

PIN OAK

ISSUE 32: TERM 1, 7 APRIL, 2016



Photo by Olivia Donovan



HOUSE SINGING



MT KEIRA



K-6

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Pin Oak Team

Head Designers

Emma Croker, Lachlan Billington-Phillips, Grace Patterson

Design Assistants

Savannah Sandilands, Bree Feary, Holly Jefford, Catriona Uliana, Juliette Swain, Tom Whyte and Cameron Grice

Editors in Chief

Kaarina Allen, Heidi Bevan, Cate Patterson and Isabella Knowles

Student Editorial Team

Ella Moran, Jemima Taylor, Izzy Moore, Tom Hill
Sports Editors

Charlie Dummer, Ted Otavaino

Student Photographers

Olivia Donovan, Catriona Uliana and George Simpson

Head of Marketing and PR

Emma Calver

Staff Editor

Beattie Lanser

Oxley College
Railway Road, Burradoo, NSW, 2576.

Ph: 4861 1366

office@oxley.nsw.edu.au



HICES

The 2016 HICES Music Festival for Years 7-12 will be held from Sunday 14 August to Wednesday 17 August, 2016. This Festival, for students in Years 7-12, brings together over 300 musicians from HICES schools in New South Wales. The Festival will begin at 6:00pm on Sunday afternoon at The Tops Conference Centre, Stanwell Tops. Students will work with conductors from HICES schools at camp for three days, including one of Australia's pre-eminent conductors, Mr Richard Gill OAM. All camp participants will be transported to Sydney Town Hall on Wednesday 17 August for the evening concert to be held at 7:00pm.

Ensembles: Students may audition for placement in ONE of the following ensembles:

Symphony Orchestra; Symphonic Winds; Concert Band; String Orchestra; Honour Choir; Vocal Ensemble.

Massed Choir - All students will combine to form a massed choir for the Festival Finale.

Please contact Mr Hughes or Mrs Bunyan in the Music Department for further details regarding the 2016 HICES Music Festival. All application forms must be completed and submitted to the Music Department no later than Friday 29 April (end of Week 1, Term 2).



IN THE GARDEN

This semester the Oxley Community Garden received a massive injection of expertise and special attention from Kylie and Michael Magill, parents of Lily Magill in Year 7. Kylie and Michael are horticulturists who own a nursery in Wollongong and they offered their resources, time and expertise to replenish our garden soil and provide all our Autumn/Winter plants for Semester 1.

Not only did the Magills donate so much but together with their four children and Ms Hansen, they came into school on a Sunday to help get the garden ready for Year 7 and 8 to plant it out.

We would like to thank them for their time and expertise and especially for their very generous donation to our community garden project.

HEADMASTER'S REPORT



Leave Expectations

I have written about leave before at Oxley, but I am restating much of it here for the benefit of parents who have joined our community over the last two years. In 2016 Oxley College students have fourteen weeks of holiday. This is about four weeks longer than Government schools and almost four times as much as the average adult worker. Students no doubt see the length of their annual holiday time as an advantage. However, it does come with a disadvantage; they don't get to choose what time of the year to take them. School holidays fall at the same time for everyone.

Given the length of school holidays at Oxley we feel that family holidays can be organised wholly within these dates. The dates are advertised well in advance: <http://www.oxley.nsw.edu.au/news-events/terms-college-dates/> In particular, the availability of seats on frequent flyer points and/or shoulder fares is not a reason to miss school time. The reason why fares are more expensive in holiday times is because that is when students should be travelling so they do not miss school.

In addition we feel that it is important that students do attend, where possible, all of the lessons that have been organised and are set. This becomes more pressing the closer that the student gets to their senior years of study and the HSC in particular. If classes close to holiday time were thinned due to people taking extended holidays, it sends a negative message about the importance of the classes to those students still at school.

This is linked to the 'floodgates' effect; as more families went on leave, the last days of term would become less valuable, leading to more families feeling justified in asking for leave. If we simply 'wrote off' the last few days of term, there would then be in effect a new last day of term: a day that would then be prey to more applications for leave.

There is also the question of 'where to draw the line'. If Oxley College in Term 1 grants a special 'once in a lifetime' request to ski Mount Kailash in Tibet, it then becomes a little more difficult to decline a Term 2 request for a once in a lifetime opportunity to ski at Aspen. Once the School grants a skiing trip in Aspen, it becomes a little more difficult to decline a family in Term 3 who have a special opportunity to ski in New Zealand. Or Thredbo. And so it goes on.

There are a number of exceptions of course. Some families have many or all of their relatives overseas. It is quite possible that they want to attend weddings or major family reunions that fall outside of our holiday time. This is very understandable and we would like Oxley students to be able to attend these events with their wider families. (However, this would not include either an extended holiday that was added onto a wedding, or a family reunion that was triggered by the fact that the Australian wing of the family had travelled overseas.) On a sadder note, as some of our parents and grandparents reach the end of their lives we would want Oxley students to be with their families during these critical days, and sometimes weeks.

Some Oxley students compete at a very high sporting level indeed and we would want to support our students' aspirations, even if it means taking some class time. We would consider the level of eliteness of the competition, the amount of time

needed and the age of the students when deliberating on these requests.

