A message from Karen…..

Thanyou- it’s been an honour.

Twenty three years ago I struck gold by being appointed to Altona Green Primary School! My two years of teaching Year 5&6 here were happy times as have been the last 21 years in steering the ship. With this being my last ever newsletter, I leave with a sense of achievement and a great sense of pride.

The students, staff, school councils and school community members who have worked alongside me have been the key players in many of the highlights and developments that stand today, some of which are listed below:

- A strong values-based culture typified by KEFAR.
- A staff culture of professional learning teams who collaborate to improve literacy and numeracy.
- A commitment to the ‘whole child’; social and emotional needs as well as academic.
- A commitment to restorative practices as our way of resolving conflict across our whole school community.
- A commitment to provide the necessary resources for teachers to do their job in the best way for our students.
- A Stephanie Alexander Kitchen Garden Program of which we are most proud.
- A commitment to using our resources to improve facilities eg: Gumbuya, to have the best learning environments for our students.
I have learnt many things with and from, our school community throughout these 23 years:

From our Parents:
- Listen deeply to us, think openly and then act wisely.
- We will come and help when we can.
- Talk to us, communication is important.
- Tell us when our kids are doing the right thing. We all love positives.
- Not all of us barrack for Collingwood so stop going on about them!

From our students:
- Listen to us, we have a voice.
- Ask us how we learn best.
- Put your hands behind your back and let us ‘have a go’. We learn better by doing it ourselves.
- Have faith is us and let us start a new day tomorrow.
- Not all of us barrack for Collingwood so stop going on about them!

Thanks to:
Our staff for their commitment to our school and to our students. Working in a school requires passionate people who are prepared to make the students their number one priority. Without a doubt, I have seen this day in day out at AGPS. It is part of the culture that has been created by THEM. They have set the standard. Collectively they do an outstanding job within our school and make a difference each and every day.

School Councils change over time however the constant theme in all my 23 years of being on School Council here at AGPS is respect. Opinions have been debated and understandings clarified along the way however all our councils have reached decisions that were supported by all, for the good of all students within our school community. There was always a collective responsibility mindset each Monday night and for that I was always extremely grateful. Thank you for assisting me in my work.

I have seen many families come through our school over the last 23 years. We have even started having some former students’ children join us. Strong connections are made with our school as our parent community commit to working in partnership with us. I have never taken this for granted and I have always valued this. I thank you all for your volunteering, attending events, overseeing homework, keeping up with communication, telling us where we need to improve and of course telling us when we have done a good job. Thanks to our Parents’ Club who are there week in week out mustering the troops and assisting in numerous ways.

To all our students, I say thankyou for being you. Sometimes some may have given me sleepless nights but always they have given me so much joy and pride. They have all been individuals but they have all shared the same need - the need to belong. My hope is that they all felt part of the very fabric of the school during my time here and that they will continue to hold fond memories of their primary school days. I will always hold them in my heart.

I take this opportunity to wish Lisa Conibeer and School Council all the very best in the future as you work together to ensure Altona Green Primary School maintains its reputation as a great place to be for all who enter its gates.

Wishing you, as always, a safe and happy Christmas and summer break with your families and friends.

Karen O’Dowd
UNIFORM SHOP

Our uniform shop is open every day during school hours. If you need to purchase uniform we recommend you do it in the next two weeks to beat the end of year rush. We have plenty of stock at the moment.

The last day for uniform sales for 2015 will be Wednesday 16th December.

GOODBYE AND GOOD LUCK

We would like to express our gratitude to Trish Allen who is leaving us next week. Trish has decided to take a break from working in schools to spend time with her family. Trish joined our staff in May, 2001. She first worked as an integration aide before combining that role with her role of overseeing the library. Trish has been a driving force behind Book Week and the Reading Challenge and her newsletter column “Book Talk” has always been a ‘must read’.

We thank her for her commitment and dedication towards the school. So many children have benefited from her care and support over the years, the impact of which is impossible to measure. We wish her a healthy and happy future.
Wellbeing, resilience and our KEFAR values have been promoted within our school through the Bounce Back Program / Friendly School and Families Program. The children were exposed to many values, concepts and skills within the programs. A forum was formed of P-6 children last week to discuss what they have learnt throughout the year. These are the words out of the mouths of children:-

**Preps & Juniors**
- It’s OK to be nice.
- Be nice.
- Manners.
- Kindness.
- Good choices.
- I love being nice.
- Filling up buckets.
- Different colours.
- Do not push.
- Feelings of people.
- See a teacher.
- It’s ok to be different.
- Helping.
- Make friends.
- How to work together.
- Respect others.
- Values.
- Do not talk when a teacher is.
- Show KEFER values.
- We are nice.
- Meeting new people.
- Co-operate.
- Supporting others.
- We all have choices.
- Being a good friend.
- If you need someone you can talk to your mum, dad or teacher.

**MIDDLES**
- Don’t talk over others.
- NEVER bully anyone.
- Don’t tease people.
- Bullying is OFF!
- Use KEFAR values at all times.
- Don’t push other people around.
- Kindness is the key.
- If you see a person with no friends play with them.
- Talk to an adult if you are getting bullied.
- Be happy, not snappy.
- Stand up for yourself.
- Don’t be in a group that is bullying others.
- Never give up.
- Attentive listening.
- Nobody is perfect.
- No put downs.
- Don’t be shy.
- Step in and help.
- Don’t give in to bullies.
- It’s OK to be the best.

**SENIORS**
- Don’t lie if you are in the circle.
- Accept who you are.
- Respect others how you want to be treated.
- Don’t be a bully.
- Stand up for people.
- It’s OK to be different.
- It will be boring if we were all the same.
- Include everyone.
- Don’t hate.
- Be fair to others.
- Be honest.
- Don’t be a bystander—ACT!
- By yourself.
- Don’t brag about what you have.
- Be awesome.
- Share feelings.
- Why fit in, when you are born to stand up.
- Don’t pressure people to do things they do not want to.
- Don’t click on pop ups.
- Don’t go on websites you don’t know.