Welcome to Nicholson Street Public School. This handbook will assist you in knowing about your child’s school and to help in building the strong home and school links that are so important to your child’s success at school.
Nicholson Street Public School

School Information Booklet

Nicholson Street Public School’s motto …

‘Learning, Laughter, Life’

… Underpins everything we do.

ABSENCE FROM SCHOOL ATTENDANCE
A note is required whenever a child returns after being absent. It should state the date and the reason for the absence. Please telephone the School in the case of any contagious disease or protracted illness. It is the Principal’s legal responsibility to approve any absence in conjunction with the Home School Liaison Officer. For periods of extended and planned leave approval must be sought from the Principal.

ACCIDENTS & INJURY
In the case of an accident, your child will be taken to one of the teachers for first aid. You or your emergency contact person will be notified if medical attention, beyond what is given as a regular part of school first aid, is necessary. Please make sure that the School has a current phone number for emergency calls, updating this information as often as necessary.

AFTER (& BEFORE) SCHOOL CARE
Before and after school care are provided on site by the Balmain East School Care (BESC) centre. The Centre is a community run, not-for-profit venture which is owned by its users and managed by a committee of parent volunteers. BESC provides care for children daily from 7am to 8:45am and 3:15pm to 6pm.

If you wish to have your child attend the Centre, you must become a member of the Centre and book a place for your child in advance. Bookings are available on a Regular or a Casual basis. The service is very popular and early booking is recommended.

Bookings must be made directly with the Centre; they cannot be made through the School office. Please contact the Centre Coordinator on 02 9810 3161 or refer to the BESC website www.bescaftercare.com.au for more information about the centre and how to book your child in for After Care.

ATTENDANCE
All children across NSW must attend School every day during term time. Hours of attendance are: 9:15am – 3:15pm.

Children may not be withdrawn from the School by anyone other than the parents and caregivers named on the Student Enrolment Form, unless written authority is presented to the office.

BAND, MUSIC & PERFORMING ARTS PROGRAM
The School runs a number of music ensembles including a training and concert band. Rehearsals are on Thursday mornings for both Concert Band and Training Band. Other ensembles run during the week and individual
There are many ways to stay connected with the happenings at Nicholson Street.

Website
http://www.nicholson-p.schools.nsw.edu.au

Twitter
Follow us on Twitter
https://twitter.com/NicholsonStPS

Facebook
Like us on Facebook
https://www.facebook.com/NicholsonStPublicSchool

tutorials take mostly take place after school hours. Students are given many opportunities to participate in regional and state creative arts initiatives including Create East, Drama and Dance camps and concerts at the Opera House.

**BELL TIMES**
The bell times at Nicholson Street Public are:
- 9:15am – Morning Bell
- 11:15am – Lunch Bell
- 12:00pm – End of Lunch Bell
- 1:35pm – Afternoon Tea
- 2:00pm – End of Afternoon Tea
- 3:15pm – End of School Day

**BIRTHDAYS**
If you wish to send cakes to celebrate your child’s birthday, please send cupcakes or individually portioned items as these are easier and more hygienic for handling. Please do not send candles or knives. Be mindful that some students have serious allergies and nut-safe and healthy food alternatives are always welcome.

**BOOK WEEK – Australia Council’s Children’s Book Week**
Book Week is a celebration of Australian children’s authors and is celebrated in schools across Australia. School activities usually take the form of a book character parade and may include visits to school by illustrators and authors.

**BOOK CLUB**
The Scholastic Book Club operates throughout the school. Order forms are sent home during the term. If you wish to place an order, forms and payment should be returned to the class teacher in an envelope marked “Book Club” or placed in the Book Club Box in the office. Parent volunteers run the program.

**BUDDIES**
To help our Kindergarten students have a positive start to school we use a buddy system, where each kindergarten student is allocated their own senior student buddy. The senior students form a relationship which lasts for the full Kindergarten year and often beyond. Buddies assist Kindergarten students in the playground and actively work with them on a weekly basis during classes. This sharing and helping is a feature of the ethos this School promotes. As well as this, children from the middle grades work with younger children in a variety of activities.

