Principal’s Message

Building Children’s Language

One of the most valuable attributes which parents can help their children develop is a rich and varied vocabulary. The cornerstone of success in learning is possessing strong spoken and written language skills.

Understanding depends on the ability to process what is seen, heard or read; demonstrating understanding depends on the ability to do, speak and write. This is required of students in all Learning Areas, from Kindergarten to Year 12 and beyond.

Therefore, it is essential that time and attention is given to ensuring that our children have the language skills they need for learning success.

It is very important that parents are aware of the importance and significance of their children’s language development. Gently correcting mistakes; modelling the correct way to form a sentence; expanding children’s vocabulary through reading or using more interesting words in conversations; checking children’s understanding of what they have heard or read—these are all ways to monitor and improve their use and understanding of language.

Children can very easily fall into poor habits with language. Like most things, unnoticed or uncorrected, these bad habits become well established and hard to change. They then transfer into the child’s writing, which suffers from poor structure, grammar and organisation.

Increasingly, the tasks that students are required to undertake as part of the NAPLAN assessment in reading and writing demand high level language skills. The language is sophisticated and rich. It is not based on simple sentences and literal comprehension. Children who do not read widely; who are not read to; who don’t hear interesting words used in conversation; who aren’t challenged to use more interesting words themselves, will be sorely disadvantaged when trying to understand the tasks that are set.

Some ways in which you can assist your child to develop a wide vocabulary include:

♣ Reading quality literature to your child on a regular basis. This shouldn’t stop when children can read to themselves. Children need to keep developing their understanding of words and concepts which are more challenging that those which they can decode by themselves. This also includes reading to your children in their first language, if it is not English. Talk about the interesting ways the author has used words; check that your child understands the more unusual words. Being aware of how our children use and understand language, both written and spoken, and ensuring that it is appropriate for their age and is progressing well, is essential if they are to achieve success at school.

♣ Make the school and local libraries regular weekly visiting places for your child. Hurstville Council libraries provide quality services free for local residents. Their children’s librarians are professionals who know literature and there are some fabulous services they offer for children.

♣ If your child is a reluctant reader, ask the local librarian for advice about good titles or high interest texts that aren’t too hard, but aren’t babyish, either. They can help select books that will build your child’s interest and success in reading.
Encourage your child to read widely, not to stick with just one type of book or author. There are such glorious books available! Help them select books. From time to time, gently steering them towards books which they might not normally choose. Look beyond the cover.

Talk to them about what they have read. Maybe read the book yourself so that you can talk about it with your child. As texts become more challenging, there are often deeper levels and concepts that can be found. Some children don’t get to that deeper level without it being pointed out.

Many older children still love being read to, especially if they are not great readers themselves. If they struggle with decoding, the fun goes out of reading. They stop reading because it is hard and so lose the added skills of vocabulary and language development. Keep them interested in books and reading by either taking turns with them or reading a book aloud to them, just for pleasure and enjoyment.

Include poetry in their wide reading. Poetry regularly appears in NAPLAN assessments. Often, because poems are shorter than other texts, the words are cleverly and carefully chosen. They can be used in unusual ways that children can consider and discuss with you. Why that word? Why there? What does it mean here?

Picture books are increasingly being written for older readers. They can be a wonderful way for older children to get into reading. Don’t think that, because they are beautifully illustrated, they are not “real books” for capable readers. There are brilliant books now available in this format.

Use interesting words when speaking with your child, sometimes pitched a little higher than their age might normally require.

Comment when they use a more interesting word themselves — "Great word!” or “I like the way you said that”. This lets them know that you notice the words they use and gives them feedback to keep thinking about language and how they use it. Children generally thrive on encouragement; if they know that language is important and something that you notice, care about and praise them for, they will usually try to earn recognition for speaking well.

