This term, and no doubt, all of 2014 has been a very busy, yet productive time for Puckapunyal Primary School. We thank our community, staff and students for a successful school year.

We also see many new families arrive each year and now we are saying goodbye to others, many of whom are moving interstate or overseas. We understand that it is a very difficult time for families and children, with many families saying goodbye to friends and packing up their houses. We believe that one special thing about Puckapunyal is the way that the community supports the school and this year has been no exception.

We would like to thank all of our families for their support this year. Schools rely on parent and community support. The best schools are the schools that have good communication between these groups. Children learn best when the community and the school work together and have the same goals. We are fortunate to have a close relationship with our community.

We wish all of our families a very Merry Christmas. We hope that our moving families travel safely and settle quickly into their new homes and their new schools. We also hope that our future families arrive safely and enjoy their stay at Pucka.

Good luck to everyone over the Christmas break and have a restful and safe New Year! Christmas cheer to all!

Kevin Warne, Principal

On Friday 19th December it will be our last day of Term 4 in 2014. The children will be dismissed at 1:30 p.m.
At 1:10 p.m. there will be a final assembly just to say goodbye and to wish you all a Merry Christmas. Please come along and join in our last assembly for 2014 in the school amphitheatre.
The final day will be an ‘out of school uniform day’ for all students.
There will not be any buses available on the last day for our students who normally travel to school by bus. Students will have to make other arrangements for that day.

***Have you heard your child read today? We encourage all students to practise their reading at home about 5 nights per week. Therefore, by now, most students should have read at least between 215-220 nights.
Well done if you have kept up!

***Sunday Nights - a great night to check for Head Lice.***
Congratulations to the following students who were ‘Students of the Week’ for last week. Winners – Paige Cooper, Zakk Chalson, Chloe Hogan, Henry Billen, Naomi Pennycook, Emma Harbert, Tea-Rose Porter, Dylan Sallis and Emily Gourlay. These students were selected because they were modelling ‘Kindness’. This week teachers are looking for students who are modelling ‘Caring’.

Congratulations to the following students who were ‘Authors of the Week’ for last week. Winners – Sophie Van Der Waal, Jy Mawer-Smith, Dakota Chalson, Deacon Simpson, Ronan Sullivan, Paige Paul, Jake Tanis, Ethan Neilson and Daniel Boucher. These students were selected because they showed great skills as an author.

P/1 O in Room 1 won the Yard Duty Competition Trophy. Elizabeth Gardner and Amber Hopkins are very happy to collect the winning trophy this week!

Did you hear Alli Jenkinson read part of her story at assembly this week? We did! She did a wonderful job! Come along at assemblies next year to hear more. Well done, Alli!
Happy Birthday to Matilda Turner, Alli Jenkinson, Janelle Paz, Jackson Bartle and Ethan Bowerman who are all having their birthdays this week or later in December. On behalf of the Puckapunyal Primary School Community, we wish them all a very Happy Birthday!

**Farewell, Damien**

Each and every year, we have to sadly farewell some of our staff.

This year, we have to say goodbye to Damien Humphrey who has been a classroom teacher over the last 2 years. Damien has just accepted a teaching position at Broadford Primary School.

He has been a highly valued teacher who we will miss greatly. Due to fewer postings into Puckapunyal for 2015, we will have less teaching positions for our staff in 2015. We thank Damien for being a wonderful teacher and wish him well for the future. We will all miss you.

**POSITIVE BEHAVIOUR REWARD**

**FINAL SCORE**

Well done to Hume house for winning this term’s reward!! There will be fun and games (literally!) and icy cups for Hume house and top reward winners from each class on Thursday. Congratulations to everyone who received a ticket for positive behaviour this term. You have contributed to making PPS a great school to be at.