On a procedural level, applications for one, two or three days of leave should be made to Mrs Kellie Henderson in 7 - 12 student services kellie.henderson@oxley.nsw.edu.au or Ms Kirrily Hope in K - 6 Student Services kirrily.hope@oxley.nsw.edu.au. They will forward applications to your child's Head of House, or in the case of K-6, to Mrs Jo Ismay. The pastoral leaders, Mr Ayling and I have clarified a common set of expectations for such leave, so that you can be comfortable that the standards will be similar regardless of which House your child is in. Applications for longer periods of time should still go to Kellie Henderson or Kirrily Hope and they will forward them to Mr Peter Ayling or Mrs Justine Lind. The pre-purchase of airline tickets will not be a factor in his deliberations. Any application that includes the first or last days of term will also be considered by Mr Ayling or Mrs Lind.

These expectations were not established in a few arbitrary moments. They were refined deliberately, carefully, and fully cognisant of the extraordinarily thorny comparative issues that arise without clear guidelines. We also know that the community grapevine can lead to false comparisons being made without knowledge of the full individual circumstances - this is why we have tried to make our expectations as clear as we can whilst still leaving room for each unique case. We are bolstered by the fact that similar expectations have existed at Oxley for years and that most (if not all) comparable schools have similar expectations.

Our protocols and expectations for leave are outlined on Page 7 of the 2016 student diary.

NAPLAN

Early next term our Year 3, 5, 7 and 9 students sit the NAPLAN tests. I am delighted to say that over the last few years these tests have come down to Earth. They were designed as diagnostic tests of a student's ability in literacy and numeracy skills. They were to help parents with information about their child, schools with information about their students, and Australia with information about its education system.

They were not meant as judges of a whole school's quality and all of its programmes. That would be like taking the overall health of a patient merely by taking their temperature. Schools in lower socio economic areas struggling with all manner of challenges from their communities were not meant to be judged by them. Nor were the high schools - particularly when half of their students (the Year 7s) were taking the tests only one term after they turned up from seven years of Primary School education somewhere else.

But overall judges of a school's quality they became. 'League Tables' of schools sprang up in newspapers. Pastoral, co-curricular programmes became invisible as elements of a school's success. Higher order, curiosity inducing programmes became suspect as some schools rushed to 'game' the test by making the months before NAPLAN a soulless series of test taking exercises. Private coaching colleges sprang up as eight and ten year olds were force fed more and more tests. It was as if, for some, NAPLAN was like an HSC for Primary School instead of a helpful diagnostic tool.

Thankfully a lot of that hysteria has died down. NAPLAN has been largely restored to its rightful place as a diagnostic tool (particularly for our Year 7s who come from 23 different schools this year). Schools such as Oxley make sure that we are teaching what NAPLAN is testing, and then closer to the test we give them some examination practice in it. However, we do not hi-jack our educational goals to it. As a result when we get the excellently detailed data back about how individual spelling rules, grammar points and numeracy applications are going in our yeargroups, we can be pleased with what our kids have learned and drill down into what they need to do some more of. This is what assessment as you learn is all about.

THE DEPTHS OF MT KEIRA



On Thursday 24 March Year 7 went on their very first excursion to Mount Keira in Wollongong. It was a fun and enjoyable day for all that went along and everyone came away with something new and exciting they had learnt. Here are two reports from Year 7 students.

We trekked down the escarpment through the rainforest on steep terrain. Our guide taught us how to test biotic and abiotic aspects of the environment using sophisticated equipment. We identified tree species by analysing the different features of the tree and comparing it to an information booklet. On our trip we encountered many species of fauna, including three lyrebirds. We learnt about the many different layers of the rainforest and orographic rainfall.

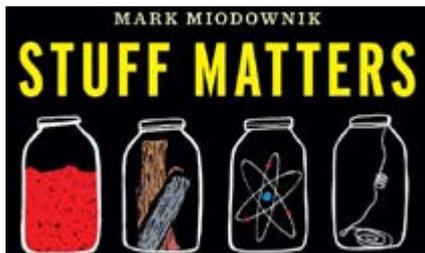
We compared the soil pH, soil moisture, foliage cover and tree height from the rainforest to the open forest. We concluded that the environment of the open forest was much harsher than that of the rainforest and had less shelter and poorer soils. Overall we learnt a lot and it was a fun experience.

By Havi Francis, Lucy Cavanough Quince, Jessica Billett and Sophie Moore (Year 7)

464 metres above sea level. 34.4000 S, 150.8500 E was where our geography excursion was. We have been learning about geographical inquiry and the types of ways we can investigate the location around us and our fieldwork excursion to Mount Keira helped us put this into practice.

We had a very interesting day, we identified the different types of trees in an open forest and a rainforest, assessed the abiotic (non-living) and biotic (living) aspects of each environment and the relationship to the geological area. We did some tests to find out soil moisture, foliage cover, tree height and the soil pH level in each different environment. We also determined what the soil texture was. During the day, Year 7 learnt about the climate at Mount Keira, a detailed area description, topography, the Illawarra area and the land usage. Overall the fieldwork excursion was extremely informative and I learnt so much.

