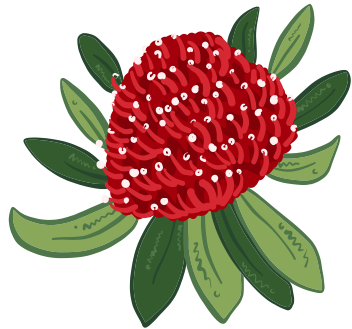


# THE WARATAH

THE NEWSLETTER OF WARATAH SPECIAL DEVELOPMENTAL SCHOOL  
- WINTER 2026



## PRINCIPAL'S REPORT

I love these two photos, mostly because it shows our students doing activities that I wouldn't want to do myself. I NEVER want to hang upside down on the gymnastic rings, and I'm pretty sure I don't want to climb a rock wall. This newsletter celebrates the various achievements that our students have made during Semester One. The achievements take many forms, maybe it's trying something new for the first time. Perhaps it involves doing something with a little more independence.

We have had several whole school celebrations - in March we came together to celebrate Cultural Diversity Week with a Chinese Lion dance, and in May we celebrated IDAHOBIT day, choosing the theme "It's OK to be different." The Early Years students had a lot of fun with the local Fire Brigade when they met students, talked about fire safety, and the highlight of course was looking at the truck and using the fire hose.

*Bronwyn*





# EARLY YEARS 1

In EY1, we had lots of fun learning together while building friendships and getting to know each other's interests. Students enjoyed trying new activities, exploring different play experiences, and developing confidence in the classroom. We shared ideas, practiced working together, and celebrated everyone's unique strengths and creativity. It has been wonderful to see students engaged, curious, and excited about learning each day.

Myf, Robert, Albert and Amir, Ash, Burka, Iris, Kenzo, and Sumaya





# EARLY YEARS 2

Let's all welcome our amazing EY2 class.

We all love sensory play, music and exploring the great outdoors with our new friends. This term we have explored learning through lots of play. Some of our favourites are trains, colours, numbers, animals, painting and messy play! We spend our mornings dancing along to one of our students when they sing our days of the week song! And in English, we have been discovering the letters M, S and F through library books, modelling with playdough and painting. We are so proud of every single one of our students here in EY2 and we are all looking forward to Term 3, see you then!