**CURRENT SCORES**

Hume - 538 points    Melba - 508 points
Bradman - 417 points    Chisholm - 359 points

*Our School Captains, Ben Postill and Melanie Waszczuk have performed admirably this year – thank you, School Captains, we wish you well!*

*Our House Captains organised their teams throughout the many sporting events this year – well done House Captains!*

*Thank you Student Representative Councillors (S.R.C.) who took on many roles throughout the year in 2014!*

*To all of those students who took responsibility for School Assemblies, the Year 6 Valedictory Dinner, school crossing flags, school flag, school bins, newsletter proof reading, yard duty marking, classroom monitoring and other assigned duties.... we say - ‘thank you, we cannot run a school without you!’*
Last Thursday, all of our Year 6 students attended their Graduation Night — the Valedictory Dinner in our Pitman-Coffey Centre. It was a fantastic night! We saw our Year 6 students accept their graduation certificates that acknowledged their transition to secondary school for 2015.

The night began with Liam Sullivan, one of our Year 6 students being MC for the evening. He performed wonderfully! Well done, Liam.

The students and special guests enjoyed the beautiful meal that was catered for by Ken’s Catering.

After the meal, all parents and family members arrived for the presentation. We began with a very professional powerpoint display that summarised the students’ year and other parts of their lives. It was put together by Lochie Itter, one of our former school captains and valedictorians. Everybody enjoyed the powerpoint display. Thank you, Lochie. Sarah Marshall, also one of our former school captains, was our guest speaker and spoke to the students and wished them the very best for their future. Everybody enjoyed the speech. Thank you, Sarah.

The presentations soon began with each student presenting an acrostic poem for one of their peers as they were presented with their Graduation Certificates from their classroom teachers.

Many special awards were then presented to the worthy recipients. Please read the next few pages.
The ‘Striving for Excellence’ Award - is designed for a student who always gives their best regardless of their abilities and academic achievement – they are striving for excellence (our school motto).
The ‘Striving for Excellence’ award is a plaque and a book voucher for $50, donated by the Parents’ Club or the school since 2005. The plaque was kindly made and donated by the Marshall family. The award was presented by School Council President Matt Postill.

-This year’s ‘Striving for Excellence’ Award was presented to Josh Porter.

Josh has been a hard working student who consistently gives 100% in everything he does. He has a positive attitude and always gives his best. He has helped out with many jobs around the school and can be relied upon to do so. He has been a great role model to his peers.
Congratulations Josh.

‘Outstanding Sportsperson of the Year’ Award - is designed for the student or students who clearly stand out from the rest of his/her colleagues in relation to sporting achievements.
The ‘Outstanding Sportsperson of the Year’ award means the name is recorded on a large plaque and the student receives a small plaque and a book voucher for $50. The award has been presented to students since 2002. The award was presented by classroom teacher, Katie Atkinson.

-This year’s ‘Outstanding Sportsperson of the Year’ award was presented to Ethan Neilson.

Ethan has shown exemplary sporting skills in many different sports. Ethan has represented the school in District Swimming; District, Division and Regional Athletics and District, Division and Regional Cross Country. Ethan, along with his many achievements, has shown maturity by encouraging others. He has been a fantastic role model and is very worthy of the ‘Outstanding Sportsperson of the Year’ Award.

Mitchell Shire Citizenship Award - is designed for a student who is a model citizen and role model for their peers.
The ‘Mitchell Shire Citizenship’ award is a certificate and a book voucher for $50, donated by the Mitchell Shire. The award has been presented to students for many years. The award was presented by Mitchell Shire Mayor, Rodney Parker.

-This year’s ‘Mitchell Shire Citizenship’ award was presented to Mara Beveridge.

Mara has been a fantastic citizen of Puckapunyal. She has been a House Captain this year and has been a great role model for her peers. She has been well organised, compassionate and reliable. She volunteers to help around the school and apart from being a House Captain, has undertaken many other roles of responsibility throughout the year.
**Achievement Award** - is designed for a student who achieves well academically and is a good role model.

The ‘Achievement’ award means the name is recorded on a large plaque and the student receives a small plaque and a book voucher for $50, donated by Defcredit. The award has been presented to students since 1995. This year’s award was presented by Defence School Transition Aide, Sue Ranger.

