



PERTAME SCHOOL

SEMESTER 1 NEWSLETTER

JUNE 2024



Pertame School Community Christmas party at Alice Springs Town Pool

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WERTA!

Welcome to our first newsletter of 2024!

This newsletter is to keep everyone updated on a quarterly basis on what the Pertame School has been up to. Firstly, we would like to acknowledge the many Pertame Elders who have kept our endangered language alive so we can see our language thrive again and honour the legacy of our ancestors and family members who have since passed.

The Pertame School is a community-led language revival program empowering Pertame Elders to pass their severely endangered language and cultural knowledge onto the next generations. We grow the next generation of new fluent speakers and community leaders to create a thriving, connected and strong Pertame community.

Warning: This newsletter contains images of people who have passed away

Language Nest staff Christmas party



Pertame 2023 Christmas party

We had a beautiful last day of the Language Nest for 2023 with our Elders, staff, nanas, parents and babies. A well deserved celebration to end the year where the Pertame School launched the first total Immersion Language Nest in Australia. Our little ones have made us so proud, growing and thriving in their Pertame language. In just 10 months of our immersion program, we are seeing our babies understand and reply to us in Pertame sentences. We are sad to see three of our Language Nest students leave us for primary school next year, but we know that the strength and identity they have gained from language immersion will empower them for the rest of their education journey. One day we dream that we will be able to provide Pertame immersion for our children's entire education.



Pertame children graduating from the Nest



We also held a community wide christmas party at the Alice Springs Town Pool with over 80 Pertame community members present. All children graduated the Pertame School for the year, shaking their Elders hands as they received their certificate.







Mount Isa Pertame Classes

In January our Pertame Staff Member Shania Armstrong ran a week long Pertame Language Workshop in Mount Isa for the Pertame families over in QLD. The Workshop classes for the Adults were held on Monday-Wednesday and the children attended on Thursday and Friday. The Adults were taught the overview of the Pertame Fluency System. The children were taught Pertame through Songs, physical activities and arts and craft.





Continuing the Language Nest

It's been a busy and productive semester for our little ones in the Language Nest, the first total immersion playgroup in Australia. A Language Nest creates a space where young children can be raised in their Indigenous language through meaningful and culturally-relevant interaction with fluent Elders and community educators, where all communication and activities will be carried out in Pertame. English is left at the door. We are aiming to raise our Pertame babies as first language fluent speakers once again, as our Elders were raised.

The children have been learning about different themes throughout the year. So far we have learnt the different words for Arlta and Ingwal (day and night), with different activities which they have enjoyed. Our Nest is looking very nicely decorated with suns and moons made by the kids. Also our kids are learning more words with words they already know.

The focus theme for the month is: Thip (birds), which will see the kids and mums learning about the names of different birds that we see on Pertame country.



In March our Pertame Language Nest was proud to host First Nations visitors from across America, including Diné, Prairie Band Potawatomi, Cherokee and Bemidji Minnesota First Nations. We exchanged handmade native seed gifts our Pertame teenagers crafted, and shared children's songs in our Indigenous Languages. The Pertame School is proud to be a part of the Lego Foundation's Learning Through Play International Network of First Nations community-led work.



