

HILLTOP NEWS

Week Nine, Term Four, Tuesday 6th December 2016 Edition One Hundred and Ninety Eight.

NSW education audit: staged learning, composite classes are the new classroom

One-in-three public primary school students in NSW are taught in a composite class.

A class audit by the NSW Department of Education reveals that in 2015, 160,734 primary students from 1616 schools were in a composite class and while some schools had none, others had as many as 12 composite classes. The audit shows there were 6586 composite classes in 2014.

The department says composite or multi-age classes are used if there is an "uneven pattern of enrolment" in the school, if the school is small or if mixing students of different ages would be academically and socially beneficial. It stresses that research shows "it makes no difference to performance whether students are in a straight year group or in a multi-age class – it's the teacher who makes the difference". A leading researcher in composite classes, Linley Cornish, said when done well, multi-age classes produced students who were "self assured and independent learners".

"A lot of parents worry about the academic side of composite classes but there are a lot of social benefits of these classes," Associate Professor Cornish, chair of teaching and learning at the University of New England, said. "They are a lot more like real life because you have different ages and abilities working together." She said teachers no longer taught "rigidly in one year" and because the NSW syllabus stretches over two years, known as a stage, composite classes often worked very well.

"The times when I have seen it not work well is when a principal puts very bright younger kids with slower older kids and what happens is the younger kids overtake the older ones and that causes all sorts of problems," Dr Cornish said.

Multi-age classes are not unique to public schools and in some Catholic schools, the traditional classroom structure has been replaced with staged learning, where students are grouped by the stage they have reached not their age.

<http://theconversation.com/are-mixed-grade-classes-any-better-or-worse-for-learning-38856>

<http://www.smh.com.au/national/education/many-parents-dislike-composite-classes-but-the-evidence-does-not-support-their-anxiety-20150413-1mk4g9.html>

What constitutes a good report?

An article by ACER "Grading Your Child's Report" identifies six features of highly informative school reports;

1. Is your child's report easy to understand?
2. Does the report show what your child is now able to do?
3. Does the report show what is expected of students in this year level?
4. Does the report show your child's progress? → Does the report tell you about more than school subjects?
5. Does the report suggest how you can help?

Newcastle East teachers have been working on a report that reflects these features at year, stage and staff meetings to ensure that the reports are consistent across the grades and that they provide parents with clear, useful and supportive information about each child's progress. Students in Years 1 through to 6 will receive a report required by the Department of Education that sets out grade levels of A, B, C, D or E for each of the Key Learning Areas. While we follow these guidelines, we use descriptors for each of the A to E levels. Kindergarten students do not require an A to E report. They receive an assessment report that indicates whether or not they are working "Towards, At or Beyond" the benchmark levels in the particular KLA.

NAPLAN Online advice

NSW schools have been advised by the school sectors that paper-based delivery of NAPLAN tests will continue in 2017, with timelines for transition to online delivery to be communicated early next year. This follows agreement by the Education Ministers that NAPLAN will transition to online delivery over a three-year period from 2017. Parents wanting to know more can review ACARA's transition research and development program and other key national information about NAPLAN Online, including frequently asked questions. A public demonstration site of the online assessment platform is available to schools, students and the community via the ACARA website. It contains sample questions covering all test domains and NAPLAN year levels. It provides an opportunity for students to become familiar with the question types and format of the online tests and schools to assess the technical requirements for delivering NAPLAN Online. To access the sample assessments, and for further information on research studies, testing and technical specifications, visit the Online Assessment section of the NAP website: www.nap.edu.au

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Year Six Farewell

At the moment, ten Year Six families have not yet indicated whether they will be attending the Farewell on Wednesday 14th December. Please return your reply slip with payment to the school office by **this Thursday**, as the venue needs to confirm numbers and dietary requirements this Friday.

I also still require a kindergarten photo from the following children, to be used on the night:

Angus C, Logan C, Patrick GM, Matilda G, Ella H, Hunter P, Drew R, Daniel S, Jack W, Ryan M,

Paola J

Digital photos can be emailed to megan.thompson@det.nsw.edu.au or printed copies can be given to Mrs Thompson by this Friday.

Notes home this week. – All notes will also be sent via the SkoolBag App

CANTEEN NEWS

Starting today, at lunch time ONLY on Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays, snacks and ice blocks will be available to buy from the Canteen until the end of term. Lunch orders will continue to be available on Mondays and Fridays ONLY when we run a full canteen service. Please don't forget Sushi Orders cost \$3.50 and must be in by 12.00pm on Thursdays.

NEPS canteen relies completely on volunteers and all proceeds go to our kids. All of our Monday/Friday volunteers who have given up their time have been so very appreciated and have done such an amazing job, particularly as it is a tiny space and a busy canteen. There are lots of unseen jobs-ranging from making hummus, to bagging pineapple rings, bringing in the milk, counting sushi orders, chopping veggies & more that help the service to run and for this, special thanks goes to Kellie Bohlsen, Jess, Cecilia, Wayne, Tracey & Kelly Wyman. Your time has been invaluable this year.

NEPS canteen is now stocking three artisan products from Bacco's Bakeries – Flatbread, Breadsticks and Cookies. The flatbread and breadsticks are made with certified organic wheat flour, extra virgin olive oil and have all natural flavourings with no preservatives. Cookies (triple chocolate and date & ginger) are made using organic flour, local fresh eggs and real butter.

