

St Margaret's celebrates Book Week

Children's Book Week is a highly anticipated event for St Margaret's primary school and this year was no exception as students paraded their costumes in celebration of literature and bringing their favourite stories to life.

This year's Book Week theme was 'Old Worlds, New Worlds and Other Worlds' and students could either choose to dress in a costume relating to the theme or as their favourite book character.

According to Head of Primary Angela Drysdale the impacts of Book Week on children's relationship with reading are profound. "One of the greatest gifts we can give a child is a love of reading: firstly, for the joy and, secondly for the implications it has on a child's academic and social growth.

"Book Week is a wonderful opportunity to not only celebrate and connect with books and favourite book characters but also to showcase the wonder and joy of reading," Angela said.

"A love of reading comes from the joy of books. From the time you pick up the book by its cover, enticed by the blurb and hold it in your hands, the reader is connected. The enjoyment of reading a book can never be underestimated."

The students revelled in the opportunity to express their individuality through their favourite stories. Some spellbinding students dressed as Hermione from the Harry Potter series while there were several renowned characters from Roald Dahl classics including Matilda, Willy Wonka himself and Willy Wonka bars. Dr Seuss characters also featured with Cindy Lou from *The Grinch* and Thing 1 and Thing 2 making an appearance. There were New World characters like everyone's favourite Australian heelers Bluey and Bingo, Old World characters including Coco Chanel, a knight, Paddington Bear and Little Red Riding Hood and other world characters such as fairies, princesses, witches and even Darth Vader.

Angela said instilling an early love of reading in children was important for their literacy and language development.

"Reading for ten minutes a day shapes a child's future by benefitting their performance in general knowledge, vocabulary, reading comprehension, verbal fluency, and spelling, which are linked to improved measures on a child's academic success," Angela said.

During Book Week, there were several other opportunities to celebrate the importance of reading. In the primary school, Book Parade coincided with a Book Swap where the St Margaret's community was invited to purchase pre-loved books in support of National Indigenous Literacy Day. Indigenous Literacy Day is organised by the Indigenous Literacy Foundation to advocate for equal access to literacy resources for remote Indigenous communities. To conclude the week, students were invited to donate books for the Primary Book Swap with the proceeds from any book sales again donated to the Indigenous Literacy Foundation.

The Year 2s celebrated with the Preps during a storytelling visit in which they shared a story using their most animated voices and actions, while the Year 6 students enjoyed a virtual presentation from author in residence and bestselling writer of the popular *Alice Miranda* series, Jacqueline Harvey.

In the secondary school, students celebrated with the Maggies Short Story competition, a Teachers' Shelfies Competition and poetry writing and a poetry garden outside Ms Café.

Since 1945, the Children's Book Council of Australia has brought children and books together across Australia through Book Week.