- This year’s ‘Achievement’ award was presented to **Isra Elsheikh**

Isra is a wonderful role model for others to follow and has been a student who has not hesitated in undertaking extra roles of responsibility throughout the year. She is always happy with a very positive attitude. She is dedicated towards achieving her best at all times. Her academic achievements are also above the expected level of her year.

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**Lion’s Club Community Award** - is designed for a student who is an excellent community member.

The ‘Lion’s Club Community’ award is a small chronology and a Landmark Book Voucher for $100. The aim of the voucher is to go towards secondary schooling for next year. The award has been presented for many years. This year’s award was presented by Dilio Schivo from the Seymour Lion’s Club.

- This year’s ‘Lion’s Club Community’ award was presented to **Elaf Elsheikh**.

Elaf was selected because she has an eagerness to learn and do well in everything she does. Isra has been a fantastic citizen at Puckapunyal. She is a wonderful role model for others to follow. She never complains, is reliable and well organised. She is always willing to help others and has undertaken many roles and duties at Puckapunyal. She has been a terrific example for others to follow.

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**Encouragement Award** - is designed for a student who we encourage to always give his/her best. It is an award for a student who realises that learning is not easy but well and truly worth the risk.

The ‘Encouragement’ award is a certificate and a book voucher for $50.

This year’s award was presented by Art/Library teacher, Sharon Anderson-Warne.

- This year’s ‘Encouragement’ award was presented to **Alex Waugh**.

Unfortunately Alex has already departed to Brisbane. We know he will be extremely proud to have received this award.

Alex is at a stage in his education where he is just beginning to realise what he can achieve. We encourage him to continue on, take risks and give it his best at all times. He realises that he has to work hard to achieve his dreams. We challenge him to dream on and achieve.

‘Striving for Excellence’

*Open since 1887*
**Quiet Achiever** – The ‘Quiet Achiever’ award is an award that is donated by Lee Whant, a former Defence School Transition Aide. This award has been presented since 2005. The recipient’s name is recorded on a large plaque which stays at our school and the student receives a small plaque and a book voucher for $50. Lee’s husband Chris has created this trophy from a red gum burl. They choose a special piece of wood each year that he makes into the small plaque. This year’s award was presented by classroom teacher, Matthew Itter.

The ‘Quiet Achiever’ award is presented to a student who focuses on doing the best they can, with what they have. They never give in to themselves and continually display the important values of tolerance, kindness and friendship towards others. Lee believes these values are another aspect of excellence and complement the school’s motto of ‘Striving for Excellence’. The significance of the bear that you see on the plaque is about caring and reflection.

This year’s ‘Quiet Achiever’ award is presented to **Charli Berger**

*Charli was selected because she is a caring, compassionate student who is always ready to help out and do her best. She is always enthusiastic to learn and eager to improve. She always works to the best of her ability and strives for excellence. She has also been a great House Captain throughout the year.*

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**Academic Excellence** – The Academic Excellence awards are designed for students who have achieved very high results academically.

The recipients of the ‘Academic Excellence’ awards receive a certificate and a $50 cheque from the school. This year’s award was presented by Assistant Principal, Allyson Dixon.

This year’s ‘Academic Excellence’ awards were presented to **Josh Esqueria** and **Nic Franks**.

*Both of these students have worked extremely hard academically and achieved results well above the expected level of their year.*

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**School Bursaries** – Are designed for students who best achieve academically and are great role models for their peers. They are our best all round students.

There are 4 awards this year. The ‘School Bursaries’ are a certificate and a book voucher for $250 and their names will remain on our new School Honours Board. The aim of the voucher is to go towards the students’ secondary schooling for next year. The bursaries have been kindly donated by the Puckapunyal Area Amenities Board. The award has been presented for the past 30 or so years. This year the awards were presented by Principal, Kevin Warne and Lieutenant Colonel Kirsty Skinner.

*The students have been selected because they are the 4 students who have achieved consistently throughout the year in all areas of the curriculum and in extra-curricular activities. They are the students who set the standard for others to follow. They are great role models. They are the students who not only behaved and conducted themselves in an exemplary manner, they set the standard academically as well.*

-This year’s ‘Student Bursaries’ are awarded to **Melanie Waszczuk, Marisa Zantey, Patrick Broughton** and **Ben Postill**.

