Principal’s Message

A poignant Dawn Service to remember

On the morning of April 24 at 6am, over 300 Castle Hill High School teachers, students, parents and community members came together to commemorate the centenary of ANZAC in our school auditorium. This was a very special service. The hall was sensitively and carefully lit with candles complementing a backdrop of atmospheric music and slides of the past, prior to the commencement of the service, at dawn. The catafalque entry began the service, appropriately sombre. Alannah Mitrovich, Caleb Davidson, David Kim, Joel Randall and Garrett Swearingham entered in their cadet uniforms, marching to the dais where they stood for the entire ceremony, heads bowed. Stephen Hall and Demi McFarlane, our School Captains, chaired proceedings from this point beginning with a commemorative address from Mr Bill Strutton, retired Warrant Officer whose service included postings to Korea, Vietnam and
Singapore. Mr Strutton spoke passionately about the impact of war and the importance for this lucky country to continue its traditions of respect and gratitude for the many men and women who sacrificed so much. Hanni Qureshi (Year 8) and Lola Wilson (Year 7) whose great grandfather Thomas Gilbert fought at Gallipoli, read a recently discovered poem, written by him, detailing the gruelling and heart-felt trials of war. This very personal reflection touched the audience. Hannah Spinks then read an address which reflected the hope and optimism so often found in this country, a timely reminder to us all that we do live in the best country in the world. Wreaths were laid by members of our community prior to the recitation of the Ode of Remembrance and the Last Post, played powerfully by Mario Echevaria in Year 9. Following a minute’s silence and the dismounting of the catafalque party, the audience moved to the flag pole where the flag was lowered and more wreaths were laid.

Finally, a sumptuous breakfast was served in the gymnasium for those in attendance at the ceremony.

The morning was so moving and poignant, reflecting the school’s commitment to honour those who died in wars generally, but at Gallipoli specifically. Tragically, these ceremonies draw attention to the futility of war, the utter waste in human life and potential and our inability as a society to find resolution to issues. It seems that we haven’t learned.

Ms Catherine Kenna, Mr John Wright, Ms Debbie Boss and Ms Alex Kenworthy are to be thanked for their superb organisation and commitment to excellence in bringing our community together for an unforgettable commemoration.

Relay for Life
On May 16 and 17 the annual Relay for Life continues to raise awareness and funds for cancer research. This is not only a wonderful Hills community event but an important event for Castle Hill High School. Our very busy P and C works with us to ensure that participants are fed and watered and that plenty of support is on tap. In recent years for example, they have purchased a tent and other sundry equipment to reflect the picnic atmosphere and attend to the many needs of participants. This year we’re hoping for a bumper turn out and, as always, we do hope that Mr Gainey continues the tradition of sleeping over. There will be more about Relay for Life in the next issue of Drawbridge.

Athletics Carnival
The annual athletics carnival will be held at Rooty Hill Sports Stadium on Friday May 8. As always we’re hoping for a warm winter’s day to complement the carnival atmosphere and the healthy competitive spirit amongst the sports houses.

Bon voyage
I am feeling very privileged to be able to travel these days. To do this I am taking a few weeks away from school. I’ll be flying out of Sydney, Paris-bound on Thursday April 30 ready for some exploring and stimulation. Switzerland and Italy also beckon. I’ll try to enjoy!

Ms Anna Girginis will be Relieving Principal, Ms Di King will be Relieving Deputy Principal and Ms Alison Bourke will be Relieving Head Teacher Science, while I’m away. I’m so pleased to give these highly competent people an opportunity to taste another role. I know you are in good hands with them.

Hairspray
You can tell we’re in musical mode. There’s a hive of activity, lots of rehearsals, some panic of course, costumes galore, hoarse voices and that lovely theatrical hysteria when there is a show about to take place. We all love it.

Opening night is on Wednesday May 27, followed by evening performances on Friday May 29 and Saturday May 30. I have no doubt that Jo Spinks and the entire “Hairspray” team working will have great success.

Good luck everyone.

Vicki Brewer
Canteen Winter Menu 2015

**CONGRATULATIONS!!!!**

Kaylyn Nicol - (Year 9) has qualified to represent NSW at the Australian Gymnastics Championships, to be held in Melbourne in May.

