



## Principal's Message

Here we are at the end of another school year and hasn't it been a significant one? 2020 began with catastrophic bushfires followed by floods then a global pandemic. I think you'd have to say that the challenges have been many.

In a year where it would have been easy for us when dealing with COVID-19, to take the 'can't do' approach, we as a school community made the decision to be a 'can do' school. In the COVID world we have, amidst all the restrictions, managed to run regular assemblies, sporting events, a very successful Kinder Orientation program and a new enrichment program. We have increased our social media presence and have offered students not only day excursions but overnight camps – something few schools have been able to offer.

Of course, none of these activities happens by magic. I have hunted high and low in my office but have been unable to locate a magic wand. Instead I have had to (happily) rely on the expertise, the creativity, the positivity, the kindness and the collaboration of an outstanding team of Westlawn teachers and support staff.

Against all odds, 2020 has been a successful year at our school. Thank you for all your support in helping us to 'strive to achieve'. Thank you for your positive approach to Home Learning, your support of Teachers and Administrative staff and the significance you place on your child's education. We have worked together well in our educational partnership under difficult conditions this year.

I would like to announce that Mr David King was the successful applicant for the position of Acting Principal in Term 1 next year at WPS following my retirement. Mr King is a colleague I hold in high esteem. He is a very experienced leader who has relieved as Principal of both Narranga and Mullaway Public Schools. Mr King's substantive position is Deputy Principal, Narranga Public School. The permanent position will be advertised through an open merit selection process during term 1 with the successful applicant entering on duty at the beginning of Term 2. Mr King is excited at the opportunity that awaits

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him and is keen to meet students, staff and families. His first day on duty at WPS will be Wednesday 27 January 2021.

At this point in time I must bid you all farewell. This is an outstanding school and it's no secret that I have absolutely loved every minute leading it.

My heartfelt thanks to:

- every child who's given me a smile and asked how my day's going
- every teacher who's cornered me to tell me how excited they are about a student's progress or how well a lesson went
- my Lovely Office Ladies for putting up with me, keeping things running smoothly even when wheels are falling off my wagon
- every parent or carer who has taken the time to say thank you
- Deputy Principal, Mrs Ellis. If you have had the joy of spending time with Mrs Ellis you will know that she is a lady of the highest calibre - strong, kind, intelligent and one of the hardest workers I have ever known. This school, its staff, its students and its families benefit enormously from the work she does at WPS and I have considered it a privilege to work with her

Teaching is a devotion and all those who work at Westlawn Public are there for the love of the job and to make life better for the students with whom they work. It has been a privilege and an honour to work with the Westlawn Team these past two years and to serve in Primary School Education for the past 39 years.

I will leave you with the words of Mohammad Ali – "Don't count the days, make the days count."

All the best,

Sandra

## CONGRATULATIONS!

We congratulate Mrs Johnson and Mrs McGrath who were successful in a highly competitive merit selection process to be permanently appointed to teaching positions at Westlawn Public School. They are outstanding operators and our school is an enriched place of learning for their professional contributions.

## WHAT ARE TEACHERS DOING ON THE TWO STAFF DEVELOPMENT DAYS (PUPIL FREE) NEXT YEAR?

On Wednesday 27 and Thursday 28, teachers will be working with the Principal, School Leadership on the Strategic Directions in our School Improvement Plan. We have three Strategic Directions. The first is determined at State level by the Department of Education. The other two were determined as a result of a rigorous and comprehensive situational analysis conducted by the school.

### STRATEGIC DIRECTION 1      *Student Growth & Attainment*

**Purpose:** To maximise student learning outcomes in reading, numeracy and writing and to build strong foundations for academic success, we will further develop and refine data driven teaching practices that are responsive to the learning needs of individual students

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## STRATEGIC DIRECTION 2

### ***Student Wellbeing***

**Purpose:** To provide a strategic, planned approach to whole school wellbeing processes that support all students to connect, succeed, thrive and be challenged to achieve their potential, in a supportive learning environment.

