



HopeTown Newsletter

Term 3— 2012

177 Pollock Avenue Wyong

Postal Address: PO Box 805, WYONG 2259

Phone: 43532522 Fax: 43512381

Email: hoptown-s.school@det.nsw.edu.au

Website: www.hoptown-s.schools.nsw.edu.au

PRINCIPAL'S MESSAGE

Term Three has been another time for our students to acquire or develop skills in many important aspects of their lives. We see each one of our students as a) an individual person b) a learner and c) a citizen. We ensure to address each student's needs in each of those 3 components.

To do that, we help our students to make good decisions, to be productive with their time, to interact positively with others, to discover their strengths and to have the courage to grow. We firmly believe that social, emotional, academic and vocational competencies can be taught to anyone and that every student must be given the opportunity to experience success and to have their achievements acknowledged and celebrated.

In reading this and our other newsletters, the wide variety of opportunities made available for our students is always apparent. Student achievement is not only measured by NAPLAN data. Parents, carers and staff all want to see our students evolve as whole, well-balanced, content and positive contributors to the societies they will live in. We want our students to flourish.

'Flourish' is a word used by Dr Martin Seligman (in his book of the same name) when he promotes well-being through 'positive psychology'. For him the 5 pillars of 'positive psychology' are **P**ositive emotion (happiness, contentment, compassion), **E**ngagement, **R**elationships, **M**eaning and **A**ccomplishment or **PERMA**, for short. He calls these the permanent building blocks for a life of fulfilment.

These building blocks align very well with what we try to achieve in every program we offer at Hoptown. It's encouraging to see so many students engaging in our programs and realising their strengths and potential.

Terry Taylor PRINCIPAL



NAB Schools First : Impact Award

Hoptown is very fortunate to be the recipient of \$30,000 in awards funding from the National Australia Bank's *Schools First*

program for its outstanding community partnership with Marine Rescue NSW – Toukley. NAB *Schools First* received over 750 applications from school-community partnerships from around Australia. The funds were awarded to schools that are in existing partnerships and can show solid evidence that their school-community partnership is providing positive outcomes for students. Hoptown's innovative boating program has been running for many years now. During this time, volunteers from Marine Rescue at Toukley have mentored students on how to operate and maintain a boat, knowledge of local waterways, rescue and survival, radio operation and meteorology. The program has not only seen many students obtain a boat licence, but has also seen a marked improvement in student attendance, engagement, confidence and behaviour. The school plans to use the bulk of the funds to purchase a new training vessel, ensuring the longevity of this successful program.



Dates to remember

First day Term 4 Monday 8th October 2012

Annual Presentation Day Friday 14th December 2012

Secondary Del Rio camp during Wk 7 Term 4

NAIDOC Week

Primary students celebrated NAIDOC week by learning about Aboriginal culture. Students participated in boomerang painting using symbols to tell a story. They also had the opportunity to eat a variety of interesting traditional food, practice throwing boomerangs and playing traditional Aboriginal games such as *wana*, *kee'an*, *koolchee* and *kolap*. The week was a great success.



Sam Cawthorn

On Thursday 13th September students from Flinders class and other junior secondary students attended a morning tea with the motivational speaker, Sam Cawthorn. This excursion was part of our students' Social and Emotional Learning program, building on the foundations of motivation, persistence and empathy. Students travelled by bus to Green Central at Kariong Youth Connections where they were given a brief tour of the facilities. Shortly afterwards, students proceeded to a conference room where they were introduced to Sam Cawthorn. Sam had a major car accident in 2006 that changed his life forever. He was driving home and fell asleep at the wheel, causing a head-on collision with a truck. On the way to the hospital Sam was pronounced dead for 3 ½ minutes but was successfully resuscitated. Sam was hospitalised for over 5 months and was told by doctors that he would never walk again. One year later, Sam took his first steps with a permanent disability in his right leg and an amputated right arm. This difficult journey enabled him to develop a mental resilience and strength which have helped him make a choice to seize the opportunity of 'life'. Students really enjoyed listening to his story and seeing Sam's bionic arm in action. He showed some footage of his accident and also his many achievements. Sam's enthusiasm and positive outlook on life were truly inspirational and motivating to our students.

The Duke of Edinburgh Bronze Award

Wow, what a term!!! Students completing their Duke of Edinburgh Bronze Award have had a MASSIVE term!!! Students have been busily completing their individual hours in volunteering, learning a new skill and have covered hundreds of kilometres achieving their fitness goals.