Jade Neath (Year 7)



Books



Stuff Matters by Mark Miodownik

When deciding to build your next wall, column, supporting structure, foundations, dome, walkway etc you might just come upon the possibility of using concrete for the job. In the vast plethora of materials available to your every whim, why concrete? The material, originally developed by the Romans, is versatile, hardy and strong. The stuff is artificial rock. It can be moulded into absolutely any shape. And when placed under pressure and compacted, can last for hundreds of years - as proven by the largest unsupported dome in the world - the Pantheon in Rome. Guess what it's made from?

Yet, place concrete under the wrong conditions or situation - such as a beam of an upper floor, where it is not under pressure but required to hold its weight - and you might find yourself under a heap of rubble. Cracks will form as the material takes continuous breathes, expanding and contracting under the heat of the sun. What do you do about this?

But what about weathering and erosion? How do you make the concrete stand the test of time - on the scale of millennia and maintaining its all so useful properties. Bacteria. Micro-organisms. It sleeps dormant in the concrete. Embed it and some starch into the material and when cracks appear, a deluge of water will gush in, wake up the bacteria and after snacking on their delectable starch - will produce Calcium Carbonate which will in turn seal the crack. This may seem like a plausible concept that doesn't actually work in reality. But it works - and is the future of concrete.

Stuff Matters by Mark Miodownik is looking upon the everyday materials with a new perspective. Steel and graphite and porcelain, he reflects on his own experience with each seemingly everyday material and presents it in a new light. Why were the Japanese masters infusing carbon into iron and creating steel whilst having no interest and little knowledge of glassware, and therefore optics, that the west had excelled in?

From the origins of chocolate to the aerogel that swoops up meteor dust micrometers thick and uncontaminated, Miodownik has managed to transform materials science into an incredibly entertaining journey of stuff.

By Tom Hill (Year 11)



Music



Vessel By Twenty One Pilots

Incalculable. If there was one word to sum up these two, that's it. Is there anything these two can't do? Drop a solid beat. Discuss anxiety and morality. Sing in perfect tune. Throw a good party. This album will have you dropping your groovy moves around the house and screaming funky tunes in the shower, only to leave you lying on the floor like a hollowed out pumpkin. You will be incapable of pressing next song, not until the final lyrics sound from your phone's tiny stereo-system. "We all have our masks that we wear". I couldn't have said it better. What happens when you are stripped of all the confidence and happiness you put on to impress? What happens when we are alone? In fact, you could listen to these lyrics for years and not know what they are truly about (I plead guilty). Underneath Josh Dun's beast of a beat, there lies a dark horse that drags behind it a burning wind ready to engulf you in the flames. Tyler Joseph expertly croons, raps, screams and wails his way through serious issues like over thinking things (also guilty), anxiety, depression, and fighting the inner demons. I dare you to try to match this daring duo to one genre. They like to mix it up, fusing alternative hip hop, electro pop and rock and roll into one giant, gleaming, golden pool of an album. Top track: 'Car Radio'. Go for it, give it a whirl. You never know what will happen.

By Emma Croker (Year 12)



Films



Stand for Trees

We spend so much time absorbed and consumed in our current lives; what needs to be done, what we have to buy, what we have to organise etcetera etcetera. Material things. Yet what we don't realise is that our environment is slipping away at a rate of knots. I'd strongly advise anybody reading this to follow this link; <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eRLJscAlk1M>

It is up to us to take care of our planet. Stand for Trees is a non-government organisation which works to protect our world's most precious forests. Because in retrospect, protecting our forests and even restoring those that have been degraded is the easiest option towards slowing climate change. A small change in your life, or a donation towards a cause like this one are what makes the difference. "An error does not become a mistake, until you refuse to correct it; we CAN redirect this."

By Ella Moran (Year 11)

Head of K-6: Justine Lind

K-6 News

A place of welcome, wonder and wisdom....how are we going?

In the week of Aristotle's birthday, I am reminded of my favourite quote of Plato's who claims, "What is honoured in a place will be cultivated there." Culture is a delicate thing, hard to achieve as an absolute but more likely as a pervading presence and the way we do things more often than not. Plato's notion is also one of growth; things that are nurtured not mandated.

Our new students provided some wonderful insights into how we're doing in meeting our own aspirations, as those new to a place can appraise it with "fresh eyes". Last week we held a special new students' morning tea, primarily to check in on how they are feeling and the connections they're making, but also to hear their voices as part of our community.

Our new students from Year 1 to Year 6 were generous in their praise for Oxley, making the following observations;

- I think that our learning is more interesting and fun at Oxley. Lisa, Year 5
- It's easier to make friends. Hayden, Year 6
- I like the playground. Imogen, Year 1
- I love all the different things I can do after school and being part of a House. Mimi, Year 2
- I like learning different languages and lots about the environment. Penni-Rose, Year 3
- I like that it's not too big, it's nice to be in a smaller class. Lexi, Year 5
- I really like how the teachers encourage us to do things rather than just make a rule. I also like the different times for year levels to go to the oval but also that we can play with different age groups too. Monte, Year 5
- I'm excited by the many opportunities like French and the different sports! Bridgette, Year 6
- I like the way that if you're in a tricky situation, the teachers help you to get out of it yourself. Hayden, Year 6

Of course we were also keen to hear about the things they thought we could improve;

There were some little ideas

- Keep it small and friendly.
- We could have some seats under the trees.
- Could we do some get to know you games in class at the beginning of the year?
- We could choose some buddy groups for when we go out to play each day.