## STRATEGIC DIRECTION 3

### ***High Impact Professional Learning***

**Purpose:** To align professional learning with the Strategic Improvement Plan and evaluate its impact on the quality of teaching and student learning outcomes. To develop explicit systems for collaboration and feedback to sustain quality teaching practice.

Over the two days, teachers will work together planning and programming for the coming year. Meetings will take place at whole school, Strategic Direction Team, Stage Teaching and Leadership Team levels to ensure we can leap into the school year ready to provide the very best in educational opportunities for your children.

### **WHEN WILL BE THE FIRST DAY BACK AT SCHOOL FOR STUDENTS?**

**The first day back for students in Years 1 to 6 will be Friday 29 January.** Kindergarten parents will receive information regarding Best Start Assessment appointments (held February 1, 2 and 3) shortly.

**The first day for Kindergarten classes will be Thursday 4 February.**

### **CAKES – PLEASE DON'T SEND THEM INTO SCHOOL**

Whilst we are happy to help children celebrate birthdays, we must do so abiding by Department of Education COVID Safety guidelines. As there is to be *no sharing of food*, please do not send in cakes or cupcakes to school on birthdays or other special events.

### **CANTEEN 2021**

The canteen will operate from the second week of Term 1 from Tuesdays to Fridays. The Canteen will not be open on a Monday. Many thanks to our hard working canteen committee, volunteers and the amazing Belinda Oxenbridge who is our Canteen Coordinator. You all do an awesome job.

### **PARENTING INFORMATION FROM MICHAEL GROSE**

***Caring or successful? Which would you choose for your child?***

Fortunately, the two aims aren't mutually exclusive, but it's an interesting question as your answer will demonstrate your values.

Are you more likely to encourage kindness or effort in your child? Are you more likely to recognise a child's words of encouragement to a sibling or their clever turn of phrase?

I suspect most parents rank a sense of caring for others as a high priority. Few parents want to raise a mean-spirited, self-centred child with little empathy or care for the welfare of others. But looking out for others doesn't come easily to all children, particularly when families are small and child-centric.

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## Caring is important for community wellbeing

If the basic task of parents is to socialise children, then a focus on caring for others should be a higher priority than individual success. The wellbeing of our community depends on the first rather than the latter.

Author Anthony D'Angelo wrote, "Without a sense of caring, there can be no sense of community." Families and schools are better places when care takes priority over attainment. They are both toxic when caring for others is not valued or encouraged.

Caring for others sits with community development and individual competency as essential leadership qualities to develop in children and young people.

Our Young Leaders Program, delivered in schools across Australia reflects the importance of caring and kindness. The program specifically identifies emotional intelligence as one of the five building blocks of leadership. The Young Leaders Program encourages schools to promote a sense of service in their young leaders. It shows how leaders should above all else, serve others and enrich the communities that they represent.

Caring for others is also a quality that you can encourage at home. These strategies will help you get the ball rolling.

## Put caring into words

Families have their own proprietary language. That is, they develop meaningful words and phrases that reflect their values and activities. In my family, the term 'non-negotiable' has specific meaning, referencing a ritual such as mealtime that everyone is expected to attend. Its 'non-negotiable' nature reinforces our core value of family connectedness. Similarly, regular use of caring language such as encouragement, words of kindness and phrases of appreciation can become an integral part of your family's vernacular.

## Making kindness normal

Kindness is caring in action. It's impossible to be kind to another person and be selfish at the same time. A smile, a small gift, an offer of assistance are simple acts of kindness that display caring and connection to others. You can promote kindness in your child through encouragement, modelling and recognition.

## Practise concern for others

Three-year-old Grace fell heavily from a table, giving herself a shock. Five-year-old Ruby immediately reached for her sister, hugging her until she calmed down. Ruby's immediate concern was for her sister's wellbeing, which was acknowledged by her grateful parents.

