Hello Everyone

The 2013 school report is progressing well, coordinated by Head Teacher Sharon Keyte. Thank you to Rachel King for the Parent Forum report and to the many staff who collect the data and write the reports for the numerous educational and well-being programs that DSODE provides for students.

In 2014 the school has more than 50 student advisers, who are actively involved in contacting students to provide support and encouragement to engage in school work. Most students respond very well to such contact.

Welcome to Emily Phimmachanh, who has recently relocated from Sydney to join the school’s English faculty as a permanent teacher.

In Term 3 the school’s hostel is being expanded to include a new kitchen, which will be situated at the northern end of the existing kitchen area. The living space will extend into the current kitchen area.

As a result of the area being a construction zone the hostel will be unavailable from week 8 Term 2 and possibly until the end of Term 3. These times were chosen to minimise the lack of access to the hostel. During Term 3 staff will focus more on providing field services visiting students in geographical areas where possible. Remember to keep in touch and call us if we can offer support during the term.

Best wishes

Chris Mason

Check out our school website

Hi everyone,

It is hard to believe that we are already coming to the close of term 1. As usual, it has been busy for teachers and students who are settling into the routine of life in distance education.

Last week, the senior residential was held. Many of our 2013 year 10 students are now adjusting to life as a senior student and the relevant workload that comes with this. Some students arrived early to participate in a field excursion to the Macquarie Marshes, leaving early Monday morning. Many thanks go to teachers Gerard Hart, Alisha Reeves and Belinda Haigh for their time and efforts in organising this trip which the students enjoyed. The rest of the residential was underway by Monday lunchtime and students spent some valuable time with their teachers in a variety of workshops. One highlight for the week was the formal dinner on Thursday evening with guest speaker, Kennedy Tourle. Kennedy spoke about her services to the rural fire service and her experience as NSW Miss Showgirl 2013. She has since expressed what a great group of students we had at our residential and how much she personally got out of the evening spent with our students. I agree, it was a great evening and many thanks to the staff and students who prepared food and waited on tables for the night. It was a great night.

Preschool students have been into the school this week with their parents, so it has been quite a contrast to see much smaller people in the classrooms compared to week 6. Planning is well underway now for week 8 and the 7-10 residential…can’t wait!!

NAPLAN planning and organisation is also happening at present, ready for the tests to take place May 13-15th. Parents of year 3, 5, 7 & 9 students will be receiving information in the mail very soon.

This year we have introduced the “Revised Enrolment Procedures 2013” to address new enrolments into Distance Education. The changes to the previous guidelines have meant that some of our enrolment documents required revising this term and these will be placed on our website. If you would like to view the new procedures, the document can be searched for at www.dec.nsw.gov.au.

Wishing you all the best as we start to wind up term 1, enjoy the Easter break, as I am sure that term 2 will be just as busy!!

Regards,

Debbie Murray
Macquarie Marshes Field trip

At the start of the 11-12 Residential this term a group of Geography and Earth & Environmental Science students visited the Macquarie Marshes.

The trip began on Sunday 2nd March and included 2 presenters, Terry Korn, Marshes Expert and Susan Madden from Macquarie Food and Fibre. The students were able to enjoy a walk along the Macquarie River from the boat ramp near the new pontoon to the Seriser Bridge and out towards the netball courts to begin identification activities with the tree classification.

Early on Monday morning the students packed the bus and got going by 7am. We stopped to pick up Mrs Haigh and travelled to Warren to refuel the bus and meet Sue Saxby and Dave from Wambangalang Outdoor Education Centre.

The first stop after Warren was Marebone Weir. Here they were able to do their first water quality testing, field sketch of the environment near the weir and do water bug surveys. After the weir we travelled to “Mundooie”, a cattle and cotton property owned by Richard and Ali Campbell who had their girls go through Primary DSODE. Richard told the group about aspects of both the cattle and cotton enterprises. The group then proceeded to Willie Retreat, the overnight accommodation, which is shearers quarters converted for Eco-tourism, owned by Myra Tolhurst. The students then enjoyed a 3 hour canoe trip on the Southern Marsh and saw pelicans, osprey, magpies, geese, egrets, cormorants and even a swimming Eastern brown snake.

