start the Parents and Carers Forum up again next term.

The first forum topic would be 'Effective Parenting.' Please let the office know of your interest.

With love,

*Judy AKA Nana Bear*



# Looking Forward to TERM 3!

In Term 3 we are hoping to be able to offer students an instrumental music program. This will depend on instrumental tutors available in our area and what instruments we have.

We will be playing host to the students at Blackall Range Independent School when they visit to play soccer and hand ball. We will show them around our school, including the creek, the Art Shed and Gather & Grow.

We also plan on starting our worldwide pen pal venture with several contact points already established.

We have our Olympics next term so start your training today! Our Spring Fair is planned for Saturday 17th October. Check with the P&F to find out how best you can help to plan this special event.

For the grown-ups, we are hoping to start our 'Leave what you can - take what you need' space in the Lillypillies House. We may even start a charity shop! I have been approached to start a ukulele class for parents and carers - All things needing investigation and it has also been suggested that we start a River School choir!

So, there's much to do and look forward to!

Please note that students will need to have covered footwear to work in the Tinkering shed and around the Fire from day one of Term 3. We have made shelving ready to store boots and old shoes.

**This is NOT optional. NO SHOES NO PLAY!**

We will have our next Open Morning at the Gather and Grow neighbourhood on Sunday 19th July at 10am. This is an opportunity for anyone; family, friends or other community members who are interested in what happens at an authentic alternative school.

We will also have an Afternoon Tea at the Tuckshop early in the new term (Date TBC) where you can share your ideas and ask any questions.

Remember: It takes a village to raise a child. Do not underestimate the importance of your role in your school. You are invited and welcome to be involved in your child's learning journey here at school. Simply speak to your student's teacher on how best you can be involved.

First Day of Term 2  
Tuesday 14<sup>th</sup> July

Gather & Grow open  
morning 19<sup>th</sup> July

Years 4 & 5 Camp  
29 - 31 July

Trivia & Cafe Night  
Friday 28<sup>th</sup> August

Book Week Parade  
Friday 28<sup>th</sup> August

Olympics Day  
Friday 4<sup>th</sup> October

Years 1, 2 & 3 Camp  
9 - 11 September

Spring Fair Term 4  
Preparations T3

Last Day of term 3  
Friday 11<sup>th</sup> September

# WE ARE PUGGLES ~ YEAR PREP!

What a fantastic first semester it has been for the Puggles! It is hard to believe just how much our little learners have grown since beginning their journey at The River School. Throughout the semester, the Puggles have shown incredible resilience, kindness, curiosity and enthusiasm as they have navigated all the exciting experiences that come with their first year of school. The friendships that have blossomed, the confidence that has developed and the sense of belonging that has been created within our classroom has truly been wonderful to witness.

One of the greatest highlights of this semester has been watching the Puggles take their very first steps towards becoming readers and writers. From learning letters and sounds to reading tricky words and writing simple sentences, each child has worked incredibly hard and should be so proud of the progress they have made. It has been a joy to watch their confidence grow as they begin to unlock the magical world of literacy.

Our time spent down at the creek has also been incredibly special. The Puggles have loved exploring, investigating and connecting with nature in meaningful ways. Whether we were listening to Country, noticing the sights and sounds around us, or sitting quietly and calmly in our magic spots. These experiences have helped us develop a deep appreciation for our beautiful school environment.

This term Science has been the Puggle students favourite learning area as the children enthusiastically experimented with forces and movement, investigated different materials and even creating slime and Play-Doh for our classroom.

Every Puggle should feel incredibly proud of the hard work, resilience, and dedication they have shown towards their learning this semester. I cannot wait to see how much more we will learn, grow, and achieve together in Semester 2.

Kind regards,  
Rob





# Kingfisher Class Years 1 & 2

Wow! What a fabulous second term we have had in the Kingfisher Room. It has been an incredibly rewarding term, and we are so proud of how far everyone has come on their learning journey. We began the term by celebrating the special people in our lives with our much-loved Pamper Day. Through acts of service, the children delighted their loved ones with massages, foot spas, nail and hair treatments, and a lovely afternoon tea. It was a wonderful opportunity to show gratitude and care for those who support us every day.

We were also fortunate to welcome residents from Range Care, who shared stories about life when they were young. Their visit gave us a fascinating glimpse into the past and sparked many thoughtful conversations.

Reading has been a major focus and we celebrated this throughout the term. As a class, we set ourselves the ambitious challenge of reading 1,000 books collectively during the term, and we were thrilled to surpass this goal by a significant margin. We were gifted books by local author Jill Morris and received a visit from the Lions Club of Maleny, who generously presented each child with a reading bear—ensuring everyone has a special companion to read to. We even shared our love of reading with the Kindy children during a delightful Teddy Bears' Picnic.



