

Term 4 Week 6

Newsletter

10 November 2023

Principal: Rod Schultz
Acting Head of Curriculum: Hannah Hammond

Deputy Principal: Leanne Kulmar
Business Manager: Helen Blines

FROM THE PRINCIPAL

Dear Mackay District Special School Families,

Term 4 is always a hectic time as we complete and report on student's learning programs, prepare and present the end of year activities while also start the planning for 2024. Student reports will be sent home on Monday of the last week. Along with the report there will be an introductory letter informing you of your child's teacher and the class book list.

Thank you for all your donations for this years' Christmas raffle, judging by the donations, it is definitely going to be a hamper well worth winning. Also, thank you to our P&C secretary, Anne Borg for organising the raffle, which is a good fund raiser for the school. The hamper will be drawn at the Christmas Concert on Wednesday 6th December (last week of school). See you there.

Next Thursday is our Year 12 students' graduation dinner at Northern Beaches Bowls Club. While we only have a small number of students graduating this year it is still a significant night on the school calendar and one, I look forward to attending with staff and parents. It is a wonderful occasion where our senior students are presented with their graduation certificates and personalised plaques from their teachers. On behalf of all the staff I would like to wish our senior students (Malachi, Tymius and Tymekka) all the very best for the future.

Our next, and last P&C meeting for 2023 is 29th November 9:00 am in the admin meeting room. Everyone is welcome to attend.

Rod

DATE CLAIMERS

- Year 12 Graduation Thursday 16 November 2023.
- P&C meeting 29 November 9:00am in the admin meeting room. Everyone is welcome to attend.
- Christmas Concert Wednesday 6 December 2023.
- Term 4 finishes Friday 8 December 2023 at 2:30pm.



FROM THE DEPUTY PRINCIPAL

Positive Behaviour Supports

We will continue to discuss Positive Behaviour Support Strategies that we implement here at school to help to develop a consistent approach to behaviour for our students. This newsletter I will focus on the strategies, Choice, Redirection and Prompting.



Choice - Giving students choice can be done with concrete items, gestures, visuals, and/or verbally, as required. Start with choice between two after some exposure to the pairing of the /gesture/visual/word/item. The initial teaching is best done with preferred foods or play items or similar, depending on what the student finds motivating. Model and facilitate touch to show response when spoken language is not possible. In the area of behaviour, choice will more likely result in a compliant response when compared to a simple direction or request. Providing

students with the option to choose gives them some level of control over what happens for them. Having choice is very beneficial to the student short and long term and helps to meet the broader goal of self-determination and life quality.



Redirection - Moving a student's attention from one thing to another before undesired behaviours occur or escalate. Use verbal, gestural or physical cues to direct focus to a new activity.

This can also be used when an initial direction is given but the student has not followed it nor understood it. The redirection can be a re-wording of the original direction to assist with understanding.



Prompting - Prompting is used to elicit the performance of an already developed skills. Initially, visuals, gesture and verbal information may be used together to communicate desired expectation. Once the student shows understanding then these supports can gradually be faded. To elicit performance of the expectation, one prompt may be all that is required. The prompt initially is best to be obvious, decreasing in saliency over time.

The eventual outcome is for the behaviour/skills to be elicited by the context and/or routine, without the adult using a prompt.

If you would like to discuss these or any other Behaviour Support Strategies, please don't hesitate to contact myself or your class teacher.

Leanne

STUDENT ABSENCES

If your child is away from school, please contact the school that day with a reason for absence.

Phone: 4963 1333, Email: admin@mackaydistrictspecs.eq.edu.au OR

Text: SCHOOL ABSENCE LINE - 0459 871 115 (FOR STUDENT ABSENCES ONLY)

School News

TRANSPORT

For daily one-off taxi cancellations or any queries please call 3556 5789 and state your child's name. Please do not call 13CABS as this will affect other students on the same route.

For any queries regarding transport please contact the school on 4963 1333. Your assistance is greatly appreciated.

P & C News



MDSS P&C

CHRISTMAS

Raffle

The raffle will be drawn at the Christmas Concert on the 6th Dec

Tickets are \$2 each or 3 for \$5

Ticket sales will help the P&C reach their fundraising goal and help provide vital equipment for our school

If you are able to donate any items that would be suitable to add to a hamper please drop them to the office as soon as possible.

