Term 1 Week 2

Important dates to put in your calendar.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>12/2/2015</td>
<td>Catch up photos</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18/2/2015</td>
<td>Yr11 parent info night</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19/2/2015</td>
<td>Primary Swimming Carnival</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20/2/2015</td>
<td>Secondary Swimming Carnival</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Principal Report

Welcome

Welcome back. A special welcome to the many new families who have joined our school community. We have many new families who have moved from various parts of the state and Australia, as well as from more local areas. We hope your family find the school to be a place that adds to the great things about the local community.

Congratulations to our 2014 Year 12 students as they embark on the next stage in their lifelong learning. It is great to see the variety of university offers covering a broad range of areas such as business, science, environmental studies, teaching, communications and the arts - including several who have been admitted into honours programs. We will be following up with all students to find out more about their diverse pathways but wish them well.

As always, our main focus is supporting the work that happens each and every period in our classrooms and learning spaces. It has been terrific to see the high levels of engagement and enthusiasm from students as they commence their next year of schooling during visits to classrooms. Our enrolment numbers are strong, which puts us in a good place to continue to offer our diverse, comprehensive curriculum offerings and programs (we literally can and do run subjects such as Rocket Science, Dance and Creative Writing). We welcome new staff who joins the team: Mrs Calverley (Primary); Ms Goldi(ePrimary); Mr Johnson (PDHPE); Ms Fuller (Science); Mr Williams (English); Ms Kokinovic (English/ESL); Ms Butler (English); Ms Purchase (Counsellor).

Collective Smartness

One of our new initiatives for this year is the establishment of a Student Engagement Officer team, who will be working closely with students, families and staff to maximise student attendance. We welcome Ms Smith who will be working with Ms Brown to support students in this area.

We have started the year with a focus on being at school time on time each day. Our aim is to maximise learning through attendance and engagement at school. As a school, the additional gains in attendance will lead to our shared, collective smartness.

Road Safety and Good Neighbours

As part of the local community the school works actively to be good citizens and neighbours. This includes working with our local businesses on parking issues that impact on them. We are also mindful of the need to promote safe pedestrian and road practices and have been working with Wyong Council and our Department Road Safety Officer.

As a positive gesture and request to ensure the local business car park remains free of school parking traffic, a local business has offered us access to the spare ground opposite the shops as a place that people might find useful to assist in us working together as a community, to maximise car and pedestrian safety around the school.

Links

The Department site http://www.schoolatoz.nsw.edu.au has information to assist parents help their children with school and is worth a look. It includes topics such as wellbeing, homework help and technology.
We have collated some study tips in an electronic document that can be found at [http://ow.ly/yYPTk](http://ow.ly/yYPTk) which are relevant to all students in terms of study, student led homework and extension. The library has also purchased more copies of the BOSTES Previous HSC Papers, including examples of how high achieving students answered the questions, which is of particular relevance for our senior students.

**School Spirit**

Another new initiative that has already commenced is the Wadalba Cup, where we are building on our school House groups to promote school spirit through learning, sport and participation.

We celebrated lunar New Year with a lantern making competition which each House group participated. As it coincides with the commencement of the school year, it is opportune to wish everybody good fortune, wellbeing and wealth in knowledge for 2015.

[http://www.actionforhappiness.org](http://www.actionforhappiness.org)

**Mr Jason McGrath**

**Principal**

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**Deputy Principal Report**

Welcome back to all parents, careers and students as well as a warm welcome to all Year 7 students and new families to Wadalba Community School. I hope you all had a relaxing break and are looking forward to a productive 2015.

Most students have had a wonderful start to the school year, Year 7 have transitioned particularly well and Mrs Burge and Ms Coghlan have been impressed with how well they have settled into high school life, older students have been very supportive in helping out where needed.

Year 11 have a parent information night on Wednesday 18th February to outline the expectations of students in the Preliminary and HSC years, I encourage all parents to come along and ask any questions they have to assist them in supporting their child through the next two years. We will also have a study skills day to support students and develop skills to assist them with homework, study and exam preparation.