Tuesday the students went for a walk through the “Burrima” block and saw some great evidence of pigs feasting on nardoo (the plant that was the demise of Burke and Wills). The students also met up with Nicola Brookehouse NPWS who took us on a great walk through the ‘tea-coloured’ North Marsh water where the students also saw another snake, this time a red belly black.

A great time was had by all.
Greetings from the Library

New Books to Borrow

**The Simple Things**
*by Bill Condon*

When Stephen’s parents decide to spend time during the holidays with his eighty-year-old grumpy Aunty Lola, Stephen is worried. What will he do for three weeks out in the middle of nowhere with no friends? But slowly Stephen and Lola warm to each other and Stephen meets Norm who lives next door and befriends Norm’s granddaughter Allie. Together, an interesting and heartfelt story emerges, where family values and relationships are depicted in a humorous, but genuine and loving way. With themes including older people and acceptance, this is a wonderful novel, best suited to those around 9-years-old.

**Tigers on the Beach**
*by Doug MacLeod*

Thirteen-year-old Adam’s life is pretty good. Helping his family run the Ponderosa, a ten cabin holiday resort in a small coastal town, everything is okay. But Adam’s life changes quickly when his Grandpa dies suddenly and his Grandma comes to stay in one of their cabins. But this story is more than that – it is a story of first love, dealing with disability, learning that it’s okay to be different, family struggles. And, finally, knowledge that everything will work out. Told in an always humorous style, you gain a real understanding of the characters and hope for their success. An underlying theme throughout the story is jokes that not everyone gets. The book is scattered with these sort of jokes making it best suited to the middle secondary students, particularly boys.

**Billy is a Dragon**
*First Bite by Nick Falk and Tony Flowers*

This is a wonderful fast paced action adventure that begins with Billy visiting a strange new pet shop with his mum and sister to choose a pet for his birthday. But a lizard bite slowly turns Billy into a dragon. Now dragons are cool, but living a normal life with family and friends is impossible when you look like one. When Billy is captured by his Dad and taken to the zoo, he causes mayhem to secure his release. But what now? Billy must find a way to change back, if that is even possible. An easy to read, humorous, and sometimes silly story that is suited to emerging young readers, particularly boys.

*The journey of a lifetime starts with the turning of a page*
- Rachael Anders
Greetings from the Library

New Books to Borrow

Rock War
by Robert Muchamore
The story follows four different groups of teenagers who are finding their way in the world, growing up in different parts of England. The groups all have varying degrees of interest in being rock bands. Then they discover a new and interesting reality TV show is coming – and the bands on the show will be battling it out to win a fantastic prize. This is the first title in what will be another great series by the author. It is best suited to middle and upper secondary students, as it is edgy and quite raw at times.

The First Voyage
by Allan Baillie
This book provides an interesting and insightful look into the possible reasons and some of the turmoils that may have faced the first arrivals in Australia. The story follows a treacherous journey across water some 30,000 years ago that ultimately see the Timorese travellers land in the north of Western Australia. Whilst this is a purely fictional account, the story and its characters give the reader a human insight into our unique past and give us a better understanding of what may have taken place in the earliest human existence in Australia. An intriguing story that will best suit lower secondary students.

The One and Only Jack Chant
by Rosie Borella
An exciting new Australian author, Rosie Borella has produced a marvellous time-slip novel. Amber has just starting work at a nursing home. This would be hard enough, but then the elusive and charming Jack Chant starts appearing to her and the elderly patients, who are all aflutter about how he is helping them. But Jack Chant hails from long ago and still has some of his own issues to sort out. Meanwhile Amber, whose close friend and neighbour, the elderly Vera, has been placed in the care of the nursing home, is seeing life with a whole new meaning. A funny and heart-warming tale of growing up and growing old that would best suit the 14+ age group.

Annie’s Snails
by Dianne Wolfer and Gabriel Evans
Annie loves snails, but she soon learns that some pets just cannot be locked up, as the hot ice-cream container she has placed them in is not a suitable home for snails. Full of fun family adventures and with the charming and inquisitive Annie as the main character, this novel will best suit girl readers 6 and up.

