

# Cross Curriculum Priorities

**Welcome** to the July edition of news from the Cross Curriculum Coach ...

The Australian Curriculum identifies three cross curriculum priorities:

- Sustainability
- Aboriginal Cultures and Histories
- Australia's Engagement with Asia

## Sustainability

### Eco Footprint

#### 1. Biodiversity Action:

##### Tree Planting

During August every class in the school participated in tree planting activities, either in the bushland or in the native garden areas of the school grounds. Younger children linked up with their buddy class, whenever this was possible, to undertake this enjoyable community service. Students learnt why trees are important, how to plant the seedlings correctly and care for them afterwards.

Over 500 seedlings have been planted this winter. Congratulations to all involved ... students, staff and the Friends of Coolbinia Bushland group who supplied the seedlings. Thank you.



##### Mildew Mania

Growing different varieties of barley is part of our research to support barley farmers. Curtin University conducts the *Mildew Mania* project annually to encourage schools across the south-west of WA to grow barley and then submit samples for examination by their scientists. Our young scientists also examine the barley leaves with magnifying glasses and microscopes. We found mildew growing on our barley!



Barley seedlings before infestation



Barley leaves showing mildew

## Native bee Hotels!

An environmental consultant, Joe Tonga, is conducting 'native bee hotel' workshops with our Year 5 and 5/6 students (Rms 4 & 5). The students are learning about the importance of stingless native bees in our ecosystem and taking action to conserve them by constructing bee homes for our school grounds and bushland. This unit of work is part of their Science and Technology studies.



Students making native bee hotels



Construction of hotels completed



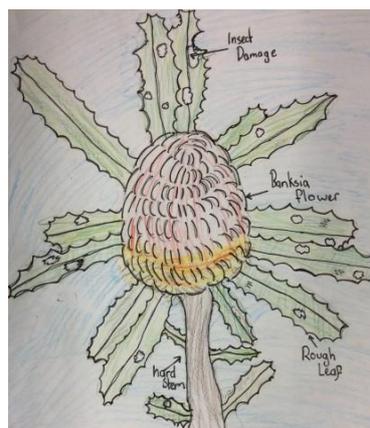
Painting the hotels

## River Rangers

### Bushland Research

Year 5 /6 and 6 students have completed their book on the bushland using the *mixbook.com* program. Soft cover books have been ordered and should be available for viewing in two weeks. Parents and children will be invited to order copies if they wish.

Student drawing of Firewood Banksia flower ...



This exciting project demonstrates how the Sustainability and Aboriginal Cross Curriculum Priorities are embedded into Literacy, Science and Geography.

Student photograph of Firewood Banksia flower ...



### Garden Masks

Children at our school use garden masks when handling potting mix. These masks are purchased from a garden supplier. This approach was developed several years ago, based on the best advice available at the time.

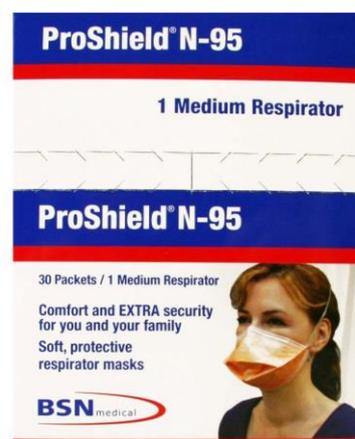
Periodically school policies and procedures are reviewed. A comprehensive review of our existing gardening procedure for the use of garden masks has been conducted over the last few months.

Since the Department of Education does not have a policy, guidelines or procedures for the use of masks when gardening, an extensive process of consultation has been undertaken to determine the best approach for our students. To date, advice has been sought from the following sources:

- Department of Education – Science and Occupational Health & Safety sections
- Department of Health
- Stephanie Alexander Kitchen Garden Foundation
- Doctors and nurses
- Other government, non-government and agricultural schools
- Mask manufacturers
- Mindarie Regional Council garden education officers

The key issues that have arisen from this consultation process so far include:

1. The Department of Health states that gardening materials like potting mix and compost can be harmful to health if simple precautions are not taken.
2. The risk of exposure to Legionella bacteria and other fungi and spores is very low in the school setting, given the range of protective behaviours employed while using potting mix (e.g. potting mix is damp and not shaken out of the bag, gloves are worn).
3. The school has adopted the precautionary principle, weighing up different issues such as the lack of availability of a mask that has maximum protection in children's sizes, difficulty ensure correct fitting and usage of a maximum protection mask, likelihood of illness from gardening, and cost of maximum protection masks (P95).
4. A new type of mask (N95) is proposed to be used from Term 1 2016. This will incur a fee to cover the cost. N95 masks filter out 95% of all particles over 0.3 microns or larger. These masks are easier breathing than the P variants of the 95 rated masks and are easier to fit. Note these masks are 'health & safety' masks rather than 'gardening' masks, as they allow improved filtering of the air the children breathe.
5. The N95 masks will be used when handling potting mix, as well as woodchips, compost and fertilizer from a pile.



