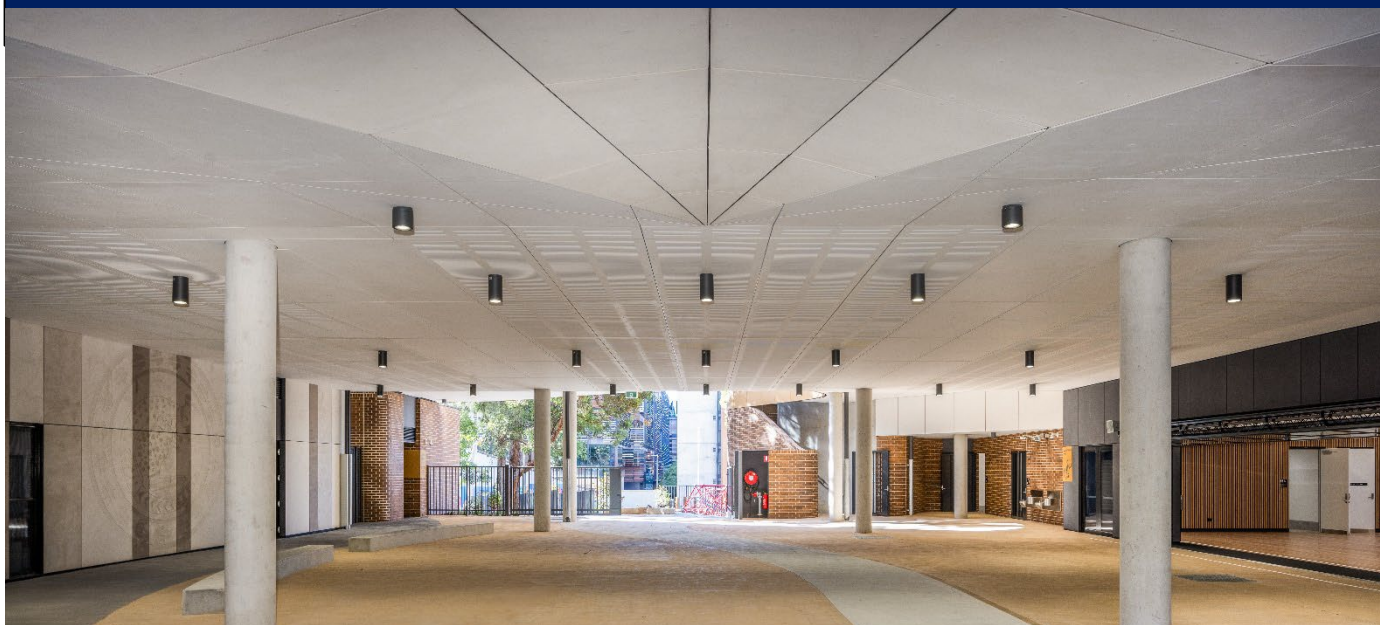


Darlington Public School

A Centre for Learning, Enjoyment and Cultural Enrichment



The Bulletin – Week 11, Term 1 2024



For your diary

Week 11, Term 1

Wednesday 10 April	P&C meeting 6pm via Zoom
Thursday 11 April	
Friday 12 April	Assembly at 2.30pm – all welcome!! Last day of Term 1

Week 1, Term 2

Monday 29 April	Staff Development Day – no students today
Tuesday 30 April	First day of Term 2 for all students Ethics and Scripture classes at 2.30pm.
Wednesday 1 May	
Thursday 2 May	Groove Nation Dance classes
Friday 3 May	Anzac Day assembly at 2.30pm – all welcome!!

Week 2, Term 2

Monday 6 May	Ricky Riots guitar lessons.
Tuesday 7 May	Ethics and Scripture classes at 2.30pm.
Wednesday 8 May	Darlington PS Cross Country at Victoria Park
Thursday 9 May	Groove Nation Dance classes
Friday 10 May	Assembly at 2.30pm – all welcome!!

