Term 1 Week 4 Thursday 16 February 2017

PRINCIPAL’S PAGE

Parent/Teacher Meetings
Thank you to all the parents who attended our Parent/Teacher meetings during the week. The attendance in a number of rooms was good but overall, it was a little disappointing to see only a small number of parents in some of the classrooms. I’m sure all who attended found it to be very beneficial. Feedback from parents was very positive. Class teachers will send home information discussed at the meetings to the parents who were unable to attend. For next year, I encourage all parents to attend as many important topics are discussed at these meetings.

Students Personal Details
A Student Personal Details was sent home last week with every student. Please check this information carefully. If any changes are required please alter the sheet and return it to the school office as soon as possible so that we can update our records. If no changes are required do not return the sheet. Please note that parents/carers are always the first emergency contact. Please ensure all emergency contacts are local residents as they will be contacted if we are unable to contact parents/carers.

Playground Leaders in Prep
Prep students will enthusiastically welcome the Year 5 Playground Pals to their morning tea and lunch play times. The Year 5 students completed a six week training session in Term 4 last year and Term 1 this year to prepare them for the responsibility of showing prep students how to play and interact in their new school environment. They have learnt about age appropriate games, how to talk to younger students and problem-solving skills. They are also committed to fortnightly training during Semester One of 2017 to maintain and grow their leadership skills.

The students are supported in their work by Ms Hall and Mr Boff, our School Engagement Officer. Students self-nominated for the program and it has been gratifying to see a large number of our Year 5 students participating in the Playground Pals program. At the end of the semester, they will be recognised by a Playground Pals Certificate and as an extra curricula activity on their report card. It is also a great program to have on a student’s record if they choose to pursue leadership activities in Year 6. Merrimac State School would like to thank all our Playground Pals for a fantastic effort so far this Term and for making our Prep playground a fun, safe and happy place to play.

Every Day Counts - Student Attendance
Research has shown that there is a direct correlation between student academic performance and school attendance. The attendance rate at our school for 2015 was 93.3% and for 2016 it was 93.4%. This is slightly above the state average of 92%. Our South East Education Region has set a target for its schools of 95% attendance rate. This is the target that our school has adopted as its target for 2017. There is no reason why our school should not meet this target. Currently our attendance rate as of today is 95.6%. It would be fantastic if we could maintain this high level of attendance. Last year we introduced Attendance Awards for students with high levels of attendance. We will continue with these awards in 2017.

Education Queensland is promoting its slogan that ‘Every Day Counts’. Our school has a high number of students who attend school every day within a school year. As a school and as parents we should be continually stressing to our students the importance of attending school every day.

Regular attendance at school is essential if students are to fulfil their academic potential and there is also a legal requirement for parents/carers to ensure their children regularly attend an appropriate approved program of education. All parent/carers need to be aware of the following requirements for authorising student absences and late arrivals:

- As per departmental guidelines, Merrimac State School now engages in the practice of Same Day Notifications. If your child is absent from morning roll call without an explanation, an electronic message will be sent to one nominated mobile phone number. You will then be asked to contact the school and provide an explanation. When responding to text messages, please refrain from using emojis or photos as the system does not recognize any of the message when a picture or emoji is inserted. PLEASE ENSURE MOBILE PHONE DETAILS ARE ALWAYS UP-TO-DATE
- A phone call or an email can be made to the school administration on the morning of the absence before 8.30am and this will be entered onto the system. An email address has been created for this purpose. Please forward all email notifications to office@merrimacss.eq.edu.au.
- Rolls are marked twice daily and legally we require an explanation for all absences.
- All late arrivals must be authorised by a parent/carer. Students who do not arrive at their classroom by 9.00am are to report to the office on arrival at school to obtain a late slip. If students who arrive late are not accompanied by a parent/carer, they will need to have a note to explain their reason for being late or the parent/carer will need to phone the office prior to the student’s arrival.

For a small number of students, regular attendance is a problem. It is recognised that some students do suffer serious or recurring illnesses and occasionally pressing family matters or crises can stop students from coming to school. Such absences are quite understandable, but some students seem to have regular absences, a day here and a day there, over the school year and often it is possible to see a pattern in these absences. All teachers mark their rolls twice daily and it is possible to monitor student attendance on a regular basis.

Frequent absences make it difficult for students to keep pace with classwork and also make it hard for teachers to properly assess students. Maximising attendance at school enhances students’ academic progress and helps prepare them for the expectations that will be required both at high school and later in life when they join the workforce. Please don’t let your children down by letting them stay at home unnecessarily when they should be at school.

