



MERRIWA CENTRAL SCHOOL

NEWSLETTER

Valuing individual potential - achieving personal best

Term 1 Week 10, 2024

Principal's Report

Parents are aware of the significant impact the teacher shortage is having on our school. Fortunately staffing levels in primary are good, with the engagement of a full-time teacher to cover day to day absences for sick leave etc. However the picture in secondary is not as rosy. We currently have seven full-time teaching positions which have been unfilled since the beginning of the year. Most are permanent vacancies, some are temporary vacancies due to staff on maternity leave. In addition we have no secondary casual teachers to cover day-to-day leave.

As a result some secondary elective classes have been cancelled, and some senior classes moved to Distance Education. Last week I sent home information via the app in regard to minimal supervision arrangements. This is the first time we could not cover junior classes and initiated minimal supervision in the playground for students Year 7-10 for some lessons. Surrounding schools such as Scone and Muswellbrook High have been using minimal supervision in the playground for the past 18 months. This is a measure we have tried to avoid for as long as possible, however it has now become necessary. Supervision requirements will be assessed daily, based on teacher staffing levels. As always our year advisers and student support officer are available to assist students who may be struggling with this impact on their learning. I am always available to meet with parents who may have concerns, particularly in regard to our senior students.

I would like to thank Hollie Hunt, President of the P&C, committee members and parents who have been so supportive of our staff during this difficult period. Since the media attention on our school the department has announced we will receive priority recruitment support.

Priority recruitment support provides additional incentives to attract staff to our school. Vacant positions now attract a relocation payment between \$6000-8000 to assist applicants with removal expenses, and in some circumstances a recruitment bonus of \$20,000 is available. As yet we have had no successful applicants apply for these positions, even with the additional financial incentives.

The Teacher Housing Authority is planning to construct three new properties in Merriva to improve the availability and standard of accommodation to teachers when they relocate. Teachers will be charged rent at market rates on these properties when completed. The shortage of local rentals has impacted on our ability to attract candidates to vacant positions. Several of our staff have been forced to live out of town due the shortage of local accommodation.

Whilst it has become increasingly difficult to attract professionals (teachers, nurses, veterinarians etc) to country areas, we hope that these incentives will assist us to fill some of the teacher vacancies.

Parent teacher interviews

Parents are reminded that parent teacher interviews will be held next term on Thursday,

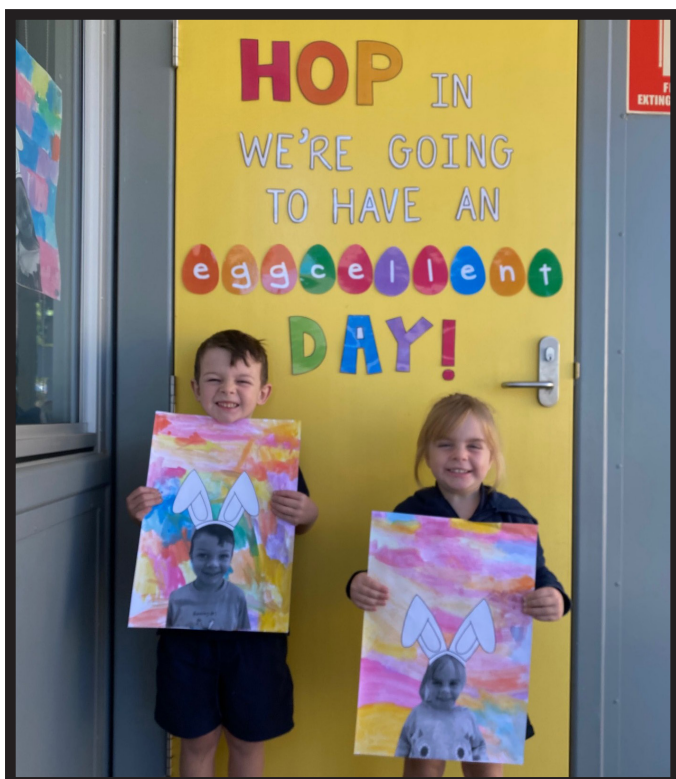
9 May. Parents are encouraged to come along and discuss their child's progress with the class teacher. Bookings for parent interviews can be made by contacting the office.