Can I take this opportunity to wish her good luck and we look forward to hearing all about this experience on her return. Good Luck Kaylyn!!

Sharon Shaw
Year 9 Advisor
Castle Hill High School

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**Centenary of ANZAC**

25 April 2015 was, of course, the Centenary of ANZAC. This presented us all with a once in a lifetime opportunity to celebrate a foundational memory of our nation as well as to gratefully remember and recognize the service, sacrifice and suffering which cemented its place in our collective imagination.

On Friday 24 April, Castle Hill High School conducted two memorial services: a Dawn Service and a School Assembly. Both of these represented sincere and moving acts of commemoration. A sense of occasion and respect for the ANZAC tradition was palpable at both.

For the families who contributed to making this such a special and successful occasion, we would like to say ‘Thank you!’. Haani Qureshi and Lola Wilson contributed a very moving reading of a poem written by their great grandfather, Thomas Gilbert Harris, accompanied by photographs and documents depicting his war service at Gallipoli. Thank you also to the Grierson family for providing images of their great grandfathers, Fabian Sherwin who served in WWI and Ray Heather in WWII. We would also like to thank Ms Kenworthy who used these artefacts to produce a wonderful display in the foyer, which can now be viewed in the school’s Art Gallery.

We would particularly like to express our sincere thanks to Mr Bill Strutton for his faithful advocacy on behalf of veterans in our school and so many others over the last 15 years.

Thanks also to the many students and staff who worked hard on stage and behind the scenes to deliver a seamless operation which allowed the audience to focus their attention firmly upon the ANZACS. Particular thanks to our Captains, Demi McFarlane and Stephen Hall, for acting as Masters of Ceremony with such dignity and to Hannah Spinks for her moving reading.

For the many people who made the effort to be present at the Dawn Service, Eric Barton’s words, so beautifully read by Hannah, are worth remembering:

“To those of you who have made a special effort to rise early on this morning and show your understanding of ANZAC and what it truly means, I want to say on behalf of all Veterans and serving soldiers, sailors and airmen — thank you. Thank you for helping us celebrate this one day of the year at least when we pay homage and remembrance to our comrades and mates who are not with us today. I hope you will take home something from our Dawn Service today and seriously consider what the ANZAC tradition of service means to you and to our nation as a whole.”

Mr John Wright
HSIE Teacher
Canteen Winter Menu 2015

RELAY FOR LIFE A GREAT COMMUNITY EFFORT

Everyone knows someone that has been touched by cancer, and The Hills Relay for Life is a wonderful way to provide an opportunity to celebrate the memory of loved ones lost to cancer or for those who have overcome cancer or are undergoing treatment.

My name is Tracey Garnett, I first got involved in Relay for Life after my father-in-law lost his battle to cancer just before I was married. A friend of mine had also lost a close friend around that time, and she decided to enter a team into the first Hills Relay for Life more than 14 years ago. My friend and her husband walked over 180km in 20hrs and raised $13500.

I remember the event well. I was six months pregnant, the heavens delivered a torrential rain and Castle Hill showground was a boggy mess, but I went to support my friends as they walked all night. Support through the night is essential to the participants, as it gives them encouragement, reassurance and inspiration through the long, dark and often wet hours.

After being run at the Showground for many years the event moved to Wrights Road at Kellyville a few years ago, and has grown in support considerably. It is wonderful to see people of all ages within our community come together and participate for the 24 hour relay to raise money for such a worthy cause.

I am honoured to represent the P & C who are working together with the staff at Castle Hill High to coordinate the school’s participation for this years event.

We need your help. Parents form an important part of the overall team by providing a break out tent, or “post” supervised by parent volunteers. This post allows the high school participants to leave their belongings in a safe place, and rest during the 24 hours of walking if need be.

IIts a wonderful atmosphere and the kids enjoy being part of making a difference.

Volunteering can involve preparation and provision of food and water for the walkers, serving a supervision shift during the event, or even just helping set up and take down the tent for the team.

If you would like to be involved, for any length of time it would be greatly appreciated. The P&C will be putting together a roster of parent volunteers, so if you can help out please contact me.