We value innovation and creativity
**Kokoda: My Australian Story**  
_by Alan Tucker_  
Written in diary form, this is the story of life during the Kokoda campaign, through the eyes of thirteen-year-old Archie McLeod and the impact of the war on his family, particularly his two older brothers who were part of this battle. Archie’s brothers write letters home that set the scene for much of the diary and depict a particularly harsh and brutal battle. It becomes almost a documentary of the period from October 1941 to November 1942, showing how Australian life and psyche was changed and moulded during this time. With a trip to Kokoda becoming a ritual for many Australians in recent years, this is a good beginning point for discussions on this important moment in Australia’s development, one that still evokes much feeling today. Best suited to older primary and younger secondary students aged 10-14.

Until next time, Happy Reading!  
David Strain – Teacher Librarian (02) 5804 7023

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**Look Who’s Been Caught Reading**

Sonya...

*What kind of books do you like to read?*

I like funny books, sad books and romantic books.

*What is your all-time favourite book?*

Dear Dumb Diary
Hello everyone,

Welcome to 2014 at the Dubbo School of Distance Education! What an exciting year we have ahead of us all. I hope that you all had a relaxing holiday and are ready to get back into the swing of completing and returning your work.

This year starts with a full agenda of field services, home visits and residentials planned so please keep your eye on the mail for notices of upcoming events.

The Primary Camp has just been held so look out for photos in the next newsletter. A school calendar has been finalised so check your mailbags. It is a great source of information for all upcoming events – make sure you put it in a prominent place in your work area.

Please look after all of the resources that have been sent out to you. Return them as soon as you have finished with them so that others can use them too.

Make sure that you keep in touch with your teacher and don’t hesitate to call or email if you need any help at all.

Best wishes for a wonderful 2014!

Regards for now

Sue Howlett

At a recent school welcome assembly a parent asked the school Principal “If you could give one piece of advice to us to help settle our children into Year 7, what would it be?” The Principal responded very quickly with the answer… “Sleep, make sure they get enough sleep.”

Sleep is essential to humans, we can cope without if for a period of time but the longer we are awake the greater the urge to sleep becomes. Sleep is important for general physical health, restoring energy, repairing injuries or illness, growth, psychological well-being and mood, concentration, memory, work performance, and getting along with others.

People require different amounts of sleep but whatever individual needs are, poor sleep quality can have effects including:

- Poor attention, concentration and memory
- Irritability and other mood disturbances
- Impaired judgement and reaction time
- Poor physical coordination

Considering the above list, it’s easy to see why the Principal recommended enough sleep for the students transitioning to Year 7.

Following are some sleep hygiene tips to help your students develop good sleep habits.

1. **Get regular.** Go to bed and get up at more or less the same time each day.
2. **Sleep when sleepy.** Only try to sleep when you actually feel tired or sleepy, rather than spend too much time awake in bed.
3. **Get up & try again.** If you haven’t been able to get to sleep after 20 mins, get up and do something calm or boring. Avoid doing something stimulating, eg TV watching, as this will wake you up more.
4. **Avoid caffeine** It’s best to avoid consuming caffeine for at least 4-6 hours before going to bed (coffee, tea, cola drinks, energy drinks, chocolate).
5. **Bed is for sleeping** Try not to use your bed to watch TV, eat, read or work on your laptop. Your body will not learn the connection between bed and sleep.
6. **No naps.** It’s best not to take naps during the day so that you are tired for bedtime. If you can’t make it through the day without a nap, make sure it is less than an hour and before 3pm.
7. **Sleep rituals.** Develop your own rituals that remind your body that it’s time to sleep.
8. **Bath time.** Having a hot bath 1-2 hours before bedtime can be useful – it raises body temperature, causing you to feel sleepy as your body temperature drops again.
9. **No clock watching.** Frequently checking the clock during the night wakes you up further and reinforces negative thoughts about sleep.
10. **Exercise.** Regular exercise promotes good sleep but try not to do strenuous exercise in the 4 hours before bedtime.
11. **Eat right.** A healthy balanced diet will help you sleep well. Some people recommend a warm glass of milk before bed, which contains tryptophan, which acts as a natural sleep inducer.
12. **The right space.** It’s important that your bed and bedroom are quiet and comfortable for sleeping.
13. **Keep daytime routine the same.** Even if you have a bad night sleep and feel tired, try to keep your daytime activities the same as you planned. Don’t avoid activities because you feel tired.
Hello everyone

I hope that you have all settled in to the pattern of completing and returning your work!