Darren Noonan
Principal

Primary News

Kindergarten

This week, our Kindergarten class has hopped into Easter festivities. Through exploring watercolor painting, students crafted stunning Easter artworks. With our phonics focus this week being the letter 'i,' students transformed into interesting investigators and went on an egg-cellent hunt.



Nicole Johnston
Kindergarten Teacher

Year 1

Year 1 have been busy learning about measurement. Students loved exploring mass using an equal arm balance, to compare the mass of different items found in the classroom. They also enjoyed measuring the length and area of a rectangular container which they constructed using cardboard. Well done Year 1 for being fantastic mathematicians.



Emellia Sexton
Year 1 Teacher

Year 2/3

Year 2/3 have been busy mathematicians over the last few weeks, organising and counting large collections of objects. They have been estimating, revising and checking their estimations. They now know the importance of organising the collections into ten frames to assist them to count their collections more accurately. It has been terrific to see them working collaboratively in small groups and improve their strategies.





In the final freeze of an Antarctic winter, green tails wave across a star-full sky, as if to farewell endless nights. If this world looks empty, look closer ... Penguins trek across the ice to their winter homes. Year 3 have been exploring the beautiful book *Iceberg* by Claire Saxby. Students have been participating in a range of informative writing activities and have thoroughly enjoyed adding to our literacy wall with art and vocabulary.

Courtney Martin
Year 3 Teacher

Year 4/5

Year 4/5 have dived straight into their new topic 'Ned Kelly'. They have loved exploring how he got his green sash and researching the Kelly Gang and what they did to become wanted by the police. We have also been working hard on measurement in maths and worked out the perimeter of the school in metres using trundle wheels.



Jacob McGrath
Year 4/5 Teacher

Year 5/6

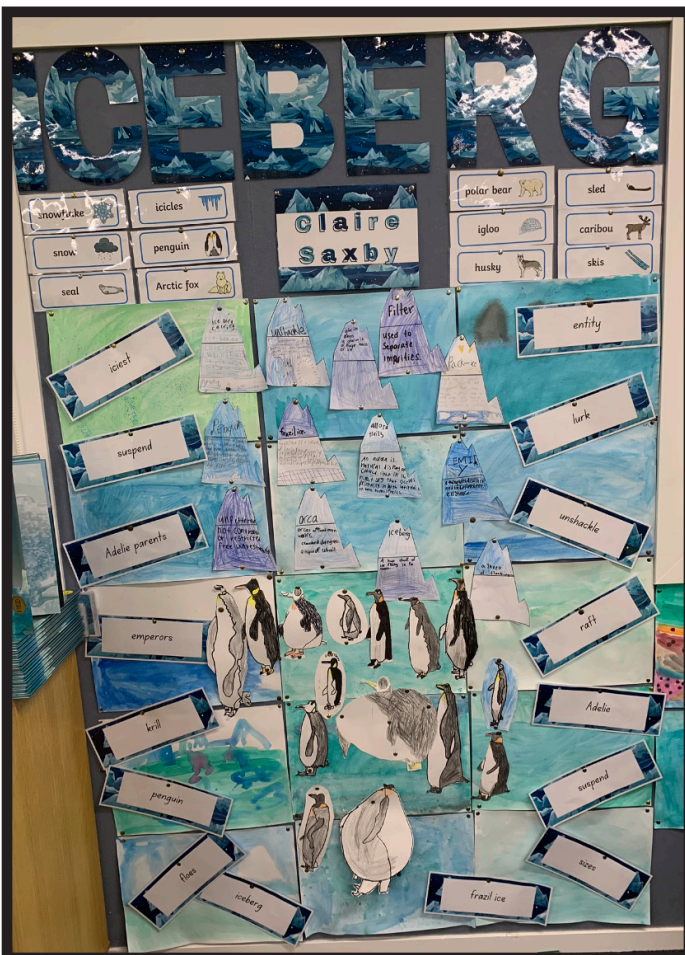
This term we have been exploring different art forms in Creative Arts using a range of materials. Year 5/6 students explored screen printing last week using pieces from our environment and making prints with paint. Students worked in pairs to select paint colours and arrangements of materials to then use a screen and squeegee to create a print. We were all amazed by the patterns created and the muscle it took to move the paint through the screen.