6. Until the new procedure is finalised and the new masks are available, the school will continue to use the current disposable (single use) gardening masks when handling potting mix etc.
7. Our focus is on the awareness of hazards and safety education in the use of masks while gardening.

Further information about the revised masks procedure for gardening may be obtained from Elaine Lewis, the Cross Curriculum Coach. The safety and wellbeing of your children is paramount, so if you have any queries or information you wish to add to the consultation process you are welcome to respectfully speak with Elaine.

## Animal Encounters

### Black Cockatoos

Kaarakin, the Black Cockatoo Conservation Centre, visited our school last term. Kaarakin volunteers conducted a presentation on the biology and habitat needs of black cockatoos. This incursion, for classes in PP/Yr 1 and Years 3/4 & 4, was part of their bushland studies, integrated into Literacy and Science.



Students from Year 4 have now taken action to support the conservation of black cockatoos. They held an assembly stall on Friday 31 July with a “Guess how many feathers in the jar” competition to raise funds for Kaarakin. \$15.15 was raised.

### Australian Birds

Year 3 students visited Perth Zoo on Tuesday 25 August. As part of their Technology and Enterprise, Science and Sustainability studies, this excursion focussed on bird observation and identification. They studied birds from the bushland, wetlands and tropical areas, as well as nocturnal birds and the marine species.



Students observing and learning, as they visited different bird enclosures.

Students playing *Habitat Hoops* at lunchtime to learn about issues impacting on the survival of different bird species.



## Australian Native Animals

Students in K-Year 1 enjoyed an incursion showcasing different Australian native animals – koala, snake, lizard and dingo. The children learnt about the features of the animals as well as their habitat needs. As you can see from the photos the children had the opportunity to pat the animals too.



## **Volunteers**

Special thanks to our Sustainability volunteers. In the Kitchen we have the fabulous support of: Sophia Dimovski, Barbara Makrides, Grace Reeson and Jeneta Masson. These helpers regularly conduct a thorough clean of the kitchen and an audit of kitchen equipment.

An extra special 'thank you' to Sophia Dimovski this month for purchasing a replacement jug for the Kitchen Aid blender. Your financial contribution to our kitchen equipment is greatly appreciated.

Leonie Tanner regularly assists in the garden and this month Deb Holland contributed jars of lime marmalade to the garden produce stall. Many thanks.

These and other helpers make a huge contribution to the running of our education programs across a wide range of learning areas, from literacy and science support, to helpers who supervise groups on cooking days. Sincere thanks.

If you would like to volunteer in any area of the Cross Curriculum Priorities please see Elaine. Your support is invaluable and greatly appreciated.

## **2. WasteWise:**

Students in Years 4 and 5/6 (Rms 3 & 5) were supported in their Biological Science studies this term by a visit from a Wastewise Educator from the Mindarie Regional Council. Eco Faerie Cara presented this hands-on incursion which focused on the benefits of worm farming and composting.



Habitat needs of worms



Examining worms



Setting up an experiment to determine the impact of blending food scraps before placing in the worm farm

Please continue to support the various wastewise initiatives across the school:

- Recycle batteries outside the Kwobadarn door
- Recycle used toothbrushes and oral care packaging outside the Kwobadarn door
- Recycle mobile phone inside Kwobadarn door
- Recycle food scraps using the green bucket in the undercover area
- Use a 'nude food' lunchbox without gladwrap or aluminium foil



### 3. WaterWise:

#### Water Incursions

Three 'water' incursions have been organised for Years 3 and 5/6 (Rms 11, 12 & 5) as part of their Biological Science studies. These incursions were conducted by a Water Corporation education officer.

The Year 3 incursion focused on sustainability of our water supplies, with particular attention to strategies employed by Aboriginal cultures. Children examined Aboriginal artworks and interpreted their messages about water sources.

Students in Year 5/6 engaged in a microscope investigation of native plant species, with a focus on adaptations that enable the plants to survive harsh, dry conditions.

How does your Waterwise garden grow?

*Acacia cognata*, commonly known as Limelight, is an attractive shrub with lime green weeping foliage. Once established Limelight is low maintenance and an attractive feature for small gardens, patios and courtyards.

### 4. EnergySmart:

Our EnergySmart program is ongoing. Recording our solar power system data commenced on 13 September 2012.

On 28 August 2015 our solar power system had generated over 50,000kWh and saved more than 48,000kg of CO<sub>2</sub>. This outcome contributes to our 200 Tonne Plan target.



## 5. TravelSmart:

The new Term 3 TravelSmart team from Year 5 (Rm 4) are organising the following TravelSmart activities for this term:

- Travel surveys ... pre and post hands-up surveys to obtain baseline travel data and evidence showing the impact of special walk/ride to school days.
- Fume Free Fridays ... to reduce congestion around the school and help the environment. Please walk or ride to school every Friday.
- World Car Free Day ... on 22 September ... with some great prizes!
- Walking School Bus ... they are fun, healthy and good for the atmosphere.