Weekly Awards:

Students of the Week

- K: Oliver Johnson
- Yr 1: Emma Barnett
- Yr 2: Bryce Rodger
- Yr 3: Lily Smith
- Yr 4: Hudson Alexander
- Yr 5: Sarah Shields
- Yr 6: Alex Salmon



Respect Self

- K: Anneliese Ewald
- Yr 1: Tippi Wernbacher
- Yr 2: Georgie Marks
- Yr 3: Hugo Findlay
- Yr 4: Gemma Lee
- Yr 5: Angus McGlynn
- Yr 6: Brianna Grice



- We like that there is a friendship seat but we didn't know about it at first so maybe we need a kind of tour at the beginning so we know about all the things that happen here.

- We could have a "chatter box" or suggestions box for the SRC.

- The SCR could organise some activities for the friendship hub where kids can come and read or build or colour-in if their friends are away that day.

And some big dreams...

- We need monkey bars for the playground.

- And swings, a round- about, a tree-house anda swimming pool!

- It would be good if the boys in Years 5 and 6 could use the new gym rooms.

- We should get air conditioning.

- Oh yeah and we want a ball pit!

The good news is that all our new K-6 students are feeling happy and settled and that they've made some friends so that is a credit to everyone who has helped them to feel welcome. We will take the suggestions under-advisement and consult with our SRC about many of the ideas, others will need to be raised with other levels of our organisation.

Beyond these ideas, there has been much happening in K-6 this term that allows us to foster and celebrate student empowerment in our midst; to encourage them to take a proactive role in contributing to make Oxley even better. Our students are full of compassion and initiative for charities and fund-raising and there is friend-raising too. We look forward to building on all of these initiatives in the term ahead!



Grandparents' Day





“The Lone Gumtree”

By Mitch Latham (Year 11)

It's weird how this place felt more like home to me, than my real home. Two blocks down from my house, on Slate Street, left, then an easy walk up the hill on Cotswold. Just far enough away from them that I can let go and forget that they ever existed. I tried not to think about how creepy it really was sitting on a swing in the middle of an empty playground at 6 o'clock on a Tuesday night. But after a few visits I realised something: It's all in the mind. I needed to embrace the creepiness, relish in it, become the creep. Instead of avoiding the strange hooded men, I must become the strange hooded man. Hence the black hoodie, my old, torn up Reeboks and the menacing atmosphere that I imagine I'm giving off. Unfortunately, if anyone found out that I was just a troubled, skinny, seventeen-year-old kid sitting on an old swing set, trying to have some alone time, I'm sure the intimidating aura that I'm giving off would be effectively dampened.

At first glance, the playground might seem a little dreary, dejected, even desolate- but I love it. I love the sun-bleached green slippery dip, the graffiti covered tunnel, the rusty metal monkey bars, how the dead leaves on the ground tumbled aimlessly. Most of all, I love the sounds. What, at first, appears to be silence, quickly turns into a cacophony of noise. The satisfying crunch of the scattered bark underfoot is more reassuring to me than my own bed, the cool autumn breeze shifts the branches on the lone gumtree and turns them into its own simple scratching melody. To me, the soft screech of the swing, accompanied by the cackle of the kookaburras is quietly comforting.

Normally I sat there for about an hour, sometimes two, sometimes four. It helped that there was really nothing to go back to, there was no real reason to motivate me to stand up and walk back down the hill on Cotswold, home. For most kids my age, their home is a place where they can finally let go, relax and take their socks off. Not me. For them, home is where the heart is, but for me; home is where the demons live.

My favourite thing to think about at the playground was the past. The present and the future hold so much uncertainty, yet the past is set in stone. The tired echoes of children's delighted screams and giggles fill my head. Imagining how they ran around, without a care in the world, made me so happy. At this exact moment, everything felt so right. I closed my eyes, took a deep breath and savoured it. Nothing could stop me from doing that.

But there it is, something amiss. The breeze felt wrong. It had been slowly getting stronger all evening yet now its short respite made me feel like someone had dropped a water balloon of dread from my throat into my stomach, but it just wobbled and didn't burst. I stand up abruptly. The water balloon split and all of a sudden the fear was coursing through my veins making my arms and legs shake.

“Be careful Isaac”. My mother's hollow words made me feel a little guilty. I had just snapped at her, saying that she didn't know anything. These words echo in my head, among the paranoia.

In fact, the scary thing is, she didn't know how right she was. She had the idea that Banbury was a relatively safe town. In reality, drugs are sold on every second street corner and most kids over the age of fourteen carry a knife when they are alone. In short, Banbury isn't a very safe town.

My mind is still racing, eyes darting, heart beating out of my chest. A glance behind me solidifies my panic. There. A dark figure leaning against the lone gumtree, glaring. The air now hung still, as if it had nothing to offer. All the sounds that comforted me so much have ceased. All except for the soft screech of the swing. I blinked my eyes repeatedly in case he was some stupid illusion my brain had cooked up. What was he doing now? He's walking in my direction, not especially fast, but with a purpose. Maybe he will walk past me, maybe he was just taking a short-cut through park, maybe he only needs directions. But the rational side of me had already ruled those motivations out. This was Banbury. This man wanted to mug me, or worse. My Year 9 science lesson about the adrenal gland whizzes through my head. Fight or flight. Fight or flight. I choose flight.