We are reminding students and encouraging them to come to class prepared for learning with all their equipment ready to engage and actively participate in classroom activities.

**Mathematics**

Welcome back to 2015! Students have settled in well to another year. I would like to take this opportunity to remind all students that they require a grid book, blue/black and red pen and a scientific calculator for every lesson. Calculators can be purchased from the school canteen. Please speak with our teacher if there are any concerns.

The Mathematics faculty are looking forward to a number of events scheduled for this year including Year 7 Numeracy Day, Year 11 Luna Park and several Aboriginal Numeracy Days throughout the year.

Year 8 students will begin their year revising basic algebraic skills before moving onto solving equations. They will finish the term with a focus on fractions, decimals and percentages. An assessment will take place during week 9/10 for all year 8 students based on these areas.

Year 9 will begin revising fractions, decimals and percentages.

**Jane Harris**

**Deputy Principal Year 8 and 11.**
Students will then complete a unit of work around Financial Mathematics in particular types of incomes. They will finish their term with a focus on Algebraic expressions and equations. Students in stage 5 (year 9/10) will be studying three main pathways, Stage 5.1, 5.2 and 5.3. Students wishing to complete Mathematics in year 11/12 will need to complete the 5.3 pathway. Please speak to your classroom teacher if you are interested in studying Mathematics in year 11/12. Year 9 will complete their first major assessment in week 9/10 of Term one.

Year 10 students have begun their year with a focus on Financial Mathematics and will be examining loans and investments. Students will then study Measurement, involving Volume and Surface Area. Year 10 will complete their term with an investigation into algebraic expressions involving indices. Year 10 will complete their first ROSA assessment task in week 8 with an open book task on Financial Mathematics and Measurement.

Year 11 has begun their senior studies and we wish them the best of luck. Students have chosen one of two courses, General Mathematics or Mathematics. Students will be provided with detailed course requirements and assessment details during week 2.

Year 12 have settled in well and are working towards their HSC. The year 11 General course has now divided into an ATAR course General 2 and a NON ATAR course General 1. If you have any questions please contact Head Teacher Mathematics Leanne Hancock.

Homework Centre
Homework Centre will run again this year on a Wednesday afternoon from 2.45-3.45 in the library starting week 3. Seminars on various topics will be available throughout the year; numbers will be limited so bookings will be essential. These included study skills, essay writing, yoga and relaxation techniques. The seminars will be advertised on the schools’ Facebook page and during roll call.

I’m sure you will join me in thanking the dedicated teachers who volunteer their time each Wednesday afternoon.

Mrs Leanne Hancock
HT Mathematics

Middle School News

My Name is Mrs Beverly Partridge and I am the Head Teacher Teaching and Learning responsible for Middle School and library. The purpose of this letter is to keep you informed about what we do at Wadalba Community School (WCS).

Curriculum Overview
The primary purpose of Middle School is to support students in their transition from primary to high school by catering to the needs of students in early adolescence. The transition from primary to high school is one of the biggest challenges young adolescents face and we are dedicated to supporting students with this change through our highly successful Middle School program.

In mainstream Middle School we teach an integrated curriculum where subjects are combined into strands. This enhances the relevance of the learning by enabling students to see connections and linkages between subjects. If students’ can see the relevance of what they are learning, they are much more engaged. The strands taught in mainstream Middle School are Humanities (English, Geography and History) and Measuring Physical Space (MPS) (Maths, PDHPE and Science).

In the academic Middle School classes, each subject is taught separately, however teachers work collaboratively on integrated projects across subject areas.

Year 7 Advisor – Ms Mel Coghlan
Our Year 7 classes were structured with two academic classes and six mixed ability classes. These academic classes were formed by a combination of results received from Primary Schools and scores in the High School Admission test conducted at Wadalba last year. Students who consistently perform well have the opportunity to gain a spot in these classes.