Follow up poor language skills. If language is slow to develop or not at an age appropriate level, see a Speech Pathologist sooner rather than later. Language development affects much more than just speaking. If there are any difficulties, the sooner they are addressed, the better for ongoing and future learning, social and personal development.

If your family’s home language isn’t English, keep up your child’s first language development. Check with your local librarian to see if there are books to be borrowed in your family’s language. Read these to your children and make sure their first language is rich and well developed. This will be a great asset to them in developing high quality English language skills.

Developing children’s language is an ongoing task that needs to become a part of everyday life. It is one of the most important things we can do to assist our children’s learning. In many ways, it is a huge determinant of how well they will access information and show what they know and understand. Time and attention spent here will have a powerful effect on their success at school and beyond.

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**Friendly Reminders**

Monday 9 June is the Queen’s Birthday Public Holiday. The school will not be open on this day. We hope you have a lovely long weekend with your family.

On Thursday 19 June we will be having a Crazy Hair Day. A note will be sent home to explain this in further detail.

Some students are arriving to school very early in the mornings. Please be aware that there is no teacher supervision at this time. Teachers are on duty from 8.40am each day. If students arrive early, we ask them to sit under the shelter near the front office.

A number of our students enjoy ordering lunch from the canteen each day. We encourage you to order their lunch in the morning with the student's name and class clearly written on the paper bag. If you send in money with your child, please make sure it is a secure position, either in their pocket or small purse. A number of children lose their money each day.

A number of our students have not returned the Permission to Publish note. A reminder note was sent home with students this week who have not returned this note. Please fill in the slip if you do not give permission for your child to have their work/photo published. If you do give permission, please fill in the yellow form and return it as soon as possible.

**Don’t forget to visit our school website at:**

[www.hurstville-p.school@det.nsw.edu.au](http://www.hurstville-p.school@det.nsw.edu.au)
Wearing Correct Uniform
Thank you to parents who are supporting the wearing of our school uniform by making sure their children are in correct uniform each day.

Sports uniform is to be worn on Fridays only, unless otherwise specified. Track pants are to be worn on Fridays only. Monday to Thursday, boys should be wearing their grey school shorts (summer) or grey long trousers (winter). Girls should be wearing their school tunic (summer) or blue school trousers, not track pants (winter).

Monday to Thursday, girls and boys should be wearing plain black school shoes, such as these, with plain white socks for girls and plain grey socks for boys.

On Fridays, girls and boys should be wearing plain white sports shoes, such as these, with white socks:

What parents can do at home to help their kids with reading
- Be confident that your child will learn to read. Give positive messages and involve them in everyday conversations and opportunities to read.
- Read aloud to your child. It helps them to learn about the language of books and will encourage them to enjoy books and reading.
- Read to your child in your home language if your first language is not English.
- Make reading enjoyable and talk about books, magazines and computer stories that you have read together.
- Try not to let television intrude on reading time. Make a special time for reading with your child, away from interruptions.
- Listen to your child read as often as you can, every day if possible, even if only for a short time.
- Give books in print or electronic forms as treats and presents.

Helping your child at home with writing
- Have your child label and describe things that they design or make.
- Compile a photo album or scrapbook with your child and have them write captions for the photos and pictures.
- Encourage your child to keep a diary of special events, eg a holiday diary with details of how and where they went and what they enjoyed, etc.
- Make the writing of notes, letters and stories on paper or on the computer a normal part of family life.
Proposed Additions to the Uniform

Girls’ Winter Uniform:
In response to long-standing requests from parents for a winter tunic to add to the existing royal blue trousers and long sleeved polo shirt, the P&C has been working in consultation with the senior school executive to develop a proposed addition to the girls’ winter uniform. The proposal is for a dark check tunic, to be worn with a sky blue, long sleeved, peter-pan collar or a sky blue, long sleeved skivvy. The existing jacket and/or sloppy joe would complete the uniform, together with tights for leg warmth.