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The School Valedictorian is a person who is selected to best represent their peers to make a speech on behalf of them. This year we had 1 Valedictorian. The Valedictorian will have his name printed on our school Honours Board and receive a small plaque.

This year our Valedictorian was school captain, Ben Postill. He was selected because he is not only a brilliant citizen, but also can make a speech to best represent his fellow peers. He is a great student and a superb role model as shown by receiving a student bursary award as well.

**Ben’s awesome speech is available on our school website.**

A big thank you to Mrs. Jennifer Philp and Mr. Damien Humphrey for their tireless efforts in organising the night. Thank you teachers! We would also like to thank our parent helpers who for weeks had been organising bits and pieces with our teachers. Many were even waiters for the night!
At Monday morning’s **Awards Assembly** several awards were presented to worthy students. It has been a long tradition to have an Awards Assembly at Pucka P.S. Congratulations to all of the successful recipients. We had a huge audience at the assembly which was terrific. Thank you to the families who were able to come.

### ‘In Kindness’ Award

At Monday’s Awards Assembly, the annual ‘**In Kindness**’ Award was presented to **Hakimi Shukri**. This award was donated by the Ulrich family in 2000.

Hakimi is a worthy winner of this award. The ‘In Kindness’ award is for a student that is a kind, caring, thoughtful and a helpful student. Hakimi demonstrates these values and many other of our school values. He is a well-liked and respected student in the classroom and the school. He is always willing to help out and has a positive manner towards his school, teachers, friends and others. Well done Hakimi, keep up the great work!

*(written by class teacher, Damien Humphrey)*

### ‘The Tryers’ Award

At Monday’s Awards Assembly, the annual ‘**The Tryers**’ Award was presented to **Shontay Wicks**. This award was donated by the Proudlock family in 2000.

Shontay is a year 2 student in my class who is always kind, caring and considerate of others. She works well in class and willingly offers and accepts assistance from other students. She responds well to feedback and encouragement. Shontay has made excellent progress this year and she is a student who always keeps on trying in order to achieve the best outcomes in many situations. She has worked hard at gaining understanding of the topics covered this year and has made great progress with her Literacy work. She seeks additional work in Numeracy and regularly completes extra work at home in order to assist with her understanding and fluency of concepts. A great effort Shontay, you are a very deserving recipient of ‘The Tryers’ Award. Congratulations!

*(written by class teacher, Robyn Itter)*

Each and every year our school selects 2 students, 1 boy and 1 girl who were out best cyclists during the **3 Day Bike Ride**.

At our Awards Assembly on Monday **Giselle Andrew** and **Daniel Allen** were awarded the distinction of having their names engraved on the shield. The shield was donated by the Franklin family in 2004.

I’m proud to say that Giselle and Daniel were part of the front group for all three days, travelling at an average of 25km/hr. Over the three days they travelled around 180km. The two students were not only the two best riders but two of the best well behaved students that went on the trip.

Well done Giselle and Daniel! *(written by class teacher, Damien Humphrey)*

### ’Fun Run’ Award

We awarded a Digital Audio Player (with LCD Screen) to the highest individual **Fun Run** fundraiser at school. That was **Tea-Rose Porter**. She raised $94! Great job, Tea! Thanks to everyone who participated.
'Making a Difference Award' of the Year

At Monday’s Awards Assembly, the ‘Making a Difference Award’ of the Year was presented to Oliver Kenny.

The student receiving the Making a Difference Award was chosen because he makes a difference in the lives of the Staff and Students at Puckapunyal Primary School. In class, he is hardworking and reliable and is one of the first people chosen when a job needs doing. He is extremely thoughtful. He goes out of his way to help anyone no matter what grade. He is the quiet hero who watches out for everyone; not for the reward, just because he cares. The student who makes sure everyone has a turn and encourages them; win or lose. He’s the unsung student who will stop his work share to share his knowledge with those who misunderstand. He’s the peacemaker on the playground who will find help when his friends are upset.