Classroom Management
Our rules at Wadalba Community School are reinforced in the classroom-
• Show and Earn RESPECT
• Accept RESPONSIBILITY
• Strive for EXCELLENCE

Part of my role as the Middle School Head Teacher is to deal with students who are persistently failing to comply with instructions, consistently cause distractions in the classroom and prevent the teacher from educating others. We will not accept or tolerate this behaviour. I will notify you if your child is not complying with school rules and procedures to seek your support in motivating your child to get back on track.
Measuring Physical Space (MPS)
The focus across each KLA involved with MPS this term is based on the essential skills required to gain a basic understanding of all aspects across the Science, Mathematics and PDHPE KLA’s.

Mathematics classes will focus on Computations with Positive Integers, Angles and Positive and Negative Integers

PDHPE Theory classes will be focusing on Sportsmanship and Anti-bullying by encouraging positive experiences and relationships for students in competitive and non-competitive situations. Practical: Minor games to improve gross motor skills, sportsmanship, athletics and cross country running. It is compulsory for students to bring their sports uniform to school during PE practical lessons and a hat is recommended.

Science classes will look at: Separating Mixtures. They learn how to separate mixtures using appropriate equipment and safe procedures whilst demonstrating an understanding of the differences in everyday material. It is compulsory that all students have fully enclosed shoes with solid uppers to participate in practical lessons in Science Laboratories.

Humanities
The topic in Humanities this term is “A hero’s Journey”. Students will be developing their English, literacy, historical and geographical skills in an integrated until based around the novel Boy Overboard.

Lessons are developed to incorporate the outcomes of the English, History and Geography syllabus in an effort to enhance student comprehension of concepts and skills required for success in these courses.

The development of students’ reading, comprehension and vocabulary skills is viewed as an important requirement of the Humanities course and this topic builds upon these skills. It is expected that all students will read the novel that has been set as part of this unit of study.

Homework
Homework is set by each teacher at their discretion. It can range from set tasks to completion of activities which were not completed in class. Students in Year 7 should be reading for at least 20 minutes a night. To assist with numeracy, rehearsing times tables up to 12 will help students with the concepts being taught in Maths. We encourage students to use their diaries so we can use this as a form of communication to allow parents to see what is happening with regards to homework and behaviour. We would appreciate if parents and carers supported us in this area to reinforce the line of communication between homes and the school.

Year 7 Camp
All students who have displayed satisfactory behaviour will be given the opportunity to participate in a three day Outdoor Adventure Camp in Morisset during Term 2.

Contact with the School
If you have any concerns about the welfare of your child or would like to talk to one of your child’s teachers the Year Advisor Ms Coghill is the person you need to contact. For any discipline concerns you can contact me, Mrs Beverly Partridge.

Information about what is happening at is regularly updated on our school website: http://www.wadalba-c.schools.nsw.edu.au

Mrs Beverly Partridge
Head Teacher – Teaching and Learning

Senior Support Class
The senior support class has settled in well to the rigours of the new academic year. Importantly, this year we have two of our students undertaking TAFE access courses in Animal Studies (Wyong campus) and Primary Industries (Ourimbah campus). These courses provide an avenue for our students to develop vital social skills whilst acquiring practical abilities in their chosen field of study. Three of our other senior students are undertaking regular mainstream electives in Electronics, Food Technology and Timber and Construction. This flexible approach to learning and a promotion of a least restrictive environment allows these students to experience teaching and learning experiences of invaluable measure. This semester this class will study a variety of interesting subjects, such as Myths and Legends, Energy, The Great Composers, Literature studies and more while concurrently learning and practicing real life skills that will assist these students to seamlessly ease into the exciting world of post school life.

Mr Stan Baric
Head Teacher Special Education

Why is arriving at school on time important?