I'm running, not in any particular direction, everything is drowned out by my heartbeat and the scrape and thump of my shoes on the sidewalk. The temptation to glance behind me was tantalizing- but I resisted. It doesn't matter where I go, as long as its not where I came from. I'm not really much of a runner, but surely I can make it. Surely I can look back now, just to be safe.

I looked back.

His sullen face reminded me of a stray dog cast away. Pure desperation in his expression, but his eyes screamed loneliness. Not a loneliness that I have ever felt before, but... something more. As if to see out of those eyes was a torment in as of itself. To see out of those eyes placed such a miserable filter on the world that, to him, he could be an object floating in blank space, with the specks of dust that are his friends and family painfully eluding his tobacco-stained fingertips. This man has lost his grasp, and has given up on any attempt to get it back.

How I got away isn't important.

Nevertheless, there I was, walking down the hill on Cotswold, safe, but with a changed outlook. It was dark now, probably around eight. Delicate raindrops stung the ground. Approaching a brown puddle, lit by the scattered streetlights, I tried something. I compared the man's eyes to mine. For me, the white cloud of innocence had dissipated. My eyes, whilst surrounded by loneliness and the feeling of abandonment, still had a glimmer of hope in them, a glimmer of strength.

I realised I needed to grow up.

Some people have it a lot worse than me. Some people are born into their life and spend every moment of every day resenting the fact that they were. To do such a thing is to squander the opportunity to shift their own life, to take matters into their own hands.

I'm not going back to that playground. There are better ways to solve problems than running away from them and hiding.



DEPUTY HEAD REPORTS

Deputy Head Learning: Kate Cunich

We have already seen so many exciting things happen this term – in the classroom, on the sporting field, on the stage and in the outdoors. As we head off on a break, we continue to celebrate the progression of our students as they develop their interests, skills and passions through the opportunities provided by our teachers and staff at Oxley.

This academic year began with more focus than ever on those things that make Oxley stand out as a school of enlightened academic rigour. The introduction of SWYM (Say What You Mean) for all students in Year 7 – 10 has been an outstanding example of listening to student, teacher and parent feedback, working on a solution as a collaborative team of teachers and leaders, investing time in researching what will make the most difference for our students, and then doing it! Mr and Mrs Carter have written each lesson in this outstanding, state-of-the-art programme that is daily assisting our students in their academic writing. Senior students too are benefitting from the discipline of regular writing with prompt and explicit feedback. We are delighted about how all our students are talking about their writing, exhibiting persistence and resilience as they work hard to develop their personal voice. The next step will be the introduction of “SWYM Meets” next term, where students will put the skills gained this term into practice in timed conditions, followed immediately by peer feedback. We look forward to hearing more about this in the first edition of Pin Oak next term.

New too this year has been the introduction of the Global Perspectives course for all Year 9 students. Again it has been wonderful to hear how interested the students are in this course - some expecting more of the same and instead being surprised by how relevant and applicable the topics are to their world. Mr Simpson and Mrs Shedden are leading the way in this exciting venture, with both teachers relishing the opportunity to link work in the classroom to the planned international service trips later this year.

Finally, it is important too to acknowledge the academic role models provided by our Year 12 students. Amidst a myriad of assessment tasks, sport, productions and work, they have managed to maintain a strong focus on the marathon that is the HSC. Year 12 Half Yearly reports have been completed and time will now be devoted to analysing both comments and marks in order to identify the gaps that need to be filled, the skills that need more work, the time that can be better organised in Term 2. We know that there is still enough time to improve, so we encourage each student to listen to the feedback provided and to work collectively as a team toward success. We acknowledge especially the teachers of every HSC course (all 24 of them) and thank them for investing so much of their time, effort and energy in order to achieve our vision for our students. To all in our community, my best wishes for the break.



Deputy Head Pastoral: Peter Ayling

ANZAC March

We look forward to seeing the majority of students attending the ANZAC Day March on Monday 25 April. Although this is the last day of the school holidays and it is not a compulsory event, it is amazing to see the large number of students who give a little of their day to pay their respect to the men and women who serve or served in our armed forces.

Please meet in Winter Uniform outside the Coles Carpark at 10:00am. We look forward to participating in another community event where we are proud of our students.

Confidence, Character and Resilience

Advice from Michael Grose who is the author of nine parenting books. Michael has an education background and holds a Master of Educational Studies.

Children best develop in an environment where parents purposefully adopt principles and techniques that promote confidence, character and resilience. These are qualities that do not develop independently of each other.

The development of one impacts on the others. When kids develop a greater sense of self-confidence they usually behave better and they are more likely to bounce back from setbacks, particularly social injustices.

Confidence

Confident kids take more learning risks and are likely to challenge themselves more than kids who are low on confidence. They are less likely to place limits on themselves or their achievements. Confidence is so crucial today as so many kids are anxious and fear failure.

Character

Character refers to the attitudes and behaviours a child develops that maximise his or her success. Character is about doing what's right, not what's easy!

Resilience

Children need to be resilient. They need to be able to bounce back from life's bigger and smaller setbacks. Resilience is linked with good mental health habits and also with a child's success.