## Help at home, without being paid

Children in families that place a high value on caring for others generally perform household chores without the lure of money. They do so because they've been taught that helping is a caring activity. "We help each other because we care for each other" is the unspoken code here. Kids who care for others think "what's in it for we" rather than "what's in it for me". The latter is a self-centred approach to life.

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## In closing

Caring is a higher-level quality that needs nurturing. It doesn't always occur naturally. Studies have shown that caring is kick started earlier in children who belong to large families presumably because children are put in a position to care for and look out for siblings in quasi parenting roles. Being raised in small families doesn't deny altruism development in kids. It does mean that you may need to work a little harder to awaken caring in your child.

*Michael Grose, founder of Parenting Ideas, is one of Australia's leading parenting educators. He's an award-winning speaker and the author of 12 books for parents including Spoonfed Generation, and the bestselling Why First Borns Rule the World and Last Borns Want to Change It. Michael is a former teacher with 15 years experience, and has 30 years experience in parenting education. He also holds a Master of Educational Studies from Monash University specialising in parenting education.*

## THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT DURING COVID

As we come closer to the end of the school year, we'd like to extend our thanks to you, our parent community, for demonstrating so much resilience and patience towards the circumstances we faced together. We strived together to get the best outcomes for our students despite the pandemic and you have stayed by our side the entire time. Thank you again.

We will be sending a **COVID-safe summer pack** to each student before the year ends. The contents of the pack will help students maintain healthy hygiene practices and to stay COVID-safe during the school holidays.

Here are some quick tips to help you and your families stay COVID-safe during the school holidays:

- Encourage your children to use their packs whenever they leave the house
- Meet outdoors whenever possible and wear sunscreen
- Meet in small groups
- Encourage good hand hygiene practices and remind your children to cough and sneeze into their elbow
- Keep up-to-date with the latest health information by monitoring the [NSW Government website](#)<sup>External link</sup>

From all of us at WPS, be COVID safe and enjoy the upcoming school holidays.

*Many thanks to Ella Whitford from Ulmarra for donating some recorders to our school.*

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## Library News

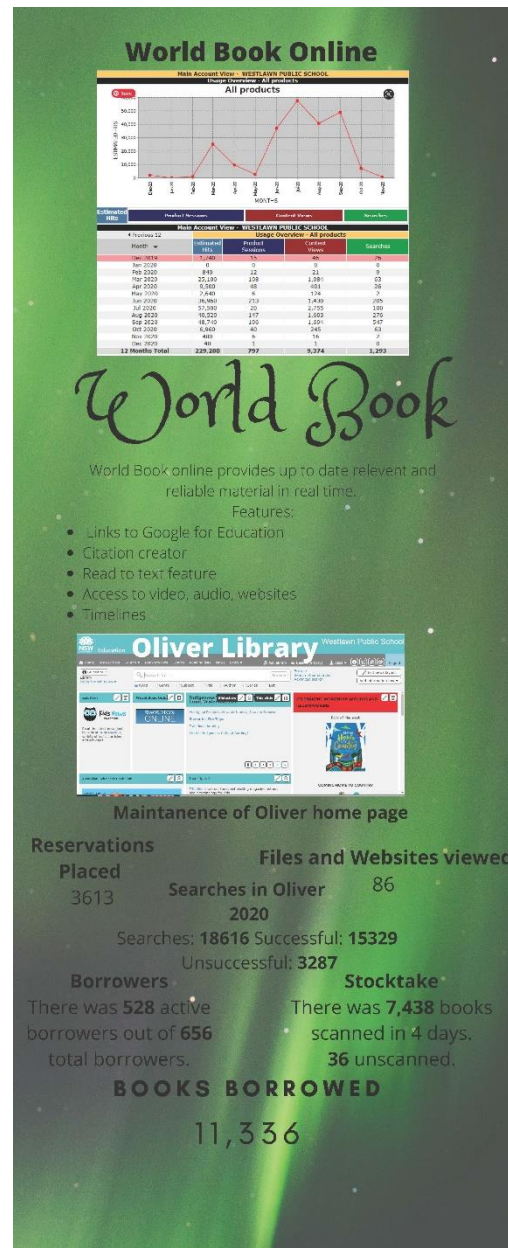
All library books now need to be returned. Thank you to everyone that has helped find long lost books. Borrowing has finished for the year. Our checkers competition is up to the final round. Good Luck to Jakob and Henry for Stage two and Aliya and Harvey in Stage three.