Arriving at school and class on time:

- Ensures that your child doesn’t miss out on the important learning activities scheduled early in the day when they are most alert.
• Helps your child to learn the importance of punctuality and routine.
• Gives your child time to greet their friends before class and therefore.
• Reduces the opportunity for classroom disruption. Lateness is recorded as a partial absence and must be explained to the school the same way as other forms of absence.

Do you have problems with getting your child to school, for some of the following reasons?

• won’t get out of bed
• won’t go to bed
• can’t find their clothes, books, homework, school bag...
• school lunches not ready
• slow to eat breakfast
• homework not done
• watching television late at night or when they should be getting ready for school
• test or presentation at school
• birthdays
• screaming and not letting go of you.

Here are some suggestions which are based on setting regular routines:

• Have a set time to be out of bed
• Have a set time to go to bed
• Have uniform and school bag ready the night before
• Make lunches the night before
• Have a set time for starting/ending breakfast. A routine is important.
• Set time for daily homework activities
• Turn the television on for a set time and only if appropriate
• Be firm, children must go to school
• Provide lots of positive encouragement
• Be firm, a birthday is not a holiday
• Time arrival at school to coincide with bell time and leave quickly

Ms J Smith

Leadership Team, 2015

We are excited to welcome our Wadalba Community School Leadership Team back for another exciting year. This term the Leadership Team are working toward the Primary and High School Swimming Carnivals, High School Athletic Carnival, Anti-Bullying day and Harmony Day. As well as these exciting events, the Team have started Wadalba Cup!

Wadalba Cup is an exciting competition designed for Wadalba Community School. Each student belongs to a ‘house’ (Hall, Bradman, Freeman, Thorpe) according to their roll class and has the chance to earn points toward the Wadalba Cup trophy and yearly reward excursion. Students can earn points by being involved in extra-curricula events, representing their school in academic, CAPA, sporting and volunteering opportunities, achieving positive referrals in class, attending school carnival, earning awards, following the school rules or winning challenges as well as many more opportunities.

Teachers, parents and community members are able to earn points for their student’s houses in a range of challenges as well- we will keep you posted via our school facebook site.

We also announce our full list of leaders for 2015, organised in their committees.

Leadership Executive
Secondary School Captain- Elizabeth Parker
Secondary School Captain- Oscar Waite
Primary School Captain- Nicole Young
Primary School Captain- Trent Ellis
Secondary School Vice-Captain- Jake Fonti
Secondary School Vice-Captain- Abraham Pashtoon

Year Representative Committee (reponsible for whole school events)
Year 11 Representative- Tarni Heath
Year 11 Representative- Jesse Chapman
Year 10 Representative- Emma Fletcher
Year 8 Representative- Hannah McCormack
Year 7 Representatives (trialing for term one)
Aurora Jones
Keegan Stewart
Brodie Pintatara
William Kember
Jorja Smith
Jorja Russ
Charlotte Coleman
Emma Harrison
Year 6 Representatives- Kaylem Maddrell
Sharmaine Stewart
Year 5 Representative- Luke Burton
Annaliese Brown
Aboriginal Education Leadership Committee (responsible for Aboriginal Education and Celebration)
Senior Aboriginal Leader - Zoe Wilson
Senior Aboriginal Leader - Jessica Wilson
Senior Aboriginal Leader - Jasmine Hennessy-Garvey
Junior Aboriginal Leader - Caley Pintatara
Junior Aboriginal Leader - Kaitlin Sloan
Junior Aboriginal Leader - Amber Bolton

House Captains (Responsible for Wadalba Cup and School Spirit)
Secondary Hall House Captain - Shanice Manukia
Secondary Hall House Captain - Lauryn Lawes
Primary Hall House Captain - Karla Megrath
BJ Panjer
Secondary Hall House Vice-Captain - Kieren Peters
Secondary Bradman House Captain - Vanessa Jager
Secondary Bradman House Captain - Brodie Evans
Primary Bradman House Captain - Alex Hancock
Sophia Ferrari-Semmler
Secondary Bradman House Vice-Captain - Jamie-Lee Hancock
Secondary Bradman House Vice-Captain - Rebecca Ellis
Secondary Thorpe House Captain - Chloe Barnes
Primary Thorpe House Captain - Sienna Davis
Blake Clapham
Secondary Thorpe House Vice-Captain - Zac Coughlin
Secondary Thorpe House Vice-Captain - Ryan Bull
Secondary Freeman House Captain - Tahlia Shiach-Scott
Secondary Freeman House Captain - Kacper Wrojck