TRACEY GARNETT, Relay for Life Co-ordinator, Castle Hill High School P & C.

Where: Wrights Road Reserve - Kellyville
When: Saturday 16th to Sunday 17th May 2015.
Times: The Relay commences 10am Saturday 16th May and concludes 10am Sunday 17th May.

How can I help?

- To supervise the Marquee Area: We need parent volunteers to remain in the CHHS allocated area to ensure the students belongings are as secure as possible;

- To assist students - encouraging individual goals and supervising tallying laps for each student;

- Volunteer to bring cut fresh fruit and bottles of water to keep the students nourished during their walk;

To volunteer or for more information please email chhspc@gmail.com or traceyg@isp.net.au with how you can help, and times available.
Winter Uniforms

Winter Uniforms are worn in Terms 2 and 3. The new Jackets are selling fast and keeping students warm and dry. Wool Jumpers are in stock. Cotton Jumpers will be available next week.

Winter Uniform Price List

Junior Girls:
- Short Sleeved Blouse: $40.00
- Long Sleeved Blouse: $45.00
- Tab Tie: $5.00
- Royal Skirt Year 7 - 10: $65.00
- Black Tights: $10.00

Junior Boys:
- Short Sleeved Shirt: $40.00
- Long Sleeved Shirt: $45.00
- Grey Trousers: $35.00

Senior Boys:
- Navy Trousers: $50.00
- Long Sleeve Shirt: $45.00

Common items:
- Jumpers are available in either Wool or Cotton blend Jumper
- size 10 - 16: $70.00
- size 18 - 24: $75.00
- Navy Blazer: $130.00
- Fleece Scarves: $10.00

NEW
- Fleece Lined Jackets: $75.00

Second Hand Uniforms - Do you have uniforms your child has grown out of? Uniforms in good condition are always welcomed as donations to the Uniform Shop. Uniforms can be left at the School Reception if the shop is closed.

The Uniform Shop is always looking for volunteers to help students and families with their purchases in the shop. If you are interested in joining our team please come in and talk to us, or leave your number at Reception.

Term 2 Opening Hours for the Uniform Shop
Monday and Friday
8.15 - 11.30
What’s Happening in the Canteen?

The canteen has experienced a very busy start to the new term. The new winter menu is up and running but just in case anyone missed it, a copy has been included with this newsletter.

Please note that there are some price increases for some food items. The canteen continues to ensure that food prices stay at affordable levels but some increases are necessary to reflect our supplier costs.

Placing a lunch order - either in person at the canteen, before school, or online through Flexischools - is the best way of ensuring you get exactly what you want for lunch.

Over the counter sales will always be available but with the high demand for some food items ordering is the only way to avoid disappointment!

Joanna Sutherland
Canteen Manager

New Winter Menu
is published at the end of this newsletter
**Concert Band News**

CHHS *Concert Band* members had a very busy finish to term 1 with two major events in the final week of school. Firstly, students from CHHS joined with guest students from Muirfield HS and Crestwood HS to workshop and perform an Earth Hour ‘Concert For The Planet’, performing Gustav Holst’s *The Planets Suite* in its entirety. This performance was joined by thousands of other musicians in a live stream, including staff from NASA’s Rocket Science Division in Langley, playing along with the Sydney Symphony Orchestra.

It was an intense and rewarding experience with students gaining a valuable insight into what it must be like to play in one of the world’s premier Symphony Orchestras.

Less than two days later our *Concert and* followed up with a full day trip visiting three local primary schools as part of the schools’ *Linkages* program.

Thirty CHHS students visited, workshoped and performed with senior students from Samuel Gilbert, Glenhaven and Castle Hill Public Schools with repertoire ranging from Tchaikovsky’s famous *1812 Overture* through to a sneaky medley from *Hairspray* promoting the school musical later this year.

A big thank you to Mrs Danckert for giving up her time on the weekend to help with the Earth Hour ‘Concert For The Planet’ and to Mr Powning for driving the bus on our Day Trip.

Congratulations *Concert Band* and all the best for your next major performances later this year at the Ryde Eisteddfod, Relay For Life and Orange Blossom Festival.