Infants Excursion

Next term students from Kindergarten, Year 1 and Year 2 will have the opportunity to visit Denman Camel Farm on Thursday, 16 May. A permission note has been sent home with students and will need to be returned by Thursday, 2 May.

Keirra Hourn
Year 2/3 Teacher
Assistant Principal Infants

Year 3



Year 3

Rewards Day

Our Primary students thoroughly enjoyed their rewards day as a reward for their incredible behaviour this term. Students challenged their creative and critical thinking skills whilst participating in Science Technology Engineering and Maths (STEM) challenges throughout the day. A particular highlight was the virtual reality session. Well done on your excellent behaviour so far primary, you have definitely deserved your rewards day this term.



Sarah Roberts/Alyssa Moore
Year 5/6 Teachers

Bronze Class

Our Bronze students have been working exceptionally hard in art this term and have been exploring some of the many different mediums that artists use to create artwork. They have particularly enjoyed using charcoal and paint.



Kylie O'Connor
Bronze Class Teacher

Star Struck

Miss O'Connor and Mrs Moore would like to congratulate our primary dance group on being selected to perform at Star Struck's Production "Love It" next term. Our students will be a part of Cast B and will be very busy in the lead-up to the production with rehearsals in Newcastle and at school. Congratulations girls!

SAVE THE DATE

Star
Struck 

Love it ²⁰/₂₄

Tickets on sale

Tuesday 30th April @10am



Performances

Friday 14 June @11am & 7pm

Saturday 15 June @1pm & 7pm



GLENCORE
A GLENCORE Community Partnership



HERALD
theherald.com.au



NEWCASTLE
WEEKLY

Graphika.
The Branding Agency.

Sarah Roberts
Assistant Principal Primary



**Students
K-12
return
Term 2
Tuesday, 30 April**

SAVE THE DATE



Friday 10 May 2024
National Walk Safely to School Day

**Merriwa Central School
P&C
AGM**

**Tuesday, 4 June
6.30pm
Merriwa RSL**

**Mothers Day Stall
Primary**

**Friday, 10 May
9.00am-11.00am**

**Gifts priced between
\$1 and \$10**

If you'd like to help volunteer on the stall please
email us at
merriwacentralschoolpandc@outlook.com
Must have current WWCC

Secondary News

Students at Merriwa Central School are expected to follow the Department of Education Code of Conduct.

These include:

- show respect to other students, their teachers and school staff and community members
- follow school and class rules and follow the directions of their teachers
- strive for the highest standards in learning
- act in a courteous and respectful way that makes all members of the school community feel valued, included and supported
- resolve conflict respectfully, calmly and fairly
- meet the school's agreed uniform policy or dress code
- attend school every day (unless legally excused)
- respect all property
- be safe and not be violent or bring weapons, illegal drugs, alcohol, vapes, e-cigarettes or tobacco into our schools
- not bully, harass, intimidate, or discriminate against anyone in our schools.

Could you please discuss the above expectations with your child.

Lisa Zielinski
Deputy Principal

Congratulations Vanessa

A big congratulations to our own SSO (Student Support Officer) Vanessa Whitten who was acknowledged on International Womens Day for her dedication and commitment to young people and their families within the community. She was presented with a beautiful bunch of flowers. Nominations came from people within the community.



**WHAT'S YOUR
STATE
OF MIND?**

Students travelled over to Scone High School where they participated in NSW Police/NRL program STATE OF MIND. Facilitated by retired NRL and current NRL players students learnt using rugby league language throughout the workshop to convey positive mental health. Students participated in a face to face workshop including both On the field and Off the field sessions.

We would like to thank Lorraine Upward - Youth Engagement Officer Youth Command.