Primary Freeman House Captain - Paige Wells
Shakiya Smith-Healey

Cultural Celebrations Wadalba Cup Challenge
As part of our school cultural celebrations, the cultural awareness team created a challenge to celebrate Chinese New Year. All students from Primary to Secondary school were involved in our first Wadalba Cup challenge. With the assistance of our school leaders, every roll call was set the challenge of creating as many paper lanterns, in our sport house colours, as possible in ten minutes with only three pairs of scissors and one stapler per room. The students all rose to the challenge and created over 500 lanterns. Each roll call group worked together in teams using problem solving skills to create paper lanterns while celebrating the diversity of cultures in our community. The lanterns are to be hung around the school.

Year 7 Advisor report
Year 7 have had a great start to their high school career. Each student has navigated their way through the maze of new structures and systems of high school including sport selections, timetables, rooming and roll call. All students are smiling and feeling more and more comfortable each day.

Just a reminder that the deposit of $50 for Year 7 camp is due by the 11th February. Detailed information will follow after deposits are paid by students.

Melanie Coghlan
Year 7 Advisor

ENGLISH FACULTY
Welcome back to all our students! It is lovely to see you returning to us ready to take on the challenges of your English studies in 2015.

All students in Years 11 and 12 have now received Course Information documentation for Advanced, Extension and Standard English. English Studies students have also received course outlines. We wish you all well in these final years of study and know that you will do your best.

Students in Years 8 to 10 have received a Study and Assessment Schedule giving details of units of study and assessment. There will be two styles of assessment for Stages 4 and 5:

- Skills Based Tasks in Literacy, Viewing/Listening, Figurative Language and Visual Texts.
- Substantive Written Tasks in the form of a Writing Portfolio, TXXXC Response and Speech.

Our English Staff contains many new faces this year, beginning with myself as Head Teacher, appointed during Term 4 of 2014. In my time here at WCS, I have met many friendly members of the community and look forward to working with parents to achieve the best outcomes for your children in English.

This year we welcome two new graduates, Miss Kokinovic and Mr Williams, as well as Miss Butler for Ms Redman. Mrs Louie also joins us as a permanent member of staff and we congratulate her on her
appointment.

We are looking forward to an exciting year in English and hope you will enjoy seeing and hearing about your children’s efforts in our wonderful subject.

Mrs Holmes
Head Teacher, English

CAPA

To Buy the CAPA GATS CD,
To raise money for the sick Kids,
I need to sell over 400,
Please buy one from the front
Admin office for $15.00
The Songs are awesome and it’s for
a good cause, Wyong hospital
Paediatric long term ward.

Niven Vojkovic
Music Teacher

The University of Newcastle
Student Podiatry Clinic at
Wyong hospital is offering children age 0-17 free lower limb assessments from 2nd March to 25th May. Would you please notify families of your school by including the following notice in your School Newsletter?

Free lower limb assessment
The University of Newcastle Podiatry Clinic at Wyong hospital is offering children age 0-17 free lower limb assessments. Children will be assessed by final year students, supervised by a podiatrist. Children and their families can receive advice on footwear and normal development, and receive treatment of foot warts, foot and leg pain, walking problems, and night-time ‘growing pains’.

When: Mondays from 2.15 to 4.15pm from 2nd March to 25th May 2015
To make a booking, or for more information, call 43947280

See you in the studio!

