

Principal's Report – NSPS P&C Meeting – Tuesday 9 February, 2021

Welcome and looking forward

Welcome to our newest families who join us for the first time tonight and welcome back to all existing members of the P&C. It has been a solid start to the school and I acknowledge the hard work of our teachers in ensuring our students and their families get off to the best possible start in their classes. I thank all members of the community for the positivity they have displayed so far this year. Everyone on staff at Nicholson Street is excited for the year ahead.

2021 Enrolments and Classes

Class structures and staffing entitlements are linked to student enrolment data. Our current staffing entitlement dictates that we have been able to form five classes to begin the year. These classes have been given Indigenous place names, which will lend itself to rich and deep learning this year. Our official enrolment as at 11/2/2021 is 117 students across 5 classes.

The beginning of each school year is exciting but can be a little daunting for some students. I can assure you that at the end of last year and at the start of this year, teachers spent a lot of time determining class placements, considering the educational, social and emotional needs of each student. Rest assured, it is normal for most of us to be a little nervous about change. As adults, our job as teachers and parents is to support and reassure the children in our care. If your child shows any signs of distress regarding starting in a new class, we encourage you to speak positively about change and reinforce that being a little worried is normal. Teachers are equipped to support students' transition into new classes. In the vast majority of cases, children adjust quickly and confidently, often better than us!

2021 Strategic Improvement Plan

It is a requirement that all NSW government schools develop and publish a Strategic Improvement Plan (SIP) by the end of Term 1, 2021. A SIP is a working document that details the steps schools will take to improve learning outcomes, and the achievement and growth of all students. To ensure continuous improvement, the SIP reflects where the school is at and how it will further improve learning, teaching and leading.

The NSPS Executive Team looks forward to meeting with the P&C Executive members on Friday 12 February to further develop our SIP.

The Nicho Exec team will then be working to finalise our plan for consultation at the March P&C meeting.

Strategic Direction 1: Student growth and attainment. **Initiative 1:** literacy; **Initiative 2:** numeracy

Strategic Direction 2: Wellbeing and student engagement in learning. **Initiative 1:** A whole school approach; **Initiative 2:** Boys' and girls' education; **Initiative 3:** Gifted and talented education

Strategic Direction 3: Parents and carers; partners in learning. **Initiative 1:** parents and carer partnerships

Improvement measures in our new school plan will include system-negotiated targets for student growth and attainment and references to effective classroom practices. The Strategic Improvement Plan (SIP) is approved by the Director, Educational Leadership and published on our school's website by the end of Term 1 at the commencement of the planning cycle. The Strategic Improvement Plan (SIP) is also required as a state archive.

The Strategic Improvement Plan for Nicholson Street Public School:-

- will be underpinned by the School Excellence Framework (SEF), SEF Self-assessments and the external validation process
- will clearly identify the expected improvement in learning, teaching and leading aligned to specific strategies, initiatives, resources and professional learning
- will include strategic directions and the improvement measures, including references to the school's agreed system-negotiated targets, against which our school's impact will be monitored and evaluated
- will clearly reflect the department's strategic plan and Premier's priorities
- will demonstrate our school's commitment to excellence and equity as part of NSW public education
- will be clearly linked to the school budget, reflecting the resources that will be used to achieve the planned improvements
- will be underpinned by high impact teacher professional learning to build the capabilities of teachers and school leaders.

NSW Department of Education filming

The NSW Department of Education has selected our school to take part in some very exciting and special educational filming. Staff from the Educational Standards Directorate at the Department of Education have requested to film and take photographs of K-2 students as they learn. The photos and footage will be used by education staff and teachers to improve their professional understanding of students' teaching and learning. Filming will take place next Wednesday 17 February and an additional day on Wednesday 24 February (if needed). All appropriate information and permission notes have been sent home to the K-2 parents and carers.

Road Safety Reminder

Please consider your actions during drop off and pick up and how you can be part of the solution i.e. park a little further away and walk to meet you children, stagger drop off time, encourage older children to walk together, use public transport

2021 NSPS Curriculum: Key Initiatives

You will be hearing a lot about the following key initiatives, which we will be embedding in our planning and programming across the K-6 classes this year:

*** Seven Steps to Writing Success**

Seven Steps to Writing Success is a writing program that empowers teachers to inspire their students to rapidly improve their writing skills, and most importantly, learn to love writing! Seven Steps creates engaging classrooms where students learn to love writing and become lifelong communicators.

*** NRICH Mathematics Problem Solving**

The NRICH Project aims to enrich the mathematical experiences of all learners. Teachers embed rich mathematical tasks into everyday classroom practice.