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Steven Lavis  
**Music Director – Teaching Services Australia**
News from the library

Our ANZAC day theme
We have been having an ANZAC day theme in our library to start term 2. We have a large book display featuring books that relate to Australia’s involvement in war, specifically WWI, WWII and the Vietnam War. We also have historic recruitment posters from WWI and II on display around the library.

There are some wonderful fiction books written by Australian authors that bring to life Australian stories from the wars. A new book to be featured in our display is “1915” by Sally Murphy. The blurb on the back reads:

“When Australia throws its support behind Britain in its fight against Germany, young teacher Stan Moore is one of the first to join up, swapping the classroom for adventure in Europe. But the 11th Battalion is sent with the newly formed Anzac Corp to Gallipoli where Stan is confronted by the hard lessons of war. Though conditions are dismal and death is everywhere, so is the humour and bravery that is the true spirit of Anzac.

Students have been enjoying making paper poppies at lunch time to add to our Library NZAC wreath. It is wonderful to see students contributing to our CHHS community in this way.

Lucky Library Competition extended until 1 May.
In celebration of St Patrick’s Day last term we have been holding a Lucky Library Competition. Students complete an entry form with a short review of the book they have read to enter. As the week one Assembly was cancelled, I have extended entries for the competition until Friday 1 May, and will announce the three winners at the week 3 Assembly. Students could win one of three Dymocks gift cards to the value of $20 or $15.
Bankstown Airport Excursion Report

Where did you go?
Bankstown airport

What did you see?
We saw small planes up close, including their instruments and control surfaces, as well as the innards of planes undergoing maintenance such as their engines, which were opened up and exposed.

What did you do?
We entered the cockpits of both a small, single engine plane and a larger twin engine plane and fiddled around with the controls, including the aircraft’s instruments. We also did some pre-flight checks such as checking for cracks in the propeller, measuring the quantities of fuel and oil and checking for water contamination in the fuel. Later we went over and toured the maintenance hangar. Afterwards we went up to the control tower which had an excellent view of the entire airport. They weren’t too busy at the time and were given a description of what everyone’s job was.

What new things did you learn?
We learnt that the first thing a pilot must do upon entering a plane is to turn on the strobe light to warn others. We learnt how helicopters taxi, how the control tower’s operations are split into parts, having one person in charge of each aspect such as: ground, circuit, departures and arrivals. We also learnt how fuels are coloured in order to be able to differentiate them.

Best part of the day?
The best part of the day for me was both going to the maintenance hangar and going up into the control tower. In the maintenance hangar seeing all those aircrafts both big and small opened up and exposed was amazing. Going up into the control tower the view was superb, you could see everything and seeing how much constant attention it needs really makes you appreciate the work they do.

By Wyatt Rey
Musical Tickets on sale Monday 4 May from Room 1.

$18.00 for adults                $10 for students/concession
$50.00 for Family Ticket (2 Adults and 2 Students/Concessions)

Matinee: Tuesday 26 May  10am    Thursday 28 May  10am
Wednesday 27 May Opening Night 7.30pm
Friday 29 May 7.30pm
Saturday 30 May 7.30pm
The month of April features two high quality and extremely creative digital images. Each achieved first prize in their category at the Castle Hill Show 2015. Alex Limberger of Year 10 with his photograph “Rottweiler” has captured a memorable image of his pet thoughtfully gazing at him. The black and white background fading into the distance enhances and contrasts the colour of the dog. Patricia Tuivai of Year 9 produced a stunning monochrome “Close-up” image of vegetation taken on the school grounds. The zoomed-in, low angled shot displays a slightly altered view of a plant that is often unnoticed but interesting when viewed from this perspective.