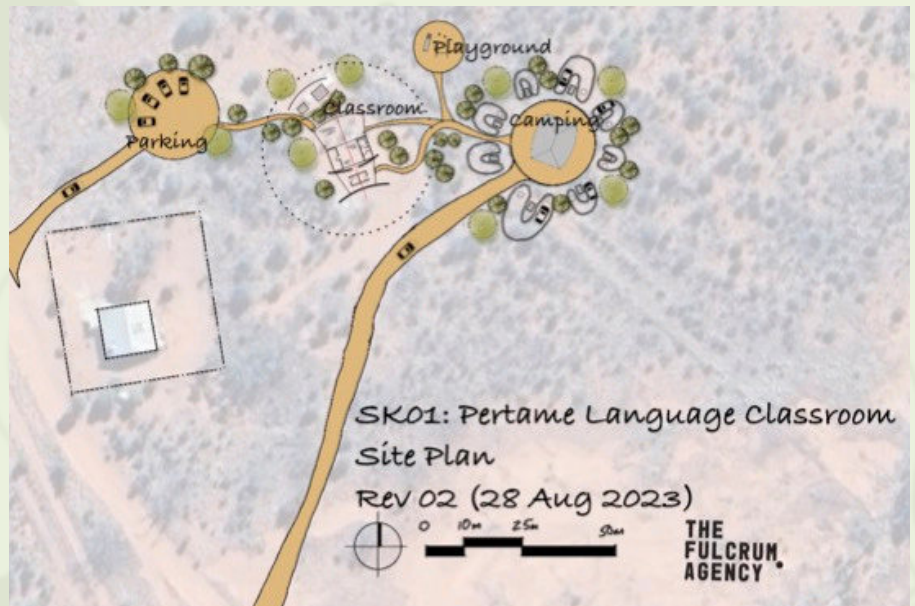




On Country Classroom Construction

After our successful crowdfunder in 2023, the Pertame School raised over \$100,000 to make our Elder's dream come true, to build an on-country classroom. Thanks to the hundreds of generous donors that believed in us! Pertame community members Sharlene, Bruce, Dillon, Tenielle and more have been working hard to bring this classroom to life. They have now put up the roof and concrete floor between two renovated storage containers. These containers will be our storage area, in-door classroom and kitchen. The outdoor sheltered area will be where we teach the children, looking out onto their country

We have some extremely exciting news! The Pertame School has partnered up with the Fulcrum Agency, an architectural practice, who applied for a grant to build a large classroom on the homeland Boomerang Bore on the



Pertame School's behalf. This grant has been successful! The Pertame community will form a classroom Project Advisory Group made up of representatives from all the different Pertame family groups. This committee will directly advise the Fulcrum Agency in ensuring the build of the classroom meets the needs of the Pertame community, that the rights of the Boomerang community are protected and that all families have equal access to this classroom for all Pertame people.





Fluency Transfer System

The Pertame School is currently developing its own Fluency Transfer System Curriculum (FTS) supported by the Salish School of Spokane, a First Nations Immersion school running from preschool to grade 8 in Washington USA. The model has been hugely successful at creating advanced fluent speakers in their community, that have then gone on to teach in their immersion school. The fluency transfer system (FTS) has six textbooks that are divided into beginner, intermediate and advance language and story books. It uses immersion, Elder audio recordings and traditional stories to teach language at the level of each learner.

After attending a Language Immersion Symposium in Montana hosted by the Salish School of Spokane, the Pertame School has developed and finalized the Beginners Fluency Transfer Language Book 1 in Pertame, complete with 50 lessons, homework and Elder audio recordings accessible online here: <https://www.pertameschool.org/fts>

Pertame Language Nest uses the FTS to develop the fluency of our parent educators and support staff, so they can teach in an immersion environment and continue to raise their children in Pertame in their homes. All staff spend half their day in the Language Nest with the babies, and then rotate into classes learning the FTS.

This year the Pertame School has been developing the Beginner Stories segment of the FTS, which teaches learners how to say sentences in Pertame by memorising short Traditional Stories using illustrations. Working with Elder Doreen Abbott, we have recorded and illustrated 16 traditional Pertame stories. See some of the beautiful illustrations by Chris Ng on the right. The pictures also make great story books for the children in the Language Nest, who love learning their creation stories.





School Holiday and After School Program

“Each Wednesday afternoon myself and my cousin Shania run an after school program to keep our language thriving within the primary school aged kids. Our Activities include mperrka marra-irrem (basic feel good body stretches) , arlta lyart wenha ngirra (How's the day today - weather), minperra mparem (painting), native animals, plants etc, and outdoor activities to keep our Pertame kids active. We provide healthy meals to ensure that they're getting the right nutritions after a long day at school.