Our learning adventures have also taken us to the creek, where we explored and observed the natural world around us. We have developed wonderful new skills through Gather and Grow, investigated our solar system and the changing seasons, and created beautiful artworks for both the Maleny Show and the Lantern Parade.

It has truly been a busy, exciting, and memorable term filled with learning, growth, creativity, and connection. As the term ends, we sadly say goodbye to a few special friends as they begin new adventures. We wish Kai, Arya, and Fox every happiness and success as they leave the nest of the Kingfisher family.

They will always hold a special place in our hearts.

Julia and I extend our warmest wishes to all our families for a safe, restful, and enjoyable holiday break. We look forward to welcoming everyone back after winter and embarking on another exciting term together. 😊



# WE ARE PICCABEENS

## Year 3



The Mighty Piccabeens enthusiastically embraced our Unit of Inquiry, "Celebrations Around the World," this term. Through this exploration, we identified connections between people and the characteristics of places while investigating the significance of various celebrations and commemorations across different countries and cultural groups. As part of the unit, students selected a celebration from a country of interest, including Australia, to research and present creatively to the class. These presentations were colourful, engaging, and informative, showcasing a wonderful spectrum of cultural traditions. We enjoyed dancing, games, storytelling, and even some delicious food as we learned from one another. Our inquiry extended further as we explored how and why people contribute to their communities. We proudly examined the contributions of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples, as well as the unique qualities that make our own River School community so special. The depth of learning was evident in the rich narratives the Piccabeens capably and enthusiastically created throughout Term Two. Our modelled reading text this semester was Scott O'Dell's classic adventure novel, *Island of the Blue Dolphins*, which explores themes of survival, resilience, and self-reliance. We thoroughly enjoyed the novel and connected deeply with its themes through a variety of rich text-to-self, text-to-text, and text-to-world learning experiences. In Mathematics, students engaged in many hands-on investigations. One highlight involved gathering and analysing data about our existing playground equipment, interpreting the results to determine popularity, and then developing proposals for possible enhancements and extensions to our play spaces. This project provided valuable opportunities to apply mathematical thinking to authentic, real-world contexts. In Science, we took a deep dive into Earth and material sciences, actively exploring the observable properties of soils, rocks, and minerals and their importance as natural resources. Students are currently applying their learning in a design challenge investigating sustainable ways to use or reuse resources derived from soils, rocks, or minerals. Alongside our academic pursuits, we have embraced meditative moments by the creek, sketching opportunities, discovery experiences, and abundant play. These treasured experiences continue to nurture creativity, mindfulness, curiosity, and a connection with the natural world. Overall, the Piccabeens have enjoyed a rich and active semester filled with growth, discovery, and achievement. They have experienced success across academic, emotional, social, and spiritual domains while continuing to develop as curious learners, thoughtful thinkers, and compassionate members of our community.



# Wattles - Year 4 REGENTS ~ YEAR 5

As we reach the end of another rich and rewarding semester, I would like to take a moment to celebrate the extraordinary learning journey we have shared together.

This semester, the children have engaged deeply with some fascinating and complex areas of study, approaching each with curiosity, enthusiasm, and growing confidence. Together, we explored the wondrous world of forests, uncovering the vital role fungi play within our ecosystems. The children were captivated by the hidden networks beneath our feet and developed a greater appreciation for the interconnectedness of all living things.

The Regents also embarked on an incredible 4.6-billion-year journey back through time into Earth's history. Along the way, we examined the many stages of Earth's evolution, from dramatic physical transformations to the emergence and extinction of ancient life forms. This exploration helped us better understand the remarkable sequence of events that eventually led to humans becoming the dominant species on our planet.

Our studies also extended into the powerful natural forces that shape our world. Through research and inquiry, we investigated natural disasters and the forces that drive them, building a deeper understanding of both Earth's dynamic systems and the forces that impact these events.

Throughout these inquiries, the children expressed their learning not only through research and writing, but also through the beautiful hand-drawn artworks that accompanied their studies.

Their illustrations brought complex ideas to life, capturing intricate fungal networks, ancient landscapes and lifeforms, and the immense power of natural forces with remarkable creativity, detail, and imagination. These artistic expressions became another powerful way for the children to communicate their understanding and wonder.

Across all areas of learning, the children have made tremendous growth. Their research skills have strengthened immensely, and they have become increasingly capable writers, thinkers, and communicators. Their mathematical understanding has also deepened significantly, particularly in number and algebra, as they have embraced challenge and developed greater confidence in problem-solving.

As I bid farewell to this amazing school and the wonderful colleagues and families who make up this vibrant community, I find myself reflecting with deep gratitude. It is the extraordinary young people who have come under my wing who inspire my teaching practice each and every day. Their curiosity, creativity, resilience, and joy for learning have been a constant source of inspiration.