Please enjoy reading our infographic which celebrates library in 2020.

Don't forget our wonderful Clarence Regional Library for your holiday reading!

Happy Reading

Mrs Palmer



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## Kindergarten 2020

Kindergarten 2020 has certainly been a different experience for teachers, parents and our 69 students. Kindergarten quickly settled into school life and were easily identified with their unique yellow hats. They enjoyed spending time with their buddies in Term 1 and these buddies were very handy when we returned from 'Learning from Home' as some children were a little reluctant to come through the gates on their own.

We are very appreciative of all our dedicated Kindergarten parents who assisted us in keeping Kindergarten motivated and learning despite the difficult situation we were in during COVID 19. Luckily, Kindergarten settled back quickly into routines and they continued to work hard in all areas of their learning.

Our fabulous SLSO's (School Learning Support Officers) - Lindel Youman, Bella Trevillian and Kate Terry (now a qualified teacher) - worked with some children on an intensive Literacy Program to ensure Kindergarten Benchmarks were met.

Kindergarten is certainly a year of firsts. We made hats (at home) and created the first ever Westlawn Public School Virtual Easter Hat Parade. We enjoyed taking part in our first sports day where we got to dress in house colours and participate in a variety of fun events. We loved dressing up for our first Book Character Parade.

We all enjoyed our Kindergarten excursion where we walked over the old and new Grafton bridges - observing and discussing the different materials they were made from. We then had an amazing lunch, cooked by Mr Hughes, at Jacaranda Park and a play on the equipment. Mr Giggins spoilt us by buying us chocolate ice creams!

Thanks for a fantastic year Kindergarten Class of 2020!

Karen Barnier, Wayne Giggins, Michelle Storm and Megan Rowe



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## WONDERFUL STAGE 1 THINGS THAT DID HAPPEN IN OUR 2020 COVID YEAR

By all accounts 2020 has been an unbelievable year. The most wonderful part of which has been that we have come through it together. In Stage 1, both staff and students have put in their all, achieving some incredible things. Here are some highlights. Westlawn Public has focused on music across K-6 this year and in Stage 1 we have taken part in weekly performing arts lessons. During these classes all Year 1 and Year 2 students have participated in singing, percussion, drama and public speaking opportunities. We have some very keen musicians among our Stage 1 students. We enjoyed eating fresh food on our Veggie Crunch Day and learnt how to keep ourselves healthy by eating fresh fruit and vegetables. Throughout the year all Stage 1 students took part in sport clinics and specialist sporting experiences that have broadened their sporting lives at school. These included the Learn to Swim Program at Grafton Pool, gymnastics clinic at the PCYC as well as hockey and football clinics. All our students thoroughly enjoyed these experiences.

Both staff and students were able to explore their creativity making hats and costumes for our Easter Hat and Book Parades this year. These experiences were lots of fun for us all.

During NAIDOC Week, not only did we learn and appreciate the culture and importance of our First Nations people but Year 1 and Year 2 students were able to take part in and enjoy activities such as the Indigenous games that were led by our senior students.

Earlier this year we all spent the day at Jacaranda Park getting to know each other and having fun together. This experience was one of the very few opportunities involving our great parents. We look forward to welcoming them back into our classrooms in 2021.

Finally, the COVID experience showed how clever all Stage 1 staff and students are. During this time, we learnt new ways of using technology to learn and work in and out of school, problem solve challenging situations, build independence and resilience under difficult and unusual circumstances and connect with each other on different levels and in different and innovative ways.