As well, there is a proposal to change the option of the broad-brimmed hat to a bucket style, made from microfibre, as illustrated above. This style eliminates the need for an under-chin cord which can be a safety hazard. It has an adjustable head band to ensure good fit and has a high sun protection factor. It folds and dries easily. The baseball cap option remains as is.

Both of these proposals will be discussed at the next P&C Meeting, on Tuesday 17 June at 9:15 a.m. Samples will be available for parents to view and discuss, so please come along.

Toilet Safety

This week, we have replaced 18 broken toilet seats in the children’s toilets. This is a very high number and raises concerns about how our children are using and treating our school facilities.

It may be that some students are standing on the toilet to use it. Whilst this is customary in many countries, our toilets are not designed to be used in this way. I am concerned that students may slip and injure themselves, as well as damage the toilets.

Therefore, I ask parents to please show their children how to use the toilet in a sitting position, so that they are safe.

I am also advised that adults – parents and grandparents – are entering the students’ toilets.

This is a child protection issue and is not permitted at any time. Please make sure that anyone who brings your child to and from school is aware that they must not enter the children’s toilets. A visitor’s toilet is available in the library. If this is locked, please come to the office.

Under no circumstances are adults to enter the children’s toilets.
Temporary Fencing

In line with the Department of Education and Communities’ (DEC) recent program to address the issue of tree safety in schools, an inspection of all trees on our school site was recently conducted. Fortunately, no Priority 1 (immediate action required) trees were identified.

A number of Priority 2 trees were identified, meaning that work, such as trimming of branches and fronds, has been recommended. Whilst the DEC’s maintenance contractor arranges for this work to be done, they are required to “make safe” the areas surrounding these trees, as far as the spread of the canopy. This will involve temporary site fencing to stop students, teachers and parents walking or sitting under the trees.

Some of the trees requiring the fencing are in areas of the playground where this will have little or no impact on our organisation. However, two of the largest trees will require some redirection of pedestrian traffic.

One of the trees identified for attention is right at the front entrance to the school on Forest Road.

When the fencing is in place, it will mean that the current front gate will be closed and the next gate along towards Belltower will be opened instead.

The other area that may have impact on movement around the school is between F Block and the demountables near the Dental Clinic. Movement around this area will be restricted.

We do apologise for any inconvenience this work may cause, and ask for your cooperation in ensuring our children’s safety in moving around the school whilst these diversions are in place.

Mrs Anne Hewson – Acting Principal

Early Stage 1 (Kindergarten)

Students have been very busy exploring the Science unit of work “Growing and Changing”. This week, most classes started making their grass heads. Students used soil, a stocking and grass seeds to make their grass head. We will be watching our grass heads grow over the coming weeks.

We are also very excited to announce the Living Eggs will be delivered on Monday 16 June. Students will have opportunities to watch the eggs hatch and grow into little chicks. Please talk to your children about all the exciting things happening in the classroom.

We are very pleased to see a wonderful improvement in the Kindergarten students wearing full school uniform. Please continue to make sure all jumpers and hats are labelled.

Mrs Jessica Maakaroun - Assistant Principal
**Stage 1**

**Year 1**

On Thursday 19 June, we will be celebrating Crazy Hair Day. Students are asked to come to school in mufti clothes and are encouraged to do something fancy and crazy with their hair. Please provide your child with a gold coin donation as it is a school fundraiser, held by the SRC.

Year 1 students have enjoyed participating in the Got Game program and are having great fun keeping fit and learning different skills.

Please ensure that your child comes to school every day with the appropriate uniform. Even though the weather is getting cooler, hats still need to be worn. Please ensure that all items are labelled. Just a reminder, that Lost Property is located in the foyer of the library.

Ms Kallie Glinatsis – Relieving Assistant Principal

**Year 2**

Year 2 and 1/2K students are very excited to be going on an excursion in Week 9 of Term 2. We will be visiting Centennial Parklands in the city to further investigate our studies on the HSIE unit “The Need for Shelter”.

