

NORTHSIDE MONTESSORI SCHOOL & STEPPING STONES LONG DAY CARE

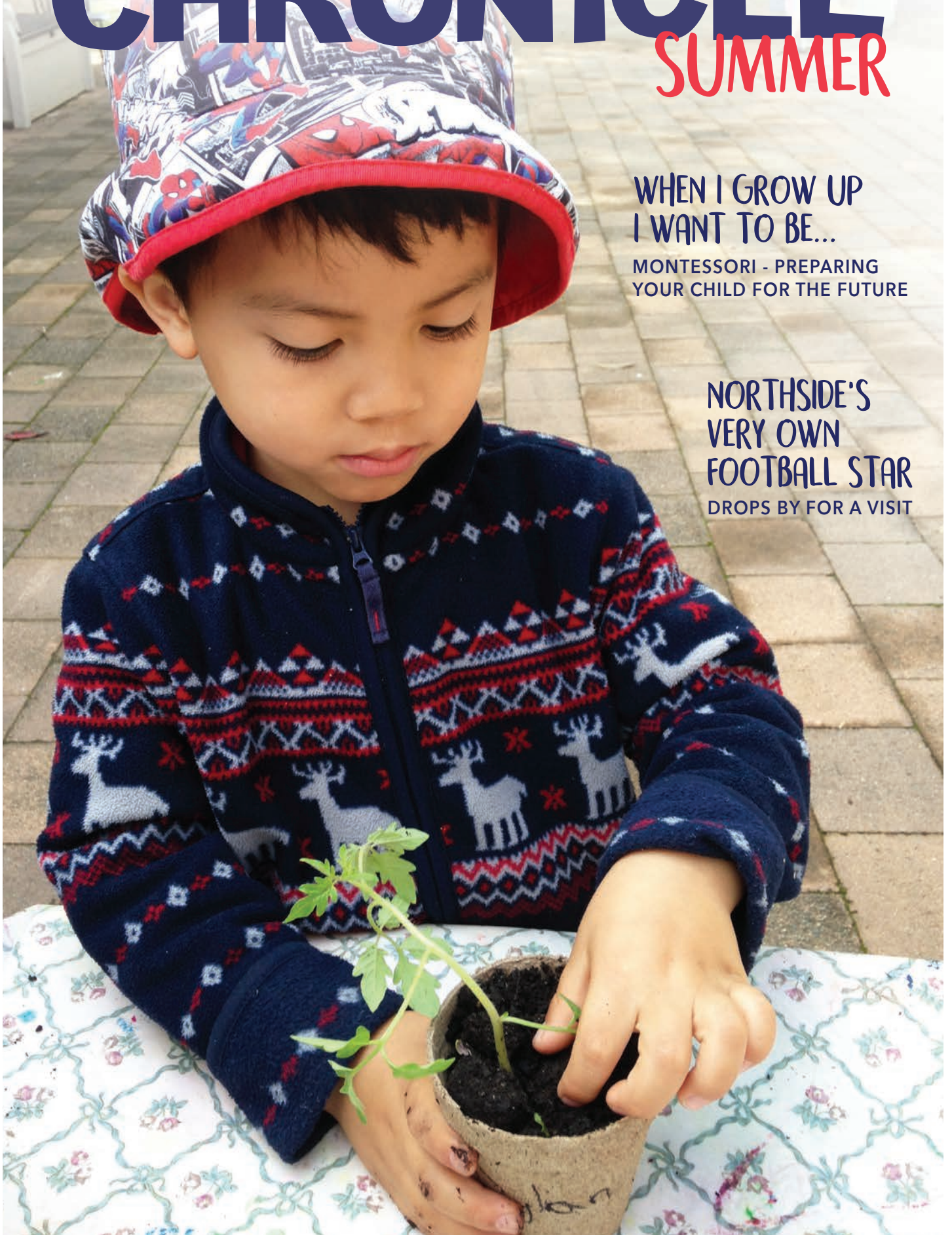
CHRONICLE

SUMMER

WHEN I GROW UP
I WANT TO BE...

MONTESSORI - PREPARING
YOUR CHILD FOR THE FUTURE

NORTHSIDE'S
VERY OWN
FOOTBALL STAR
DROPS BY FOR A VISIT



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SUMMER 2018 NORTHSIDE CHRONICLE



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NORTHSIDE CHRONICLE SUMMER 2018

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FROM THE PRINCIPAL

SOME HIGHLIGHTS IN THE 40TH YEAR OF NORTHSIDE.



At the end of Northside's 40th year it is wonderful to see how our school has developed over this time.

While I have been here for only a short time, I am constantly reminded of the commitment that parents now, and over the years have made to Montessori education, and the valuable gift this has been for their children and families. The value that we place on the Montessori method is well founded, as we see the many ways in which this approach to education helps our children grow and develop with independence, confidence and rigour.

This year has provided a wonderful 'snapshot' of the many ways in which Montessori Education meets the needs of the students. I am always encouraged by the level of work and engagement shown by our children, and the work that our students do with the Montessori materials in their classrooms. Across all areas of the school curriculum our staff follow the child and provide opportunities for students to engage with their interests, provide for open-ended learning experiences and guide to develop and demonstrate understanding.



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Some highlights for me personally this year have been the community gatherings as well as the many events and activities that promoted the engagement and learning that has taken place for our students. In this final Chronicle for the year I want to briefly recap on some of the wonderful opportunities that our students have provided for us to see their work in action.



THE 40TH ANNIVERSARY

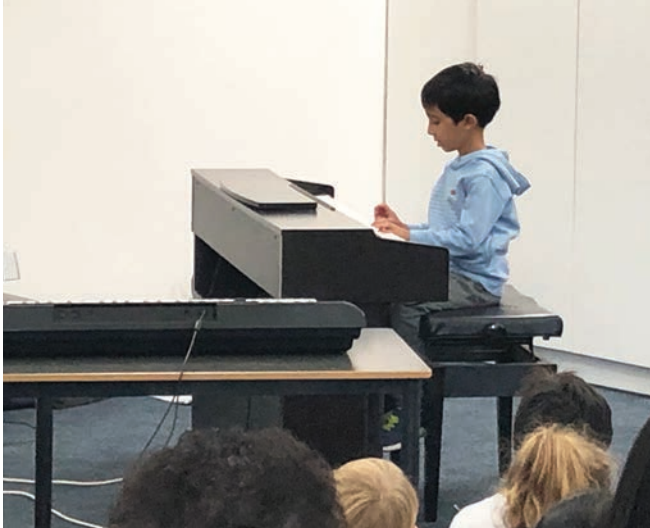
Bush Dance really set the scene for a wonderful 2018. It was amazing to see the way in which our community came together to put on this event and the way it was supported as a key community event for 2018. What a wonderful night for families coming together and celebrating the many good things that we have here at Northside. This certainly was a special event in the calendar.