It is my great pleasure to award the Making a Difference Award to Oliver Kenny. It has been a pleasure to teach him this term. I wish him well in Queensland. (written by class teacher, Racheal Broughton).

'Julie Lyons-Vague Scholarship' Award

Each year, the ‘Julie Lyons-Vague Scholarship’ Award will be presented to a Grade 4/5 student who embodies the qualities that Mrs Lyons-Vague valued. The award is presented on behalf of the Vague family, including Leigh Vague, Mrs Lyons-Vague’s husband, and Mrs Lyons-Vague’s sons, Aaron and Justin.

At Monday’s Awards Assembly, the ‘Julie Lyons-Vague Scholarship’ Award was presented to Giselle Andrew. This award is a book voucher for $100 donated by the Vague family. Our teacher, Jane Challis presented the award on behalf of the Vague family.

I am proud to award Giselle with the Julie Lyons-Vague Scholarship Award this year. I have had the pleasure of teaching Giselle the past 2 years and have watched her develop into a valuable student at Puckapunyal Primary. She is a student that pushes herself to absolute limits, either in the classroom or in extracurricular activities such as athletics. Giselle has been an SRC representative the past two years and demonstrates all of our school values. I’m sure Mrs Lyons-Vague would be incredibly proud and pleased for Giselle to win this award. Well done Giselle! (written by class teacher, Damien Humphrey)

'Chicken Princess' Award

We thank Naomi Pennycook and Emma Harbert. They were responsible for organising everything to do with our school chickens this year. They were especially impressive each week at assembly informing us about the chickens. They were presented with the ‘Chicken Princess’ Award at assembly. Thank you, girls!
‘Striving for Excellence’ Awards

The school presented 6 awards to students in each of the year levels from Prep-Year 5. The students were selected because they are students who always try and give their best, regardless of their academic levels. They received a plaque and a book voucher for $50. Well done, kids! ‘Striving for Excellence’ is our school motto!!

Prep – Amelia Cree
The recipient of the Foundation Striving for Excellence award is someone who always has a smile on her face. She tries her hardest at whatever the task. She is helpful, thoughtful and willing to lend a hand to anyone. It has been an absolute privilege to teach her this year. The winner of the Foundation Striving for Excellence award is Amelia Cree!

Year 1 – Christiana McCabe
Christiana McCabe is a polite, quiet member of the class who goes about the task at hand with a minimum of fuss. She tries hard to do her best and takes advice and works hard to improve her skills. She is a very capable student too. Christiana’s reading is particularly good. She sets a good example for others with her behaviour and effort. Christiana treats other people with respect and frequently displays good manners.

Year 2 – Haikal Shukri
I am sure if the Oxford dictionary was to have a meaning for Striving For Excellence- this boy’s name would be used as the real life example. The Year 2 Striving For Excellence Award is being awarded to a student who each and every day attends school with a positive, can do attitude. He is consistently on task and uses every class moment to extend his skills and learn new things. He has read more than 250 nights at home this year and has delighted in learning new words and their meanings. He has not missed one week of Homework and has some of the most impeccable handwriting I have seen in my 17 years in teaching. When in class this student always produces work of a very high standard and expects nothing less of himself - never worrying about how other students are achieving or comparing himself to his peers. The Year 2 Striving For Excellence Award is awarded to … Haikal Shukri

Year 3 – Carter Grant
Carter is a friendly, caring and kind student. He has a positive attitude and always approaches new work with enthusiasm and the desire to learn. When it came to the nominations for this awards assembly Carter could have easily fallen into several of the categories. He is a ‘trier’, he will always have a go at any task I ask him to complete no matter how hard or easy. Throughout this year he has worked so hard to improve his reading and the achievements that he has made in this area have made me very proud to be his teacher. He continually makes a difference in our classroom, he is kind and caring to his peer and makes everyone feel welcome. He always helps and supports other students. Keep Striving for Excellence Carter!