The “Photograph of the month” competition is starting in Term 2 and as previously mentioned in the newsletter, Volume 4 we are starting an all-school photography competition to run each term. Our photography competition for Term 2 will be based on the theme CARE OF SELF – CARE OF OTHERS and will be judged on the creative interpretation of the theme and technical accomplishment. All students are encouraged to enter. Please submit an A4, photo quality print to Mrs Jones in the Art staffroom by Thursday of Week 8, June 11. There will be exciting prizes on offer!
## CALENDAR

### Term 2

#### Week 3A

**Monday 4 May**
- Year 11 Half Yearly Exams (Optional)
- Year 7 Half Yearly Exams (In Class)
- Year 11 Hospitality Work Placement

**Tuesday 5 May**
- Year 11 Half Yearly Exams (Optional)
- Year 7 Half Yearly Exams (In Class)
- Year 11 Hospitality Work Placement

**Wednesday 6 May**
- Year 11 Half Yearly Exams (Optional)
- Year 7 Half Yearly Exams (In Class)
- Year 11 Hospitality Work Placement
- Assembly Years 7-12 Gym

**Thursday 7 May**
- Year 11 Half Yearly Exams (Optional)
- Year 7 Half Yearly Exams (In Class)
- Year 11 Hospitality Work Placement

**Friday 8 May**
- Athletic Carnival

#### Week 4B

**Monday 11 May**
- Year 8 Half Yearly Exams – in class
- Year 10 Half Yearly Exams
- NAPLAN Years 7 & 9

**Tuesday 12 May**
- Year 8 Half Yearly Exams – in class
- Year 10 Half Yearly Exams
- NAPLAN Years 7 & 9

**Wednesday 13 May**
- Year 8 Half Yearly Exams – in class
- Year 10 Half Yearly Exams
- NAPLAN Years 7 & 9
- Careers Excursion – projectABLE
- Assembly Years 7 – 10

**Thursday 14 May**
- Year 8 Half Yearly Exams – in class
- Year 10 Half Yearly Exams
- NAPLAN Years 7 & 9

**Friday 15 May**
- Year 8 Half Yearly Exams – in class
- Year 10 Half Yearly Exams
- Catch-up NAPLAN Years 7 & 9

**Saturday 16 May**
- Relay for Life
- Concert Band Perform at Relay for Life 11.00am

**Sunday 17 May**
- Relay for Life
- Musical Rehearsal – all day

#### Week 5A

**Monday 18 May**
- Careers UWS Lunchtime Presentation

**Tuesday 19 May**
- ICAS Computing Skills Competition

**Wednesday 20 May**
- Assembly Years 7-12
- P & C Meeting 7.30pm

**Thursday 21 May**
- Year 8 Scripture Seminar
- Musical Bump – pm

**Friday 22 May**
- Musical Bump – all Day

**Saturday 23 May**
- Musical Tech Rehearsal

**Sunday 24 May**
- Musical Rehearsal – all day
## Canteen Winter Menu 2015

### ROLLS & WRAPS
- ¼ wrap - Flame Grilled Chicken and Salad $2.50
- ¼ wrap - Chicken Avocado & Rocket $2.50
- ¼ wrap - Salad $2.50
- ¼ wrap - Falafel, hummus, tabouli, lettuce, tomato $2.50
- Chicken & Salad Roll $4.00
- Chicken, Lettuce & Mayo Roll $3.50
- Salad Roll $3.00
- Buttered Roll $0.70
- Unbuttered Roll $0.60

### SANDWICHES (White Wholemeal/Multigrain)
- Chicken Lettuce & Mayo $3.00
- Leg Ham $2.50
- Chicken $2.50
- Salad (lettuce tomato beetroot cucumber carrot) $3.00
- Tuna & Lettuce $3.00
- Egg & Lettuce $2.50
- Egg $2.00
- Cheese & Tomato $2.00
- Cheese $1.50
- Ham and Cheese $2.00
- Buttered Bread $0.60
- Unbuttered Bread $0.50

### RICE PAPER ROLLS
$3.50

### SUSHI ROLLS: Chicken / Beef / Vegetarian / Salmon / Tuna $3.00

### BREAKFAST – from $1.50
- Toasted Ham & Cheese Sandwich $2.00
- Toasted Cheese Sandwich $2.50
- Toasted banana bread $2.00
- Toasted banana bread (half) $1.30
- Raisin Toast – per slice $0.70
- Toast and Vegemite – per slice $0.50
- Hot Chocolate $2.00

### SALADS / FRUIT
- Salads (order only). Various ingredients listed at canteen. Prices vary according to selection. $4.00
- Caesar salad $4.00
- Chicken Caesar salad $4.50
- Green mixed garden salad $4.00
- Seasonal fresh fruit $1.00
- Watermelon Tub $2.00