Ms Angela Moir

XLR8
"XLR8 is back for its fourth year in 2015. Students are off to a great start, signing up for Tafe and Trade Training Centre Courses, Work Placement, and beginning their Group Project-a makeover of the native garden at the schools main entrance.

Our focus for the term will be to develop in the areas of attitude, application, and excellence in our efforts. The course aims to develop a positive sense of self awareness, and work skills and knowledge to improve employability. Some students are already demonstrating leadership qualities and exploring apprenticeship opportunities in the local community.

If you would like to support our students and are seeking an apprentice, or there is an opportunity for a traineeship in your workplace, please contact course coordinator Angela Moir on 4392 5000."

Art
"Welcome Back to all our sm’ART Students"
The VA Team of Ms Florido, Ms Moir, Miss Norris & Miss Painter are looking forward to working with you this semester. We’ll be studying Australian Art and culture this year, with a focus on traditional and contemporary indigenous influences. We’ll take a look at the graphic designs of MAMBO and the salutation of domestic Australia by artists Howard Arkley and Reg Mombassa.

All students will enjoy experiences in drawing, painting and clay techniques and hopefully submit there best work for our end of year WCS EXHIBITION.

Please do your best to organise the purchase of an art diary and any other equipment your teacher has specified.
Welcome Back!

It is good to see so many new families joining our school community. We hope that you find Wadalba Community School to be a happy and welcoming place and one that provides a broad range of activities to cater for all.

We are also excited to welcome Mrs Resli Calverley and Ms Julie Goldie to our staff who bring a new range of ideas and experience to share with us.

There are currently 220 students enrolled with 25 Kindergarten students.

The class and staffing structure for Term 1 will be as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Class</th>
<th>Teacher</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>K</td>
<td>Mrs Resli Calverley</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>K/1</td>
<td>Mrs Lee-Anne Collins</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Mrs Lauren Ryder</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Miss Danielle Green</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2/3</td>
<td>Mrs Naomi Kinsela</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3/4</td>
<td>Mrs Gabrielle Griffiths</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(W-F)</td>
<td>Miss Jamala Stirton (M-T)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Ms Julie Goldie</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Mrs Natalie MacDonald</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5/6</td>
<td>Mrs Kylie Snell</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Principal- Mr Jason McGrath
Deputy Principal- Ms Roxanne Sanday
Assistant Principals- Mrs Jo Allan, Mrs Natalie MacDonald & Mrs Lee-Anne Collins
Library- Mrs Kerry Crowther/ Mrs Jo Allan

Reading Recovery/ RFF – Mrs Melinda Farrelly
SLSO- Mrs Rachel Fitzpatrick
SLSO- Ms Carole Beckley
Learning Support- Mrs Debra Bell

Mrs Allan and Mrs Crowther will be sharing library in Term One as they will both be taking leave. Ms Furey’s leave will continue through Term One also.

As you can see, four of our classes are multi-age classes. This occurs because schools are staffed on overall numbers not on the numbers in each grade. Students in all classes have work programmed to their individual capabilities and needs. Being in a multi-age class is not detrimental to a student’s learning and is often very beneficial. If you have any concerns or queries, please do not hesitate to contact me to discuss them.

In the Spotlight:
Our School Captains

Nicole Young

Age: 11 Years
My friends are: Sharmaine, Karla and Sienna
My favourite teacher is: Mrs Allan
The thing I like most about going to Wadalba: the students and the teachers
I wanted to be a school leader because: there are lots of things I’d like to do to help Wadalba be a better school
My favourite subject at school: Art
Someone I look up to: My teachers
I look up to them because: They are older and AWESOME
What I’d like to be when I grow up: A real estate agent

Trent Ellis

Age: 11 Years
My friends are: Ben, Shakiya and Nicole
My favourite teacher is: Ms Sanday
The thing I like most about going to Wadalba: that I am respected and treated fairly
I wanted to be a school leader because: I would love to help Wadalba be a better school for everyone
My favourite subject at school: Art
Someone I look up to: My old peers and teachers
I look up to them because: They are the ones that help me prepare for my future
What I’d like to be when I grow up: A crane operator
Good mental health is vital for life. Children who are mentally healthy are better able to meet life’s challenges and have stronger relationships with the people around them. They are also better learners who are more likely to succeed at school. Good mental health in childhood provides a solid basis for managing changes as they grow.