The residential for the year have started and the kids were working well and there was a lot of productive work completed. Keep your eye out for photos in future newsletters.

The Preschool camp is on now and the 7-10 residential is coming up next week.

Make sure that you look after all of the resources that have been sent out to you. Return them as soon as you have finished with them please so that others can use them too.

Keep in touch with your teacher and don’t hesitate to call or email if you need any help at all.

Have a great year!

Regards for now

Sue Howlett
We value the achievement of personal bests

Swimming Carnival

The Dubbo School of Distance Education held a second swimming carnival for the year of 2013. It was a wonderful day in the little town of Trangie with a 25m swimming pool. All of the students demonstrated great enthusiasm all day and their encouragement of each other was brilliant to see.

Many records were broken during the day: Ellie, Zach, Luke and Natasha were just some of the excellent competitors for the day.

There were some interesting novelty events throughout the day which got everyone involved, events ranging from the belly flop competition to the iron man and woman competition, which I must admit the teachers gave the students a good run for their money.

Overall the day was a success and I would like to say a big thankyou to all of the students that got involved and the parent’s support and encouragement which made for another outstanding carnival.

Annabelle Newbigging
Sports Coordinator
It is hard to believe that we are now more than half way through term one and that we are into another season. The cooler weather makes it a little more pleasant to be outdoors and working your way through the preschool program. The cooler weather is also an excellent time to snuggle up with your children and read books!!

We are very fortunate to have Mr Strain, our talented librarian, at Dubbo School of Distance Education. Mr Strain makes sure that we have a large collection of quality picture books available and is always adding to this collection. A range of books is sent out with each preschool unit. However, if you would like additional resources please let your teacher know. The Preschool also has an extensive range of parent support materials. If you would like to access these materials please talk to your child’s teacher.

**Easter Packs**

Easter packs have been sent to those families who have requested them. These activities are part of your yearly program and you will find the activities are all appropriate for early learning. Teachers ask that you set aside the unit that they are currently completing and focus on the Easter unit from Monday 7th to the 11th of April. We hope that you enjoy completing these craft activities with your pre-schooler. Our preschool teachers love receiving photographs of their students working their way through the activities, so please keep the camera nearby while your child is engaged in their preschool activities.

**Artist of the Newsletter**

In each newsletter we aim to include a piece of quality work that preschool students have sent to us. This is a lovely way to showcase the talents of our students and highlight the fact that there is such a variety of ways in which you can complete each of the preschool activities.

The ‘Artist of this newsletter’ is Daniel, who sent in this lovely Collage which he completed as he worked his way through his first unit.

Congratulations Daniel!
Birthdays.
We wish the following students a very Happy Birthday for March:
Audrey on 6th
Estelle 17th
Ada 21st
Henry 30th
George 30th

Term One Preschool Camp
Our first Preschool camp was held from Monday 10th to Friday 14th March. Fourteen enthusiastic preschool students made their way to Dubbo to make new friends and meet their teachers as well as participate in a range of activities around the theme of our camp which was Safety. During this camp students had the opportunity to participate in swimming lessons each afternoon at the Dubbo RSL heated pool.
Hello everyone and welcome to 2014. This year has started off with a bang and I am sure it is not going to slow down anytime soon! Of A Primary Concern is the section of the newsletter that focuses on Kindergarten to Year 6. It is a place to share information about up and coming events, reports on past events, items of interest, items of requests to you as supervisors/parents and lots of other bits. Although I recommend reading the entire Newsletter, please give our section your priority. I do apologies that it was omitted from the last newsletter – you will need a cuppa to catch up on all that has happened during the first half of term 1.