*** Youcubed - Open, Creative Mindset Mathematics**

The world-renowned youcubed project is led by Professor Jo Boaler from Stanford University, who many teachers will recognise for her work with growth mindsets in mathematics. The project aims to encourage

students to see Mathematics as a beautiful, open, creative, and multi-dimensional subject. While there is an explicit mathematics curriculum focus, it is underpinned by numeracy, grounded in real-world contexts with an emphasis on the development of students' number sense.

*** You Can Do It!**

Developed by Professor Michael Bernard, University of Melbourne, You Can Do It! Education online elearning programs teach positive attitudes, social-emotional skills, character strengths and values based on the science of wellbeing and achievement. Lessons for students from foundation year, primary and secondary years teach mindfulness, grit, gratitude, optimism, resilience, self-acceptance, growth mindset, confidence, organisation and getting along. YCDI! Educations Program Achieve is recognised by Kidsmatter as 'best practice' demonstrating 'long-term effectiveness' and recommended by Beyond Blue's Be You initiative.

*** Musica Viva**

Musica Viva In Schools has been bringing the very best live music to Australian schools for 40 years and is one of the leading providers of music education in Australia.

Teaching and learning resources

- Up to 10 weeks of curriculum-aligned lesson plans
- Interactive content that brings the musicians into the classroom with instructional videos
- Independent student learning journeys that can be accessed in school or at home

*** Music Count Us In**

Music: Count Us In, an initiative of the peak representative body, Music Australia, is a program which aims to provide quality music education to thousands of schools each year across Australia. They advocate for the importance of music education in classrooms and aim to provide the opportunity for all students across Australia to have access to a quality music education. They provide teachers with high quality, curriculum-aligned resources to teach their students.

*** Quality Teaching Rounds**

Quality Teaching Rounds is high impact professional learning, strongly supported by the Department, based on over 20 years of research by the University of Newcastle and positive feedback from many teachers who have been trained in and participated. Rounds utilise the Department's Quality Teaching Model as the framework for deep engagement in analysis and review of classroom practice. They are cost effective, highly regarded by participating teachers, negotiated and trusted by participants and there is an increasing bank of evidence supporting the impact of participation in Rounds on student learning outcomes.

*** Safe on Social Schools Toolkit**

A comprehensive, year round training program to help make online safety education accessible, easy to understand ... and teach

- Cutting-edge resources & regular updates
- In-depth teacher & student training in all areas of online safety
- Videos, lesson plans & student activity sheets tailored for both primary & secondary students
- A program that aligns with existing curriculum
- Addresses Australian professional standards
- Accessible to staff anytime, anywhere with accredited training available

*** Smiling Mind Mindfulness Program**

Smiling Mind is a unique web and app-based program developed by psychologists and educators to help bring balance to people's lives. Just as we eat well and stay fit to keep our body healthy, mindfulness meditation is about mental health and looking after the mind.

High Potential and Gifted Education

The High Potential and Gifted Education Policy applies to all NSW public schools, teachers, and students. It describes a framework to develop the talent of high potential and gifted students. The policy provides advice to implement effective learning and teaching practices. The policy is operating in all public schools in NSW from the 27 January, 2021.

Nicholson Street Public School staff have participated in extensive professional learning around the policy and will be embedding the policy across all key learning areas this year. We look forward to sharing our HPGE implementation with the Nicho community throughout the year.

Road Safety

The beginning of the year rush and new school routines both result in an increase in the number of parents driving their children to school. I would like to remind all members of the school community of their responsibility to obey road rules and ensure child safety is the number one priority during the busy morning and afternoon pick up and drop off times. The council intend on closely monitoring for parking infringements over the coming weeks so please do the right thing and make sure your children's safety is prioritised when you are driving and parking around the school.

Quick Bytes

* Our "Meet the Teacher" sessions will be held via Zoom on Tuesday 23 February. Scheduled times are as follows: **Kindergarten Pirrama: 5:00pm; 1/2 Tumbalong: 5:30pm; 2/3 Warrane: 6:00pm; 3/4 Bennelong: 6:30pm; 5/6 Barangaroo: 7:00pm**

* In the pipeline: Sydney Theatre Company Literacy/Drama workshops, Stage 3 Leadership workshops.

Thank you!

* The 2020 K-2 students, teachers and the P&C exec (especially Carly Freel and Ashley McGrath) for coordinating and participating in the "Random Acts of Kindness" community gesture at the end of last year.

* Ms Nunik and Sarah Straker-Williams for maintaining our school gardens over the Christmas holiday period;

* Ashley McGrath and the Nicho P&C for pushing forward to get the air conditioning installed in the heritage block over the Christmas holiday period (jointly funded by the P&C and the school). We are so happy to say that the whole school is now air-conditioned!

* Todd Buncombe who spent a lot of time on site over the school holidays as part of the air-conditioning installation;

* The Nicho staff who worked tirelessly with planning and programming over the school holidays;

* Elizabeth and her staff at BESC who ran an absolutely brilliant Vacation Care program.