### MILK
- Ice Break Coffee 500ml $3.50
- 600ml Large Chocolate / Strawberry $3.50
- 300ml Oak (Chocolate / Strawberry / Coffee/Vanilla) $2.00
- 250ml Up & Go (Choc / Strawberry / Vanilla) $2.00
- Plain Milk 600ml $1.60
- Plain Milk 300ml $1.00

### ICE CREAMS
- Paddlepop Shaky Shake $2.00
- Mini Calippo Tube $1.00
- Frozen Strawberry Yoghurt $2.00
- Paddlepop (Chocolate / Rainbow) $1.50
- Vanilla Ice Cream Cups $1.50
- Paddlepop Icy Twist (Lemonade) $1.00
- Quench fruit juice stick $0.50

### HOT FOOD
- Flame Grilled Chicken Burger $4.50
- Classic Chicken Burger $4.50
- Chicken nuggets (5 nuggets & sauce) $3.00
- Four-N-Twenty Traveller Pie (beef or beef bacon cheese) $3.00
- Spinach & Ricotta Roll $2.50
- Hot Cheese Roll $2.00
- Pizza Rounda $2.50
- Garlic Bread (small) $1.50
- Garlic Bread (large) $2.50
- Cheese Toastie (half toastie $0.50)
- Ham & Cheese Toastie (half toastie $1.00)
- Hot Bolognaise and Cheese Roll $3.00
- Hot Soup (Chicken Noodle/Pumpkin) $3.00
- With a bread roll $3.50
- Sausage Roll $3.00

### DRINKS
- Pump Water 750ml (Plain) $2.50
- Flavoured Pump Water 750ml $3.00
- Appletiser can $2.00
- LOL Fruit Juice Cans $2.00
- Nudie fruit juice (100% juice) $3.00
- Mt. Franklin Water $2.00
- Quencher (various flavours) $2.50
- Lightly Sparkling Water (Lemon/Lime/Berry) $2.00

### EXTRAS
- Chips (Honey Soy Chicken/BBQ/Sea Salt/Salt and Vinegar) $1.20
- Plain Popcorn 20g $1.00
- Mamee Rice Sticks (Cheese) $1.00
- Mamee Noodle Snacks (Chicken) $1.00
- Piranha Veggie Crackers (BBQ or Honey Soy) $1.00
- Delitas (Salt and Vinegar, Sour Cream and Chives) $1.00
- Eucalyptus Drops 25g $0.70
- Life Savers Peppermint $1.30
- Finger Buns $2.00
- Homemade Choc-Chip Cookies $1.00
- Homemade Raisin Oatmeal Cookies $1.00
- Pretzels $1.00

*Gluten Free, Dairy Free and Vegetarian Menus Available on request from Canteen

## Daily Specials
- **Monday:** Pasta Bolognaise Small $3.50 Large $5.00
- **Tue:** Butter Chicken Small $3.50 Large $5.00
- **Wed:** Nachos $4.00
- **Thu:** Fried Rice Small $3.00 Large $4.50
- **Fri:** Sweet Chilli Chicken Wrap $4.00
CASTLE HILL COMMUNITY NEWS
AND ADVERTISING

Disclaimer: Advertisements placed in the school’s Fortnightly Newsletter do not reflect an endorsement or otherwise by Castle Hill High School of that product or service.

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Hills Community Aid presents the
Volunteer Expo & Open Day
Thursday, 14th May
9.30am - 1.00pm
Ground Floor, Vinegar Hill Library and Community Rooms,
29 Main Street, Rouse Hill Town Centre
Light morning tea will be provided

Find out about volunteering opportunities
Sign up to a volunteer role and assist your community
Be inspired by talking to other local volunteers

FOR MORE INFO
Contact Bronwyn Millington
02 9629 6038
bronwynm@hca.org.au
www.hca.org.au
Bedford College has provided Play Sessions to the community for 7 years at the Giebe Campus, and we are now bringing the fun along to the Hills!

Play Session is a great opportunity for parents and carers to bring along young children (6-5 years) to have a fun morning in a safe learning environment.

Play Session will commence 1 May 2015 (not open during school holidays).