Prices are:

Flatbread (pk 2) - \$3.00

Cookie - \$1.50

Breadsticks (pk 4) - \$2.00

Canteen Roster Term 4 2016

Attention: If you are able to help out on any of the following dates where volunteers are needed please call Cherry on 0409927006

Week	Monday		Friday
9	5 Dec		9 Dec
	Volunteer needed		2x volunteers needed
10	12 Dec		16 Dec
	Liz Walker		Lou Porter Felicia

Year 5 Sports Gala Day Report

On Friday the 24th November, the Year 5's walked down to National Park for the annual sports gala day. We were already in teams and ready to play. NEPS had 3 teams; The Comets, The Rabbits and The Lions. All of the teams were put in different pools so we didn't play each other. The Year 5s participated in 4 sports. The sports were soccer, netball, ultra vortex and Oz tag. All three of the teams did really well and had a really great time. After we finished playing we had a barbeque lunch provided by Newcastle High, then we got into team lines for the presentation. During the presentation two kids from each team were awarded a medal, and one of the two got a prize pack with a pedometer and a water bottle. The two kids, who were chosen by their group leader (a year 10 student from NHS), were picked for demonstrating the values of participation, respect and responsibility. After the presentation we walked back up to school.

Amberley Moffat 5/6T



Term Planner

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
24 Yr2 Swim School Kinder orientation Parent Information 6pm Library	26 Yr2 Swim School	26 Yr2 Swim School Yr. Five Taster Lessons – NHS (Morning session) K-2 Sport 9.45-10.45	27 Yr2 Swim School	28 Yr2 Swim School 3-6 Sport - Mornings
31 Kinder orientation Morning- Library 10-10.45	1 NOVEMBER Stage One Transport Excursion	2 K-2 Sport 9.45-10.45	3	4 3-6 Sport - Mornings Let's build Our Hunter Art Installation Workshop- Civic Park-10.45am 4/5T, 5/6T, 6E
7 Kinder orientation Morning- Library 10-10.45	8	9 K-2 Sport 9.45-10.45	10	11 Remembrance Day Civic Park – School Choir Performance 11.00am Remembrance Day Assembly at school 3-6 Sport – Mornings
14 8:45am 2017 school captain candidate speeches Kinder orientation Morning- Library 10-10.45	15	16 K-2 Sport 9.45-10.45	17	18 3-6 Sport - Mornings
21 Kinder orientation Morning- Library 10-10.45	22	23 K-2 Sport 9.45-10.45	24 NHS Year 5 Gala Day at National Park	25 3-6 Sport - Mornings
28	29	30 K-2 Sport 9.45-10.45	1 DECEMBER	2 3-6 Sport – Mornings Welcome Kinder BBQ 5.30
5	6	7 K-2 Sport 9.45-10.45	8	9 3-6 Sport - Mornings
12 Presentation Day Assembly	13	14 Yr6 Farewell Dinner – South Leagues	15	16 Last Day for Students
19 Staff Development Day	20 Staff Development Day			

FUN + SAFE + EASY

surfest surf school

at Nobbys Beach
for 5 - 12 year olds



Search To book Online, Click on 'SURFGROMS'
@ www.sanbah.com

DATES

December Holidays (4 Days)	19/12/2016 - 22/12/2016	\$249
December Holidays (4 Days)	27/12/2016 - 30/12/2016	\$249
January Holidays (4 Days)	03/01/2017 - 06/01/2017	\$249
January Holidays (3 Days)	11/01/2017 - 13/01/2017	\$199
January Holidays (3 Days)	18/01/2017 - 20/01/2017	\$199
Mondays After School Term 1	13/02/2017 - 20/03/2017	\$199
Thursdays After School Term 1	14/02/2017 - 21/03/2017	\$199
Fridays After School Term 1	17/02/2017 - 24/03/2017	\$199

\$199 - 9 hour program
\$249 - 12 hour program

...or start your own group!
for all booking enquires:

0410 840 155



Get your +

Weet-Bix SurfGroms receive: Every child signing up will receive a great Quiksilver or Roxy backpack bursting with surfing merchandise including a rash-vest, sun-hat, Weet-Bix plastic bowl, Toyota wax comb, Nikon camera offer and Banana Boat Kids SPF 50+ 240mL finger spray and magnet.

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**Transport
for NSW**

School Student Transport Scheme Applications open 10 October 2016

From Monday 10 October 2016 parents, guardians and students over 16 years, will be able to apply for 2017 School Student Transport Scheme (SSTS) travel pass by visiting www.transportnsw.info/school-students

Information for parents and students

School travel passes only need to be updated when a student:

- changes address, or
- changes school or campus.

A new application is required when:

- applying for an SSTS pass for the first time,
- enrolling in Kindergarten,
- progressing from Year 2 to Year 3,
- progressing from Year 6 to Year 7, or
- requesting an additional pass as a result of a new shared parental responsibility situation.

For more information on planning your school travel, visit www.transportnsw.info or contact your local operator.

Passes for 2017 travel

Opal network: Please remind ALL your students to keep their School Opal cards for travel in 2017. These cards will be automatically deactivated for school holidays and then reactivated for school travel in term one. Current School Opal card can be updated with changes of school, home address or operator.

Rural and regional travel: Student's travelling with operator issued passes will receive a new pass in the new school year.