A GREAT OPPORTUNITY

to see our 9-12 students in action was the 'Night of Montessori Materials'. On this evening we caught a glimpse into the depth of the Montessori primary experience through the knowledge of our students. We saw our children demonstrate the Montessori materials with confidence and joy. We observed the students demonstrate complex mathematical, scientific and literary skills and techniques using the materials that Montessori developed for our classrooms.

In Term One we also saw the 6-9 students presenting a variety of science experiments to the 3-6 students as well as parents. This science fair day was a wonderful opportunity for our students to engage with the parents by explaining and demonstrating what they had learnt in science that term.

The 'Extraordinary Ordinaries' event for our 9-12 students promoted the research and creative skills of our students as they presented the lives of those who have made a significant difference but are less well known than some. These exceptional people's lives were highlighted at this event and it was a terrific opportunity to for our students to engage with the visitors on the night and showcase their splendid work.



OUR SOIRÉE'S

throughout the year are always spectacular and these events provide a valuable opportunity for our students from Pre-Primary and Primary to perform in a safe and caring environment. For many of our students it is their first time performing to an audience and these moments are very special. Some of the older students or those in choir or orchestra have been performing for many years, and it is a good opportunity to see how their talents have been developed by the direction and support of their parents and teachers.

The Graduate Panel was an event that I had heard a lot about, but had not actually had the privilege of seeing prior to this year. If you have not had a chance to come along to this night, make it a priority in 2019 as it provides wonderful insight into the value of Montessori Education and the lasting value that this has provided for our graduates. Those attributes that are so highly regarded in education today and also in the corporate world are key elements of what we see in our classrooms and were a highlight of the conversation with our graduates. Attributes that they took with them from Northside were – a love of learning, collaborative skills, independent thinking, creativity, confidence, organisational skills, good communication skills, responsibility and respectfulness.



IN TERM THREE

we saw our students across the school feature in the production at Turramurra High School. This event featured the 6-9 students who presented their production of 'The Adventures of Ben and Daisy' which was written by our Level 3 students, followed by the 9-12 production of Northside's version of 'Charlie and the Chocolate Factory'. Both these productions showcased the writing, planning and presentation of their work in a creative and dramatic fashion.

Our Spring Fair was a wonderful community event and one that I know many of our families will remember for a long time. This event is featured elsewhere in the Chronicle.

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AS THE YEAR

rapidly draws to close the school seems to ramp up in terms of events. At the time of writing our students have just competed in the final of the National Virtual Debating Competition and won the final. We have been educated about care for the environment through the extraordinary presentation of our 6-9 students at their Environmental Expo and been amazed at the research and presentation skills of our 9-12 students through their Destination Imagination projects.

In these final weeks we are looking forward to the Graduation of our Year 6 students who we will miss very much. We thank them for their contribution to Northside and we have greatly appreciated the time they and their families have spent in our community. As they move into the next chapter of their schooling, they are reminded that they will always be part of our community and we wish them all the very best.

In these final weeks we are looking forward to the Graduation of our Year 6 students who we will miss very much. We thank them for their contribution to Northside and we have greatly appreciated the time they and their families have spent in our community.

THERE ARE

so many other events that I have not mentioned in this article. We have a very vibrant and active school with many, many opportunities for our students to learn about the world and their place in it. Thank you to all the parents and staff who have made 2018 a very special year at Northside. I certainly look forward to another great year in 2019, however until then, have a wonderful Christmas break and a safe holiday period. See you next year!

Kind regards

Adam Scotney

Principal



MONTESSORI

REFLECTIONS

Hitting a milestone is often an opportunity to stop and take stock of how you got where you are, and with the 40th Anniversary coming up and with my youngest child approaching her last year at Montessori - this was a good opportunity for me to reflect back on my time at Northside and how the school has changed over the years.

by Stuart Parker (Board Member)

For background, I have been a member of the Northside Montessori Society for 14 years or 5 Principals depending on how you like to measure time. My time at Northside began in 2004, but this was not our first experience with Montessori. Our two eldest children began their Montessori experience at Montessori Excelsior located at Bromley Ave in Pymble with the amazing Lily Lim as directress who was the most wonderful introduction to education that a child could have. Montessori Excelsior consisted of a single 3-6 class run out of a spare church building shared with a dance class and other church activities and so required being packed up and reset up every day. Unfortunately Excelsior closed down around 2010.

I mention Excelsior for 2 reasons, the first for provenance and the second being that it was my first experience on being on a school board. This was at a time when a school could be run effectively by a few volunteer parents, who over the course of a few late nights each month, could handle the regulatory requirements and other management responsibilities - how times have changed. To effectively manage a school now requires a substantial and dedicated full time staff and an effective leader.

WHEN WE

joined Northside there was a relatively rigorous interview with the Principal which was quite challenging for us as parents. We were expected to be familiar with various published Montessori books and the underlying pedagogy and as there was an extensive waiting list there was by no means an assured entry - despite our previous Montessori affiliation. The rigour of this process really showed to us the intent of Northside to ensure that parents understood and bought into the Montessori process as obviously it does not start and stop at the school gate. Fortunately we must have passed Diedre's scrutiny as we were offered a place for Chris and the journey began.

FOURTEEN YEARS

ago the school was mostly as you see it now, although the majority of the buildings purposes have changed. The Jacaranda building had just come into use and Janene was the first directress of the new 6-9 class that Chris joined. I was co-opted onto the Board and was promptly presented with the maintenance portfolio - which meant that I was in charge of coordinating activities such as the Working Bees and the like. I also ended up with the IT portfolio for a number of years. The Board structure back then was quite different, with each Board member holding a portfolio responsible for running a different aspect of the school. This is not an approach that would, or should, work now, however at the time was appropriate given the lesser degree of regulation and governance required.