It has been an absolute honour to nurture their wonder, support their growth, and share in their learning journeys. Thank you for your trust, kindness, and partnership throughout my time here.

I will carry many cherished memories with me.

With heartfelt gratitude,  
Lynne

# RED CEDARS YEAR 6

## SCHOOL LEADERS & LANTERN MAKERS





We have had an exceptionally busy and creative time in the Art Shed this term! In our Prep-Year 6 art classes, we have made collage artworks, paintings, drawings, ceramic sculptures, and tableware, experimented with cyanotype and gel printing processes, and made lanterns! In our ceramics program, students have had the opportunity to glaze their fired artworks, with stunning results. We have displayed the children's artwork in two exhibitions this term. Soul and I have witnessed incredible growth in student confidence, artistic innovation through experimentation, collaboration, and the generation of new ideas during artmaking. We can't wait to see, what the students create in Semester 2, as we continue to expand our skills working with clay and other mediums. In Semester 2, we will also be engaging with drama and media arts, as part of the River School Arts program.



### The Maleny Show Art Display

Each year we take the opportunity to showcase the amazing range of artworks made by our River School students during their specialist art classes, in the Junior Handicraft section of the Maleny Show. This is such a great chance for students to see their artworks displayed in a public exhibition. We had the opportunity to show our newly glazed ceramics this year! So many of our student entries received prizes and encouragement awards.

### Lantern Parade

We spent several weeks during art lessons constructing and decorating bamboo and paper lanterns for our much-loved, Winter Solstice Café Night. The night-time lantern walk around the school, was a beautiful celebration of our vibrant River School community, creative expression and connection to our inner light. The Year 6 bamboo construction was a collaborative effort of engineering by students, and is the biggest lantern ever made in River School history.

A big thanks to Jaro and Anthony for harvesting the bamboo for us to use.



# Creek-ulum

This term, we have begun our whole school environmental/ science program called Creek-ulum. All classes from Prep to Year 6, have a weekly or fortnightly lesson with Alieta at the creek. This term we have been refining our science inquiry skills, noticing subtle and big changes at the creek in weather, fungi, plants and animal systems. Students have selected their own 'magic spot' to sit and return to each week to deeply notice and connect to this living system. We look forward to deepening our connection to the living world at the creek in term 3, as we begin to select areas of interest to study further.



Alieta



### Winter Wonderland: Free event

4pm - 8pm Friday 26 June 2026

<https://caloundra.com.au/winterwonderland>

### Picnic on Kings

10am - 4pm Saturday 25 July 2026

Bluey and Bingo Live Interactive Experience

<https://caloundra.com.au/picniconkings>

If your school or organisation would like to be involved, the details are here

The Curated Plate  
Queensland  
**Picnic on Kings**  
\$16.50 pp bookings essential  
25 July 2026  
10am-4pm  
Kings Beach Amphitheatre, Caloundra  
see Bluey and Bingo  
thecuratedplate.com.au  
Stockland | AURA | Caloundra | Sunshine Coast COUNCIL

## SPECIAL FEATURE EVENT



### This school holidays, create with Kate!

Learn from the best in our highly immersive interactive experience hosted by beloved local mural artist, Kate Kazony!

Kate will guide participants through a spot the animal activity incorporating her fabulous artwork in our children's area before bringing her own debut children's book to life in a read-aloud of *Rashmi's Rainforest Readers*.

The action-packed two-hour workshop culminates in an educational art experience wherein Kate will work with guests to create a collaborative picture book using a simple and effective art technique. Take home your own page of a special one-off children's story!

Check out our full school holiday line-up below to make bookings to this event and more!



*Our Rainforest Readers programme was made possible by a generous grant from Penguin Random House.*

Caloundra  
Winter Wonderland 2026  
4-8pm Friday 26 June  
Bulcock Street, Caloundra  
Markets  
caloundra | Sunshine Coast COUNCIL | Shop Caloundra

## Kids' Reading Guide



### Welcome to the 2026 Winter edition of the Kids' Reading Guide!

In this guide you'll find stories full of laughter, wonder, mystery and discovery. Some are heartwarming, others hilarious, but all remind us of the magic of getting lost and found between the pages of a book.

Every title in this guide has been carefully chosen by passionate booksellers who love helping young readers find books that spark imagination, comfort, curiosity and courage.

Whatever a child's age or interest, there's a book here to engage, delight and stay with them long after the last page is turned.

So many fabulous books are out now (or due for release soon), and we're excited to share some of our picks from the Winter Kids Reading Guide with you.

Drop in to grab a copy for TBR pile inspiration.

# ROSETTA BOOKS