Students have a diverse range of skill goals, learning Spanish, athletics, cooking and sailing which requires them to complete a total of 13 hours for each student. Similarly, students have had to complete the same hours in volunteering and we have had students doing aged care, fire brigade and car clubs, all giving their time to help others. Each week students have embarked on an adventure for their fitness hours, bushwalking, mapping, team work, first aid, emergency procedures, conservation, risk assessment and hazard reduction. The fitness of the students has markedly improved as has their resilience to longer journeys; they now think nothing of 2-3 hour hikes. We are very close to logging up nearly 25 hours to complete the largest section of the award.

Students are now ready to embark on the final stages of their award and have planned two adventurous Journeys for Term Four. This has entailed choosing the correct equipment, food and campsites to meet the criteria set out by the assessor. Students will complete a practice journey where they will be assessed as to their suitability to participate in their final journey. This is no easy task and they are required to plan and complete a 2 day journey involving 3- 4 hours hiking each day and an overnight camp, using the skills that they have learnt.

Well done boys!! Keep up the effort, it is fantastic to see you achieving your goals and growing as a team.

Wii Connect Program

Congratulations to Joshua Stevenson-Howard and Chris McLeod who have completed their accreditation in Volunteering and Community through the School of Volunteer Management.

The Wii Connect Program has been funded by Gosford City Council and organised by Michelle Vanstone from Volunteering Central Coast. The program involved students completing 20 hours volunteering assisting residents from Yallambee Aged Care to learn how to use a Wii for their leisure time. Students also had to complete the same hours compiling a training manual to achieve their qualification.

Community Access

Students of Saunders class have been participating in a Community Access program. Every Thursday, they have caught the public bus to Lake Haven Shopping Centre where they purchase groceries for home and enjoy lunch with their classmates before catching the public bus back to school. The program has given students the opportunity to participate in travel training and develop their money and time management skills in different contexts. All students enjoy participating and have displayed an increase in confidence and independence as the program progressed.



Big Brother Mouse



During the July school holidays I travelled to Laos with my family. Before we departed Australia I had made contact with Sacha, the manager of the Laos Literacy Project which is also known as *Big Brother Mouse*.

In 2011 the primary students of Hopetown School had made a \$400 donation to this project and I wanted to see first-hand how this money was being spent. Sacha arranged for us to attend a book party in a small village.

We travelled for an hour on some very questionable roads, then, finally arriving at the village school we were greeted by 60 excited primary students. These students were on school holidays and many had come in from the rice fields and farms to celebrate the Book Party with staff from Big Brother Mouse. The staff organised games, literacy activities, songs and morning tea for everyone. Later the students were taken into a basic classroom to select a book to take home. This was the highlight of the party for these children. They were enthusiastic and passionate as they picked their "take home" book, while their library received another 80 books for borrowing.

This small school and its grateful students were part of an uplifting experience for me and my family. The classrooms had no learning resources, along with uncomfortable wooden furniture, no air-conditioning or computers, bare floors and their written work was completed on recycled paper. Yet these children were happy, eager to learn, motivated and resilient. They were excited to receive a small book and they had given up their holiday time to come to school.

Thank you to the Hopetown primary parents and carers who have supported the lunch program, the profits of which made up the donation.

Sue Donoghue Assistant Principal

Footy Colours Day

Secondary students at Hopetown School are now being given the responsibility of choosing the charities which they would like to support. Students from Hargraves class chose to support FOOTY COLOURS DAY this term which raises much needed funds for the *FIGHT CANCER FOUNDATION*.

Students were able to dress in their favourite teams colours for the day from a variety of football codes; league, union, soccer and AFL. The day was a great success and students and staff raised a total of \$80.00 by paying a 'fine' for being in mufti.

A big thankyou to students from both primary and secondary and staff, who supported the day. Well done to the Hargraves class members who organised, promoted and ran the day. It was a fantastic effort.

Job Hunting

This term, students from Darcy class have been eagerly searching for work. Apart from English and Mathematics activities, a large part of student's Homeroom programs has involved looking for employment and applying for vacant positions.

Students have been applying for a range of employment opportunities from casual positions in fast food restaurants to traineeships and apprenticeships. Mitchell from Darcy class said "while you may get heaps of knock backs, you just have to keep on trying". Apart from developing capacities for resilience and persistence, many students are becoming equipped with a valuable set of skills including writing a resume, emailing and talking in a professional manner to potential employers.

Since this article was first penned Mitchell has a job interview to attend following his successful online application.

Woodwork with Saunders Class

This term, impressive woodwork items have been made by students of Saunders class. The students have been leading the program coming up with their own ideas of what to make including pieces for themselves and for others. The students have gained experience and are continuing to develop confidence and persistence in using the mini band saw, the disc sander, the drill, the wood burner, screwdrivers, hammers and stain. One student has been drawing his own designs.