One board meeting we decided to develop a Master Plan for the school - something that would not necessarily be achievable in the short or medium term, but would be an inspiration towards future fund-raising and general planning for the school. A number was determined that would be considered appropriately pie-in-the-sky-worthy - \$2 million. From memory - it was just one day after the board meeting where the Master Plan was presented and ratified, that the Government announced the BER program with grants of up to \$2 million per school - as long as they had an existing master plan. Serendipity and happenstance.

The Jacaranda building had just come into use and Janene was the first directress of the new 6-9 class that Chris joined.

THERE HAVE BEEN

many attitudinal changes towards Montessori over the last 14 years I have been a member, both within the school and within the parent groups. I have witnessed the consensus change from "Only Montessori" to "Montessori where we can" and then tilt back again. I believe that a lot of this has occurred due to the increased governance that schools work under, with increased levels of administration and policy for the sake of it. Staffing levels have had to grow significantly to accomodate this. The introduction of the Naplan was a part of this earlier attitudinal change, and it is disappointing from a number of viewpoints; firstly that standardised testing is a weak approach to measuring your child's capabilities, and secondly that we have accepted that children have their own pace of learning, so to compare them to others at the same "age" is misguided.

The extra governance can lead to an attitude of "we are a school first, and a Montessori school second". This is incorrect. We are a Montessori school first and foremost. Everything that the school needs to do can be done in a Montessori manner and with a Montessori focus. If that is not the attitude then we as the school community are not doing our job right. In my opinion a core function of the Montessori education is to provide what is needed to the child at the appropriate time from their perspective. It is not to make our lives easier. To that end, I am really enjoying observing the change in attitude from parents, students and staff over the last year or so since Adam has become principal.

INTERESTINGLY,

in the same period, mainstream academia has started to adopt some Montessorian (and other alternative/progressive school) practises. There has been a conspicuous growth in articles from mainstream teachers to reduce or eliminate homework, teach in a more tactile manner, and focus less on standardised testing, and talking about Montessori no longer brings looks of confusion from other parents faces. I think I've only had to once describe Montessori to someone in the last year during conversation - 17 years ago I only met 1 person who was aware of Montessori as an education option and their advise was to find a Montessori school - anywhere if they had a vacancy - and enrol asap. Great advice.

About 6 years ago I ran a Friday afternoon computer club on the school premises. While not Montessori trained, I did my best to try to convey the weekly topics in a manner that the children would be familiar with from class. We approached topics in a tactile manner (e.g. to learn about the components of a computer we dismantled 4 computers), we built physical representations of largely theoretical concepts (e.g. made rotating cyphers and encoded messages to each other when learning about encryption) and built games that the students designed themselves in small self-organised groups. What really affected me was when I could see that moment when a child 'gets' a concept that was alien to them just minutes before and I can see why our directresses and teaching staff do what they do.

There has been a conspicuous growth in articles from mainstream teachers to reduce or eliminate homework, teach in a more tactile manner, and focus less on standardised testing...

DESPITE EVERYTHING

that has changed since we first started I would like to acknowledge Margaret, Janene, Marilyn and Kay as very welcome constants of our time at Northside. The one main takeaway I have from time at Northside is that the directresses and teaching staff are excellent at their jobs and that we can explicitly trust them to educate our children to their most effective level, but as parents we get so much more out of the school when we contribute to the community wherever possible, whether it be volunteering in class, being on the school board, the working bees, and attending school events, especially the mornings where the children can demonstrate to you what they have been working on inside the classroom - that pride in their work and the opportunity to take you through the process is a joy to watch. All in all, it has been a very enjoyable and worthwhile journey and positive experience to have been a part of the school for the last 14 years and on (at least one more year).



NEW STAFF

INTRODUCTIONS

This term we welcomed two new staff members to Northside. Here is a little bit about them.

CARLI SABER

I'm Carli!

I grew up here in Sydney, in Bondi on the East. I love the ocean, salt and sunshine!

After realising how much I love learning and sharing knowledge with others, I decided teaching was what I was made to do. Who would be better to teach, than curious, joyful children?

While studying education, I recognised the traditional education system did not seem to match up to the humans needs that I was simultaneously learning in psychology. After further research in education I learnt about Montessori teaching and I have been hooked ever since. After completing my education and psychology degree I started my AMI Montessori specialised teaching.

I love the Northside Montessori community and I am so grateful to be a part of it. It has been so joyful learning and sharing knowledge with the students this term.

Fun fact: I am also a yoga teacher.

LINDA VAN LIEROP

Hello, my name is Linda and I am the new 6-9 teacher in Cooinda. Many long years ago (just writing that makes me feel old), after completing my teaching degree I started in a Special Needs school 'Giant Steps'. This was such a wonderful experience and I learnt so much working there. When I left special needs, I started casual teaching around the primary schools on the Central Coast. A close friend from university introduced me to the Montessori philosophy and encouraged me to give Northside Montessori School a trial to see how I felt. I was in awe of the children and what they are capable of, the independence and curiosity they have in their learning was inspiring. I love the way that children gain a concrete understanding of the concepts rather than rote learning everything!

I undertook my Montessori training in Bergamo, Italy, from 2008-2009, and upon my return took on the Directress position in a 9-12 class.

I worked at Northside Montessori School for 4 years before leaving and working at Inner Sydney Montessori School. While at ISMS I worked across the school in the 3-6, 6-9 and 9-12 classrooms. I believe this has broadened my understanding of the Montessori classroom as I have seen where children are coming from and where they are going.

I love that I have joined the community again and I look forward to many long years ahead at Northside Montessori School.

I have a three year old boy who I love exploring the world with. I love reading and going to the beach in my free time.

SENSORIAL EXPLORATIONS

IN THE TODDLER PROGRAM

by Sandra Sin (Infant & Toddler Directress)

Maria Montessori believed that educating children begins at birth as they take impressions of their world through their senses. It is believed that educating the senses preceded intellectual development.

"It is necessary to begin the education of the senses in the formative period, if we wish to perfect this sense development with the education which is to follow. The education of the senses should be begun methodically in infancy, and should continue during the entire period of instruction which is to prepare the individual for life in society." Dr. Montessori

In our toddler program, we provide a safe, beautiful and orderly environment for children to move freely while engaging in many sensorial experiences which encourage them to touch, see, hear, smell and taste. By using their senses, young children begin to make sense of and study their environment before they classify and create order to their understanding, learning and place in the world.