Tara, Sarah and Brendan, with Addy, Ayman, Khalid, Nada and Wynalah



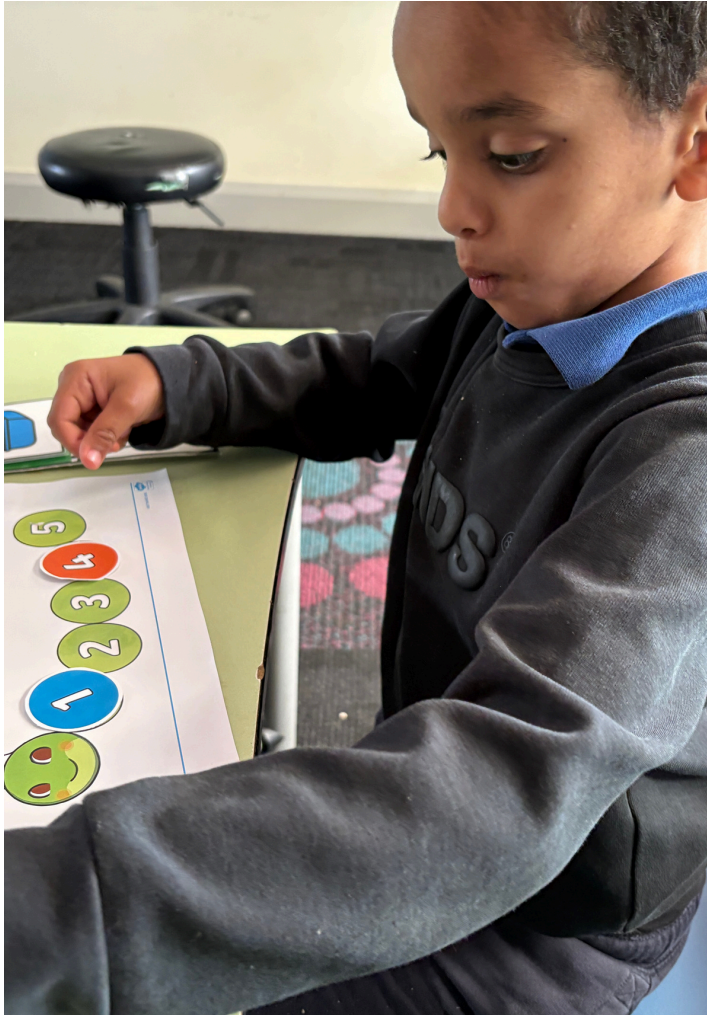


## EARLY YEARS 3

This semester, students have become more familiar with following their morning schedules, unpacking bags and lunchboxes with support, and settling into table activities focused on fine motor, sequencing, matching and sorting skills. Students are growing in confidence with transitions around the school and to and from the playground. Our learning theme has focused on dressing for the weather and different locations, with jackets, hoodies and beanies now making a regular appearance as the season changes. Students have enjoyed shared reading experiences including *We're Going on a Bear Hunt*, *Brown Bear, What Colour Are Your Knickers?*, *I Went Walking* and most recently commenced interactive read alouds of *Pete the Cat and His Four Groovy Buttons* and *Pete the Cat: I Love My White Shoes* on the SMART board. Students especially enjoyed counting, sorting buttons by colour and size and using their AAC communication devices to identify colours.

Stay snug and have a relaxing break.

Carmel, Cynthia, Grace with Chris, Evie, Jack, Khalif, Maazim, Mohammed and Neve





# EARLY YEARS 4

What a fantastic first semester we have had in EY4! It has been a joyful and busy time filled with learning, creativity, and new experiences. Throughout Term 1, students focused on building friendships and developing social skills through play-based learning opportunities and supported interactions with peers. In Term 2, students explored weather and seasons through engaging sensory and hands-on activities. A very exciting change this semester was moving into a bigger classroom in Term 2. Students adapted wonderfully to the new environment, and the transition showed how much their flexibility, confidence, and independence are continuing to grow.

In Mathematics, students practiced counting, recognising patterns, and comparing collections using meaningful real-life experiences. During Literacy sessions, students enjoyed shared reading activities and participated in our Little Learners Love Literacy phonics program to strengthen their early reading and communication skills. Students especially enjoyed participating in the farm program, painting activities, making playdough, and riding scooters with their teacher, which supported their confidence, coordination, and social engagement. We also celebrated birthdays, participated in a fire brigade incursion, and attended weekly occupational therapy sessions that supported students in developing motor skills, independence, and self-care routines such as toileting and washing hands and faces.

We are incredibly proud of all the growth, learning, and achievements our students have shown this semester and look forward to another exciting semester ahead in EY4!

Brigita, Theresa and Vicky, with Ibrahim, JayJay, Nas, Sitan and Tasniim





# EARLY YEARS 5

What a wonderful first semester we have had in EY5! It has been a busy and exciting time filled with learning, fun, and new experiences. In Term 1, students explored friendship and developed pro-social skills through play-based learning and supported interactions with peers, while Term 2 we focused on weather and seasons through engaging hands-on activities. In Mathematics, students explored patterns, counting, capacity, and comparing collections using real-world examples, while in Literacy, students enjoyed shared reading experiences and participated in our Little Learners Love Literacy phonics program to develop foundational skills. Students also enjoyed many special experiences including birthday celebrations, a fire brigade incursion, and physiotherapy and occupational therapy sessions that helped students build confidence, develop motor skills, and strengthen their ability to engage in learning experiences. We are so proud of the growth and progress shown by all students this semester and look forward to continuing our learning in Semester 2!

Ellen, Grace, Laura and Trang, with Charlotte, Daniella, Isha, Munasar, Rishaan, Sulaman and Zain





## MIDDLE YEARS 6

Semester One in Middle Years 6 has been full of fun, learning and exciting new experiences for Sara, Christopher, Koshin and Faida. Throughout the semester, Amber, Brendan and Ashleigh supported students to build their independence, confidence and communication skills across a range of engaging activities. In Gardening with Margaret, students explored the changes in seasons and enjoyed hands-on learning in the garden. During Social Studies with Gurinder, the class learnt about the Zones of Regulation and practised important clean-up routines. Swimming with Marisa focused on safe entries and exits from the pool, as well as learning how to stay safe on excursions. In PE with Clare, students developed their movement skills through gymnastics, balance and active games. In English, students enjoyed shared reading experiences with books including *Dear Zoo*, *Healthy Eating* and *Just One More*. Maths learning focused on patterns, sequencing, understanding time concepts and using "first and then" and "today and tomorrow" language. In Science with Brendan, students participated in exciting experiments and hands-on investigations. In Health, students continued building independence in self-care routines, including cleaning up after eating and brushing their teeth. It has been a wonderful semester filled with growth, laughter and learning for everyone in Middle Years 6.





# MIDDLE YEARS 7

MY7 has had an exciting and fun start to the year!

