



You can count Swan Hill in

Students at St Mary's Primary School practising the song 'Let It Play' for this year's Music: Count Us In event.

JADE BATE

ON Thursday November 3, at exactly 12.30pm, something very special will occur at more than 2000 schools all around Australia, and two schools in Swan Hill will be part of the action.

St Mary's Primary School and Swan Hill Specialist School will join half a million children to perform the same song at the same time as part of the Music: Count Us In event.

Music: Count Us In is an initiative that began 10 years ago to promote the importance of teaching music in schools and to create an event in which children felt as though they were part of something bigger.

This year's Program Song is 'Let Us Play' which was written by four students with assistance of musicians John Foreman and Jay Laga'aia.

Music teacher at St Mary's, Janine Dow, said the event was a great way to celebrate her school's music program.

"This is the sixth year we've participated in Music: Count Us In.

"All 500 kids at our school - from prep to year six - will be participating.

"It's been great for our kids to learn these new songs, they really enjoy knowing that they are a part of something bigger," she said.

She said the event also provided the children with learning to think about music analytically.

"We encourage the kids to analyse and deconstruct the song," she said.

This is the second year Swan Hill Specialist School has participated in the event and music teacher, Jess Scott, said this year they're doing things a little differently to the other schools.

"We have divided the kids into two groups, singing and band, and we're also incorporating Auslan into the performance.

"It's a great event that makes people more aware about how important music is in

schools.

"Although it's been a bit harder with the two different groups, these kids are capable of doing a lot of amazing things," she said.

Music: Count Us In 2016 mentor, Jay Laga'aia, said the event was an important way to encourage kids to learn music.

"The great thing about music is that you don't have to speak the same language to understand the intention of the piece.

"Our young are great at expressing their feelings and it is my job as the Music: Count Us In mentor to encourage them to paint their word pictures and inspire others to do the same," he said.



Students at Swan Hill Specialist School will participate in this year's Music: Count Us In event.