Students
We have a fantastic and large group of students in 2014. I would like to make a special welcome to our new Kinders as they start their magical journey of learning – Caitlin, Bridie, Millie, Jack, Alyra, Bridget, Emma, Billy and Harry. Whether you are with us for a few months or many years we hope that your first few weeks at school have been wonderful. This year we make welcome to our school students associated with the National School for Travelling Show Students (NSTSC). These students were attached to the Queensland Department of Education but have now moved to NSW and in particular, joined our school. Their parents travel Australia to provide, amongst other things, entertainment at your local Agricultural Show. At the moment (as more will be joining us later in the year) we welcome Jayden, Layla, Ash, Zali, Jake, Lincon, Gianni, Talia-Rose, Bay, Ashton, Isabelle, Houston, Shara, Tasman, Jye, Maddix, Jasmine, Remington, Chivani, Reo, Sheena, Indiana and Dylan. We would also like to welcome further new students who have joined us – Elina, Jane, Jonathan, Natalie, Patrick, William, Claire, Lucy, Kaitlyn, Darcy, Reuben, Ella, Carter and Mackayla. We hope that you all enjoy your Distance Ed days. With all our continuing students, we are hovering around the 90-95 student mark! Along with our students we give a huge welcome to their families and supervisors. Please do not hesitate to contact the school if you have any questions.

Staff
The 2014 staff are made up of full time and part time. Full-timers (available Mon-Friday barring any absences) and their extension numbers – the first 4 digits for everyone is 5804 - Melissa Cox (7058), Rebecca Monteiro (7059), Mel Egan (7064), Vanessa Duncan (7030), Hayley Cosgrove (7057), Laura Carter (7164), Sammy Webb (7141) and Jenny Ballhausen (7058). Part – timers are Leanne White (7063) working Monday – Wednesday, Tahlia Webb (7129) working Mon, Tues, Thurs and Friday and Sarah Dugan (7062) working Tuesday - Thursday. If a staff member is absent when you ring – which could be for any reason – please do not hesitate to leave a message on the answering machine, send an email or contact Jenny for assistance. We will get back to you as soon as we can. Many of the staff have taken up opportunities to broaden their experiences by teaching in other faculties across the school. This is a marvellous professional opportunity and may explain that while we are present 5 days per week, we are not teaching a full primary class. This year Averil is working in Orange supporting students at the Educational Support Centre operated by DSODE and Amanda Hamilton elected not to work during term 1 due to family and personal reasons. Mrs Dwarte is continuing her role in the Effective Reading Centre for term 1.

‘You cannot open a book without learning something.’
Confucius
Return of work
Unless it has been otherwise negotiated, it is expected that students will return their completed school work each week. Staff will then evaluate and comment on the work and have it returned as quickly as possible. It is encouraged that students will make digital recordings of reading, maths discussions and other oral activities as directed in leaflets. These should be emailed when done and indicated by name as to content. These are not always listened to until the written work comes in (particularly maths discussions) as it is then incorporated into the appointed set. If work – particularly art – is too large, heavy, fragile or awkward to send we encourage you to take a photo and email it. Also as a supervisor, if you want us to see a particular piece of work quickly (for praise or support) scan and email it in to us!

Satellite
Satellite lessons for students began on Monday 17 February. Students are expected to attend their lessons. This year we have 2 studios to meet the demand of satellite lessons across the school. If a student logs into the incorrect studio they will be told and then asked to log off and log on to the correct studio. After a couple of weeks, we have found that very few students are making any errors – it is more the staff! Well done kids. If a student is to be absent, a quick email to indicate this would be appreciated. Teachers will not ‘make up’ missed lessons but may, if important to subsequent lessons, send out a brief overview of the content that was covered. When a staff member knows they will be away for a lesson, they may choose to set a short task to be completed during the lesson time. If a staff member is absent at short notice (usually due to illness) or due to Field Services, the lesson will be cancelled. Students will be notified of the cancellation with an email as soon as we are notified of the absence. Students receiving regular satellite lessons will not receive telephone lessons as well. They will be contacted on a regular basis to check that there are no issues with their school work and a quick chat, but that is all. Students/supervisors are encouraged to ring their teacher when there is a concern with the school work. We are always here to support families in the implementation of a student’s school work.