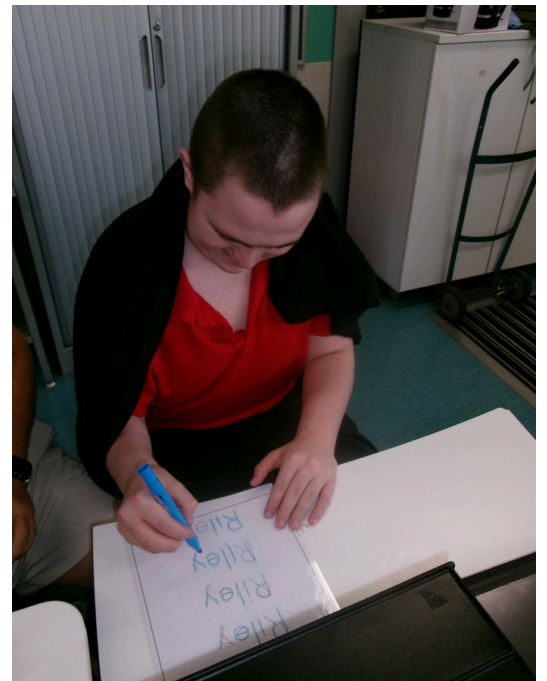
In Literacy, we have worked on our book-handling skills by reading many stories, such as The Very Hungry Caterpillar, The Rainbow Fish, and The Crayons Go Back to School. We have loved creating our own fish and using crayons to illustrate our ideas.

In Maths, we have continued to work on our counting skills and our patterns through interactive group games and craft. We have explored sequencing events throughout our school day and week, and how we can follow our classroom routines to the best of our ability!

MY7 students have enjoyed our weekly visits to the school library, the PMP room, and our walks around the bike track!

It has been a great first semester in MY7, and we cannot wait for the next one!

Sarsha and Joe, with Abdimalik, Amira, Binti, Ilyas, Kai, Nancy and Riley.





# MIDDLE YEARS 9

Semester 1 has been full of fun, learning, and exciting experiences in our classroom!

In Literacy, we enjoyed reading many wonderful stories. Our favourite books included *Dear Zoo*, where we loved creating animal crafts and listening to different animal sounds, and *There Was an Old Lady*, which brought plenty of laughter and enthusiasm during story time.

Students have been developing important literacy skills by learning about book handling, including how to hold a book correctly, turn pages carefully, and identify the front and back cover. We also explored sequencing events from stories and classroom routines, helping students understand what happens first, next, and last. Through songs, visuals, and daily activities, students practised recognising about the days of the week and familiar classroom routines.

We also had lots of fun participating in movement-based sessions in the PMP room and enjoyed spending special time with Bailey during our dog therapy visits.

In Maths, we practised our counting skills and explored creating patterns through hands-on activities and games. It has been wonderful to see everyone learning, participating, and growing throughout Semester 1.

We look forward to an exciting and fun-filled Semester 2!

Kris, Karissa, Janelle, and Rose with Alice, Ahmed, Evie, Harerta, Hasinat, Lewis, and Uy









# MIDDLE YEARS 10

It has been a busy Semester!

We are all enjoying the Middle Years Playground and having easy access to the Sensory Room, PMP room and Library. Swimming has been a highlight with Sterling, Asanti and Lara enjoying trying new things and making amazing progress. Following a recipe to cook scrolls once a week has also been a really engaging session. As it becomes familiar, students are enjoying the sensory experiences as well as learning to follow instructions and waiting for their turn. The students are making the most of the amazing sensory experiences Jennie sets up in the classroom as they take breaks from regular Maths and English sessions. It has been wonderful to get to know all of the students in MY10 and watch them try new things and build trusting relationships. See you all next term! Meg, Albert, Jenni and Grace, with Asanti, Fromsa, Lara, Indie and Sterling.





# GARDENING

This semester students across the Gardening program have enjoyed a range of engaging hands-on experiences. Early years students explored “what are our garden tools?” and learned about summer watering and caring for plants during the warmer weather.

Middle years students discovered how gardening can support relaxation and sensory wellbeing as they explored sourcing native herb plants, mixing ingredients and enjoying the different scents they created.

Senior students undertook school based work experience through summer herb harvesting, preparing produce for local neighbourhood house outlets.

It has been wonderful to see students building practical skills, confidence and connections through outdoor learning experiences.

Regards Margaret





# SATELLITE

What a fantastic semester it has been at Satellite! The term has been full of smiles, laughter, and many enjoyable experiences.