EARLY YEARS NEWS

EYTH have been having lots of fun at school, learning through play and sensory hands-on experiences. The children have enjoyed interacting with Help Kidz Learn on the interactive whiteboard and writing activities using pre-made ALD boards of the children's interests. We enjoy listening to our shared stories followed by activities relating to the story with lots of dance and music.



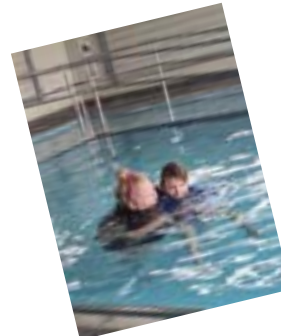
EYMB have amped up the fun that we normally have each week by adding weekly visits to a local park. Students have done a fantastic job at transitioning to and from the park on the school bus and have all demonstrated safe and respectful behaviours while out in the community. We've all enjoyed climbing up and down the playgrounds, going down the slides and going on the swings.



We are nearly at the end of Term 4! What a fun Term it has been. EYMM have enjoyed special events such as the Safety Circus and Day for Daniel. Our students have also been loving weekly swimming, tennis lessons and attending the movement space where our students are doing an excellent job of turn taking on the swing. We have recently been enjoying cooking! We have made rice krispie treats, icing cookies, rainbow linguine and margarita pizza. We look forward to all of the Christmas craft, cooking and joy that is yet to come this term!



What a busy term it has been. EYCH have been busy with our classroom routines and communicating throughout the day with Proloquo2go. The students have been enjoying their shared story of the week in song recently. We have been engaging with fun sensory experiences such as rainbow noodles, animals in jelly, water play and more. We are looking forward to finishing off the term with fun Christmas activities.

