

PAL (Preps At the Library) Mackay West State School Testimonial

Reading and Literacy are closely linked and is the core business of teachers and co-educators like the staff from the Young Peoples' division of Mackay Regional Council Libraries.

For many years Mackay West State School Junior Library has offered the PAL program to our Prep families.

What is PAL? Every Prep family is encouraged to join their public library, which in our instance, is Mackay Regional Council Libraries. (MRCL) This year we have had a fabulous response with over half of our families applying for a Library card.



What are the mechanics? All families receive a Parent invite attached to a MRCL Membership Application. These are processed by MRCL staff and returned to school for distribution via a MRCL Storytime session at our school.

Why do we do this?

As schools, our primary business is early childhood literacy skills via reading. School and public libraries are in the same business; developing life-long literacy skills. We also share the same clientele as Mackay West students are also the patrons of the MRCL. The commonality of purpose for schools and public libraries has been widely recognised, including by the 2020/2021 Australian Children's Laureate, Ursula Dubosarsky. She is convinced of the benefits of children accessing the amazing reading resources of our public libraries.

"That's why, over my next two years as the Australian Children's Laureate, I am making it my chief purpose to travel the country and urge all the children in Australia to join their local municipal library – actually join up and get their own library card. That is the best thing you can do to make your child a reader. Take them to the library – often – and let them loose among the books." Ursula Dubosarsky.

So to all primary schools, I say, "Get your Prep students joining their public library. Learn from the experience of Mackay West over many successful years. We have so enjoyed our collaborative relationship with MRCL. You will not regret it. Plus we can provide all the documentation to get you started!"

Happy reading to all.

Margaret Spillman

Teacher Librarian.

Mackay West State School