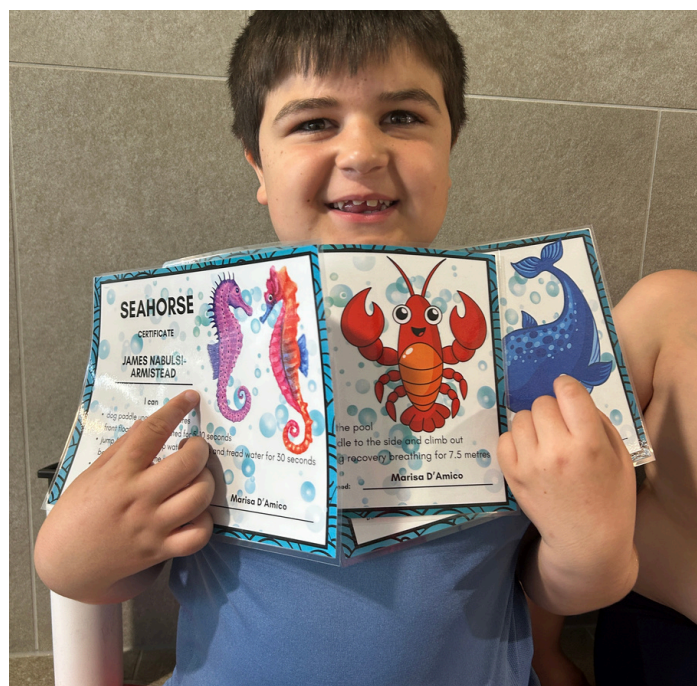
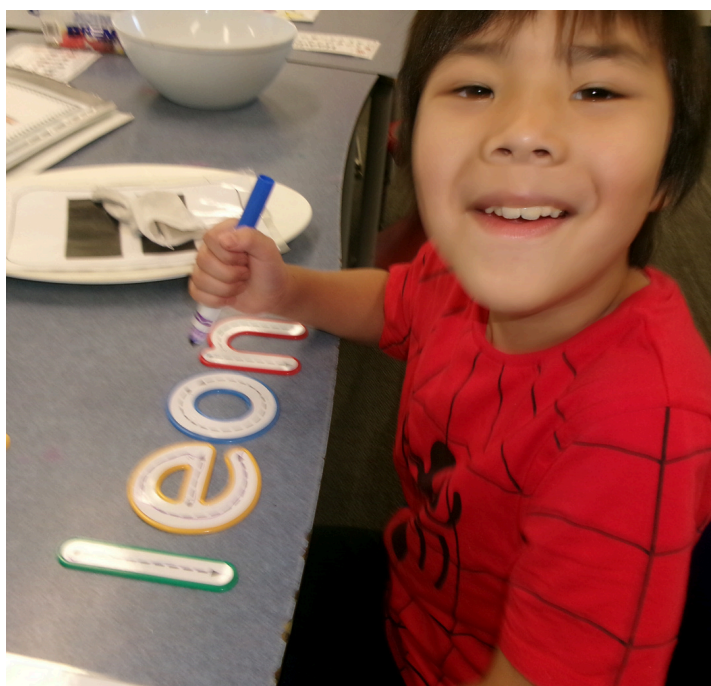
Throughout the semester, we have spent valuable one-on-one time supporting students to follow routines, use their schedules, and develop important goals such as making requests and seeking help when needed. Staff have worked hard to build positive relationships with students while creating a calm and supportive learning environment. We know that managing emotions can sometimes be difficult, so we have continued focusing on recognising our feelings and selecting strategies from our Zones of Regulation toolbox to support regulation. Regular movement breaks and working towards PBS rewards have also helped students remain engaged and ready to learn.

Students have shown excellent growth in literacy as they explored stages 1 and 2 of Little Learners, learning letter names and sounds while also practicing drawing and copying letters. We have shared many engaging stories together that encouraged imagination and participation. In mathematics, students have strengthened their counting skills through songs, videos, books, and hands-on learning activities.