Year 4 – Emma Harbert
I have had the privilege of teaching Emma in grades 1, 3 and now again in grade 4. Over this time I have had the opportunity to see her blossom in so many areas. She is caring, creative and boy can she talk! Emma is a student who constantly demonstrates all of our school values, but in particular she always Strives for Excellence. She always works to the best of her ability no matter what she has been asked to do. This year I have seen Emma really push herself and work hard in Numeracy so that she can extend her knowledge in this area. Keep working hard Emma and continue to Strive for Excellence in everything that you do.

Year 5 – Taylah Studte
This year’s Year 5 ‘Striving for Excellence’ Award is presented to Taylah Studte. Taylah consistently gives 100% effort in everything that she does. She has a great, positive attitude and always gives her best. She volunteers to help with jobs around the school and can be relied upon to do so. She has been a great role model as an SRC representative. Congratulations Taylah.
Congratulations to all of the students who reached the final of the School Spelling Bee. Well done to the 7 winners! Thank you again to Mr. Itter for being our MC and doing another entertaining job! Thank you to all of the supporting staff.

Well done, Jackson, Amelia and Joel!

Well done, Tallen, Henry and Jett!

Well done, Anna, Abigail and Emily!

Well done, Hamish, Nathan and Oliver!

Well done, Samuel, Elijah, Tea-Rose and Raelene!

Well done, Mitchell, Isam, Dylan and Jake!

Well done, Mr. Itter!

Well done, Marisa, Mel, Nic and Ben!

‘Last week, my mum and other Go-TAFE staff came and took our grade for cooking in the school kitchen. We cooked chocolate pizzas. It was tasty! It was a special treat for my birthday.’

By Alli Jenkinson
The end of 2014 is almost upon us and no doubt there is excitement about school for next year. For Kinder families we hope that our school has been helpful over the past few months with transition days so that the move into Foundation (Preps) will be easier for your child. The year 2015 is going to be special for your family. Obviously it will be your child's first year of schooling. We understand that families will be excited and nervous.

The starting date for **Years 1-6** students is Thursday 29th January. The first day for **Foundation (Prep)** students is Friday 30th January.

The Foundation (Prep) students will then attend school for normal hours from 9:00 a.m. - 3:30 p.m. for Mondays, Tuesdays, Thursdays and Fridays in February. The students will **not** attend school on Wednesdays during Term 1 until 4th March. This again will help the students get used to school life and a break mid-week will keep them refreshed for school. In our experience, Foundation students do get very tired in their first few weeks of school and a break mid-week has shown to be beneficial. Again, the Wednesday will also be used for Foundation student testing and an appointment date will be given to each family for one of those Wednesdays.

**School Open Day** is Thursday 22nd January, which is for families who haven’t yet **enrolled** their children or had a chance to **tour** the school. **School Uniforms** will also be available for any families to purchase on that day. At the end of Open Day, when we have a much more accurate idea of how many students will be attending our school, we will send each family a letter. The letter will let families know who their child’s teacher will be and what classroom they will be in for 2015.

On Thursday 29th January at 9:00 a.m. all Years 1-6 students will begin their school year with a morning assembly in the school amphitheatre. Families and students can find a seat together in the amphitheatre. Immediately after the assembly, all new families and especially Foundation (Prep) families are invited to a **New Parent Information Session**. That meeting will give parents a chance to be introduced to their child’s teacher and find out important information for 2015. We recommend that all new families attend that session, as this session won’t be repeated on Friday.

### Public Holidays for 2015
- Monday 26th January Australia Day Holiday
- Monday 9th March Labour Day
- Friday 3rd April Good Friday
- Monday 6th April Easter Monday
- Saturday 25th April Anzac Day
- Monday June 8th Queen’s Birthday
- Tuesday November 3rd Melbourne Cup Day

### Significant School Dates for 2015

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<tr>
<td>Thursday 22nd January</td>
<td>Open Day</td>
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<td>Wednesday 28th January</td>
<td>Staff Resume</td>
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<tr>
<td>Thursday 29th January</td>
<td>Years 1-6 Commence</td>
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<td>New Parent Information Session 9:00 a.m.</td>
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<td>Friday 30th January</td>
<td>Foundation (Preps) Commence</td>
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<td>Wednesday 4th March</td>
<td>Parent/Teacher Interviews</td>
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