The cost is $5 for one child and $10 for families of 2 children or more (this includes a healthy morning tea for children and light refreshments for the carers).

Learning in the Hills

Tutored & Social Groups

Learning in the Hills offers a range of tutored and social adult learning groups and classes including leisure and lifestyle, hobbies and arts and crafts.

These groups are a great opportunity for adults to meet new friends while learning a new skill or perfecting a favourite hobby in a welcoming and relaxed environment.

Weekday, evening and weekend classes offered.

Classes are held during school terms at:
Learning in the Hills, Balcombe Heights Estate, Turner Building (405), 92 Seven Hills Road, Baulkham Hills.

For more information phone 02 9639 7918.

Acting Classes for High School Students!

Speech, movement, mime, scripts, drama games, improvisation, play building and performance techniques.

Studio locations:
Castle Hill, Baulkham Hills, Dural, Kellyville and Quakers Hill.

Contact Principal Janelle Butler – 8883 2448

New course: MUSICAL THEATRE

Enrolling now for 2015!
WESLEY GIANT GARAGE SALE

Where: *In the Wesley Uniting Church grounds at 32 Showground Road, Castle Hill.*

Dates/Times: *Friday May 1st 2015* (operating from *8:00am to 1:00pm*) and *Saturday May 2nd 2015* (also operating from *8:00am to 1:00pm*)

Sale items/Stalls will include Books, Records, CDs, DVDs, Clothing, Electrical, Jewellery, Plants, Toys, Furniture, Manchester, White Elephant, Fine Art and China etc.

We will also be providing tea and coffee during sale hours, together with a Sausage Sizzle for lunch on both days, and Bacon and Egg rolls for breakfast on Saturday morning.

Enjoy the friendly atmosphere, and pick up a bargain (or two) knowing you are helping those families who were recently devastated by Cyclone Pam in the Port Vila area of Vanuatu.

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EVENT DETAILS
Established in 1992, *The Sydney Morning Herald* Half Marathon is one of Australia’s largest and most prestigious half marathons. Taking place on Sunday, May 17, the event attracts over 11,000 participants. Highlighting Sydney’s iconic harbourside, entrants can register as an individual or opt for the team relay event which splits the course into a 7km and 14km leg.

KEY MILESTONES

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<td>Nov 13 – Mar 11</td>
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For more information or to enter please visit smhhalfmarathon.com.au
Parenting ideas

Building parent-school partnerships

WORDS Michael Grose

Helping students get ready for the NAPLAN tests

The most resilient children and young people are those who rise to meet rather than retreat from the challenges presented to them. Perhaps it’s best to view the NAPLAN tests as good learning experiences rather than dreaded pressure tests.

During the second week of May Australian children in Years 3, 5, 7 and 9 will take part in the National Assessment Program – Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN). The stated purpose of this testing program is to gain an overall picture of educational attainment levels to assist education policy and decision-making.

The program first implemented in 2008 has drawn some criticism from a number of different quarters, particularly in regard to the use of the information gained through the NAPLAN tests. You’ve probably heard a number of different viewpoints expressed in the media over the last few weeks.

One view commonly put forward is that the NAPLAN tests put undue pressure on children to perform in test situations. If so, then perhaps the best approach for parents and teachers is to help them handle the pressure rather than avoid it. The most resilient children and young people are those who rise to meet rather than retreat from the challenges presented to them. Perhaps it’s best to view the NAPLAN tests as good learning experiences rather than dreaded pressure tests.

Children and young people take their cues from their parents about how to handle many situations. American psychologist Martin Seligman discovered more than a decade ago, through his research into children’s thinking styles, how closely a child’s explanatory style mimics that of the parent they spend most time around. Optimistic parents beget optimistic kids, just as anxious parents can beget anxious kids. The impact of a parent’s explanatory style seems to be magnified somehow in small families where there are fewer voices to be heard.

As a parent it helps your child, if you take a positive view of the NAPLAN tests. It’s better to see them as learning opportunities for kids as well as opportunities to overcome any anxieties or nerves that these tests may bring on. It’s also worth remembering that many children don’t stress over these tests. The vast majority take them in their stride, wondering what all the fuss is about.