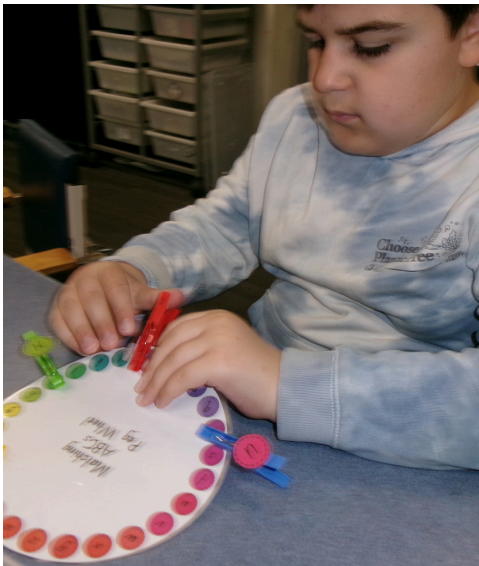
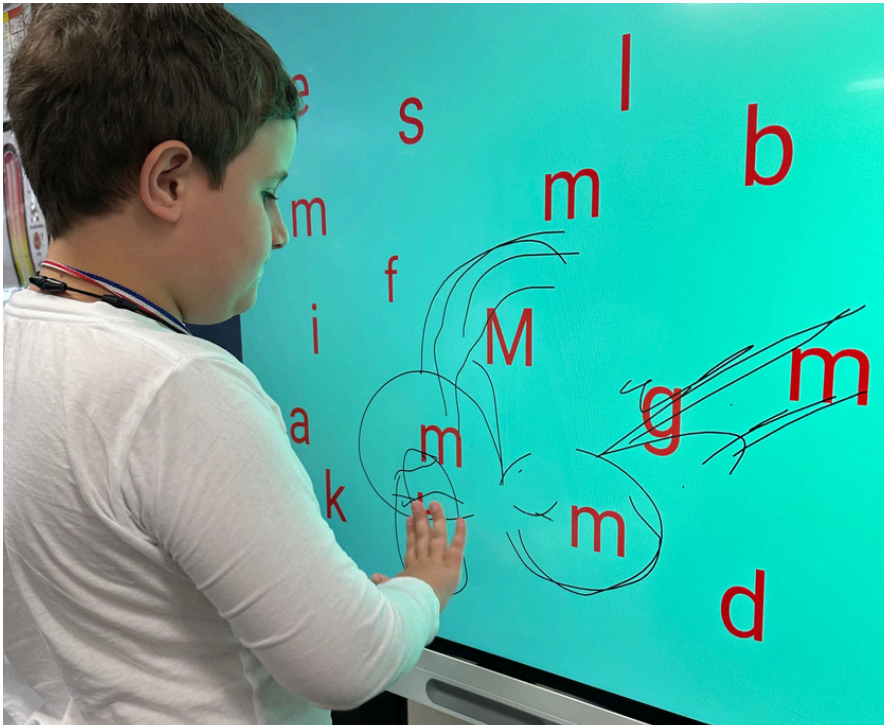
We thoroughly enjoyed swimming lessons in Term 1, where all students made wonderful progress in developing their swimming abilities. In Term 2, students have been loving our weekly visits to the Waratah farm and all the learning opportunities these experiences provide.

It has been wonderful to see the growth and achievements of all students at Satellite this semester, and we are looking forward to continuing our learning journey together in Semester 2!

Ashley, Marisa, Huong, Jeni, Kim along with Felix, Haadiya, James, Leon, Sunny, Tony and Yusuf









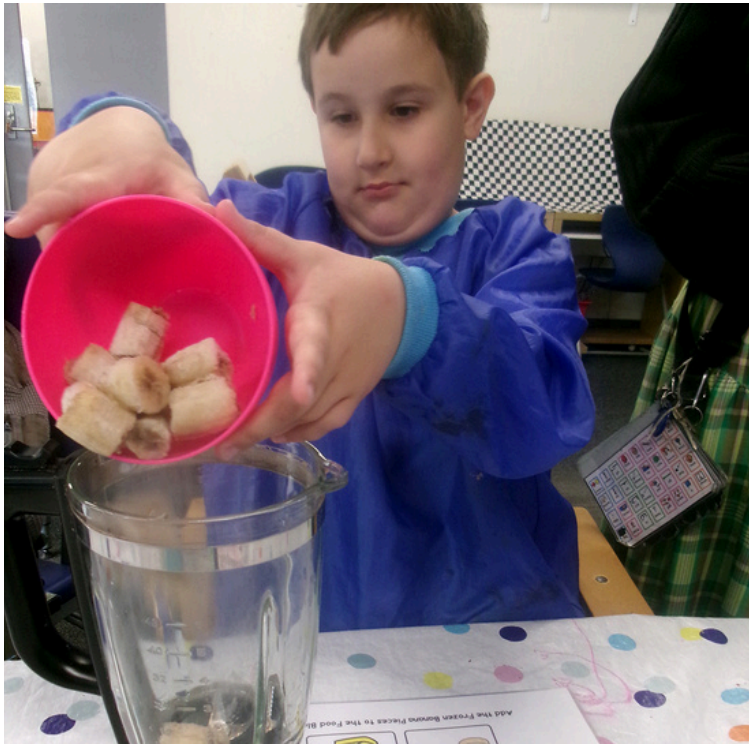
# MECRAFTS

In the Homecrafts Cooking Program we have been learning to make delicious dishes such as: veggie noodles; handmade pizzas; fruit flavoured muffins; frozen banana, mixed berry & passionfruit sorbet; as well as making our own toast with a choice of differing spreads. During the preparation and creation of these differing dishes, students have learnt about kitchen safety and hygiene, and refined their fine motor skills by developing basic food preparation skills such as: cutting, slicing and spreading ingredients using safety knives; and measuring out, adding and mixing ingredients together. Learning has been supported during these activities by using step-by step visual recipes &/or the Cooking Communication Book. As a result, we have had the opportunity to further develop functional literacy and communication skills, as well as reinforce numeracy skills in the counting out and measurement of ingredients. Well done everyone!!!