Police Visit K-12

Lorraine Upward - Youth Engagement Officer Youth Command visited both primary and secondary sites to discuss with students K-12 a variety of subjects including decision making, cyber safety and laws. Secondary students also tested their ability to complete the NSW Police enrolment challenges such as sit ups and planking. She also held a community information session for parents to support navigating technology and the internet.



School Uniform

Just a friendly reminder that the expectation of students who attend our school is that they wear full school uniform.

We understand that times are very tough at the moment, however, we have seen an increase in secondary students not complying with this expectation.

If you require support to purchase a part of your child's uniform please do not hesitate to contact me.

Di's Clothing Patch is **closing down** - With the recent information that Di will be closing her shop, we are working with stakeholders to organise alternative buying options. If your child requires a new piece of uniform in the meantime, please write a note and it will be documented.

Narelle Smith
Deputy Principal Student Wellbeing

MERRRIWA CENTRAL SCHOOL

Secondary Jersey

Yr 7 -12



**Special
\$50**

**Normally \$68
Sale Price \$50
(Sale ends 12/04/2024)**

**Layby now for winter at the special
sale price**

Purchase from the Office



Proudly funded by



Merriwa 6 Week FREE Young Driver Licence Access Program

7 May - 14 June 2024

If you need assistance with the licence process we've got you covered!

Birrang Driver Access Company Registration Days

Non-School Students registration:

Please Bring 100 Points of ID

7 May, 2024 at Merriwa Library 9:00am - 1:00pm.

School Students:

Please Bring 100 Points of ID

7 May, 2024 at Merriwa Central School.

Qualified driving instructors will develop a lesson plan and structure lessons specifically for each individual. We will ensure that each student is developing the skills required to becoming a safe and more confident driver.

You may also be applicable to receive 3hrs in your log book for every 1hr driving lesson (conditions apply)

Scan QR Code to Pre-register Now

Reserve your place in the program

Confirm your spot by bringing your 100 points of ID to your school or to Merriwa Library 7 May, 2024 from 9am - 1pm to receive your schedule.

Visit www.birrang.com.au for more information

What else is covered?

Getting on-road driving experience progressing to a provisional licence regaining a licence. This program is run giving culturally appropriate support to get you on the road, driving safely. We help you with:

- Understanding road rules and road safety.
- Improving reading, writing and computer skills to prepare you for licence tests
- Meeting licence application requirements (e.g. getting identification documents)
- Communicating with Service NSW and other government organisations accessing roadworthy vehicles
- Advising on how to manage fines and regaining a loss of licence.



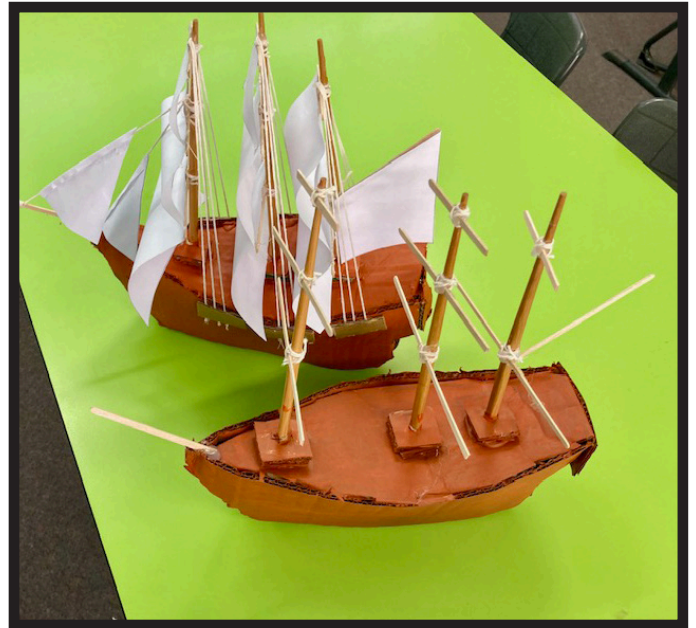
Driving Lessons

We are lucky enough to work in conjunction with this program for the second year in a row to offer our students the ability to gain their licence and undertake the practical component of their driving licence.