In term 4, I have the opportunity to observe and follow our "sensorial explorers" in acquiring and building up many sensorial impressions from interacting with our carefully prepared environment.

In our toddler program,
we provide a safe, beautiful
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ETHAN appreciated his senses of tasting and smelling as he prepared and enjoyed morning tea with his friends.



Kayla sharpened her senses that enable her to understand the many impressions she received through touching and hearing from the seashells.



AILEEN became aware of the details (e.g. colour, shape, size, texture) while practising visual discrimination (seeing) as she matched some Australian animal figures to the printed images.

STEPPING STONES



NIDO ROOM

One of the biggest changes for the Nido environment after our recent renovations has been the addition of the new outdoor deck. The deck area allows the children to make a choice between environments and provides an extension in their learning space allowing them to freely move between the two spaces. As the deck is so new and exciting we are not at all surprised by how popular the space has become with all of the children.

Though we are living far away from our India, today it felt like we are celebrating Diwali in India only because of all our lovely families.



WE RECENTLY CELEBRATED

Diwali within the room. We had many families and educators who kindly shared in this celebration and allowed us to not only witness, but really experience the festival of light with them. Children were able to dress up in traditional clothes and observe sparklers while educators demonstrated dance and brought a real sense of home life and culture to the room. The day was wonderfully described by one of our educators -

"Though we are living far away from our India, today it felt like we are celebrating Diwali in India only because of all our lovely families."

With the end of year fast approaching we will also be incorporating Christmas and New Year celebrations into our program. We will have opportunities for craft, gift making, song, dance and stories to end our year. We would like to wish everyone happy holidays from all the staff in the Nido room.

Karla Moggs, Nido Room Leader.



CASETTA

With the year coming to an end, Casetta have transitioned beautifully into their own little class creating new friendships, keeping old friendships and gaining trust with their educator. In the beginning we focused on combining routines from both the Infant Community and the Casa community.

As 2019 is fast approaching, we have focused more on Casa's routine as we get ready to transition over to our new room and make new trusting relationships with our experienced educators and new friends.

Casetta have learnt a song about continents, which helps us remember where the continents are placed on the world map as well as descending size.

THIS TERM

we have had a wonderful time learning our routine, controlling our emotions and using our words to demonstrate what we need or desire. Since the transition, Casetta have been very excited to learn new works and be shown demonstrations of age appropriate materials so they are ready for their next stage of development in Casa.

Casetta have explored and mastered many new works during the work cycle and have gained a strong focus towards continents. "Geography is the most all-encompassing subject in the Montessori cultural curriculum, it creates the foundation for understanding the oneness of the human family, recognising the basic needs that all people share while appreciating the diversity of how different cultures satisfy those same needs." With the help of the Casa children and educators, Casetta have learnt a song about continents, which helps us remember where the continents are placed on the world map as well as descending size.

Casetta have been utilising our world puzzles during the work cycle taking the pieces out and then concentrating very hard to manipulate each puzzle piece into the correct section, "Montessori puzzle maps are meant to be taken apart and put back together again as the children develop an understanding of continents." During group time our favourite thing to do is get the big world map puzzle and take apart the puzzle, and name each continent and colour as we place the pieces back together. During this process Casetta were very excited to learn Australia is a continent.



DURING OUR

transition-focused days we have introduced outdoor socialising days with Casa to get to know the Casa children who will be continuing in 2019 as well as our new room leader and assisting educators. Casetta have the opportunity to work in the shared playground with Casa and discover new friendships and work on communicating and resolving issues independently. We recently participated in National Outdoor Classroom Day and transitioned their classrooms outdoors for the whole day. We participated in outdoor morning discovery, dining and resting all while utilising our developing new playground and shaded outdoor area. "When teachers take learning outdoors they report some powerful impacts: Children's behaviour improves, whole classes are excited to learn, and individuals who feel inhibited by the curriculum often thrive in an outdoor environment."

Some of the benefits for taking learning outdoors include: enhanced social skills, enhanced problem solving, team working skills and fun! Being outdoors helps children focus, boosts creativity and imagination and can simply be more enjoyable. Children who have the freedom to play, make friends, get lost in the moment and have fun today are better prepared for whatever tomorrow throws at them. Playing helps children build friendships, test their own boundaries and solve their own problems. It's central to a child's development and their enjoyment of childhood. Did you know? 90% of adults played outside everyday as children now it's only 30%!

Overall Casetta have had a great few months together and can't wait to transition to Casa. I wish Casetta all the best for their new year of discovering and learning in Casa and can't wait to watch them grow and develop into beautiful young children in Casa.

Amy Webb, Casetta Room Leader.



We reminisce on the incredible discoveries, insightful conversations and dramatic discussions, exuberant laughter and moments of authentic connection which have consumed our days.



CASA

As the end of 2018 creeps towards us faster and faster, we find ourselves reflecting back on the incredible journey we have all have taken together in Casa, and the exciting prospects presented to us for the future. We reminisce on the incredible discoveries, insightful conversations and dramatic discussions, exuberant laughter and moments of authentic connection which have consumed our days. Casa has developed into a warm, inviting and productive learning environment for all thanks to its positive members - both children, staff and families and I am very proud to be a part of such a wonderful community.



FOR THOSE

of you and your children who will be returning to us, we very much look forward to seeing you again soon. We have much learning still to do!

For those of you and your children who are transitioning on, whatever your next phase might be, we thank you for being a part of our community here in Casa and we wish you all the very best for your futures - may they be bright and filled with happiness and joy. It has been our pleasure to be a part of you and your child's journey. We know that with the skills, knowledge, attitudes and dispositions we have strived to build and foster within our Montessori environment, that our children will be well equipped continuing on the learning journey of life - independent, resilient, compassionate, inquisitive and confident.

Bronte Nielsen, Early Childhood Teacher and CASA Room Leader.





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ALUMNI VISIT

by Margaret Kroeger (9-12 Directress)

It's 2001 and at the back of the Northside 9 - 12 classroom, sits a young student, Jon Faerber. He has sandy-red hair and a big smile. In fact, the only thing quicker than his smile are his feet under the table practicing soccer manoeuvres and kicking that perfect imaginary goal. Jon is rarely seen without a soccer ball. He dreams of nothing more than playing soccer professionally.