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## STAGE 2 REFLECTIONS ON 2020 – THE THINGS THAT COVID DIDN'T STOP US DOING!

As the final weeks of 2020 draw to a close we begin to reflect on the year that was. This year has been a significant one. Our Stage 2 students have shown resilience, strength and adaptability. We look back at all that we have achieved with pride and elation. We are a very collaborative group of students. We share sports rotations, arts rotations and enrichment rotations weekly. We have had a truly marvellous year with our cohort.

Our school calendar is usually quite full, but this year in-school activities have been absolutely teeming. Our teachers have also had to adapt. If there was a missed opportunity or a cancellation of an event, we modified and ensured that our students experienced the same excitement, anticipation and fun.

This year Stage 2 have participated in a wide range of activities and events such as; Community Sport, Choir, online learning with Google Classrooms, home learning packs and projects, Enrichment Rotations, Stage Sport, Stage 2 Sports Fun Day, Stage 2 Discos, Book Character Parade, Multicultural perspectives Public Speaking, NAIDOC week rotations, Yulunga Traditional Aboriginal Games, the Year 4 excursion to Yarrahapnni and the Year 3 excursion to Coffs Coast Adventure Centre. Our students have also had many opportunities to participate in extra-curricular events with many participating in activities such as music lessons, band, skipping club, checkers club, Basketball Gala days, the Talent Showcase and mentoring programs to name a few.

We thank all our students, their parents, carers and the wider school community for a wonderful year and we look forward to seeing you all in 2021.



### **2020 – A GREAT YEAR IN STAGE 3!**

As 2020 draws to a close, we can reflect on the many commendable achievements our students have attained throughout the year.

This year our stage 3 classes had the benefit of very experienced and capable teachers. The teachers on Stage 3 classes were Ms Williams, Mrs Hadley, Mr Alford, Ms Gordon, Ms Adams and Mr Ogilvy. We were also fortunate to have additional staff with Mrs Palmer, Mr Bell and Mrs Gough working alongside our classroom teachers to further support and extend our students' achievement. Mrs Linley, Ms Cowan and Mrs Wynn, three of our amazing Student Learning Support Officers, also worked with our classroom teachers, ensuring that students received individual support when required.

Our dedicated staff has continued to implement changes in curriculum and improve their practice, based on current research, in all areas of teaching. We introduced a Bump It Up Writing program in stage 3, which helped to further improve students' writing outcomes. We began our Positive Behaviour for Learning journey, which is a promoting positive behaviour. This in turn has enhanced student achievement of learning outcomes. We have continued to achieve success with our stage Mathematics organisation of graded classes with five students receiving medals in the Maths Olympiad and three students receiving high honours in the Newcastle Permanent Building Society Maths Competition.

In Term 3 a Stage 3 Fun Sports Day was organised, where all stage 3 students were put into mixed teams and participated in a range of sporting activities including soccer, AFL, newcombe ball and dodge ball. All students showed great sportsmanship and involvement on the day, which was fabulous. Another such day is planned for this Thursday for all stage 3 students with different activities this time.

Year 6 students have displayed excellent leadership skills this year. They were wonderful buddies to the new kindergarten students during Term 1 of this year. They completed their leadership training with the Burn Bright group and received extra in-school training as well to successfully lead Peer Support groups involving K- 5 students during Term 3. Year 5 students have already been busy assisting the kindergarten teachers with the new kindergarten students for 2021.



Recently, an activities week was organised for Year 6 students, where planned excursions to The Big Banana Water Park, Dolphin Marine Magic, Springloaded and Bowling 300 in Coffs Harbour took place. Students also went on a jetty walk and saw a range of marine creatures in the wild. At school during that week students also had a Westlawn Cold Rock experience, a Water Challenge with the teachers, a STEM challenge and viewed a film with their friends. It was certainly an exciting week for Year 6 students.

