

Pete's Page

Hello Kids,

Last month I got a letter from Sister Ignatius of Our Lady of Compassion Aborigines Mission, Wilcannia. She told about the Mission's health clinic, pre-school centre and junior school which have been on the Reserve since the beginning of 1966.

The Wilcannia "littlies" certainly must have a great time at the Mission schools. Each morning Sisters Mark, Ignatius and Urban pick up the children in the school bus and drive them to school.

The childrens' day begins with flavoured milk and vitamin tablets, and some have a shower in the health clinic. Each child is given his own towel, mug and toothbrush.

Sister Ignatius said that the neat appearance of many of the children was a credit to the way their mothers were co-operating with the Sisters.

Learning to look after the new furniture and attractive equipment is an important part of the training of pre-school and junior school children. The kids especially like the big-enough-to-sit-in wooden play trucks.

The health centre treats those who need first aid, and more serious cases are taken to the local hospital and the Flying Doctor Service.

The Sisters also hope to help the mothers of the children as much as they can. They will help them care for their babies and teach them the various ways of preventing disease.

Money from the Aborigines Welfare Board and the Catholic Church enabled the health clinic to be built and the Mission to be improved in other ways.

The Wilcannia Mission is just one of several pre-schools in New South Wales where young Aboriginal children are given a head-start in their future schooling.

Don't forget to write to me, boys and girls. I'm sure other children would like to read what you write to *Dawn*. My address is: Pete, c.o. Dawn Magazine, 121 Macquarie Street, Sydney, 2000.

'Bye for now, kids,

See you next month,

Pete



Top: Jeffrey Whyman, Kenny Hunter, Nicki Hunter and Stephen Burke wait for their turn as Spark Hunter takes his tonic

Middle: The kids at Wilcannia Mission line up for their flavoured milk and vitamins at the beginning of their school day

Bottom: Cheryl Smith, Joyce Bugmy, Selina Burke and Trevor Whyman do their sums with the help of Cuisenaire rods