Fast forward 18 years and that little boy has grown up. He is now a 30-year old playing with Keflavik - the Icelandic first division side. His dream has been realised.

Recently Jon participated in an interview with Optus Sport.

"It's as much of a surprise to me, as it is to you!"

"It is not a direct path at all. I've bounced around a lot between clubs," Faerber told Optus Sport.

That quest saw him depart Australia in 2014 after finding A-League opportunities hard to come by and has ended, for the time being at least, in Iceland.

"I actually got pulled into train on spot for Central Coast Mariners but had to make the choice to sort of drop out of there because I wasn't getting game time," he said

"Found myself with a German fifth-division side, which isn't a bad place to start. Was with the team for a season, got drafted into a fourth-league side and then I ended up with a sixth-league side.

"Then I moved briefly to L.A. - this is where the Icelandic trainer came in to offer me a chance to train over here. It has been a very long, winding path." Working as a groundsman as well as a goalkeeper for the club, Faerber is simply happy to be living his football dream and is savouring life on the other side of the world.

"I'm sure that there are goalkeepers better than me. Had they kept going, they would have taken my exact spot where I am right now!"
"But because they stopped and I kept going, I ended up here and not them."

"WORKING HARD is not new to me. I'm used to working a job and playing soccer at the same time. I'm a grounds keeper here. I thought 'It's cutting some grass. That won't be bad.' But actually - it's a lot of work. That's ok because working hard is something I've always done. It keeps me grounded."

His advice for other Australian footballers?

"If you want to do it, and I mean really want to do it, then there is always a way. Expect that things will not go the way you want them to go or expect them to go. If you're willing to throw yourself miles out of your comfort zone. If you're willing to look into every option. Look for a foot in the door, somewhere, anywhere! You just need to be willing to put in some serious hard work, be willing to put up with a lot of disappointment. You've got to believe in yourself."

"I'm sure that there are goalkeepers better than me. Had they kept going, they would have taken my exact spot where I am right now!"

"But because they stopped and I kept going, I ended up here and not them." "If I can keep doing this for another 5, 10 years, oh my gosh, where will I be, what will I know, how many languages will I know, how many countries will I have seen, what bizarre foods will I have tried, gotten sick, gotten kicked out of countries, who knows? It's awesome. Awesome! And if football can be the vehicle for this, if I can play the game I love and learn all this stuff at the same time, how lucky am I? I can't complain about a thing in life." Jon's enthusiasm for life and utter joy in soccer seem just as bright today as they were as a 9-year old.

It was our pleasure to welcome Jon back to Northside last week when he spent the day with our Primary students. The children were delighted to ask him questions and to join in a spirited game of soccer. He had some inspirational words for them too. He's the type of person that just makes you feel positive by being around him.



I attribute
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in Montessori.

"NORTHSIDE

helped me to communicate with people. I know I can go into a room and speak to anyone. I'm interested in learning about their lives and asking questions. There's always something to learn. That has opened a lot of doors for me. My trainers have told me I have a great attitude and that I'm a good influence for the younger players on my team. I attribute my ability to communicate as a direct result of Northside and my time in Montessori. You know that in Northside you have mixed ages together. You get used to being with different people - younger, older. That's the same in the world. Anyone you met is a chance to learn and grow."

"Persistence and resilience are other things that I got from Northside."

We wish Jon all the best as he continues to make the most of every opportunity while playing the game he loves. Like Jon, we encourage all our students to follow their dreams.



OUR SOIRÉE

AND OTHER MUSIC NEWS

by Marilyn Williams (Music Teacher)

We are midway through term 4, the busiest term in the music department. We have had our last Soirée, which saw a variety of different performances. Some of the highlights from the night were: The Zhouand family demonstrating African drumming on an assortment of different drums; Ella and Georgie singing a beautiful duet with their father accompanying on the guitar; and Ming-Wei accompanying Christopher and Natalie and Cleo playing carols on the French Horn, while everyone sang along.

We know our end of year is near when the carols begin. On Tuesday, December 11, before school, our choir will welcome everyone with Christmas carols as they arrive to school.



NOW THAT THE

Soirée is over, the focus is on the end of year, with older children helping the younger ones in preparation for the Graduation end of year concert on Wednesday December 5th. This concert is not only a very special Graduation ceremony for our Year 6 students, but also an opportunity where every child in the school is preparing to go up on the stage of Turrumurra High. It must be recognised that for many 3 and 4-year olds this could be their first experience of performing on stage and I am grateful to my Year 5 & 6 volunteers who help make this experience as smooth as possible. I look forward to seeing everyone at the concert and for those who require any more details please don't hesitate to email me on Marilyn.williams@northsidemontessori.nsw.edu.au.

Lastly, we know our end of year is near when the carols begin. On Tuesday, December 11, before school, our choir will welcome everyone with Christmas carols as they arrive to school. Some of our 9-12 children will also visit Stepping Stones on Wednesday to make sure they don't miss out on the Carols.

Looking forward to 2019.





KINDNESS, MUTUAL RESPECT & EMPATHY IN OUR 3-6 CLASSES

by Margret Ranada Palma (Brolga Directress)

I recently met a mother at a friend's birthday party and I was introduced as a Montessori teacher. She looked at me and said: "Oh, Montessori..." I was waiting with bated breath and if I had a thought bubble, it would read: "Here we go..." and she continued with a polite smile: "Isn't that where children are free to do whatever they want? How does that work?" I chuckled slightly into my glass and turned it into a form of a cough, trying to remember my manners and apologised as I prepared myself to casually speak about my passion.

It is a difficult task to convince people about something that they have little information on. I usually try to explain why Maria Montessori designed the classroom with mixed age groups and how there is individualised teaching as the directresses present the materials to the children depending on their interests and ability as they go at their own pace. My new acquaintance was nodding politely to the brief explanation but as I noticed her eyes glaze over, I decided to change the direction of our conversation.

This mutual respect towards each other without the adult's intervention or supervision is astounding.



LAST WEEK

I witnessed how the classroom has transformed into a normalised class as if the adults were not present and mere onlookers. The Extended Day children were working on a group lesson together as an extension to the card activities of the Geometric Cabinet and its figures. I took a step back and told them that they could work by themselves. At first they were having a discussion on who would go first. Naturally, in a group, one would say that they want to go first, and another would argue as to why he had to go first. And then one of the oldest children, Edward, piped up and said, "Okay, this is what we are going to do..." and he went on and assigned the order of things as everyone listened. After they completed that first step, and looked at their mat, Sion asked each of his friends: "Have you had a turn?" until all six of them said they've all had a turn and all was fair.