Support Class

Students in the secondary support class have been very busy this term in Art and History lessons. We have been studying Multimedia Art and have created stunning artworks based on the work of artists such as Martha Haversham, Johanna Goodman and David Wightman. History has seen us studying The First Fleet, the Convicts and the Gold Rush. Students have been busy making models from these periods as part of a 'Museum Display'. Checkout the manacles, ball and chain, cat-o-nine tails, gold pans, miners tools, miners tents and First Fleet ships. All students had a great time creating these fabulous items and learning about these periods of Australian history.



Cheryl Ham
Gold Support Class Teacher

Science in action

Year 7 Science have been refining their scientific skills this term. Students recently have been practising measurement and exploring variables. They have designed and built paper planes and measured how far they flew. One plane flew 15 metres! They have also measured the height and width of the biggest bubble they could create.



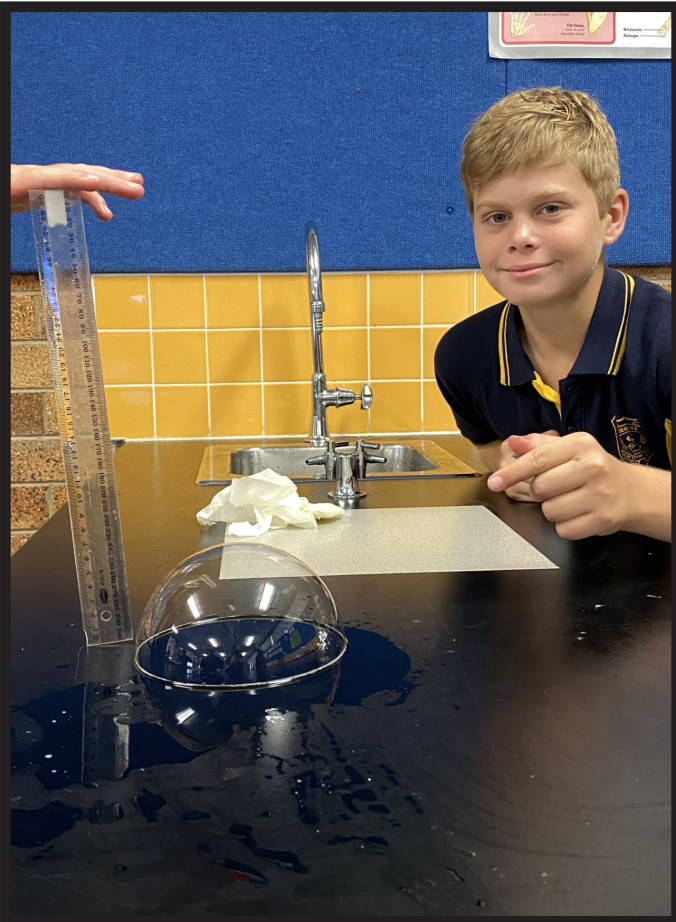
Bale to Bobbin to Beanie

Year 11 and 12 Agriculture students visited the Nundle Woollen Mill as part of their Farm Product Study on wool production.

The mill is the last wool spinning mill of its kind still operating in Australia and the only spinning mill in the world commercially operating machines over 100 years old. The wool supplied to the mill is 22-23 micron, low vegetable matter polwarth merino wool from Elsdon in Tasmania.

Students were able to witness the steps involved in processing the wool from opening, carding, spinning to dyeing and ball winding. They were able to appreciate value adding whilst admiring the range of products made and sold at the mill shop. They enjoyed the opportunity to ask questions and apply the theory recently learnt in class in a practical setting.

Thankyou to Nick Bradford for taking students on a guided tour of the mill and for giving a demonstration of the machines.