Kurtis









# SENIOR TRANSITION 1

One of the highlights this semester has been working in the "STOP Shop" Students have taken turns working in different shop roles while learning valuable money handling, communication and employment skills. From serving customers to counting money and organising stock, students have shown fantastic teamwork and responsibility. Students have also been busy running our Senior Transition café, "The Hub". The café has become a wonderful opportunity for students to practice real world hospitality skills. Students have been taking orders, preparing meals, serving staff and classes, and developing important customer service and food handling skills. We are so proud of the confidence and independence students are showing each week.

Another important role this semester has been our Newsletter Delivery Program. Students have been sorting and delivering newsletters throughout the school, helping to build organisation skills, responsibility and workplace routines while contributing to the wider school community.

We have also loved our visits from Bailey the Therapy Dog! Students always look forward to spending time with Bailey, with visits supporting student wellbeing, communication and social connection in a calm and positive environment.

As part of our Getting Ready for Work Program, students have been working with Shanae, our Occupational Therapist, to develop important workplace skills related to personal presentation and hygiene. Students have been learning about dressing appropriately for work, self-care routines and building confidence for future employment opportunities.

This semester also included some wonderful special events. Students proudly celebrated IDAHOBIT Day by creating colourful rainbow banners to celebrate diversity, inclusion and acceptance. We are especially proud of the students in our class who helped organise the day through their involvement in the Student Representative Council (SRC).

It has been fantastic to see students continue to grow in confidence, independence and teamwork throughout the semester. We are incredibly proud of all their hard work and achievements!

Have a great break and we look forward to seeing you all in term 3.

Rebecca, Brendan, and Takako, with Adam, Ben, Khalid Natasha, Mahad, Olivia and Samuella.







senior transition 1





# SENIOR TRANSITION 2

What a fun and busy semester it has been in our class!

We have enjoyed celebrating two 18<sup>th</sup> birthdays and special occasions together, while continuing to build friendships, confidence and independence. We also welcomed some changes to our Education Support team and are excited to now have Amanda and William working with us.

Friday Senior Electives have been a highlight, with students enjoying drawing, colouring, painting, making paper planes, and creating stories

This semester, students participated in two Occupational Therapy programs with Shanae. The first focused on dressing skills and daily living routines, including putting jackets and jumpers on independently, managing clothing, and choosing appropriate clothing for different weather conditions. Students enjoyed showcasing their learning in a fun fashion show.

The second program focused on personal hygiene and self-care, with students practising skills such as washing their hands and faces and developing an understanding of daily hygiene routines. These sessions have helped build students' confidence and independence in everyday life skills.

Our in class baking program has been another favourite activity. Students made cupcakes in Term 1 and cookies in Term 2, taking staff orders, preparing ingredients and proudly delivering their finished products around the school.

Mathilde, Amanda and William, with Angelina, Hugh, Mayer, Phoebe and Raff





# SENIOR TRANSITION 3

As we reach the end of another busy and rewarding semester, it is a wonderful opportunity to reflect on the growth, achievements, and experiences shared across our class community.

Throughout the semester, students have participated in a range of programs designed to build independence and confidence in everyday life. These have included developing work skills, strengthening self-care routines, learning to share spaces respectfully with others, and taking greater responsibility for managing personal belongings. We have been incredibly proud of the effort, persistence, and growth demonstrated by all students as they continue to develop these important life skills.

We would like to acknowledge some individual highlights from the semester:

- Congratulations to Tyler for his ongoing efforts in reconnecting with his new school community. It has been wonderful to see his confidence through music and connection
- Adil has approached learning with enthusiasm and curiosity, and it has been fantastic to see him exploring his environment safely while building his independence.
- Greg has generously shared his ideas, interests, and skills with both peers and staff, enriching our classroom and helping others learn alongside him.
- Romeo has shown great adaptability while navigating new environments and experiences, demonstrating resilience and flexibility throughout the semester.

Thank you to our students, families, and support networks for your ongoing partnership throughout the semester.

We wish everyone a safe, restful, and enjoyable break and look forward to another exciting semester ahead.

Krysten, Albert, Jeni, and Shannon with Adil, Greg, Romeo and Tyler









# PERSONAL & SOCIAL STUDIES

Over this semester, students participated in a variety of activities such as music and movement, art/craft and reading stories to develop their social, mental, emotional, physical, multicultural and independent living capabilities. The two main topics covered over the semester include:

- Exploring different feelings and emotions and how to manage them.