Coming up

- **Tuesday 30 April** – first day of Term 2 (Monday 29 April is for staff only – no students on this day!)
- **Reconciliation Week 2024** – 27 May – 3 June the theme this year is **“NOW MORE THAN EVER”**.

We wish all of our families a fun, safe and relaxing school holiday break!

From the principal

Welcome to Week 11 and the end of Term 1! As we approach the end of another busy term, I would like to take a moment to express my thanks to all parents, carers, and families for your continued support and involvement in our school community. Your presence at events such as the Easter Hat Parade, assemblies, and sport carnivals, not only brings joy to our students but also strengthens the sense of community we strive to cultivate here at Darlington.

I want to thank all our families who joined us for the Easter Hat Parade last week. It was wonderful to see the creativity and enthusiasm displayed by our students, and your presence added to the festive atmosphere of the event. I also wanted to extend a massive thank you to all our staff who were busy looking after the BBQ breakfast on the day. Your effort and contribution was greatly appreciated by all.

Attendance: As we continue to prioritise the wellbeing and educational success of our students, I would like to take this opportunity to remind families of the importance of informing the school of your child's absences. It is a legal requirement for parents of children from Kindergarten to Year 12 to ensure their children attend school every day, except under certain circumstances.

Justified reasons for student absences may include:

- Being sick or having an infectious disease (e.g. my child is unwell with cold and flu like symptoms)
- Having an unavoidable medical appointment
- Being required to attend a recognised religious holiday
- Exceptional or urgent family circumstances (e.g., attending a funeral)

If your child needs to be absent from school for any reason, it is essential that you provide an explanation to the school within 7 days from the first day of the absence. This ensures that our records are accurate and up-to-date. Where no explanation has been received by the school, your child's absence will be recorded as unexplained.

Please direct all queries regarding your child's absences to the front office.

Opportunity Classes for Year 5 in 2025: Opportunity classes are for high potential and gifted students in Year 5 and 6. If your child is in Year 4 and you are interested in applying for entry in 2025, applications open on 4 April 2024 and close 20 May 2024. The placement test is on 1 August 2024. Applications are [online](#) and you can read more about the [placement process](#) on the Department's website.

Year 7 2025: On Wednesday 6 March a letter was emailed, and sent home by hard copy, with details on how to enrol your child into Year 7 for 2025. The Expression of Interest (EOI) lets you indicate which school(s) you would like your child to attend in Year 7. **You will need to complete an Expression of Interest for Year 6 to Year 7 transition by Thursday 4th April.** Could you also ensure that the front office has your updated address and contact details.

School Bytes: We have now transitioned to School Bytes, and Compass will be ceased within the school. If you have not yet signed up to School Bytes please contact the office, as all future communication, including school excursion permission notes will be coming through the School Bytes app in Term 2.

NSW Police Legacy Child Safety Handbook: The "Child Safety Handbook" is a comprehensive resource to assist parents, carers as well as teachers on a range of topics essential to child safety. Over the past 6 years most NSW primary schools have received hard copies of this most important child safety handbook and have distributed them to the parents and carers of their pupils.

We urge all parents and carers to download this [latest edition](#) and discuss the safety content with your children.

Parent responsibilities: Parents are reminded that they are not to approach other children to discuss any issues or concerns they may have with the child or the child's family. Please speak to the class teacher or for serious issues make an appointment with the office to speak with Michelle.

Wizard of Oz: I can confirm that the performance evening for our production will be Wednesday 7 August, so please put that date in your diary now. We have changed the musical to Madagascar and students from Preschool to Year 6 will be performing.

I wish all of our families a safe, fun, and relaxing autumn holiday break. We look forward to seeing you all on Tuesday 30 April for the start of Term 2.

Michelle McCormack
Principal

From the school – mental health

Rank, rate, and humiliate!

If you didn't read last weekend's Australian, it's worth catching up with. The Australian Magazine (March 30 – 31) shone a very bright light on the dramatic rise in adolescent mental health problems, triggered by the clutch of the smartphone, and young people's radical abandonment of the real world for a virtual one.