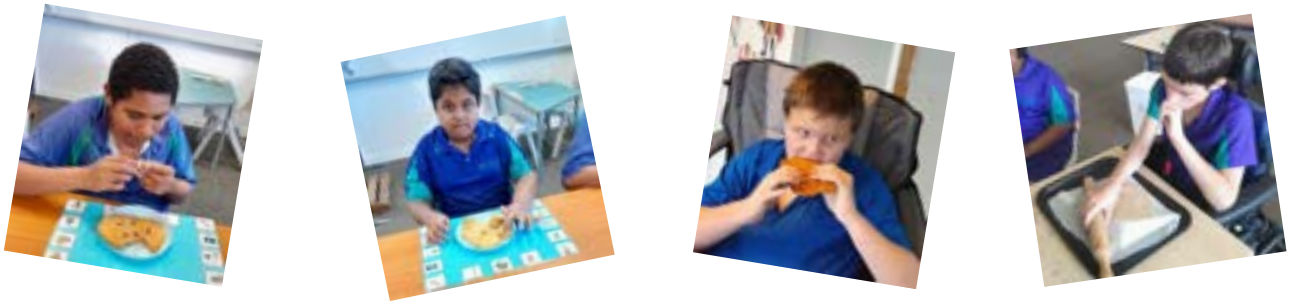


UPPER PRIMARY NEWS

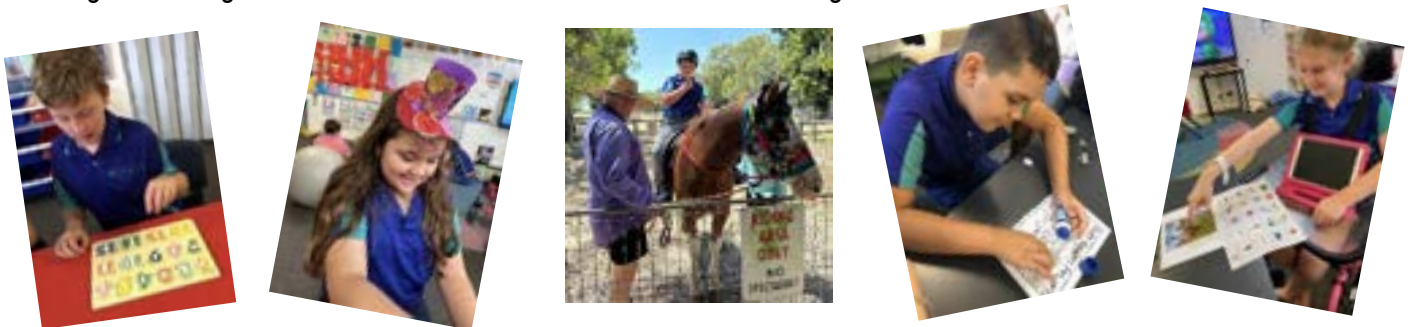
UPSB have enjoyed more successful excursions; this time visiting Mulherin playground at the Harbour. The students transition to the bus, to the park and back to school confidently, enjoying exploring the new sights and surrounds on their journey. Last Friday, we also had the pleasure of dancing along and learning something new in a performance by the Safety Circus. We are excited to see what fun the last 4 weeks of term will bring!



During the last few weeks, UPMR have used our senses to investigate tomatoes, pineapples and jelly beans and we used AAC to talk about the features. We also cooked gingerbread man biscuits, and ate them before they could jump on the back of the fox. The enormous cookies we baked were decorated with jelly beans from our 'Jack and the Beanstalk' story. We are looking forward to the last four weeks and all the awesome things we will do.



UPLA has been having a lot of fun lately! This week we have learned about Remembrance Day and the Melbourne Cup. We made poppies to commemorate Remembrance Day and enjoyed reading the book 'A Poppy is to Remember'. For the Melbourne Cup on Tuesday, we made Fascinators and went horse riding. We finished the day off by watching the race with our friends from JSKH! Between all the fun we have continued to work hard on our counting and writing. We can't wait to see what the next few weeks bring.



We are working very hard in UPFM to consolidate various skills we have been working on – particularly around communication. Particular shout out to Wiremu for his hard work learning how to use a switch to access communication and other learning activities. He is so proud of his progress in this skill (and so are we).

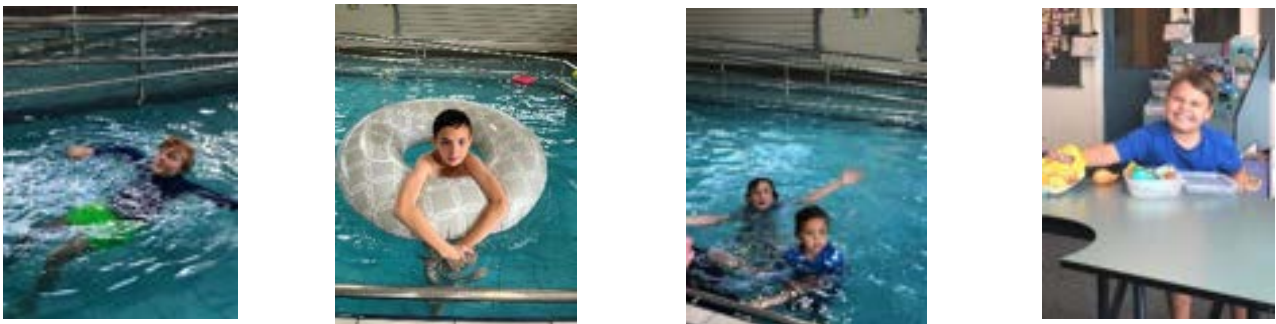


UPPER PRIMARY NEWS

UPNA have been hard at work learning about our letters and our sounds. We have learned so much throughout the year. We have been enjoying our trips to B Block and the junior playground to learn to play safely. We liked watching the safety circus when they visited last Friday and Blake especially liked the scooter rider in the circus.



UPHP have been enjoying the swimming program this term. With the beautiful weather we have been taking the opportunity to do our learning in the outdoors. We are starting to create some beautiful Christmas crafts to decorate the room and practice our item for the Christmas concert.