The Thriving! approach gives parents the tools and strategies to help bring out these three vital ingredients.

For more information <http://www.parentingideas.com.au/Parents/How-to-Parent>

Relay For Life

A huge congratulations to all our students who took part in Relay For Life. Congratulations to Isabella Davies (Year 11) who was instrumental in organising every detail of a hugely successful event.

We had over 80 students and parents participating in this event and raising money for cancer. I am so proud of Isabella, her drive and passion to help others is to be commended and something we value at Oxley College. Well done to everyone who took part in the day, we even had some campers stay the night.



DAVE THOMAS

A few weeks ago, Year 10 Visual Arts students enjoyed a Friday afternoon incursion with local artist, Dave Thomas. Dave is an expert in portraiture, the current topic in Year 10 VA. Dave demonstrated his art making process, managing to paint an entire portrait within an hour and a half! He showed us techniques including colour mixing, tonal matching and the use of detail. All students learned many skills just by watching Dave that we can now apply to our own portraits. Thank you very much to Ms Forbes and Mrs Pugh for organising this incursion and to Dave for sharing his knowledge; it was a great afternoon.

By Liv Donovan and Juliette Swain

RELAY FOR LIFE

The 2016 Relay For Life was an extremely successful event! Every Oxley student involved made the school proud with their effort and contribution to such a worthwhile cause. The day began extremely well with a few students showing up early to show their support followed by a much larger group at around 4:00pm. Cakes were sold throughout the day, as were raffle tickets with fantastic prizes sourced by the students involved. A big thank you goes out to all of the parents that helped throughout the day. Also thank you to Mrs Hamilton who took a lot of time out of her day to attend several meetings and to supervise the students, Mrs Henderson who walked for the full two hours and made Oxley proud and all of those who baked delicious cakes to sell and who helped the school raise very worthwhile funds. We will be sure to announce the final amount raised for the Cancer Council once all of the money has been tallied.

BY Izzy Davies (Year 11)



PSYCH ME UP!

Some people are naturally more positive than others. Some people see the glass half full and some see it half empty. Recently, research has shown a link between negativity and anxiety and depression. In an attempt to approach these problems from a different direction scientists are trying to work out if we change the way we think will we be less prone to anxiety and depression. Can we rewire our brains to become more positive?

Psych Me Up is an app that is designed to retrain the brain to dismiss negative feedback and chose the positive feedback. This app is a simple game that you need to do a few times a week or before doing anything particularly stressful. It features pictures of several different faces. In these faces, one person is smiling, the rest are frowning. The aim of the game is to look for the smiling face as quickly as you can! Easy right?

So go to: <http://www.rainybrainsunnybrain.com/bbc-horizon/> for more information.

Research into this area is new and exciting. Why don't you download the app <http://www.mindhabs.com/mobileapps.php> - and give it a go.

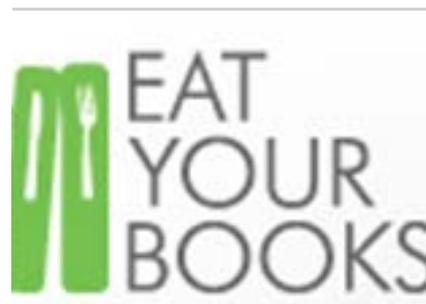
By Savannah Sandilands (Year 9)

LIBRARY



2016 NSW Premier's Reading Challenge

Premier's Reading Challenge instructions with usernames and passwords will be sent home with K - 6 students this week.



<http://www.eatyourbooks.com>

Our library has an account to enable students to search for recipes in our cook book collection. Everyone in the school community is free to use our account:

Username: OxleyLibrary

Password: oxley

Holiday Reading

We encourage our students to borrow books during the holidays as we believe there is nothing better than a sleep-in with a good book.

There are many little ways to enlarge your child's world. Love of books is the best of all.

-Jacqueline Kennedy Onassis

HOLIDAY MUST DO'S

WINTER IS COMING:

I don't know if it's just me but I have definitely been feeling the nip in the air. I know 13 degrees isn't that cold but it's time to face the fact that winter is definitely on its way. Winter is not all bad – think cozy fires, warm beds and hot chocolate. Try not to focus on early morning sporting fields, icy mornings and bitter winds.

TIPS FOR DEALING WITH THE COLD:

- 1) **EXTREMITY MANAGEMENT:** Keep your feet and head covered. Your feet control your body warmth. If you keep your feet warm then you will keep the rest of your body warm.
- 2) **ACCESSORISE:** Hot water bottles, snuggle rugs, gloves and scarves are winter necessities.
- 3) **HEATING:** put the heater on or light a fire, invest in an electric blanket.
- 4) **EXERCISE:** Although when it's cold, you don't feel like going anywhere or doing anything, doing exercise keeps your blood flowing around your body essentially making your skin warmer. It also gets your endorphins going which will boost your mood.
- 5) **WINTER FOOD:** Get cooking – it's time for soup, warm pudding and slow cooked pork.
- 6) **TRY TO FOCUS ON SOMETHING ELSE:** Don't constantly think about the cold, it will only make you feel colder. Try and distract yourself with a project or a book.

Winter is all about your attitude. Snuggle down and enjoy it!