I will keep parents informed at the end of each term, how our school is travelling towards its attendance goal of 95%.

Same Day Student Absence Notification
This year Merrimac State School has moved to the automated text message system to alert parents of any absences. Please be aware that the incoming text message length for your reply is only 100 characters. Messages longer than this can have important information missing. In addition we cannot process doctors notes or any images in general. Please deliver doctors
notes to class teachers when your child returns to school. Thank you

Children at School after 3.15pm
Children are supervised at the front of the school till 3.15pm. Any children who have not been collected by this time are asked to wait at the gate near the Administration Building (between the large car park gum tree and the main small gate entrance to the school). This allows Admin to monitor that students are all collected by their parents. Please do not ask your child to meet you anywhere else if you will be collecting them after 3.15pm. This is an unsafe practice.

School Disco
Come to the Merrimac student council’s ‘Surf’s Up!’ disco next Wednesday night – 22nd February. Come in beach gear. Entry is just $2. Money raised will be donated to the Chappy program at Children at School after 3.15pm

Religious Education (RE)
Religious Education commenced last Thursday. All RE lessons are held on a Thursday afternoon. Except for Baha’i, children remain in their class groups for their thirty minute RE lesson. The children receive a general non-denominational Religious Education lesson. Participation in these lessons is encouraged. Children who do not participate in religious education will be supervised in a nearby classroom. Parents wishing to exclude their children from Religious Education classes need to do so in writing.

All students participating in general non-denominational Religion classes require activity books which were part of the year level booklist and were distributed last week to the students who have paid for them through the bookshop.

The cost per year is $6.00 and includes two activity books which add interest and fun to RE lessons. They are full colour with puzzles, word games, colouring activities and song sheets in the back. Please see the bookshop if you still need to purchase these books. Bookshop hours are Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays from 8.00am – 9.00am.

Volunteers
Volunteers are an important part of our school. Parents and grandparents are always welcome in various areas within our school. If you are able to help out in the tuckshop or bookshop please contact the school with your details. We look forward to meeting more of you in 2017. If you are free on a regular or casual basis we would appreciate your help.

Staff Car Park
Parents are reminded that the staff car park and the truck delivery roundabout in the school grounds are not a pick up or drop off area for children. Only those parents (with special circumstances) who have the Principal’s permission are allowed into the staff car park area. Please adhere to this direction. For the safety of our children this has to be enforced.

It is great to see that most parents are not using the staff car park as an entry or exit route to and from school. Parents and students must use the main pathway from the front school gate. Please follow these instructions to ensure the safety of our entire school community. We do not wish to see any accidents due to irresponsible actions.

School Uniforms
Parents and students are reminded that our school has an approved School Dress Code and Jewellery Policy. These have been approved by our school’s P&C Association. Along with the school’s responsible Behaviour Plan, parents are made aware of these policies when enrolling students at our school. Copies are available from school or can be found on the school’s website. Parents are asked to reinforce our school’s expectations with their children.

Children are reminded that shoes (joggers or runners) are to be predominantly black or white. They should not be bright multi-coloured shoes. Children should not be wearing fluoro coloured shoes to school or to out of school activities.

Messages for Students
Please ensure messages for students are phoned through to the school before 2pm (extreme emergency situations excluded). It can be difficult to contact students if they are away from their classroom at a specialist class, on the oval, or at parade. We are happy to pass on important information regarding afterschool pick up but must have a reasonable timeframe to get the message to the students. We thank you for your assistance with this matter.

Request for References
From time to time requests are made by parents and children for references to various Private Schools. The Gold Coast Primary Principals’ Association has determined that such references should not be supplied. This decision is endorsed by our School Council. It is felt that the making available of the School Report Card and any Statewide Testing is sufficient documentation for all Private Schools. This means that the school will not be able to assist with requests for written references. This also applies to individual teachers in an official capacity. A copy of the child’s Report Card and Statewide Testing will be made available if requested by parents.

Mathletics, Reading Eggs, Language Perfect and Soundwaves
This week all students in P-6 who have paid the levy will receive their user name and password for Mathletics, Reading Eggs, and Language Perfect. Teachers will also provide the access code for the Soundwaves online resources for use at a later date. This levy was included in the year level booklist. This is a great resource to support your child’s learning. Please contact your child’s teacher if you need more information.