JUNIOR SECONDARY NEWS

How is it the end of week 6 already! Here in JSAM we are on the count down, literally! Each morning we check how many more days are left in each month and we have even started our count down until Christmas! Our mornings have been a fabulous time when we laugh and communicate stories of things we like to celebrate. The communication from each and every student has improved out of sight. We have PODD's being dragged all over our room to initiate and respond to verbal prompts and to request our preferred activities. Speaking of preferred activities, sensory play has been a favourite. From slime, kinetic sand, shredded paper and even cooking ingredients we have had it all. Great work everybody, let's keep it going for our last weeks of the year!



JUNIOR SECONDARY NEWS

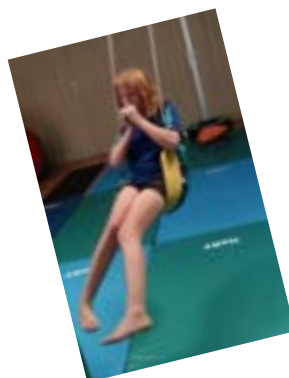
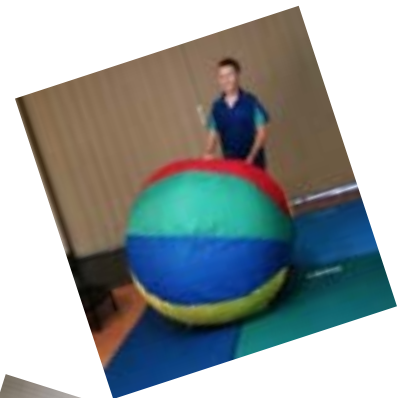
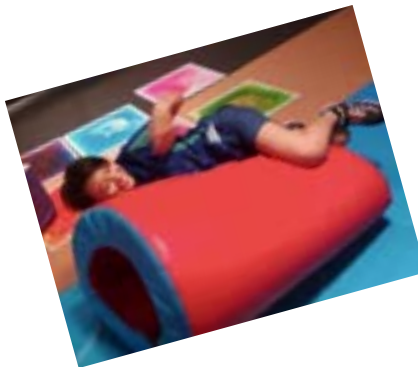
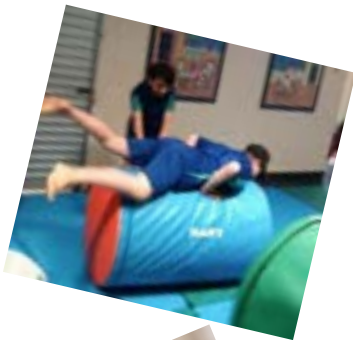
JSMG have been busy planning and preparing Christmas Craft to decorate the classroom. We will be looking at different Christmas stories and activities, as well as Christmas baking. With the lovely weather we have been participating in our learning outside. This week the class prepared, baked and decorated a birthday cake for our hard-working groundsman, Morrie. Happy Birthday to Morrie from all of us. We all enjoyed eating the cake.



This month, JSKH was buzzing with activity. Students got into literacy activities, showing progress with Augmentative and Alternative Communication (AAC). We spiced things up with Halloween cooking, adding a spooky twist to our culinary adventures. Sensory play remained a hit, offering hands-on exploration. It's been a month of growth, expression, and fun, and we're looking forward to last few weeks of the year.



JSJT have been using the 'Movement Room' throughout this term. All students enjoy rolling, crawling, swinging, climbing and spinning in a safe, squashy sensory space. It is a pleasure to see everyone sharing and taking turns on the equipment.



SENIOR SECONDARY NEWS

SSJW have explored the use of textured materials and used them to create artworks. We used bubble wrap, print rollers and scrunched plastic, dipped in paint and transferred the patterns to paper. Some of the boys enjoyed the end product, some enjoyed the process and some relished in the smell of the paint. Everyone selected their own colour palette.



The past two weeks, the students have had fun learning about different traditions around Halloween, like pumpkin carving. They have discovered the origins of Halloween and its cultural significance. Armed with pumpkins and carving tools, they were creative, making their jack-o'-lanterns which they had outstanding results.



MDSS Op Shop

Donation bins are out -

- Near the red shed
- In the parent/carer drop off zone



Qkr! payment option now available.



I love to op shop

Tuesday & Thursday
8:45am-9:30am
Parents bring family/friends for bargains

Shoppers,
please check-
in at the
office.

**Fill a bag
for \$1**

Your
shopping
supports our
students'
learning.