Art Project - Autumn leaf candle

If you're anything like me then you love the crisp crunch of Autumn leaves under your feet as you walk along. Not only do leaves provide a source of endless entertainment but they can also be used in lots of artsy/creative ways. Here are some steps to make an Autumn candle- a perfect decoration for your house and a fun activity to do over the school holidays!

What you'll need:

- Fallen leaves
- An old jar – fairly large
- A paint brush
- Clear drying PVA glue
- Small tea light candle

Step 1: Go outside and gather some fallen Autumn leaves from the ground - get a variety of colours but make sure they aren't too dry or will break easily!

Step 2: Press the leaves under a pile of heavy books for a few days until they are completely flat.

Step 3: Smear the PVA glue all over the sides of the jar so that it is evenly spread out.

Step 4: Stick the leaves all over the pot and then go over them with more glue. You can arrange them in whatever way you want. Allow a few to overlap, but keep in mind that the more leaves you use the less light will be able to shine through.

Step 5: Use the other end of your brush and make a striped pattern in the glue going over any areas that aren't covered with leaves. This will give the light a nicer effect.

Step 6: Add another layer of glue to the jar and then let it dry over night. Place your candle inside and there you have it!



Must Do's For The Holidays

1. Tie Dye a shirt

Get creative with some fun patterns and messy dye. Tie dyeing a shirt is too easy! Just follow a recipe from the Internet and voila! You have a fancy shirt to show all of your friends.

2. Capture an 'Autumn Leaves' Photo

Autumn is the most beautiful time of the year with the different coloured leaves and what better way to capture the beauty than in a photo?

3. Check out Wet n' Wild in Sydney

Of course only on a lovely day! Drive up to Wet n' Wild and get a little fun into your life!

4. Make a cake in a mug

Easiest, and yummiest thing ever! Google the ingredients required and simply throw them in a mug, put it into the microwave and taste the sensation. Thank me later.

5. Visit the Australian War Memorial ANZAC Ceremony

Starting with the Dawn Service at 4:30am with some excerpts from some Australians who have experienced war first-hand, then at 10:30am the National Ceremony will commence, and lastly the Last Post Ceremony starting at

4:30pm.

6. Go to Luna Park

Luna Park. An oldie but a goodie. It's always an enjoyable day out in the city.

7. Pack a picnic and head to the Domain

Right in the heart of Sydney, enjoy the gardens, the scenery and some family bonding time.

8. Take a footy to Lake Alexandra, Mittagong

Similar to the Domain, only locally. Grab some fish and chips on the way, take a footy, and spend the day with the family.

9. Harbison Care Autumn Fundraiser on Sunday 17 April

Harbison Care is holding a fundraiser on the 17th. Grab a two course lunch and help support the local aged care.

10. ANZAC Day fly by, Mittagong

If you can't make it to Canberra for ANZAC Day, attend the Mittagong Ceremony and watch a group of members from Mittagong Aero Club fly their warbirds in formation over the cenotaph after a minutes silence.

By Tully Mahr (Year 9)



WHAT A SNAP

Local photographers capture those special moments for you to buy



ROSIE BOWYER
BY AJ MORAN



BEN QUIRICO
BY OLIVIA DONOVAN

We'd like to introduce to you an Oxley parent, AJ (Anthony) Moran. AJ has been a professional photographer for over 30 years and has been shooting junior sporting events in the Southern Highlands for the last 15 years. He's decided to focus on school sport throughout the Highlands and will be at sporting events, including, school sport matches and carnivals throughout the year. Please feel free to view his images on his website ajmoran.com.au or email him personally at ajmoran707@gmail.com for particular requests. The images will only be available to Oxley parents with a specific password to access the galleries.

Olivia Donovan is a Year 10 student who is a talented photographer and her photos are also available for sale online. Here is the link to [geosnapshot.com](http://www.geosnapshot.com) where riders who attended the Oxley College Equestrian Day can view and buy photos of themselves! <http://www.geosnapshot.com/e/oxley-college-equestrian-day-2016>



PIN OAK FAIR UPDATE

These holidays why not have an early spring clean! We're looking for nearly new books, good quality once worn clothing and lovely homewares that need a new home for the Pin Oak Fair.

Why not sign up for 'Emerge', the Pin Oak Fair's Art Show. We're looking for artists of any medium. Please email Penny Simons on pen.hayes@bigpond.com for an application form. Applications close Sunday 5 May.

P & F Equestrian Day

There will be a full report on the Oxley College Equestrian Day in the next Pin Oak. An enormous thanks to Sally Quirico who seamlessly coordinated this highly success Oxley event and fundraiser. (Approximately \$10,000 was raised on the day)! The best ever. A huge thank you also to all the parents, Oxley staff and students who assisted on the day and in the lead up to this event. It was an incredible community effort. All Equestrian Results can be found via this link: <http://www.oxley.nsw.edu.au/wp-content/uploads/2015/07/Oxley-College-Equestrian-Day-Results-20162.xlsx>