Whether your child stresses or takes them in his stride here are some tips to help prepare for the NAPLAN tests:

1. **Take your cues from your child:**
   If your child doesn’t worry about them then neither should you. Be careful not to create a problem that doesn’t exist by incessantly talking about, or worse, worrying about the test.

2. **Focus on doing their best and trying hard:**
   Choose your words carefully when you speak with your kids. As with all their learning activities place your focus squarely on effort rather than results. The only pressure on kids should be to try hard rather than to do well.

3. **Listen to any concerns they have:**
   If your child confesses to some nerves then validate their feelings, rather than shut them down with a ‘got over it’ response. “Yes, sometimes tests can be a little scary, but they get easier every time you take them.” Use this as an opportunity to develop some emotional smarts, which starts with recognising how kids feel.

4. **Give them some relaxation ideas:**
   Anxious or nervous kids will benefit from some simple relaxation strategies. Taking some deep breaths, changing their thinking and exercising the morning of the test are some simple ways to help kids get some feeling of control.

5. **Help them retain their perspective:**
   One way to help children who become excessively anxious about an event is to ask what’s the worst thing that could happen? Okay, they may not do as well as they would like but the sun will still rise tomorrow, regardless of how well they do. Keeping perspective is a life skill that we all need to practise.

A positive, caring parent attitude is one of the best gifts you can give a child when they are apprehensive or nervous about approaching any different situation whether it’s going on school camp, joining a new club or sitting a NAPLAN test.


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Building parent-school partnerships

WORDS Michael Grose

Mother of all jobs

As an ex-house dad, I take my hat off to mothers.

When I was busy at work I would often think about what my wife must be doing. I used to conjure up an image of her playing happily with my three-year-old son in the sandpit at the local playgroup while the other two children slept peacefully nearby. With these images at the front of my mind I thought motherhood sure beat working for a living.

Many years ago I discovered how far from the truth my notion of motherhood really was when my wife and I swapped roles. I must confess that two of the children were at school so it had it easier than my partner but it was as close as I could get.

The first thing I learned was that while I may be the primary carer I could never be a substitute mother to my children. Take sickness or illness for example. When one of the kids was off-colour, had a cut or bruise or just needed some tender loving care they headed straight for their mother. Dad may do it in the meantime, but I was a pale imitation of the real thing, their mum, when it comes to dispensing comfort. I could give them just as good a hug as any female. It is just that their mum was well ... their mum. It is as simple as that.

I also learned there are some things that fathers can't do as well as mothers. In my case it was fixing my daughters' hair. The first time I put my youngest daughter's hair in a plait she cried. Not from pain, just the embarrassment of being seen in public with a hair-do that looked like a piece of knotty old rope. It became accepted in my house that 'dads don't do hair'.

I soon appreciated the unique skills that mothers develop if they are to survive the rigours of parenting on a daily basis. In particular, mothers seem to have the uncanny knack of doing three jobs at once while dealing with noisy or whingeing children.

Multi-task masters

Anyone who can cut a round of sandwiches, prepare breakfast for a family, find a missing pair of socks for tiny feet while making sure everyone is on track, has my vote. I have trouble getting myself dressed in the morning, let alone worrying about anyone else.

There is no place in a mother's repertoire for tunnel vision or focusing on one task at a time. These are luxuries reserved for the workplace, not the family home. The fact that kids are noisy, demanding and often unpredictable means anyone who spends a fair time in their vicinity must be flexible, patient and able to keep cool under extraordinary pressure. Qualities I still don't possess.

Take cooking for example. The job of preparing a decent meal wasn't too hard. I could – and still can – usually produce something quite edible with a minimum of fuss. However, rarely did I have the chance to cook in isolation. There was always a child interrupting, asking for help or just wanting to chat. Not to mention fitting cooking around bathing, hearing kids read or picking them up from sports practice.

An increasing number of mothers do full-time paid work then come home for their second shift of parenting. Any mention to these mothers of my trials with the juggling act, simply evokes a shoulder shrug and a 'welcome to the real world' look.

If anyone says that motherhood is not like real work, send them my way. After many years of being the primary parent to my children – usually the preserve of women – I can really set them straight. It's hard yakka that largely goes unrewarded.

Happy Mother's Day!