THIS MUTUAL RESPECT

towards each other without the adult's intervention or supervision is astounding. These children are five years old. Sometimes we forget in the classroom how young and little they are, these three to six-year old children, yet how capable and giving they are.

THROUGH OUR

Grace and Courtesy lessons we impart respect, kindness, consideration, empathy, sympathy, helpfulness, compassion and so many other values we wish for the children to turn into virtues as they constantly form the person they are yet to become.

THE CHILDREN

learn that they must walk around the classroom so as not to get hurt or not to hurt others if they would be running. The control of their movements is part of our Grace and Courtesy lessons, especially when they walk carrying trays, baskets and other materials from the shelf to the mat or the table. They remember to push their chairs in so that others will not trip. They are reminded to put the materials and activities as they found them to ensure that the next person gets to use it with care as well. Through caring for our environment, we show a mutual respect for each other and for ourselves. Through caring for our pets as they feed them and maintain a healthy living space; and our plants as they water them and see to it that they receive enough sunshine, they learn the needs of living things.





WHEN THE CHILDREN

prepare their morning tea as they cut up fruit and put them on the serving dish in the snack area, others are able to partake. You would see an older child assisting a younger child if some of the implements for food preparation are too difficult to handle. You could hear a child remind another who eats more than their share because others won't have enough, therefore that child must prepare some fruit too.

THESE ARE NATURAL

movements, actions and reactions without prompting from an adult. It is a beautiful sight to see when one observes carefully. These are simple acts of kindness and respect that the children learn from each other and as the adults model this kind of behaviour as well.

Through caring for our pets as they feed them and maintain a healthy living space... They learn the needs of living things.

IN OUR MODERN

world, we have become spectators to and are involved in the changes that allow us to evolve as humankind. Change is inevitable. What does not change in the Montessori classroom? What remains constant? Apart from the materials and the method and philosophy that we try to maintain, it would be the values and virtues, characteristics we try to instill in the children to become better or more responsible citizens of the world. Kindness, mutual respect and empathy, are these not the virtues Dr. Montessori hoped the children gain as they work together becoming products of an Education for Peace.

AS WE APPROACH

the summer holidays, we hope that we continue to be kind to one another as we try our very best to model the behaviour to our children not merely through words but through our actions as well.

P.S. If you were wondering how my conversation ended with the lady, she nodded her head courteously and said: "That's wonderful!" and then turned to the person on her other side. I guess I have to work on my conversational skills.



OOSH NEWS

BEFORE & AFTER SCHOOL CARE

by Surendrini Giritharan
(OOSH Coordinator)

Our OOSH year is almost coming to an end and what a busy one it has been! It was a smooth transition for all the children who joined throughout the year. They all settled in really well and mingled with peers and other age groups alike. It was interesting to watch how the children developed and progressed throughout the year.

Each day the OOSH staff create a daily program covering Learning and Wellbeing. The children participate in our enriched programs through various arts, crafts and cooking activities. The knitting, Hama beads, cooking, building games and our play kitchen with the utensils all became very popular activities this year. The children were very happy to take their cook books home. Almost all of them said that they are going to try the recipes at home during the Christmas break.

We also do termly observations of each child individually and in group situations. Parents are more than welcome to see.



It was a smooth transition for all the children who joined throughout the year. They all settled in really well and mingled with peers and other age groups alike.



OUR NEW

pre-primary play area has been a big attraction to all the children and especially the pre-primary children as they have a big variety of equipment to explore without getting bored. The play area is also very colourful making it all the more fun for the children.

Our front play area has always been an attractive playing ground for all, including our primary children who particularly love playing there. The garden has been a truly educational experience for the children, as they wonder around investigating all that nature has to offer. We see almost all the children getting involved in some form of group activity, collaborative game or generally enjoying being active. This year Halloween was a big project. Primary children wanted to do the outdoor decorations with all the Halloween props and layout using all the theme colours. They spent almost two weeks preparing their decorations and it was a great outcome at the end. We took lots of pictures in every step of the way to see how it all progressed and finished. The team work was amazing to watch, even children who usually wouldn't interact with each other were working collaboratively.

Hide and seek, soccer, hockey and cricket have become very popular sports during playtime. What is even better is the primary school children are very happy and patient in explaining and involving the pre-primary kids in their games.

WE KNOW

how much every parent worries about their child's safety, so a task sheet is filled out every single day about the safety and practice of the activities being performed, prior to the children engaging in it.

Also, holiday program incursions are getting very popular, plus each term we bring in a variety of in-house activities based on learning and fun. The 9D Mobile Cinema was a big hit during the last holiday program. It was a first-time experience for almost all the children, they were very excited and had the best experience on the day. They all had so much to talk about that whole afternoon and they wanted it running every holiday program! We are happy to be receiving positive feedback from parents and children alike.

The team work was amazing to watch, even children who usually wouldn't interact with each other were working collaboratively.

We would like to take this opportunity to wish all the children who are leaving our school this year the very best.



FINALLY, a BIG THANK YOU to all our wonderful staff members Blandine, Christine, Elle, Hyun, Kalpana, Kay, Sandra, Sirisha and Veena. Ladies, without your commitment, cooperation and support the program couldn't have been implementable. It was a very busy year without any major hick ups and thanks to all of you for helping make it happen.

Seasons greeting and have a relaxing and safe holiday!

Blandine, Christine, Elle, Hyun, Kalpana, Sandra, Sirisha, Sureni and Veena.



6-9 ENVIRONMENTAL EXPO & SCIENCE NIGHT

by Janene Johnson

(6-9 Directress)

This term our students have been working hard on their presentations for the Environmental Expo. As usual they provided us all with an informative and joyful evening. It was evident by the enthusiastic conversations going on in the room that the students knew their topics very well. This was as a result of weeks of hard work. The students worked in small groups with a Year 2 or 3 student as the team leader. They had to decide on their topic and then commence researching. This was done using the library resources and the internet. Once they had gathered information, they then had to summarise and paraphrase it in their science books. The group then had to work out how they would present their information. As you can imagine, this took a great deal of collaboration and input from each student.