Breakfast and Fitness Program
The before school Breakfast/Fitness Program commenced this week on Wednesday morning for interested students in Years 4, 5 and 6. Students in these year levels have the opportunity to be involved in this fitness and breakfast program. There will be up to 100 places available. Students will need to commit to attending each week from 8.00am to 8.45am to be part of the program. A big thank you to Chappy Steve and Mr Epiha who coordinate and run this program. I know that they both appreciate the help and support from parents and other staff who volunteer to help with the breakfast program each week. A big thank you to Tina Nenadic, from Harcourts Real Estate, who is sponsoring the Breakfast/Fitness Program for this term. We certainly appreciate Tina’s support of our school. The support from Merrimac McDonalds is also very much appreciated.

2017 NAPLAN Dates (please note on your calendar)
Tuesday 9 May Language Conventions and Writing
Wednesday 10 May Reading
Thursday 11 May Numeracy
Friday 12 May Catch-up tests for students absent on 9, 10 or 11 May

Advertisements Disclaimer
Although we at times include advertisements in our school newsletter we do not necessarily endorse products nor the information provided. It is important that parents thoroughly investigate products and services advertised and make their own informed decision.
Parent Fitness (Boot Camp) Program - free for Merrimac Parents

Thanks to Tina Nenadic, from Harcourts Real Estate, we are continuing this year with the free fitness program for our parents. Simone Doyle is the fitness instructor who runs the sessions weekly in the PAC/Tennis Court area each Thursday from 1.45pm to 2.45pm. It is completely free. I'm sure that there are many parents who would be interested in being part of this program. Any parents who wish to be involved in the fitness program can contact Tina direct on 0402984898. Simone can only cater up to 20 in the session so please register your interest with Tina as soon as possible.

Student Leader Badge Ceremony
The Student Leader Badge Ceremony is to be held on Wednesday 22 February in the PAC. It will commence at 11.30am and conclude at 12.15pm. Parents are invited to attend this special ceremony. A number of special guests will also be in attendance.

Koala Joeys - Term 1
Koala Joeys has recommenced for 2017. Koala Joeys is an early years literacy and numeracy oral language program. The program is suitable for children of all ages. As part of our school's commitment to early years development, Koala Joeys will be held at Merrimac State School. When: Friday mornings Where: PAC Science Activities Room (please note change of venue) Time: 9.00am - 10.00am See you there.

School Website and QSchools Smartphone App
The QSchools app is available to the school community as a free download via the Apple iTunes store and Google Play. Update regularly to access the latest features.

Active School Travel

Move it Thursdays! has commenced for the year

From the desk of Ralph and Rosie
Merrimac State School Focus of the week

Over this past week, the children at Merrimac State School have been examining what it means to be 'Respectful'. In their classes and on parade, the boys and girls at MSS have been asked to engage in discussions, role plays and class demonstrations on the importance of being safe.

Earlier this term we launched our Safe, Respectful, Learner Campaign. All boys and girls are invited to participate in our school find Ralph and Rosie competition and art competition where children have the opportunity to win some great prizes.

The competition started Monday Feb 6 and all entries are due by Friday Feb 17. Please see the class teachers or the office for more details.

Congratulations to 5B and 1C for winning the class awards this week. 5B received their award for always waiting patiently and respectfully for Mrs Powell. 1C received their award for keeping their area clean and lining up promptly.

Well done all boys and girls for remembering to be safe, respectful learners.

From Ralph and Rosie

FINANCE NEWS

Important Information on Invoicing

When the school system creates invoices for excursions all parents/caregivers of participating/invited students who have an active email on our database will receive an invoice. If your child is participating you can make payment but be sure to complete the permission form and return to the finance window for verification. If paying online please send the receipt with the permission form to verify payment. Online payments take up to 48 hours to be received so please allow for this in relation to due dates. Look on the top right hand side of the invoice for the excursion description.

Important information: when the payment date for an excursion closes and we cancel unpaid invoices if you did not pay for this excursion you will receive an adjustment notice email, this is not an invoice, please open and read. This email only goes to those not participating and can be ignored.

We are currently collecting money for:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Participants</th>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Cost</th>
<th>Payment due date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Year 4</td>
<td>Camp</td>
<td>$165</td>
<td>10 Mar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Instrumental Students</td>
<td>Program</td>
<td>$100</td>
<td>27 Feb</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Instrumental Hire</td>
<td>$120</td>
<td>27 Feb</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

MONEY IS ACCEPTED IN PERSON AT THE FINANCE WINDOW MONDAYS, WEDNESDAYS AND FRIDAYS FROM 8AM - 9.30AM - DIRECT DEPOSITS CAN BE MADE ON RECEIPT OF INVOICE (VIA EMAIL)

MUSIC NEWS

MERRIMAC STATE SCHOOL TALENT QUEST 2017

GUIDELINES

MERRIMAC TALENT QUEST 2017 will be run in the same format as last year:

1. There will be One Talent Quest event.
2. Years 3, 4 (JUNIORS) 5, 6 (SENIORS).
3. This will be held in Week 8 of Term One - Wednesday 15th March. From 9.00am - 12.00pm.
4. Auditions will be held by Year Level Teachers in the PAC Hall in Week 6
5. Teachers to book a time in the hall which suits the whole year level.
6. There will be 4 Sections - SINGING - INSTRUMENTAL DANCE - DRAMA
7. Items 3 minutes maximum in length
8. Items with inappropriate lyrics will be disqualified (teachers please check)
9. Max 6 students per group
10. Singing Section - must have instrumental backing, vocal backings will not be accepted. Acapella is also acceptable.
11. All finalists will receive a McDonald's Certificate/Voucher.
12. Separate prizes for winners of each section in Finals. Years 3 and 4 will be judged as Juniors and Years 5 and 6 judged as Seniors.

The format will be as follows:
Week 4 - Students prepare items in their own time.
Week 6 - Year Level Auditions will be held in the PAC Hall. Teachers will judge no more than three items per section for each year level to go through to the Finals.
Week 7 - List of finalists and items submitted to Mrs Powell by Tuesday 7th March (3.30pm)
Week 8 - TALENT QUEST Wednesday 15th March 2017 9.00am - 12.00pm
MUSIC REHEARSAL TIMES 2017

Monday 8.00am - 8.45am --- Senior Choir
Monday 3.00pm - 4.00pm --- Senior Band

Wednesday 8.00am - 8.45am --- Intermediate Strings
Wednesday 3.00pm - 4.00pm ---- Junior Band

Thursday 8.00am – 8.45am --- Beginner Strings
Thursday 3.00pm – 4.00pm --- Senior Strings

Friday 8.00am - 8.00am - 8.45am - --- Junior Choir

PE NEWS

District Swimming Carnival
Mr Singh accompanied 11 of our students today to the District Swimming Carnival. We wish our swimmers all the very best - Sasha 5C, Amelia 4B, Cullen 5A, Darby 4B, Alex 4B, Tara 6D, Tatumn 5B, Josh 5D, James 5A, Mikayla 6B and Lachlan 5A.

Swimming Lessons for Years 3 and 4
Swimming for Years 3 and 4 began last week and will continue for another five weeks. Swimming is part of the P.E. Curriculum. All children are reminded to bring their togs, towels, and goggles each Thursday. The Swimming Carnival will be held at the Merrimac High School pool on Friday 31 March for Years 4 to 6. Bus costs for this are included in the swimming fees.

Surf Awareness Program for Years 5 and 6
On Tuesday Years 5A, 5D, 5E, 6A and 6B commenced their Surf Awareness Program. Students gain knowledge in safe surf conditions, tides, currents and basic surfing skills. Students will have 3 lessons which will run for 90 minutes each and the total cost is $70.00. Soft surfboards, wetshirts and sunscreen will be provided.
Years 5B, 5C, 6C and 6D will commence their three week Surf Awareness Program from 7 March. The Swimming Carnival will be held at the Merrimac High School pool on Friday 31 March for Years 4 to 6. Bus costs for this are included in the surfing fees.

FREE Golfing Program
PGA Golf coach Lee Harrington is conducting FREE golf sessions on Friday mornings as part of the Sporting Schools program initiative. The program will continue for six weeks until Friday 17th March. If you would like your child to attend the classes please email Lee at lee@thegolfschool.com.au, call her on 0413163312 or see Mr Singh at school.

STUDENTS OF THE WEEK

Congratulations to the following students of the week:

P&C NEWS

P&C AGM Meeting
Our next P&C meeting on Monday 13 March is our Annual General Meeting. All committee positions will become vacant and a new committee will be elected for the following positions: President, Vice President, Minutes Secretary, Correspondence Secretary and Treasurer. Also we need to elect a Fundraising Coordinator and fill positions on several P&C sub committees. Interested parents are invited to come along and be part of our P&C.

Our P&C do a great job for our school. Please come along and support your child's school.
The meeting will commence at 6.30pm in the school staffroom and all interested parents are invited to attend.