During Term 4, Saunders class will continue to build confidence while using a variety of tools and machines and will build the skills necessary to complete the steps of a major project.



Encouraging Healthy Eating in the Classroom

Primary 1 conducted a daily lunchbox survey during week 3. This involved grouping and graphing the food provided in individual lunchboxes. This showed some surprising results including:-

- Some lunchboxes were consistently full of well-balanced food, but it didn't get eaten
- There was a predominance of snack foods
- It is difficult to cover all food groups
- A lack of variety

Based on the information we gathered, we decided to embark on a *Healthy Food Challenge*. This meant that none of the students could bring food from home. Instead, the school provided a fruit break, recess and lunch for a two week period. The boys explored a wide range of recess and lunch options.

During this time students prepared, cooked, ate and cleaned-up after eating.

Initially some boys who were very selective in their food choices found this confronting. Within a few days they were trying new foods and discovering healthy alternatives.

Our healthy eating initiative also provided a great deal of stimulus material that was woven into the students' literacy, numeracy and social activities. It was a fine example of incorporating motivators and meaning into academic programs.



Snow 2012

Secondary students recently had the opportunity to spend a week in the snow at Smiggin Holes, Perisher Valley. Many had never seen or been in the snow. Some were keen to improve on skills developed during previous snow visits. Others had never been away from home on a school excursion for seven days.

The visit enabled all those involved the opportunity to set and achieve goals, take calculated risks with confidence, show varying levels of independence and to follow rules in a variety of settings.

Once again the Chalet management commended the students' behaviour and extended Hopetown an invitation to visit in 2013. The week proved a positive, worthwhile and valuable experience for both students and staff.

Kimnastix

During term 3, each primary class attended Kimnastix at Berkeley Vale for a gymnastics program. Each class had three lessons under the direction of gymnastics teachers.

The students showed persistence and hard work to master the new skills they were taught. Our students were presented with new exercises and team games each week. We were amazed to see the amount of energy and resilience shown by the students in overcoming new challenges. All the students from, Year 3 to Year 6, had obstacles to overcome in completing the planned activities.

Special thanks go to Kim and her staff at Kimnastix, for their inspirational work with our Hopetown School students.



LITTLE BIG SHOTS SHORT FILM FESTIVAL-SYDNEY OPERA HOUSE

Seven students from years 7, 8 and 9 were fortunate enough to attend the *Little Big Shots Short Film Festival* at the Sydney Opera House early in Term Three. The festival features the best in local and international children's shorts, animations, documentaries and child-produced films.

The films screening inspired the discussions about world cultures, different languages, cultural diversity, emotional intelligence and human values.

Little Big Shots was a fantastic experience for our students and staff and was made even more interesting by hearing two of the film-makers speak about their production. Students were given the opportunity to ask and answer questions, which several of our students thoroughly enjoyed. A big thankyou to those students who attended; it was a pleasure to attend this event with you!



NAIDOC Week

As part of our NAIDOC week celebrations Flinders Class embarked on an excursion to Yango National Park. Yango Mountain is in the Hunter Valley and is an important cultural site for Aboriginal people in surrounding areas. The local Aboriginal people believe that the mountain was the gateway for the creator 'Beami' to enter and leave the Earth.

Students made their way to the lookout that provides a great vantage point for locating nearby landmarks. After a short stroll down the hill there can be seen Aboriginal engravings that date back thousands of years. There the students discovered images of men, women, emus, fish and other animals significant to the Aboriginal people that inhabited the area. In addition Flinders Class went on a cultural walk that helped explain the area and how the Aboriginal people interacted with it. All students were extremely respectful of each other and the historical sights they visited.

Flinders students really enjoyed the day and in the later weeks wrote some very well constructed information reports to describe their discoveries. These reports were proudly displayed in the new library in time for Hopetown's hosting of a Wyong Aboriginal Education Consultative Group (AECG) meeting.

As a part of their Social and Emotional Learning Program, students in Flinders class also participated in several lessons about *Sorry Day*. Students listened to a story that told how life changed for Aboriginal people after European settlement. Students were able to retell the story from an Aboriginal perspective. It was pleasing to see many students displaying empathy and understanding towards Aboriginal people both past and present.

Flinders class students also looked at some traditional Aboriginal communication methods. One method was the use of smoke signals. Students created an artwork that displayed a smoke signal using paper and tea light candles. This activity required students to have a lot of patience and concentration for prolonged periods. Students held a piece of paper approximately 10cm above a tea light candle and tried to make a smoke pattern on the paper without setting it alight. It was a lot harder than it initially appeared, although all students successfully completed this activity whilst being safe and sensible. Well done boys!