Email
Email is the preferred means of communication as it is (usually) fast and reliable. Information about Residential, this newsletter, staff absences, school requests are all best sent by email. All students are issued with a NSW Departmental email. Students in Years 3 – 6 should be accessing this email on a regular basis. Daily is suggested. Students in K-2 will also be sent email but generally a parent is CC’d into the email so both student and parents receive the relevant information. At times information is sent ONLY to parents. Please ensure your child’s teacher has the most appropriate email address for you to receive information on.

Field Services
Many of the staff have been out and about over the last few weeks. In Week 4, it was fantastic to travel to Canberra to meet with a large number of our NSTSC students and their families. They have an amazing set up of a school in a semi-trailer. At each town they stop in, this semi-trailer is extended to make a classroom with everything you would expect along with 2 teachers. There is a wonderful atmosphere of respect, support and learning within it. This week we visited Armidale to meet the smaller, but no less efficient van and the students working within it along with their teacher. As well, staff have been to Cassilis and Nymagee with more home visits planned over the coming weeks.
Residential
Week 3 saw the first of our in-school Residentials for invited students. Time was spent meeting and working with their teachers and peers. We also participated in the Dubbo Wellington Small Schools Swimming carnival and a great day was had by all. Millie, William, Ruby, Connie, Laura and Tom had a fantastic time with a huge range of tabloid activities in and around the small pool. Their smiles (and slight sunburn) indicated that they enjoyed participating in everything!
Toby, Tom, Mercede, Sonya, Jennifer and Kate were busy with the competitive carnival and are to be congratulated on their efforts. I think they all exceeded even their own expectations of involvement and success!! An extra big pat on the back to Kate, who was awarded the Senior Girls Champion at the end of the day. DSODE was awarded third place in the overall School Championship – an excellent effort with only 6 swimmers!! The end of the day also finished with a teacher vs parents relay – thanks to John our sole parent representative! He did us proud. Mercede, Tom and Kate did qualify for the Dubbo and District carnival and put in a great effort. A huge thanks to your parents for driving you to Dubbo to take part in this Carnival.

Kidsmatter
KidsMatter Primary is a framework that aims to bring together families, schools and communities to improve children’s mental health. Good mental health is vital for learning. Children who are mentally healthy are better able to meet life’s challenges. They also learn better and have stronger relationships with teachers, family members and peers. School’s can make a difference to children’s mental health and wellbeing by addressing four key areas.
1. A positive school community
2. Social and emotional learning for students
3. Parenting support and education
4. Early intervention for students who are experiencing mental health difficulties.

To support this program, each Newsletter will have a ‘focus’ for families and staff to think about. This could be used in your home and classroom. Our next focus area is self-awareness.

Self-awareness is the ability to accurately recognize one’s emotions and thoughts and their influence on behaviour. This includes accurately assessing one’s strengths and limitations and possessing a well-grounded sense of confidence and optimism.

Some things we can do to teach self-awareness include:
• Talking to our students about personal strengths.
• Discussing how practising a skill improves performance.
• Having students reflect on what they have learnt about themselves as learners each week.
Immunisation Statements
An email was sent to all parents on 31 January. Thanks to the parents who have addressed this request. As quoted from the NSW Health web page - **Under the Public Health Act 2010 and the Public Health Regulation 2012, primary schools must request and record the immunisation status of each enrolled child.**
The Immunisation History Statement which is issued by the Australian Childhood Immunisation Register (ACIR) is required as proof of immunisation status for enrolment at school under the NSW Public Health Act 2010. The following Questions and Answers may clarify some issues. Note these apply only to the requirements for primary schools.
So it is a requirement and request that all families send the school a copy of your child’s Immunisation History Statement. After this year, only new enrolments will be required to do so. If you were enrolled with the DSODE Preschool, you are still required to send the statement as it should reflect their 5 year old immunisations. These Statements are kept confidential. If you move to a new Public School within NSW, the Statement will be forwarded to this new school.
The Immunisation History will be one of the following:

