Wow! What a busy term it has been at Salisbury Downs Primary School!

On a whole school basis, we have had another very successful Very Important People (VIP) Day – this time with a focus on Design and Technology across the school; all of our staff members – teachers, support staff, administrators and office personnel – were introduced to the cultural and language basics of Auslan (Australian Sign Language) which will become a formal curriculum area for us during the last half of this year; our Years 3, 5 and 7 students participated in the 2016 NAPLAN (National Assessment Program in Language and Numeracy) – this may well be our last ‘pencil and paper’ NAPLAN test as all SA schools are trialling a computer-based option during next term; and we have just concluded an exceptionally engaging Aboriginal Cultural Awareness Week (ACAW) Day with students undertaking a variety of activities to better understand the Aboriginal culture.

Our Governing Council has been active in fundraising for school projects. This term they held a couple of colourfully and entertaining School Discos (one for Early Years students and one for the older students) and a marathon effort for the Election Day BBQ. Many thanks go this small but dedicated band of community members who are reaping the benefits of SDPS Skoolbag APP.

Some of our students have had physical examinations to assist with their learning – both hearing and sight which may prove beneficial as time goes by, allowing them to concentrate more through better hearing as well as being able to actually see what is being presented.

Some of our older students have participated in SAPSASA events such as cross country, netball and soccer. The students from the Blue Unit participated in a series of lessons from the UniSA Health and Physical Education school – this has become an annual occurrence, providing the university students with valuable real life experience and our students with some new and challenging physical activities.

Our Blue Unit students were also treated to a series of dance workshops through the Parafield Gardens High School Dream-It! Dance Crew – this again is a most enjoyable experience that our students look forward to each year.

We have also had a number of excursions this term. The Yellow Unit took their students on a “discovery tour” of various playgrounds around Adelaide as a culmination to a unit of study in Investigations, Science and Design Technology related to playground construction. The Blue Unit students were excited to visit the Central Market and attend a theatre production by the Windmill Theatre troupe.

Not to be outdone, the Green Unit students had a visit to the road safety school and the cinema. All of this happens on top of the usual demands of lessons within the Australian Curriculum. So as I stated earlier – what a busy term this has been.

We hope that the students will have an enjoyable break away from their studies and come back to school in two weeks’ time refreshed and ready to commence Term 3.
Aboriginal Cultural Day

Dear Parents & Caregivers

On Tuesday 5th July, Salisbury Downs Primary School held our Aboriginal Cultural Day. The day started with an opening ceremony, which was great. Jack Buckskin came down the hall playing the didgeridoo and when he finished he welcomed us all in the Kaurna language. We then went outside to raise the Aboriginal flag. The students then went off to different classrooms to participate in many different activities. The junior primary listened to a dreaming story called “How the Kangaroo got it’s Tail” and then made kangaroo puppets. They also made shields, scratchie boomerangs, headbands and had their faces painted with ochre. The primary students made jewellery and headbands, didgeridoos and clapping sticks. They made some sand art pictures and drew their own stories on the back of a fake fur. Some students learnt about the culture from a computer program called ‘Dust Echoes’ and some went outside to learn about spear throwing with Jack Buckskin, which was awesome as he had put out cardboard animals on the oval for them to throw at. Both Junior Primary and Primary students made damper and enjoyed seeing it cooked in our fire pit. At the end of the day we came together in the hall to share what we had made and learnt.

A big thanks to Craig Lack and Wendy Benton for organising our resources for the day, and a huge thankyou to Jack Buckskin for opening our ceremony, spending the day with our kids teaching spear throwing and for joining our Ab Ed committee to teach us more about the beautiful Aboriginal Culture.

It was a deadly day.

Thankeyou
Cheryl Taylor
Wellbeing Coordinator
NAPLAN Online – Getting ready for 2017

The Australian Government is committed to delivering NAPLAN online from 2017, with all schools across the nation transitioning over a 2 to 3 year period. This change will provide each child with a more personalised learning experience and a better assessment. It also means that the results will be returned to you and your child’s teachers within a few weeks, rather than several months.

Our school will be participating in a trial of the new online system in August 2016. This trial is not a ‘test’ of content; it is a test of how the new online system will work in a real-life classroom environment. You may hear this trial referred to as the NAPLAN Online Readiness Trial. As part of the trial, students in Years 3, 5, 7 and 9 will undertake 2 online readiness tests. Each test will take approximately 45 minutes to complete.

It is important that we participate in this trial before the system is officially in use in 2017 to enable familiarisation with the system in a classroom setting. Participation will allow us to confirm that every school is ready and that our teachers are confident that their students will be able to participate fully.

This trial will help our site to be well prepared to complete NAPLAN online in 2017 and provide feedback into final changes at a statewide level.

NAPLAN Online – answering your questions

What is NAPLAN online?
NAPLAN online is an initiative of the Australian Government and involves the transition of NAPLAN from pen and paper to a computer-based assessment.

Why is NAPLAN going online?
Moving NAPLAN online allows for better and more varied assessment tasks and a personalised test experience. It also means your child’s results will be more precise and available to you within a couple of weeks, rather than several months.

When is it happening and who is doing it?
The Education Council, comprising state, territory and commonwealth education ministers, has agreed that NAPLAN online will be implemented from 2017 over a 2 to 3 year period.

DECD is encouraging as many schools as possible to move to NAPLAN Online from 2017.

Who is managing the move online?
Education Services Australia (ESA) have been commissioned to develop and trial the platform which will deliver NAPLAN online.

The Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority (ACARA) will continue to be responsible for all aspects of development of the NAPLAN tests.

In South Australia, DECD is responsible for preparing schools to move online.

What is the NAPLAN Online Readiness Trial?
The NAPLAN Online Readiness Trial is a practice run of the NAPLAN online platform. Schools will complete as many test sessions as they need to develop their understanding of the system and their readiness for the 2017 implementation. It is also an opportunity for schools to provide detailed feedback on their experiences and readiness.

Students in years 3, 5, 7 and 9 are asked to trial the online system and new question style. As part of this trial all students will log in with an anonymous student code so they cannot be identified.

The trial will involve students completing 2 assessments:
- a test for each year level containing sample NAPLAN online questions based on reading, numeracy and convention of languages (spelling, grammar and punctuation)
- a separate writing test for each year level.

Across Australia, the test is called the Platform Test Readiness Trial (PTRT).

Why is the NAPLAN Online Readiness Trial important?
The trial will provide information about the school’s internet capabilities and confirm that there are sufficient devices to run the test successfully. It will also allow staff to ‘test drive’ the new processes and trial classroom logistics.

What about schools that do not have the necessary bandwidth to undertake online assessment?
The Australian Government is developing a ‘low bandwidth’ solution for schools that are experiencing issues with internet connectivity. This will ensure that all students are also able to experience the online test.

Can students use their own devices?
Yes, many schools have a Bring Your Own Device (BYOD) policy allowing students to use their own computer at school and in most cases these devices will be able to be used. Students will also be able to use their own headphones for the spelling test.
ACAW DAY CELEBRATIONS