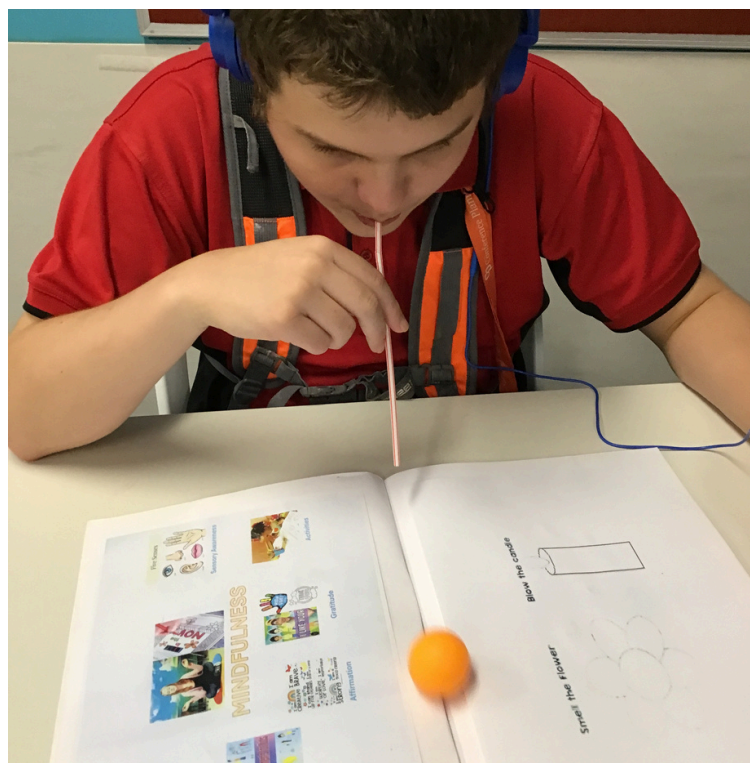
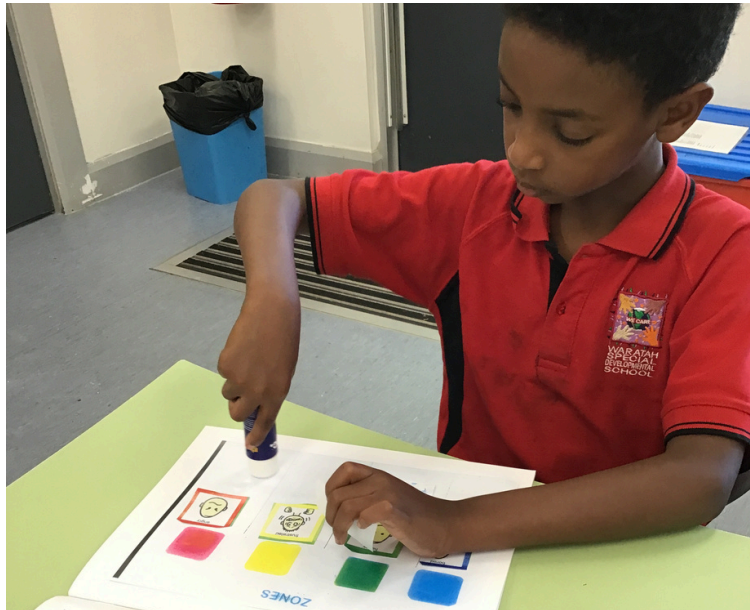
This included identifying and labelling picture symbols related to different emotions, different contexts that we experience different emotions and managing emotions through different strategies such as mindfulness.

- Developing awareness about different domestic chores and practising those chores.