i. **An Immunisation History Statement** showing your child’s immunisations are up to date (if your child has a medical contraindication for a specific vaccine(s) a Medical Contraindication Form will also be required), or;

ii. **A Medical Contraindication Form** if your child is unable to be immunised with any vaccines due to medical reasons, or;

iii. **A Conscientious Objection Form** (or certified ACIR letter) if your child is unable to be immunised due to religious or philosophical reasons, or;

iv. **An Immunisation History Form** where an immunisation provider has certified that your child is catching up their immunisations. Immunisation History Statements are sent to each parent/guardian after their child turns 18 months and 4 years of age. You can obtain one at any time by contacting Medicare:
   By telephone on 1800 653 809
   By email on acir@medicareaustralia.gov.au
In person at your local Medicare office, Centrelink office or Child Support Service Centre. If you have further questions, please do not hesitate to email and ask.

Student Merit System
In 2012 a Student Merit system was introduced into Years 7 – 12. Last year we extended it to cover Years 1 – 12. The merit system is a way of recognising their work and effort and will focus on the positive aspects of education and school involvement. We will keep a record here at school of the awarding of merit certificates. As students accumulate awards they move through the merit system.

Level 1 – Achievement Awards
Level 2 – 15 Achievement Awards = merit award
Level 3 -25 Achievement Awards = Honour Award
Level 4 - 30 Achievement Awards = Excellence Award
Level 5 - 35 Achievement Awards = Banner Award.
Western SSA Calendar

If you are interested in trialling for these Western area sporting teams, please contact the sports co-ordinator Annabelle Newbigging on 58047158 or email annabelle.newbigging1@det.nsw.edu.au.

Have a look around this website if you would like more information:

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<th>Secondary Basketball - Girls</th>
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<tr>
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<td>Bathurst Basketball Stadium</td>
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<td>6895 3501</td>
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<td>6882 7955 / 0425 317 424</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Facsimile:</td>
<td>6881 8749</td>
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Autism Support Group for Parents and Carers

- Do you care for someone with Autism?
- No diagnosis required, people which suspect Autism are welcome to the support group
- All parents, carers and grandparents of people with Autism are welcome to be a part of this support group
- Support group will focus on sharing information to parents, carers and grandparents with their suggestions for topics

Child care is not provided, but children are welcome to attend - parents and carers are responsible for this care

2014 Support Group will meet:
- 16th April 2014 (may change due to EASTER)
- 18th June 2014
- 20th August 2014
- 15th October 2014
- 17th December 2014

Guest Speaker via teleconference

NSW Autism Advisor Program

The NSW Autism Advisor Program assist families to take their next step by providing information, access to funding and support to make their own decisions.

Australian Geography Competition

"Due to soil and water requirements, where is cotton commonly grown in Australia?"

- A) Along sandy coastlines
- B) At high altitudes
- C) In deserts
- D) In rainforest clearings
- E) Near rivers."

This question came from 2013 Australian Geography Competition. This competition requires students to complete between 30 - 40 (depending on age category) multiple choice questions in 35 minutes. If you would like to be part of this competition in 2014 (or would like more information) please email Mr Shannon, andrew.shannon4@det.nsw.edu.au, as soon as possible. Our school has already organised 15 entries, so places will be determined by those who are first to express their interest. Entry is free. Participating students will be required to complete the competition between 24 March and 2 April.
International Day of Forests

focuses attention on the sustainable development and management, and the conservation of forests for the benefit of our generation and for the future. Each year hectares of forests are lost to deforestation which impacts on plant, insect and animal species. Forests provide habitat, food, water and contribute to the balance of oxygen and carbon dioxide.

EARTH HOUR

on Saturday 29th March at 8.30 pm

flick off the switch! Save energy and support the international campaign that embraces 7001 cities and 152 nations. Focus for 2014 is attention on the threatened Australia’s Great Barrier Reef.

Refer to website

www.earthhour.org.au