BOOK and UNIFORM SHOP HOURS
MONDAYS - WEDNESDAYS - FRIDAYS
8AM - 9AM

TUCKSHOP NEWS

Tuckshop Roster for week commencing 20 February 2017:

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Volunteers</th>
<th>MEAL DEAL</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mon 20/2</td>
<td>Mayumi</td>
<td>Chicken &amp; Cheese snackwrap (w lite mayo)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tue 21/2</td>
<td>Yoko H</td>
<td>Large muffin</td>
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<tr>
<td>Wed 22/2</td>
<td>Serena, Mel</td>
<td>Mini Calippo</td>
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<tr>
<td>Thu 23/2</td>
<td>Maria S, Mayumi</td>
<td>Bottled Water</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fri 24/2</td>
<td>Mayumi</td>
<td></td>
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* add extra 50c to upgrade to flavoured milk or playwater
* extra $1.00 for large playwater

Many thanks to our wonderful volunteers in our tuckshop and welcome to our new crew members, Serena and Rachel. Your help is greatly appreciated.

Our weekly “Quick Pick” option has really taken off and is so very handy for those extra busy parents requiring a quick meal for their child. New menus are available from either the tuckshop counter or office and online at www.flexischools.com.au. Sign up for quick and easy lunch purchasing. Have a great weekend everyone.

~ Denise ~
A teacher was teaching her class about bullying and gave them the following exercise to perform. She had the children take a piece of paper and told them to crumple it up, stomp on it and really mess it up but be careful not to rip it. Then she had them unfold the paper, smooth it out and look at how scarred and dirty it was. She then told them to tell if they’re sorry. Now even though they said they were sorry and tried to fix the paper, she pointed out all the scars they left behind. And that these scars will never go away no matter how hard they tried to fix it. That is what happens when a child bully’s another child, they may say they’re sorry but the scars are there forever. The looks on the faces of the children in the classroom told her the message hit home.

COMMUNITY NEWS

SPEECH AND DRAMA CLASS - Mondays 3-5pm for Years 1-6 in the Science room. These classes build and improve self confidence and self esteem, leadership techniques and problem solving: important life skills.

- Accelerate and Extend their reading and speaking abilities effectively.
- Have fun learning through storytelling, role playing, improvisation, mime
- Voice care (projection, delivery, enunciation & speech exercises-phonetics/sounds
- Weekly speaking tasks (poems, readings-prose, informal speeches, plays-drama
- Games for listening, observation, focus, & self control, self awareness of feelings

Small limited numbers - $23 per class. Class trials their first 3-4 lessons. Parents welcome to sit in on the class. Structured yearly programme. Enrol now in preparation for future performances and presentations. Phone Karen, on 55461692 / 0438732009 local teacher (36 years) of Communication, Speech & Performance. EMPOWER YOUR CHILD FOR LIFE.

Dear Parents/Caregivers,

Do you have a child going into Year 7 in 2018?

If so, you are invited to attend our Year 7 Expo Evening on Wednesday, 1 March 2017 from 4.30pm to 6.30pm in the school’s Sports Hall.

This Expo Evening will give you and your students the opportunity to find out how you can enrol at our school, learn about our programs and scholarships and talk to staff members.

If you have any questions or require more details on this Expo Evening please contact us on 07 5582 7340 or email enrolments@benowa.shs.qld.edu.au.

FROM THE LITERACY COACH AND MASTER TEACHER

UPCOMING EVENTS

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Wed 22 Feb</td>
<td>School Disco (Week 5)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Thurs 23 Feb</td>
<td>2.00pm Active School Travel meeting</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mon 13 Mar</td>
<td>5.30pm Katsuragi Parent IEC meeting</td>
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<td>Mon 13 Mar</td>
<td>5.45pm MOSHC meeting</td>
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<td>Mon 13 Mar</td>
<td>6.30pm P&amp;C meeting</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mon 13 Mar</td>
<td>Young Leaders Day in Brisbane (4 school leaders)</td>
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<td>Wed 15 Mar</td>
<td>Years 3 to 6 Talent Quest</td>
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<td>Thurs 16 Mar</td>
<td>Last day of Years 3 &amp; 4 Swimming Program</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tues 21 Mar</td>
<td>Last day of Years 5 and 6 Surf Program</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mon 20-22 Mar</td>
<td>Year 4 Camp - 4B, 4D and 4M girls</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mon 22-24 Mar</td>
<td>Year 4 Camp - 4A, 4C and 4M boys</td>
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<tr>
<td>Wed 29 Mar</td>
<td>Parent/Teacher Interviews (3.30pm to 7.30pm)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Fri 31 Mar</td>
<td>Last day of Term One</td>
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<tr>
<td>Fri 31 Mar</td>
<td>Years 4 to 6 Swimming Carnival at Merrimac SHS</td>
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<td>Fri 14 April</td>
<td>Good Friday holiday</td>
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<td>Mon 17 April</td>
<td>Easter Monday</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tues 18 April</td>
<td>First school day of Term Two</td>
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