My favourite part is when we're happily singing Werta Wara at the end. It gives me the satisfaction that the kids have had a good afternoon”

- Sashanna Armstrong, Language Nest Parent Educator



At our Pertame After school program Pertame Elder Judy Swan comes in to teach our Pertame teenagers how to make native seed jewellery. Our young people will be selling their Jewellery this year at NAIDOC to raise funds for the school.





Bush Tucker Garden

We are excited to announce that we now have our very own bush tucker garden at our Language Nest at Yipirinya School. In May our Pertame children planted the first seeds in our garden bed, painted the plant labels and will now get to watch as their bush tucker grows.

Since colonisation, the introduction of buffell grass and climate change, many Pertame bush foods are near impossible to find. Despite this, we want our Pertame children to see their ancestor's important food and medicine sources everyday, to watch them grow and to know their Pertame names and uses. Bush foods are an important part of Pertame culture and language, so we are growing our own so our children don't have to miss out.

A huge thank you to Jorgen Doyle from Centralian Seedlings for building our garden bed, providing the seeds and guiding our children through the planting process. And another huge thank you to Groundswell Giving for supporting this beautiful project connecting Language, land and sustainability 🌱





Pertame 2030 Strategy Retreat

Last month the Pertame community came together over a historic two days to collectively create a 5 year vision and strategy for what the Pertame School will achieve by 2030. The Pertame School started in 2016 when our founders, Christobel Swan and G Stewart, showed the Fouress Foundation their homeland, and told them about their dream to start a language school for the next generations. From there the Pertame School was seeded. From on-country camps, to language classes, to a Master-Apprentice program, and now the first true Language Nest in Australia, the Pertame School has gone from strength to strength.

As our School continues to rapidly grow, we knew it was time we bring our Pertame community together, and get clear on a path forward for our language as one. At This Strategic Plan retreat, we mapped out where we are, where we came from and where want to go in the future. We decided as a community what matters the most, what we need to do to get there, and how we can resource it. We had some tough conversations, and laid down our priorities to ensure every Pertame family is a part of our dream.

A huge thanks to all our Pertame Elders who were in the room or were there with us in spirit. We are standing on the shoulders of giants. Thanks to all the community who paused their lives for two days to have input into the School's vision. Thanks to our facilitators Arielle and Aaron who did an incredible job at holding space for our community. Thanks to Treat Me Good for catering our event and Dillon, Richard and Tenielle for cooking the Kangaroo tails. Thanks to Batchelor Institute for hosting us and Josie, Melissa and the Batchelor library for caring for the children.

We are excited to share our 5 Year Strategic Plan with our supporters, partners and community - stay posted!







Aotearoa Immersion Cultural Exchange

In June a team from the Pertame Language Nest including two coordinators, 2 parent educators, 2 Elders and 3 babies travelled to Aotearoa (New Zealand) to learn from the most successful Indigenous Language Revival movement in the world. We were graciously hosted by Toi Matarua, a Māori youth leadership program the Pertame School connected with through the Lego Foundation.

The Language Nest model was born in Aotearoa. 40 years later, Māori children now have the option of attending total Indigenous language Immersion schooling from preschool to Higher education tertiary studies. The Pertame School had the opportunity to visit Language Nests (Kōhanga Reo) and an Immersion school (Kura kaupapa Māori) where Māori children are surrounded by only their language throughout their entire educational journey. We created deep international connections which will allow us to continue to run the first Language Nest in Australia, and start the first immersion primary school in Australia.



Pertame School and Toi Matarua at Te Kura o Te Koutu Total Immersion Māori School, which enrolls over 300 students from 5 to 18 years old.

My trip to New Zealand was so amazing and a beautiful country, I met so many wonderful people who really love their culture and keeping it strong. I love how the younger generation are so passionate about who they are and where they're from. They have really inspired me to bring back teaching to these younger generations of the Pertame mob. Because I want our language to be as strong as it was in the past and to be as strong for our Future.