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Year 5 students were fortunate to attend a COVID 19 safe camp at Lake Ainsworth in Week 7 of this term where they participated in a number of activities including archery, kayaking, sailing, canoeing and bush walks. The students had a lot of fun in the evenings too when they participated in a range of games held in the large multipurpose centre.



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## DIARY DATES

Wed Dec 9	Presentation Day - (COVID rules apply – no visitors on site)
Thurs Dec 10	Stage 3 sports day
Mon Dec 14	Reports go home  Stage 1 Treat Day – Saraton  Stage 2 Treat Day - Saraton  Stage 3 Treat Day - Saraton
Tues Dec 15	Year 6 Disco (daytime at school)  Year 6 Farewell – Grafton Racecourse
Wed Dec 16	Students last day of term
<b>2021</b>	
Fri Jan 29	Students return for Term 1 2021



**KIDS CHRISTMAS CRAFT  
AFTERNOON**  
FOR KIDS AGED 5-15

TIME: 3.30-5.30PM  
PLACE: 116 OLIVER ST STREET,  
GRAFTON PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH  
COST: \$12/CHILD \$18/FAMILY COVERS GINGERBREAD HOUSE  
CRAFT & AFTERNOON TEA  
CONTACT: JAMES ON 0402 354 099

**FRIDAY 18<sup>TH</sup> DECEMBER**

STRICTLY LIMITED TO 20 PARTICIPANTS. REGISTER VIA MESSENGER OR MOBILE  
COVID-SAFE PRACTICES IN PLACE

Find us on  **facebook**

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## Term 4 Award Recipients

### TEACHERS AWARDS

Javahn Donovan  
Jazmine Bellette  
Jordan Hall  
Elijah Watling

### BRONZE

Jasmine Whamond  
Sophie Griffiths  
Ruby Larkin  
Indie Boland  
Harley Fowler  
Logan Clark  
Kianne Kershaw- Gorman  
Eva Slattery  
Paul Eggleton  
Ryan McRae  
Nathan Arnold

### SILVER

Boyd Langdon  
Kaden Welch  
Myles Lardner  
Aquilla Ward  
Charlie Radin  
Chevy O'Brien  
Brooklynn Kelly  
Jazlyn Pigg

### GOLD

Skyla Ellis  
Sally Whitburn  
Aniston Haynes  
Layla Gentles  
Chase Stoves  
Brock Paul  
Alayna Welch  
Isabella-Rose Bateman  
Kobi Woods  
Adam Roberts

Ben Allen  
Landen Gough  
Taj Chevalley  
Zack O'Loughlin  
Barney Wratten  
Lily Fraser  
Ellie Gray  
Marcus Green  
Bohdi Henwood  
Riley Kelly  
Lily Van Vyfeyken  
Jack Foster  
Blake Power  
Domonik Brack  
Sharna Danks-Brown  
Ashford Kearns  
Sharlet Knight  
Jaxon Vasey

### DIAMOND

Rheo Brown  
Elsie Firth  
Hayden Almond  
Isabella Whamond  
Kokoda Hutchings  
Kiara Winters  
Levi Donaghey  
Aidan Rasborsek  
Tylah radin  
Nate Barrett  
Sharnie Evans  
Mollie Phelps  
Max Oxenbridge  
Emmy Deleiuen  
Eliza Hebron  
Mason Thorley  
Oliver Willis  
Hayden Everson  
Keirra Gaeta  
Mahkai Haynes  
Adelaide Kearns  
Laqueesha Laurie

Declan Niddrie  
Aliya Eastment

### Principal

Summah Chevalley  
Olivia Jones  
Lily Fairleigh  
Hayden Luxton  
Kate Raven  
Poppy Farrell  
Aria Barnes  
Ashlea Blair  
Burnum Gerard  
Grace Gilbert  
Sunny Hartmann  
Ethan Johnston

### School Spirit

Sophie Kratz

### PRINCIPAL MEDALLION

Lila Heyman  
Sophie Johnson  
Jack Wiles

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