Overall, the students are aiming for double Platinum level in TravelSmart this year, so please walk/ride to school and support the students' initiatives. Thank you.

## Social Handprint

### 1. Student Wellbeing:

Year 6 students will visit RSL Care next month to present a session on their bushland book and games. This opportunity will enhance their personal confidence and presentation skills.

### 2. Aboriginal Cultures:

This year our students, from K-6, have participated in a range of excursions and incursions that enhanced their understandings about Aboriginal cultures.



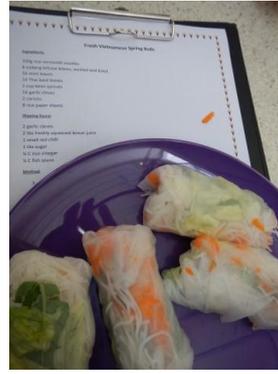
Students participating in a smoking ceremony at Herdsman Lake Wildlife Centre



Trevor Walley, Noongar Educator, working with students in our bushland

### 3. Cultural & Social Diversity:

Year 2 students in Rooms 8 and 9 are continuing their exploration of foods from different cultures. The following photos show the children making delicious, healthy Vietnamese Spring Rolls.



Many thanks to the hard working teachers and parent volunteers who support our cooking programs.

#### 4. Community Partnerships:

##### Science Week

As a Teacher Development School in Science, our school is building cooperative relationships with many schools, including Yokine Primary School. On Wednesday 19 August students from Yokine Primary visited our school to share in our Science Week celebrations. Two sessions were organised: robotics and sustainability. Yokine students worked with our Year 5/6 and 6 students for a robotics challenge. Next they joined Dr Lewis for a guided walk through our bushland. They learnt how to identify common species of flora and fauna in the bushland, as well as Noongar uses (for food, medicine and tools) of different plants.



Yokine students examining the red-eyed wattle



Learning about the Christmas Tree

A spectacular display by four birds was the highlight of the tour for one group of Yokine students. A kookaburra was swooped and chased by two little honeyeaters and a magpie. The kookaburra was too close to the honeyeaters' nest and the magpie just joined in the excitement!

#### 5. Economics & Built Environment:

##### Boya Currency

Boyas are our local currency created to acknowledge and reward environmentally and socially supportive actions. There are three different boyas circulating in our community and wider: 1 boya, 5 boya and 10 boya notes. Boyas can be spent at assembly garden produce stalls and the canteen. Our new 200 Tonne Plan will include designing new 20 boya notes, so watch out for these in the coming months.

# Aboriginal Cultures and Histories

## 'Bushland Trail' 2015 PALS Project

The aim of the 'Bushland Trail' project is to enhance understandings of Aboriginal culture. The project is part-funded by a PALS grant. The PALS acronym stands for the qualities of Partnership, Acceptance, Learning and Sharing. This program encourages young people to take a leadership role in strengthening relationships in their local community between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people. This year our Aboriginal culture focus will be based in our bushland.

The 2015 PALS project will address the 'Community Participation' category of the PALS awards. This focus on community participation will be achieved in four main ways:

- working with and learning from Aboriginal educators

Sharyn Egan, Noongar artist, creating a painting of the bushland with Yr 3 students ...



- publishing and distributing a book about our learning experiences;
- conducting an arts festival reflecting student learning about Aboriginal cultures and histories; and
- celebrating our relationships with Aboriginal people on a community day.

Leonard Thorn, Noongar Educator, teaching Yr 6 students to throw a boomerang correctly...



## Kids Teaching Kids Conference



To find out more about Kids Teaching Kids visit [www.kidsteachingkids.com.au](http://www.kidsteachingkids.com.au)



In September, Year 6 students will be attending the Kids Teaching Kids Conference in Mandurah. They will be conducting a workshop based on the Bushland Trail project. At the workshop our students will showcase their book on the bushland and play games they have created, with the workshop aim of enhancing participants' knowledge about the bushland in relation to environmental and Noongar understandings.

## *Australia's Engagement with Asia*

### **Wildways Program**

Our school has been selected to participate in the Perth Zoo-Asia Literacy Wildways Program. This program uses art as a vehicle to raise awareness about conservation issues and to promote positive action encouraging people to care for precious ecosystems in both Asia and Australia. The aim of the program is to enable deep and rich student learning to occur through collaborative planning between the Year 6 classroom teacher, Erica Graca, and the Cross Curriculum Coach, Elaine Lewis.

Students will investigate common environmental issues pertaining to their local and SE Asian regions and express their understandings of the role of sustainable practices and conservation in the environment through a banner. The production of a banner as the visual arts focus may also focus on the investigation into the loss of biodiversity within an ecosystem and the purpose the Perth Zoo plays in securing long term populations of species in natural environments. The students have commenced work on this project and the banner will be completed by 18 September. It will be submitted to Perth Zoo for public display.

Sincerely

Elaine Lewis

Cross Curriculum Coach (Part time role; located in the Kwobadarn on Tuesdays & Thursdays)

28 August 2015