On the other hand, children who are exposed to multiple stressors – such as a family breakdown, poverty, abuse, racism, bulling, or the mental illness of a parent – are at a higher risk of developing emotional or behavioural problems that can continue into adulthood.

It’s not always possible to tell which children will develop difficulties, so it’s important to consider the wellbeing of all children.

The good news is that KidsMatter Primary is all about growing healthy minds. KidsMatter is a mental health and wellbeing framework that helps schools focus on the development of all their students in partnership with families. It was developed by mental health and education experts and has already made a big difference to the lives of Australian children.

Does KidsMatter Primary work?

KidsMatter Primary works because it unites all the people that influence children’s mental health most – families, school staff and the wider community.

KidsMatter Primary can help improve:

- the mental health and wellbeing of students
- the quality of their school work
- the ability of parents, carers and teaching staff to help children deal with problems
- NAPLAN results – when schools implement KidsMatter Primary well.

KidsMatter Primary was developed in collaboration with beyondblue, the Australian Psychological Society, and the Principals Australia Institute, with funding from the Australian Government Department of Health and Ageing and beyondblue.

How does KidsMatter Primary work?

When schools take on KidsMatter Primary, they build on the work they are already doing to support students’ mental health and wellbeing. Firstly, they form an Action Team to represent the whole-school community and to coordinate and lead the implementation of the initiative. The Action Team reviews the schools’ current efforts across four focus areas (or ‘components’). They look for ways they can strengthen these efforts, and then take action using a step-by-step planning process.

Every school is different, with different needs for their students and families. The KidsMatter Primary framework covers four components that have shown to be highly successful in supporting the mental health and wellbeing of children.
Positive school community
Positive and respectful relationships at school help children and families feel that they belong and that their contributions are valued. A positive school community also gives children a sense of security that their needs will be met. Research shows that when children and families feel connected to school, children are less likely to develop mental health difficulties and are more likely to succeed academically.

How can families help?
Families are the biggest influence on children’s mental health and play a very important role in KidsMatter. Children benefit when the important people in their lives work together and have a shared understanding of their development and their needs.

KidsMatter Primary has developed a range of information sheets with parenting tips and strategies to help all Australian families support the wellbeing of their children. View them online at www.kidsmatter.edu.au

If your child’s school is participating in KidsMatter Primary, there are many things you can do to help make it a success:

• Read the KidsMatter Primary information sheets to further your understanding about children’s mental health.
• Develop relationships with staff, so you can share knowledge and information about how they can support your child.
• Get involved in the Action Team.
• Ask staff how KidsMatter Primary is being implemented.
• Participate in school activities to build a sense of community.
• Respond to any school requests for ideas or information.
• Talk to other parents and carers about ways the school can support your needs.
• Let the school know what skills or talents you are happy to share.

Social and emotional learning for students
Learning how to manage feelings and get on with others is an important part of children’s development. It helps them become better learners and feel good about themselves. Teaching children social and emotional skills as part of the school curriculum gives them tools for coping with emotions, solving problems and learning more effectively.

Working with parents and carers
In order to promote children’s mental health and wellbeing, it makes sense for families and schools to work closely together. Schools can support parents and carers by providing useful parenting information and resources, and by connecting them with further assistance if required.

Helping children with mental health difficulties
It can make a significant difference when children and families are able to access mental health intervention early. KidsMatter primary schools learn to respond more effectively to children’s mental health difficulties by recognising and responding to concerns that may need following-up. They can provide information to families and develop links with health and community agencies in their local area.

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This resource is part of a range of KidsMatter Primary information sheets for families and school staff. View them all online at www.kidsmatter.edu.au

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