Grayson Tilse
Year 7 Year Adviser
Science Teacher





**Tara Hogan
Agriculture/Primary Industries Teacher**

travelled all the way from NSW. During the day we were split into groups and completed many different activities related to the Summits theme Self, Others and Community. The girls whole experience was based around this theme:

- **Self**, we all stepped out of our comfort zones and challenged ourselves
- **Others**, we made connections with students from across the country and our local area
- **Community**, we respected everything we were given and learnt

We learnt that not all leaders wear a badge and a leader does not have to be one person it can be a group.

There were many activities throughout the day around the importance of listening and the different types of listening. During one activity we had to flip a tarp without talking and then the same task but this time talking, it was so much easier when we communicated.

The blindfold activity was well received by everyone, we had to communicate with our blindfolded team members manoeuvring them through different activities around the room with voice commands only.

At the end of the day we all came back together with our school groups to work on a potential project for our schools, Makayla Mobberley and Makayla Coles stepped out of their comfort zones to present our idea to the whole summit.

To conclude the day we were taken on a tour of St Peters College. We were given a history lesson and marveled at the manicured gardens and grass which were so perfect we would not walk on the lawn.

That evening we dined at an Italian restaurant where there was only one rule - no phones. This was great as we all spoke to each other about the day and continued to build our relationships across the group.

Saturday brought with it a different challenge, not only the heat but we were sent on a scavenger hunt across the city of Adelaide. We were given



National Student Leadership Summit

On Thursday, 7 March Annabelle Orton, Makaylah Coles, Makayla Mobberley and Milana Horne set out on their adventure to Adelaide for the National Student Leadership Summit with the "Where there's a Will" foundation as part of the group of five high schools from across the Upper Hunter.

The girls were quite nervous about flying as only one of them had flown before.

Friday, 8 March was the day of the Summit at St Peters College. The Summit was attended by many schools from across Adelaide and many of the students were amazed that we had

paper maps and could also use google maps to find the different monuments and would check in with the adults via the what's app. Some of the things we saw were the Haighs Chocolate Shop, Central Markets, City Library and the Zoo to name a few. The last instruction we were given was to meet at Glenelg under the Ferris Wheel by 1.00pm.

That afternoon we were given time to explore Rundle Mall and relax in our rooms before we attended the Fringe Festival where we saw street shows, had dinner, connected with our fellow Upper Hunter attendees and even saw some students we had met the day before at the Summit.

After a big weekend we were all glad to get home and sleep in our own beds, ready to see what this experience will bring next. We would like to thank Where there's a Will for allowing us to be part of this experience.

Makaylah Coles "I learnt not to judge before I know someone or try something and not all leaders wear a badge."

Milana Horne "I felt less nervous talking to people during the trip and each time we meet for "Where there's a Will" I am finding it even easier to talk with people."

Makayla Mobberley "Always to be open to new challenges and connections, put yourself out there so you don't miss out."

Annabelle Orton "I learnt that leadership is not just about being the one in charge, it is about working together on a common goal. I am very thankful for the opportunity."



Vanessa Whitten
Student Support Officer

SRC

Anzac Day

Students and Staff are invited to March with Merriwa Central School for the Merriwa Anzac Day March and stand with our school throughout the service. Parents can drop students off in full school uniform at the corner of Bow Street and Bettington Street between 10.00am to 10.15am and collect students from the Merriwa War Memorial on the corner of Marquet Street and Bettington Street after the service. The Merriwa RSL is also offering a BBQ for students at 12noon at the RSL.



Harmony Week

Students had the opportunity to join in some lunch activities throughout the week including bracelet making, quiz, and crafts. All students participated in a lesson on body decorations around the world to learn a little more about different cultures and their traditions. A big congratulations to Thomas Kneeves and Ashton Marchese who smoothly ran the Harmony Day Kahoot (quiz) and to Damian Mitchell who won the Kahoot! The SRC hopes students enjoyed the activities and look forward to putting on more events!



PBL

It has been great to see students taking an interest in collecting tokens to go towards their Year group collections. With Year 7, 8 and 10 all filling their tubes and enjoying a refreshing icy pole for their hard work, Year 9 are super close, and Year 11 and 12 are making steady progress. Our next focus is phones, there has been a slight increase in phones and wireless earbuds (airpods etc) being used in classrooms and on the playground. If students choose to bring a phone or associated products to school they are to be handed in at the front office at the start of the day and collected at the end of the day. Students seen using phones or wearing earbuds will be directed to the front office to hand them in. This is not only a school policy but a state-wide ban on phones in schools. We want our students focus to be on learning in the classroom and socialising with mates during breaks.