APRIL CALENDAR

<p>Oxley Holiday Shop Hours Tuesday 19 April, Wednesday 20 April and Thursday 21 April 8.30am-4:00pm. Term 2: Winter Uniform</p>	<p>Mon EXC Y11 GEO Biophysical Interactions Year 12 SOR I/II Auburn Mosque</p> <p>04</p>	<p>Mon</p> <p>11</p>	<p>Mon</p> <p>18</p>
	<p>Tue Sport: End of season BBQ's OLA Softball/Cricket</p> <p>05</p>	<p>Tue</p> <p>12</p>	<p>Tue</p> <p>19</p>
	<p>Wed OXLEY Music Night Orchestra Room Sport: End of season BBQ's OLA Basketball, girls/ boys</p> <p>06</p>	<p>Wed</p> <p>13</p>	<p>Wed</p> <p>20</p>
	<p>Thu P&F: K-6 Cake Stall END OF TERM 1</p> <p>07</p>	<p>Thu</p> <p>14</p>	<p>Thu</p> <p>21</p>
<p>Fri INC: Y9 Drama Theatre Sports</p> <p>01</p>	<p>Fri</p> <p>08</p>	<p>Fri</p> <p>15</p>	<p>Fri</p> <p>22</p>
<p>Sat Relay for Life</p> <p>02</p>	<p>Sat DoE Gold Hike, Bronze/Silver Practice Hike</p> <p>09</p>	<p>Sat</p> <p>16</p>	<p>Sat</p> <p>23</p>
<p>Sun Sport: Oxley Equestrian Day.</p> <p>03</p>	<p>Sun DoE Gold Hike, Bronze/Silver Practice Hike</p> <p>10</p>	<p>Sun</p> <p>17</p>	<p>Sun</p> <p>24</p>

Upcoming events

- + Monday 25 April ANZAC DAY
- +Term 2: Tuesday 26 April

Sport



WATER POLO

Oxley Axolotls – Amelia Carpenter, George Dummer, Hamish Tregenza, Jack Hatcher, Alister Hill, James Wilson, Benedict Regan (injured). It was a mild evening at Mittagong Pool considering our recent weather, and the pool deck was filled with enthusiastic spectators for the showdown grand final game between Tudor House 2 and our very own Oxley Axolotls, skilfully coached across the season by Mr Jonathan Hatcher. Some great saves by Hamish and strong swimming to feed up to James and Jack at the goal scoring end merged nicely with solid goal keeping by George. Millie and Alister provided protection to the Oxley goal and mid pool areas, with Benedict offering encouragement to his teammates from poolside. With no available substitutes the Axolotls were still a force to be reckoned with. It was an absolute nail biter of a game that actually went down after a five all draw to a penalty shoot-out. After an early goal against Tudor House 2, Tudor proved too strong in their penalty shoot-out goal defence and came away victorious by one point. The excitement around the pool was electric and the Axolotls should be very proud of themselves making it to the grand final in only their second season. I can't wait to visit another game next year! Congratulations must also go to our U16s Gold water polo team, coached by Mr Chris Canute, who emerged victorious from their season with Bronze medallions. It was great watching the strength of this team in the pool and hearty cheers to Olivia Davies, Finn Ottaviano, Chris Court, Ben Canute, Sophie Dummer, Eleni Connell, Lucie Drysdale and Olivia Donovan for their strong team play and positive sportsmanship. All in all it was a terrific night of water polo at the recently renovated Mittagong Pool, and thank you to all our families, coaches, students and Sport Department for helping to make this sport so vibrant.

Guest Sport Report by Miss Lane



SUCCESS

2016 7-12 House Cross Country Results

Age Champions

Age/ Gender	Runner Up	Champion
Girls 12 years	Grace Ayling	Julia Parker
Boys 12 years	Jarrold Smith	Xavier Walker
Girls 13 years	Anneliese Wansey	Madeleine Sargeant
Boys 13 years	Nicolas Milner	Harry Jensen
Girls 14 years	Layla Ross	Jessica Malcolm
Boys 14 years	Archer Kalde	Connor Taylor-Helme
Girls 15 years	Jade Gillis	Sienna Knowles
Boys 15 years	Finn Ottaviano	Hunter Hayes
Girls 16 years	Tara Bevan	Kiara Rochoaix
Boys 16 years	Louis Connell	Tom Whyte
Girls 17 years	Cate Patterson	Gabriella Taylor-Helme
Boys 17 years	Ted Ottaviano	Jenson Barker
Girls 18 years	Emma Croker	Heidi Bevan
Boys 18 years	William Lewis	Brandon Colby
House Champion 1st	336	Florey

2016 7 - 12 House Swimming Carnival Results

Age Champions

Age/Gender	Runner Up	Champion
Girls 12 years	Arabella Brown	Grace Ayling
Boys 12 years		Jarrold Smith
Girls 13 years	Lucy Cavanaugh-Quince	Mia Gillis
Boys 13 years	Max Davis-Rice	Alex Webb
Girls 14 years	Claire Allan	Lauren Howes
Boys 14 years	Bryce Wellman	Archer Kalde
Girls 15 years	Sophia Dummer	Jade Gillis
Boys 15 years	Finn Ottaviano	Lachlan Coleman
Girls 16 years	Abbey Marnoch	Olivia Davies
Boys 16 years	Oscar Moran	Campbell de Montemas
Girls 17 years	Rosemary Bowyer	Madeline Kalde
Boys 17 years	Mitchell Wellman	Cedric Hely
Girls 18+ years	Jamie Binder	Kaarina Allen
Boys 18+ years	Campbell Macquarie	Brandon Colby
House Champion 1st	1299	Florey