Students will visit Centennial Parklands to learn about animal shelters and how to identify them. They will also be engaged in an activity where students have to build their own shelter out of natural materials!

We look forward to all our students participating in this excursion which will be held over two days. Please return your permission and money to class teachers by Wednesday 18 June 2014.

Mrs Zaga Marinkovic and Mr Graham Enright - Relieving Assistant Principals

**Stage 3**

**Year 5 and Year 6**

**Uniform Reminder**

It has been a busy few weeks with a number of important ceremonies and occasions. Thank you to all students for representing our school so well. It is important that Stage 3 students, as leaders in the school, set a good example for younger students, particularly in regards to the wearing of correct school uniform. Students should be wearing black shoes Monday to Thursday and sneakers on Fridays. Boys are to wear grey socks, and girls wear white socks. Please ensure blue school hats are brought to school every day and that hair ties and ribbons are in school colours.

**Year 6 Camp Review**

In Week 2 of this term, Year 6 students spent 3 nights and 4 days at the Sydney Academy of Sport and Recreation Centre at Myuna Bay. Students stayed in lodge style accommodation with bunk rooms and ensuite bathrooms, and participated in a number of outdoor adventure activities. Fun games were held in the evenings. Students ate their meals in a communal dining hall. Camp was a great experience for our students. See what some of them had to say about it...
Going to camp was a very exciting experience. The activities were thrilling and the food was delicious. My favourite activity was the giant swing because the view up there was spectacular! When we were dropped down we went 45km/h. Food was served by students and the food was great. When I left camp, I was glad I could sleep in my bed once again, but I missed the awesome activities a lot. (Annie 6D)

My favourite thing about camp was the bike riding. It was really fun and exhilarating since we were going at fast speeds over a bumpy dirt track. Going uphill was a task, but I beat the camp counsellor to the top! It was really satisfying when we got to go really fast. We also got to see and learn about the hot water reserves and saw turtles. (Bidhu 6D)

Camp was awesome! We used lots of cool equipment, which was really fun. Some of the activities were: high ropes, giant swing, bushwalking and kayaking. We got wet while kayaking. One of my favourites was bushwalking. We got to cook damper and have syrup. We had to collect sticks to make a fire and a long stick for cooking our damper. The accommodation was pretty cool. We got to sleep in a cabin with our friends for three nights. I thought camp was really awesome! (Arkie 6D)

Mrs Tina Cowley and Mrs Rebecca Ingram – Assistant Principals

Support Unit News

At school we encourage the students to participate in a healthy lifestyle. This includes daily fitness activities as well as a focus on healthy eating. The Support Unit classes participate in Crunch and Sip each day. Students have a short break during the morning session to eat some fresh fruit or vegetables. This is especially important for students who have an early breakfast. Thank you to all the parents who support their child by preparing bite-sized pieces of fruit or vegetables for crunch and sip each day.

As part of our focus on healthy eating, a breakfast club has started on Thursday mornings. Students are asked to bring in $1.00 to participate and a healthy breakfast is provided.

Lastly, routines are very important to the student in the Support Unit and any disruptions can lead to changes in behaviour. Parents are asked to assist in this by ensuring that students arrive at school on time and limit any interruptions to the classroom in both the mornings and afternoon. Your cooperation in this matter is greatly appreciated.

Mrs Nicole Moore – Assistant Principal
Congratulations to The Wind Orchestra on a fantastic audition, and in securing a place to perform in the Sutherland Performing Arts Festival (SPAF). It certainly demonstrates how hard they have worked and how professional they sound.

Notes have been distributed to students for Bandfest. Please return the permission section as quickly as possible so we can finalise numbers for the bus and to the organisers. We hope many parents are able to attend the Bandfest performance to support the hard work of their children, and to see the progress of the Band as a whole.

A big thank you to the Wind Orchestra (and Miss Hudson) for their performance during the ‘Old Boys’ visit. The men were very impressed with the high standard of playing.