- Renae Coull, Language Nest Parent Educator

Pertame parents and babies visited the Te Kōhanga Reo o Keita Pūiri rava ko Language Nest in Napier. It is one of the hundreds of total immersion preschools in the country. Our children fitted right in, and the wonderful staff gave us insight and advice on our Language Nest journey





"The trip to NZ was the first time I went overseas and a very new experience for myself, the only time I travelled on the plane was to Melbourne with the Pertame School. The people I met in NZ were very welcoming, kind and hospitable in allowing us to stay in the homes and their Marae. When we visited their Language Nest, I loved seeing the little ones talking their language and not using English. They showed us their traditional country, the rainforest country which was lovely and green. The Elders of their country welcomed us and made us feel comfortable.

The things I got out of the trip was Elders being strong and how proud they were of the teenagers in their community and how much respect they showed towards their Elders and their culture. I want to bring back their advice of keeping the teenagers on the right track and put it back into my home and community with more bush camps and teaching teenagers how to look for bush foods and keep them connected to their country and language.

It was a wonderful experience and something that I will keep close to me, especially meeting people so strong with culture and language and how they look after their families and visitors"

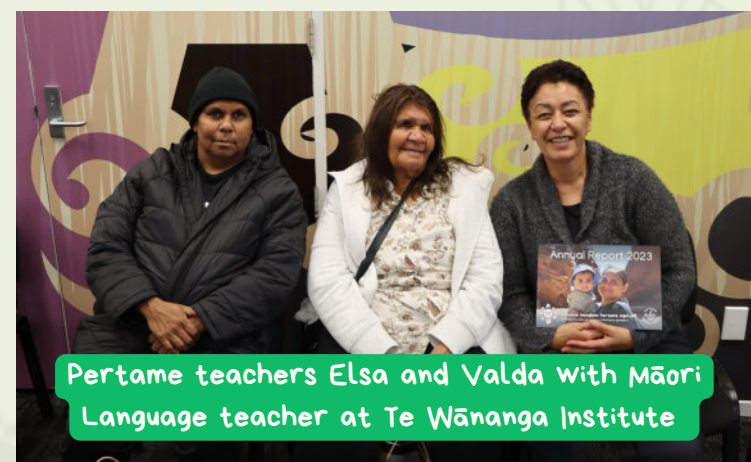
- Elsa Swan, Pertame Grandmother Supporter

It was my first time going overseas to go to New Zealand. It was an honour to be hosted by First Nations of another Country. During our trip, I learnt that we are all very similar but slightly different in some ways with our traditions and customs. Deep down, I felt right at home but only I was thousands of kilometers away from my actual home.

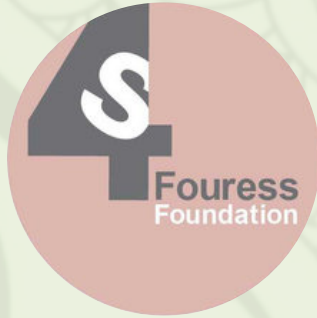
It was amazing to see how Māori prioritise the importance of culture and language in schools, tertiary education, landmarks, etc, as well as looking after their families, especially their Elders. What had touched my heart was they had allowed and trusted us to stay in their Maraes. Marae's are very important to the Māori people and they utilise it for all kinds of events. At the Kohanga Reo visit, my boys fitted right in and enjoyed every moment. I'm glad I got to meet educators in an Indigenous language only place - it is rare where I'm from. I often get asked what's a "language nest".

The Māori people had inspired me to be determined and dedicated to continue working on my Pertame language learning journey and make my family proud, as the Māori Elders were of the generations after them. I want to raise my boys to be strong, respectful, resilient and proud of who they are, as much as the youths we had met and spent our week with.

- Sashanna Armstrong, Language Nest Parent Educator



Marra Nthurra Tyenha Nwernaka Thank You Funders & Partners



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