The team leaders took their roles very seriously. They ensured that the younger students were involved and had age appropriate tasks to do. The leaders also had to make sure that the group were meeting deadlines. Some groups coped better than others with this, but they all had their information ready to present on the night.

The creativity was apparent. Some groups had made beautiful models, others used charts and some made games to interest and capture the imagination of their audience. The confidence shown by all of the students on the night was wonderful and it was obvious that they felt a great sense of achievement. The learning that occurs from this work can't be measured.

The team leaders took their roles very seriously. They ensured that the younger students were involved and had age appropriate tasks to do.



FOR THOSE OF YOU

who stayed for the 9-12 part of the evening, you would have noticed the progress that the students make as they get older. Their presentations and the work for Destination Imagination was inspirational.

Thank you all for attending. Your support and sharing the excitement of the night with your children was greatly appreciated and something they will always remember.

WHEN I GROW UP I WANT TO BE...

MONTESSORI - PREPARING YOUR CHILD FOR THE FUTURE

*Is our education system
preparing our children for
the future and where does
Montessori fit into all of this?*

by Janene Johnson

(6-9 Directress)

We are now well into the 21st century and it is quite incredible how much times have changed since we were all at Primary school. When I was at school my fellow students wanted to be doctors, teachers, firemen, shopkeepers and astronauts. Our world has changed so much now that experts and researchers agree, our children will be doing careers that haven't even been invented yet. The World Economic Forum predicts that a whopping 65% of our children will be in this situation. How can we prepare them for careers that are non-existent at this point in time? Is our education system preparing our children for the future and where does Montessori fit into all of this?



THE OTHER NIGHT

at the Primary Science Evening I heard a parent saying that we need our children to learn to think outside the square. Currently, traditional education is still grounded in philosophies dating back 100 years or more. A huge focus is placed on language and mathematics. The time throughout the day is highly structured and teacher-driven. There is very little scope for independent work or for students to critically think about subjects and problem solve within a collaborative team. However, these are the features of education that researchers are saying must be introduced if children are to be able to adapt to the rapid and complex changes that are occurring in the world which will become their workplace.

EDUCATION MUST

become student-focused with students learning how to problem-solve, make decisions regarding their learning, work collaboratively with others, design, create and critically think about information and solutions. They must be taught the skills which will allow them to adapt to a constantly changing world. Children must also learn the social skills which will enable them to work creatively with others. There must be a focus on exploring things rather than knowing things. "They need to know how to learn because we don't know what it is they're going to need to learn," (Thompson, Glenys, 2016)

The world is highly computerised now and will become more so in the next decade and beyond. Technology is taking over tasks that were once done by humans. "Up to 40 per cent of current Australian jobs could disappear within the next 10 to 15 years as robots and computers continue their unstoppable advance" (Thompson, Geoff, 2016). The jobs that will be safe from automation are the ones that require a human element.

Researchers are now recommending that schools introduce some element of project based learning. Several schools in Canada are trialling "Genius Hour". Every few days students get an hour where they can explore a project of their choice. "These initiatives ignite a passion for self-directed learning and create opportunities for creativity and problem-solving - skills easily adapted to changing times" (Gamwell in Kielburger, 2017).

A Montessori classroom embodies all these recommended characteristics. Our children are encouraged to be independent in their learning and work choices. The Directress is there to guide and support, not to dictate whilst imparting facts and figures. "Our care of the children should be governed not by the desire to 'make them learn things', but by the endeavour always to keep burning within them the light which is called intelligence." (Maria Montessori)

They must be taught the skills which will allow them to adapt to a constantly changing world. Children must also learn the social skills which will enable them to work creatively with others.

OUR CLASSROOM

culture is built on respect for, and collaboration with, other students and adults. Project based learning is a big part of what we do and the project is done independently by the child. It is not taken home for the parents to complete. Children have to make decisions about work choices and ensure that they are acting in a responsible manner. Their research skills are being developed at a very early age, and any of you who were at the Science Evening last week will attest to that fact; that the students were so emotionally connected to their work and could explain in detail what their work was about. They are constantly challenged to self-reflect and to critically analyse what they are doing. The joy they exhibit during this learning process is wonderful to witness. Their passion for learning is always ignited.



A COMMON

question parents often ask is, "How do they go at High School?" The answer is that they are self-assured, confident, flexible, creative thinkers who are armed with excellent research and social skills. A recurring comment from our graduates at the Graduate Panels is that their High School teachers say that they ask a lot of questions. This is because our graduates have very enquiring minds and they want to find answers. They are not afraid to voice their opinion and they often come up with very creative ways to solve problems. The graduates are always on hand to assist other students and they are team players.

A Montessori education is providing children with all of the skills they need to move ahead into the unknown. Traditional education systems are starting to recognise that to assist students to navigate their way forward successfully, we have to move away from the traditional industrial revolution model of education.

"Yesterday's classroom won't prepare our kids for tomorrow's job market. It's time to rethink education, teaching the lessons they'll need for careers we can only imagine." (Robinson, 2017)

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(ROBINSON, 2017)

MARIA MONTESSORI

may not have been able to see where we would be in the 21st century, but she certainly understood what it meant to develop a child holistically so that they acquired skills which went beyond the three R's. Montessori students are independent, self-driven problem-solvers who will be able to adapt and move into the future. The skills that are intrinsic to them as a result of their Montessori education, are timeless and will carry them forward to careers we can only imagine.

"The child, making use of all that he finds around him, shapes himself for the future." (Maria Montessori)

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FROM OUR OUR 9-12 CLASS

It is hard to believe that the holidays are nearly here with the academic year almost at a close.

by Margaret Kroeger
(9-12 Directress)



We've had a fantastic year full of some wonderful events and experiences. In Term 1, we welcomed out new Year 4 students and settled into our new classroom location. We celebrated some amazing people in our annual 'Evening of Extraordinary Ordinaries' where the children had fun sharing their research and hard work. In Terms 2 and 3, we spent a night with the monkeys and meercats at Taronga Zoo, spent a week enjoying the wonders of Canberra and prepared for our production of 'Charlie and the Chocolate Factory'. This term we have settled into our temporary new location, continued with Peer Support and have held a number of 'going outs' to places as diverse as the pop-up Globe theatre, a photography exhibition and the Museum of Human Diseases. We welcomed new class pets - our duo of ducks. The children completed their year-long national debate competition where they won first place in the Year 5 and 6 division. Term 4 also saw some of our students preparing for 'Destination Imagination' which is a global non-profit event to stimulate a love of science, engineering, collaboration, fine arts, Mathematics and critical thinking. Other students prepared their papers and speeches for the Montessori Model United Nations Conference in New York early next year. We welcomed our new students for 2019 during a three-day orientation and we prepare to farewell our graduating students. It has been an eventful and productive twelve-months.