**Miss Danielle Scott – Relieving Deputy Principal**

**Library News**

**Premier’s Reading Challenge**

Well done to the more than 80 students who have already completed the challenge for 2014! It is still not too late to begin, as the completion date is August 22\(^{nd}\).

You may have noticed that many of the books now have their identity number written in red inside the cover. In the near future, this task will be completed for all titles. This will enable you to fill out the student reading record much more easily.

Remember, K-2 books have a yellow sticker on the spine, Year 3-4 books have a blue sticker, and Year 5-6 books have a red sticker.

**Book Club**

Issue 4 Book Club orders need to be returned to the school on Wednesday, 11\(^{th}\) June. Unfortunately, late orders cannot be accepted.

**Old Book Sale**

Next Thursday and Friday – 12\(^{th}\) and 13\(^{th}\) June – there will be a sale of very old Library books in the Library. During 2\(^{nd}\) half of lunch students may purchase books for 20 cents each. Returns will not be accepted, nor will refunds be made if children change their minds about keeping items bought.

Money raised from this sale will be put towards the purchase of soft furniture for student use in the Library.

**Ms Leslie Hyde - Teacher/Librarian**
Community News

Student Representative Council
On Wednesday 28ᵗʰ of May, the SRC representatives had their induction ceremony to receive their badges. Miss Taylor announced the students from each grade, whilst Mrs Hewson and Mrs Maakaroun pinned the badges to the students.

The Vice President, Anika, and I spoke about the direction the SRC will be taking this year with a large focus on raising money to help improve the school playground and also environment initiatives to help reduce rubbish in the school.

Our first fundraiser will be held on Thursday 19ᵗʰ June. We are holding a crazy hair day. Notes will be handed out this week. We look forward to some amazing hair styles.

Annie -SRC President

Sports Report
This term, a group of 33 students attended the Botany Bay Zone Cross Country Carnival. Their behaviour on the day was outstanding. Each student tried their hardest, with the 8-10yr olds running 2km and the 11-12yr olds running 3km. We had most of our students finish in the top half of their race and 4 children place in the top 10: Aditty 9ᵗʰ in 10yr boys, Emily 9ᵗʰ in 11yr girls, Adelyn 3ʳᵈ in 11yr girls and Nabin 3ʳᵈ in 12yr girls. Adelyn and Nabin will compete at the Sydney East Carnival on Wednesday 11ᵗʰ June in Miranda and we wish them all the best for this.
In other sporting events, we have had a number of students attend Zone trials for various sporting teams, such as netball, touch football, rugby league, rugby union and softball. Well done to those students for having a go. We had some success with: rugby league – Mohammed and Khalil; and softball – Kiara, Julia, Olivia all being selected in Botany Bay teams. Congratulations to those students. The boys have already played at the Sydney East Carnival, but were not selected for the next level. Good luck to the girls who will be competing in two weeks’ time.

The school Athletics Carnival is coming up this term: Tuesday, 24th June at Hurstville Oval. A note will be coming home shortly about it. Field events are being practised in the Got Game sessions for Years 3-6.

_Miss B. Moar- Sports Organiser_

**Chess Club Chatter**

Chess Club continues with many enthusiastic students playing on Wednesdays at lunchtime. Students who participate have a mixed range of ability from beginners to the more experienced. Lunchtime chess provides an opportunity for students to play and make some new friends in the process.

**Interschool Chess Competition**

Last Friday afternoon, our Interschool Chess teams played against Our Lady of Fatima and Sutherland Public School at a home game. The Champion Team and Intermediate Team won and although the Rookie Team were formidable opponents, they did not win overall.

The children should be congratulated on the way each of them conducted themselves whilst representing our school. It has been very pleasing for me to be able to provide the students with the opportunity to play competitively and enjoy the friendship of students from other schools in the process.

_Ms R. Rourke – Chess Co-ordinator_