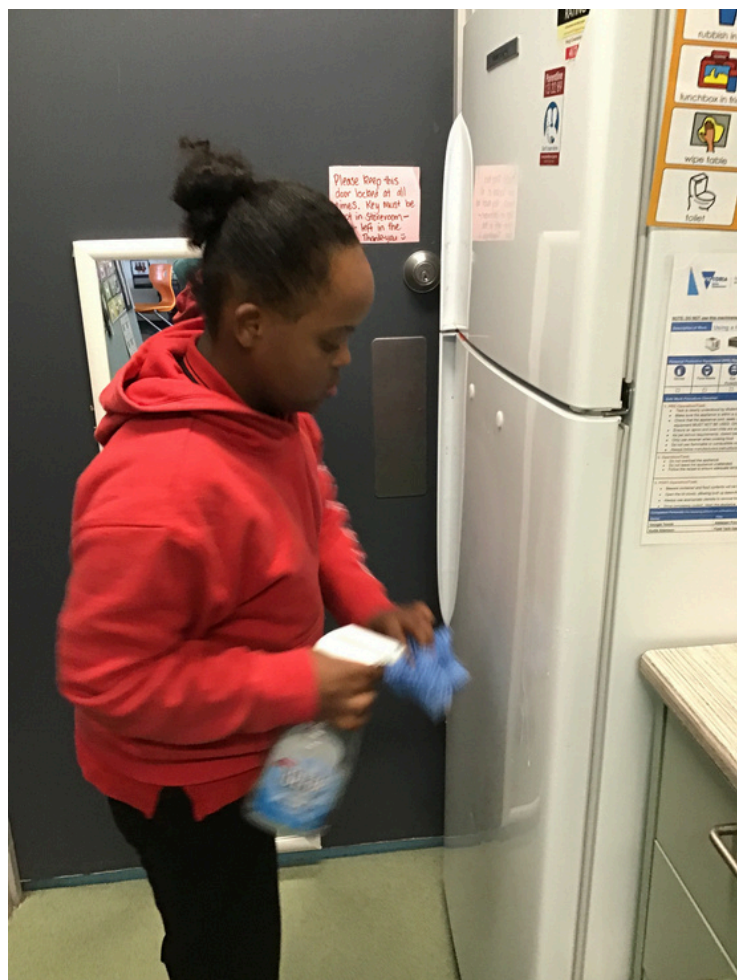
Students in different sections of the schools learnt and practised different domestic chores during their weekly sessions. These included, picking up rubbish, packing away items such as toys and books, cleaning outer surface of some household appliances, sorting and putting away groceries in appropriate places, folding clothes, setting table, sorting cutlery, sorting laundry, drying dishes and wiping tables.

Structured teaching and explicit teaching strategies were used to develop their skills in these areas. Students enjoyed the activities and actively participated in these activities.

Gurinder.









# PHYSICAL EDUCATION

This semester the students in the early years enjoyed our gymnastics program with many of them taking to tumbling, balancing, and climbing while others preferred to observe how the equipment is used. However, rhythmic gymnastics was enjoyed by all, it turns out we have some very expressive dancers! Our brand-new students had a more exploratory experience with access to a range of equipment. It was so nice to see what they gravitated towards and what skills they bring to school life. They are quickly learning how to transition safely, stay responsibly with the group, and act respectfully by sharing and taking turns.



In the **m**iddle years, the students also very much enjoyed rhythmic gymnastics. While they were very familiar with the tried-and-true ribbons and hoops, they also enjoyed using balls and ropes in their dances, and the clubs were a runaway sensation. For sport we have been playing volleyball. Student were able to access their skills and knowledge of net sports (from 2025), without worrying about the racquets. We used with a range of balls in different shapes, sizes, and weights. The giant parachute ball was (as always) a big hit.

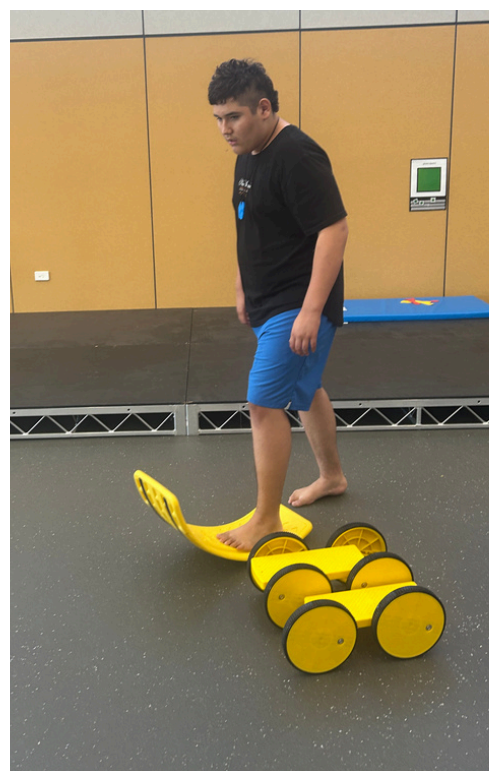






We had many collaborations across the senior school this semester. This allowed for maximum socialising, team sports, big discos, and a more communal experience. The big event in term one was the senior camp where we got to enjoy the new ropes course, telling ghost stories around the fire, and lots of delicious food-glorious-food at the ever-impressive Blackwood Kitchen. The senior students also enjoyed volleyball and gymnastics, as well as (drumroll...) a return to bike education on our super upgraded bike track! Along with new traffic lights, boom gates, and road markings, the students look smashing in their new helmets which are labelled with their name and picture and fitted for grab-and-go efficiency. We are excited to continue to learn to cycle and share the road in semester 2.

Clare













# CAMPS

Senior camp





# Weekly visits from Bailey the therapy dog







**Waratah Special Developmental School**  
**228 Banksia St Bellfield**  
**Phone 9474 8700**  
**Semester 1, June 2026**