Elissa Scott Recruitment Workshops

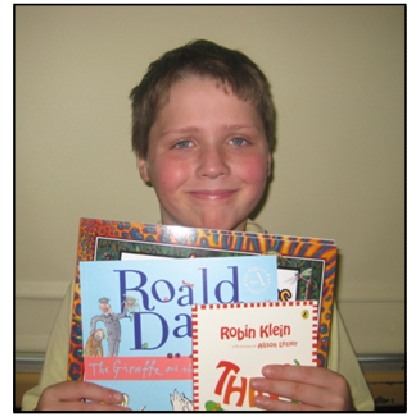
Students from Years 10, 11 and 12 continued their series of workshops with Elissa Scott, from Elissa Scott Recruitment. Elissa has visited the school several times and has conducted a variety of careers workshops for students in areas such as resume writing, what employers want and interview techniques. Students will complete their final workshop on presentation and grooming late in Term 4. Students are gaining valuable skills by participation in these sessions and are applying learnt skills during their work experience placements and when applying for jobs.

Junior Code Cracker

Blair, a Primary Room 3 student, has been judged as a winner of the Scholastic Book Club's Issue 1 *Lucky Junior Code Cracker* competition.

Blair's persistence in completing this colouring competition led to a successful outcome.

Blair has won a \$20 Book Clubs Voucher and another \$50 voucher for his teacher to purchase classroom resources. In addition, each student in the class was awarded a book prize.



Primary School Olympathon

With the excitement of the Olympic Games happening during Term Three this year, the primary students enjoyed an Olympathon of their own during week four.

After a quick assembly the students were placed in their teams. Each team had to complete a variety of activities. These included scooter board races, high jump, long jump, bike races and track and field events. It was great to see the students try their best in these events and show persistence when faced with a challenging task.

After the events, the students then had a sausage sizzle for lunch before accepting their certificates of participation and getting a medal for their efforts.



The HTK!!

As from Term 4. the Secondary School Senior Café will be known as the Hometown Kitchen (HTK!).

Morning tea will still be held on a Tuesday and lunch on a Thursday.

There will be two sections to the lunch menu and a **new** and **exciting** weekly special.

An order bag will be sent home on a Friday to be returned by Tuesday the following week.

Each week we will also be showing episodes of popular series with popcorn, ice-creams and treats available for purchase.

Please encourage your child to support our healthy HTK. It is an important part of our school charity work.

"Thank you" to Adam Clarke for taking the time to name the cafe. He has won a voucher to use at the HTK.

Laser Tag

A reward outing for 'Townie' reward recipients was held at Charmhaven's Laser Tag game centre.

Students participated in three games of laser tag. Each game involved a different theme – teams vs teams; one-on-one and 'Red Dog'. The games required stealth, planning, calm nerves and quick decision making and even quicker reflexes.

After Laser Tag we went to Budgewoi Park for a BBQ. At Budgewoi the students had the opportunity to play on the playground equipment or to walk around the island.

All ten students thoroughly enjoyed themselves and showed good capacities for co-operative games, getting along with each other and winning and losing in a sportsmanlike manner. The overall laser tag winner for the day was Michael Vickery.



Athletics Carnival

Term Three saw the reintroduction of the Hometown athletics carnival. The day was a huge success with all students participating and thoroughly enjoying themselves throughout the day. Parents and carers were there in force to cheer on their charges while the weather provided a comfortably warm day for the last day of winter.

The morning session of events included the field events, high jump, shot put, discus and javelin. The students' results were very impressive and demonstrated the required skills and techniques they had learnt throughout the year in their PE lessons. This was extremely pleasing to see.

Track events were held in the afternoon session and there was real excitement with some nail-biting finishes. The 100 metres, 400metres and marathon events were the last of the serious events; while the traditional sack race saw out the carnival.

Students should be very proud of their achievements and a big thank you goes out to staff, students and supporters for their sustained enthusiasm throughout the day. Well done everyone!



Central Coast Indigenous Jobs Market

Several indigenous students from Hometown had the opportunity to attend the Central Coast Indigenous Jobs Market held at Mingara during August. This gave students the opportunity to interact with employers, industry groups, recruitment and training providers and participate in a local event that gave them real employment, training and pathways information.

Students were able to interact with the exhibitors from a wide range of areas and also attended a career information workshop and talk. This was a fantastic session and students returned to school with a lot of information and new ideas for their futures.