This won't come as shock to many, but the data underlining how childhood has been 're-wired' is nonetheless disturbing.

In his new book, *The Anxious Generation**, American social psychologist Jonathan Haidt chronicles what he calls society's 'biggest blunder', the way childhood has been transformed by a handful of technology companies.

Haidt's book quotes Pew Research that in 2015 one in four teens said they were online 'almost constantly': by 2022 that number had doubled to almost one in two.

The Australian Magazine also cites MIT Professor Sherry Turkle writing about smartphones: "We are forever elsewhere. This is a profound transformation of human consciousness and relationships, and it occurred between 2010 and 2015. This is the birth of phone-based childhood", with Haidt adding these years were "the definitive end of play-based childhood".

Haidt further notes that "US teens have displayed a very large upturn in major depressive episodes, beginning around 2012", the "trend sharper for girls than boys" as "depression has become roughly two and a half times more prevalent across all races and social classes".

The Australian article tables a graph of a similar spike in young Australian adults reporting high or very high psychological distress, again more acute for girls than boys.

Further data shows the first generation of Americans going through puberty with smartphones "became more anxious, depressed and self-harming". No wonder. A child on 'social' media - a misnomer if there was ever one - "can scroll through a thousand data points in an hour, each accompanied by a 'like' or 'dislike'". Haidt says that social media platforms are "the most efficient conformity engines ever invented".

The harms that arise from such conformity are fourfold: social deprivation, sleep deprivation, attention fragmentation and addiction. Addiction researcher Anna Lembke likens the smartphone to a "modern-day hypodermic needle, delivering digital dopamine 24/7 for a wired generation".

Girls are more vulnerable, Haidt says, because they are "subjected to hundreds of times more social comparisons than girls have experienced for nearly all of human evolution", including "more cruelty and bullying because social media platforms incentivize and facilitate relational aggression".

Haidt signals an urgent warning to reverse the trend because "we are losing a generation" in the way it trains people to act in ways contrary to the broad traditions of moral, ethical and religious thinking - being aggressive, petty and cruel, gleaming admiration and self-regard from the fragility of 'likes', and the despondency of 'dislikes'. The recent publication of the ACU's 2023 Australian Principal Health and Wellbeing Survey (APHWBS) suggests some parents may have contracted a similar affliction.

In a parallel development, the Parliamentary Library's 2023 research paper on School Refusal reports another troubling phenomenon: absenteeism from school which has not recovered post pandemic. Chronic absence from school in Australia typically means missing 10% - 20 days of the school year. In 2022 in Australian schools, the student attendance rate—the percentage of possible days that students in Years 1–10 attend school—was 86.5% while the attendance level—the proportion of students in Years 1–10 whose attendance rate is equal to or greater than 90%—was 49.9%. This is a sizeable drop from 2021, when the attendance rate was 90.9% and the attendance level was 71.2%. High levels of absenteeism mean less stability about which friends and classmates will be at school, exacerbating days missed.

When Haidt describes social media as a "disease of the mind", school leaders might drop their head in their hands in despair. But Haidt is optimistic the harm being done can be reversed. For this to occur, four foundational reforms are needed: **more unsupervised play and childhood independence; no smartphones before high school; no social media before 16; and phone free schools**. If - a big hypothetical - these changes could be implemented, Haidt bullishly predicts a "substantial improvement" in adolescent mental health in two years. We sincerely hope he is right.

Importantly, Haidt says reversing this trend this is not about rescuing kids but rescuing parents.

So, what can parents do? The *Anxious Generation* details 20 Rules for raising kids in the age of the iPhone segmented into ages two to five, six to 13 and 14 to 18. You won't be surprised by the plain and orthodox recommendations, but you might nonetheless find the book a useful resource for parents.

Article by Dr Chris Duncan

From the school – Selective Education

NSW Department of Education



Selective education computer-based test pilot

Is your child in Year 3 or Year 5? Express your interest now to participate in our computer-based test pilot

The department is moving from paper to computer-based tests in 2025 for selective high school and opportunity class entry in 2026.