Elizabeth La Trobe
Head Teacher Support
SRC Coordinator



Pink Shirt Day



17th May 2024



**Wear a pink shirt to take a
stand against bullying**

Term One	Week	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday/ Sunday
April	10	Easter Monday 1	Primary Cross Country 2	 3	Driving Lessons Chillax Program Feeling Fantastic Year 9 Girls K-6 Scripture 4	School Photo Day Aboriginal boys group 5	 6/7
April	11	 8	Create and Grow Playgroup Support Class 9	Grease the Musical Rewards Day Secondary 10	Chillax Program Feeling Fantastic Year 9 Girls 11	Primary K-6 Formal Assembly 10.15am Last day Secondary School Jersey Sale Last Day of Term 1 12	 13/14
Term Two	Week	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday/ Sunday
April/May	1	SDD 29	Students K-12 return Star Struck Tickets on sale Ticketek 10.00am 30	 1	 2	 3	 4/5
May	2	Minecraft competition 6	P&C Meeting RSL 6.30am 7	 8	Parent Teacher Interviews K-6 Scripture 9	Primary Zone Cross Country Walk Safely to School Day K-6 Mothers Day Stall Primary 9.00am to 11.00am 10	 11/12
May	3	Minecraft Competition 13	 14	 15	Primary Camel Farm Tour & Denman Park K-2 16	Pink Shirt Day K-6 Formal Assembly 2.15pm 17	 18/19
May	4	Minecraft Competition 20	 21	 22	K-6 Scripture 23	 24	 25/26



WHY JOIN THE P&C?

What is the P&C?

We provide assistance and support to the students, staff and families of MCS.

We work to promote the school in our community, and contribute actively to the progress, development and improvement of the school.

Why Join the P&C?

- Meet other parents and community minded people.
- Stay informed and be part of the school's decision making process.
- Learn new skills and have a laugh.
- Help give back to our school.

Without the P&C ...

We wouldn't have:

- Operating canteens
- Student of the Week Books
- Easter Raffle
- Mothers Day Stall
- Fathers Day Stall
- Xmas Ham Raffle

Our fundraising

Helps provide:

- Uniform Subsidies
- Free Kindy & Yr7 Polos
- Graduation Dinners & Cakes
- Book Awards
- Grandparents Day morning tea & more

How can I help?

- Attend meetings and have a say.
- Buy raffle tickets and attend events.
- Help out on a stall.
- Help organise an event.
- Volunteer in the canteen.
- Donate prizes for raffles.

P&C Meetings

Meetings are held on the
1st Tuesday
of each month.
6:30 pm at Merriwa RSL
Please come along.

Membership Application Form



Please complete and return to school office or executive committee member with \$2 Membership Fee

Name:

Email Address:

I wish to be a financial member of Merriwa Central School P&C Association and agree to follow the constitution and by-laws of this association.

Correspondence and meeting minutes will be sent via email.

Signature:

Date:

I'm interested in:

Please tick...

Receiving Meeting Minutes

Coming to Meetings

An executive position

Helping on Stalls

Helping collect donations

Helping to organise events

Helping in canteen

Common Myths

If you're a member you must go to meetings - FALSE

You can become a member and receive minutes via email. Attend meetings only if and when it suits you.

If i go to meetings I'll be asked to take on a role - FALSE

You are welcome to nominate and assist but you will never be forced into anything you don't want to do.

If I join I'll be hounded to help at lots of events - FALSE

We aim to keep it simple! We have ONE major fundraiser and that is our Christmas Ham Raffles. We also have 3 small events (Mothers/Fathers Day Stalls and Easter Raffle). You can choose to help at one event, all events or no events.

The meeting will last for hours - FALSE

Most of our meetings take 45mins-60mins