SO MANY

of the events mentioned above would not have been possible without the support of our wonderful Northside families. Thank you to Michelle Parker, Niki Kursakul and Linda Appleyard for all your help as class parents. Thank you for all your efforts throughout the year. Thank you to all the parents who helped with library, canteen, craft, cooking, going outs and excursions. Your contributions have enriched the school experience for so many children.

Thank you to Adam, Greg and the parents who helped clean our room after the recent plumbing issue. Thank you to Noelle and the Nguyen family for the kind donation of ducks and to the Kologlu and Tarraf families for their care of our class pets in the holidays and on weekends. Thank you to our camp parents – Davinia, Joelle, Niki and Steve. Your help and care of the children in Canberra was much appreciated. We'd like to acknowledge Michelle for her enthusiasm and time in guiding students with Destination Imagination. Thank you to Shirley and Janine for help in facilitating the production of the Year 6 graduating shirts. Thank you to Adam for his continued support of 'going outs' and for the 9 – 12 in general. We appreciate all the work you have put into the 2018 graduation to make the celebration memorable. For all the parents who have helped in so many ways throughout the year – we thank you.

We welcomed our new students for 2019 during a three-day orientation and we prepare to farewell our graduating students. It has been an eventful and productive twelve-months.



WE BID ALL OUR

Graduating students a fond farewell and a big congratulations! It has been a pleasure to see you grow and become such confident young people. We welcome our new students for 2019 and look forward to getting to know them better. Finally, I'd like to acknowledge Kay and Kim. Your kindness and professionalism are beyond compare. Thank you for a great year.

Wishing everyone a restful and safe holiday,
Margaret, Kay and Kim.

It has been a
pleasure to see
you grow and
become such
confident young
people.

TO OUR GRADUATES

DECEMBER IS

always a bitter sweet time of year as we bid a fond farewell to our Year 6 graduates. While they are well prepared and ready to begin their next academic adventure in high school, we will miss them and their families. Congratulations to Anthony, Amber, Chiara, Chris, Cleo, Ella, Emma, Harshavardhan, Isabella, Isabel, James, Jamie, Max, Taj, Tara and Will. We wish you all the best and know that you will settle into your new schools with confidence and independence.

In the wise words of Dr. Seuss,

'Today you are You, that is truer than true.

There is no one alive that is more youer than You!

.... You have brains in your head

You have feet in your shoes

You can steer yourself in any direction you choose.

You're off to great places

Today is your day!

Your mountain is waiting so get on your way!'

From all the Northside staff - congratulations Graduates! It has been an honour to work with you and we look forward to keeping in touch. So go out there and be YOU!





We wish
you all the best
and know that
you will settle into
your new schools
with confidence and
independence.





CONGRATULATIONS!

TO ANTHONY, AMBER, CHIARA, CHRIS,
CLEO, ELLA, EMMA, HARSHAVARDHAN,
ISABELLA, ISABEL, JAMES, JAMIE, MAX,
TAJ, TARA AND WILL.



40TH BIRTHDAY SPRING FAIR

WOW, WHAT A DAY! I would like to thank you all from the bottom of our hearts for your support of the 40th Birthday Spring Fair held on 22 September 2018. This outstanding achievement was made possible by our truly dedicated P & C Committee!

The silent auction items were fabulous, and we appreciate the generosity of the businesses who supported us with their goods and services.

Donations - thank you to all the families who donated items or services either their skills and talents or those sourced from other businesses in the community.

The class artworks were positively divine, and I thank all the teachers for their insightful ideas that were beautifully implemented by the children, each piece was a reflection of their beautiful classrooms.

Thank you to you all for coming and generously supporting the School. The atmosphere was terrific and many I have spoken to loved the day. I am proud of our little school and our community - amazing! The generous support of our sponsors and the parent body is crucial to a small school to fund projects that are out of the reach of our operational budgets.

Again, thank you and know that your support has contributed to better facilities for our classrooms!

This
outstanding
achievement was
made possible by our
truly dedicated P & C
Committee!







WHAT'S ON...

THESE SCHOOL HOLIDAYS



Claude Debussy's *The Toybox* at Mosman Art Gallery

THE NORTH POLE COMES TO WESTFIELD CHATSWOOD

Westfield is bringing the North Pole to Chatswood in December with a giant snow globe, igloo, live ice sculptures and an ice skating rink from Saturday 1 December to Monday 24 December.

1-2 December: Free giant snow globe, elves on the shelf craft station, complimentary snow cones, face painting, roaming stilt walkers and live ice sculpture of Elf on the shelf. **8-9 December:** Free ice skating rink.

15-23 December: Elf on the shelf craft station.

THE TOYBOX

Experience Claude Debussy's children's ballet re-told as a musical story. A wonderful opportunity for kids to get up close to some of the earliest musical instruments. Sunday 16 December from 11am at Mosman Art Gallery. Kids free, adults \$35.

CHRISTMAS LIGHTS AT 10 CAMBAGE COURT, DAVIDSON

The Award winning Cabbage Court Christmas Lights house is lighting up again in December 2018. Now in its 18th year it's decorated with over 100,000 Christmas Lights! 30th Nov-13th Dec 8pm-10:30pm. 14th-27th Dec 7:30pm-11:00pm. 28th Dec-31st Dec 8pm-10:00pm. Entry is free, however donations are welcome and money raised will go towards Red Nose, The Humpty Dumpty Foundation & Cure Brain Cancer Foundation.

WILDFLOWER PARK RUN, ST IVES

Wildflower parkrun is a free weekly 5km event for runners of all ages every Saturday at 8:00am in Kuring-gai Wildflower Garden, St Ives. It is not a race against other runners, but a 5k timed run and it can really be whatever you want it to be, whether that's for fun or as part of a training plan. Register at parkrun.com.au.

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