To help with the change we are testing the use of computers in a test 'pilot'. We are seeking **expressions of interest** from parents and carers for their child to participate.

When is the pilot?

Saturday 22 June 2024

- Pilot opportunity class test:
7:30 am – 11:00 am
- Pilot selective high school test:
12:30 pm – 5:00 pm

Where are the test locations?

- International Convention Centre, Sydney
- University of Newcastle, Callaghan
- Mount Panorama, Bathurst

Participating students get to experience sitting the computer-based test under test conditions

Important: Participation in the pilot will not result in placement in a selective high school or opportunity class.

Year 3 students will sit a **pilot** Opportunity Class Placement Test. Year 5 students will sit a **pilot** Selective High School Placement Test.

Places are limited so express your interest by 12 April 2024 using the link below. There are no fees or charges for the pilot.

Express your interest now

Visit: edu.nsw.link/sepilot



For more information regarding the pilot visit: edu.nsw.link/cbtpilot

education.nsw.gov.au

From the community

SOUTH EAST **BLOCK PARTY** BIDJIGAL LAND



WEDNESDAY 24 APRIL 2024
3 – 7PM CORAL SEA PARK MAROUBRA
BIDJIGAL LAND

featuring headline performance from Maroubra's own

KOBIE DEE

To celebrate Youth Week 2024, Weave, Randwick Council and Kobie Dee, are throwing the fourth annual **South East Block Party** on Bidjigal Land.

This is a free, all ages community event, showcasing local talent, bringing young people together and celebrating community.

Join us for an afternoon of food, music, performances, games and cultural activities.

For more information please contact Imogen at Weave | imogen@weave.org.au

THIS IS A DRUG + ALCOHOL FREE EVENT


Randwick City Council
a sense of community

**KOBIE
DEE** 

WEAVE
YOUTH & COMMUNITY SERVICES

From the community – Drama Club 2024

DRAMA SCENE

School Holidays



Choose 1 or 2 days to play Drama games and perform on stage making sure the audience hears and sees all you can do, practising feelings of all eyes on you!



KINDERGARTEN - YR 7
BE SEEN AT DRAMA SCENE

*Age-group activities, kept with friends

*Drama games

*Improvised scene acting

*Set building craft

*Costumes

*Making new friends



CHOOSE 1 OR 2 DAYS TO PLAY
16 APRIL Tuesday
17 APRIL Wednesday



8.00am - 9.00am Before Care
9.00am - 4.00pm WORKSHOP
4.00pm - 5.30pm After Care



Taverners Hill Infants School
QUEEN STREET - PETERSHAM



CREATIVE KIDS VOUCHER



WHATSAPP Stephanie Waites
+61 0407 235 914



www.dramascene.com.au



From the community – Art Class Term 2

Get ready with the Art and Music experts!

STAR HOUSE ART CLASS

at

DARLINGTON PUBLIC SCHOOL

Term 2
2024
ART CLASS

Congratulation! **CREATIVE KIDS**
\$100 voucher
for your child's ★
arts lessons

Star House Art & Music
College has approved as a
CREATIVE KIDS PROVIDER

You can use \$100 voucher
from NSW Government



JOIN US!



ART CLASSROOM
5/6G Class



TERM 2 Enrol Now!

Scholarships will be awarded for
talented artists when the term is over! ★

**Creative &
Intensive
Art Class**

K-Y2

Y3-6

- Preparing competitions
- Learning Basic/Intensive Art skills
with Creative drawing Portfolios

TIME Every Monday, 3:05 PM - 4:20 PM (1hr 15m)

CLASS 5/6G CLASS, Darlington P.S.

MATERIALS - Watercolour Paints & Brushes
- A3 Size Sketchbook
- Pencils / Colour Pencils

PRICE (1hr 15m) Art CLASS : 1 Term \$250
Casual \$25

**Enrol
now**



STAR HOUSE
ART AND MUSIC COLLEGE

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