**BUS PASSES**
Application forms are available from the office. Children in Kindergarten, Year 1 and Year 2 are eligible for bus passes from the NSW Transit Authority. Children in Years 3-6 are eligible only if they live 1.6km or more from the School.
BYOD
Students at Nicholson Street Public School are able to bring their own handheld devices, tablets or smartphones into the classroom to be used for learning as directed by their teacher. Details of the School’s BYOD policy are available on the website.

CAMPS
Camps are organised for all students in Years 3-6. All children attend a camp to build and foster positive relationships and independence. These camps usually occur on a two year cycle.

CANTEEN (UNDER REVIEW)

CHANGE OF ADDRESS
It is most important that you notify the school office as soon as you move house, or if your home or work telephone contact numbers change. Up to date telephone numbers of someone who can be contacted in an emergency are essential.

CHARITIES
Students are encouraged to participate in a number of, student and parent led, fundraising events throughout the year. This forms a part of students’ service learning helping to build social conscience and understanding of responsibility.

Twice yearly there is a used clothing collection for Stewart House. Stewart House is a respite facility situated on the North Shore that caters for students in public schools across NSW. It relies almost entirely on the support of families of our public schools.

Student led fundraisers, including dress-up days and captains’ fundraisers etc. raise funds for various charities.

CLASSES
Classes are formed each year based on student enrolments. Stage based and multiage classes are a facet of our school, and involve students working together across and within classes and age groups to provide the best social and learning outcomes for each cohort of students. Parents will be advised of class groups at the beginning of each school year.

CLASSROOM HELPERS
Parent helpers are actively encouraged. Help can take the form of listening to children read, helping with writing, using technology, cooking, gardening or any other skill that you might be able to offer. Please contact your child’s teacher to see how you might be able to lend a hand.

COLLECTING CHILDREN AFTER SCHOOL
School finishes for all children at 3.15pm. Children apart from those who attend aftercare should be collected at that time. If in an emergency you are unavoidably delayed please telephone the
School and your child will be cared for in the main office or given a message as to what they should do. If you are not contactable by 4:00pm, your child may be taken to Balmain Police Station.

COMMUNICATING WITH CLASS TEACHERS
Communicating with your child’s teacher directly is the best way to find out the necessary information about most things that take place in our very busy school.

Making an appointment through the office is the best way to discuss issues that require more time and attention, as before and after school can be hectic and are important preparation and meeting times for class teachers as they prepare for the day’s many and varied activities.

An email (Nicholson-p.school@det.nsw.edu.au) or phone call to the school office is a great way to get a message to your child’s teacher or to arrange for an appointment.

COUNSELLOR
The School counsellor visits the school each week, to provide guidance and counselling to children and parents. Arrangements to consult the counsellor can be made through your child’s classroom teacher, the Assistant Principal or Principal. The counselor will not work with children without signed permission from parents and carers.

CURRICULUM
The six learning areas as set down by the Board of Studies are:

- English
- Mathematics
- Science and Technology
- Human Society and Its Environment (H.S.I.E.)
- Creative and Practical Arts
- Personal Development, Physical Education & Health

There are also policies in across curriculum areas such as: Aboriginal Education, Drug Education, Multicultural Education, Computer Education and Child Protection.

DISCIPLINE
Students at Nicholson Street Public School are encouraged to be friendly and to respect others. We are very proud of our student’s behaviour and the positive reputation our students have earned by demonstrating respectful and positive behaviour in the community.

If a child’s behaviour is unsatisfactory over a period of time, your child’s teacher or the principal will request an appointment with you to discuss the best way of supporting students in managing their behaviour.

The school uses a positive and proactive approach to working with students and their families to promote positive behaviour and effective learning. A copy of the school’s Student Welfare Policy: Fair Discipline and Effective Learning: is available on the school’s website.

DOGS
In accordance with the Leichhardt Council’s Dog Owners Guide, dogs are not allowed on or off the leash in school grounds. For more information please contact Leichhardt Council.

EDUCATION WEEK
This is designated by the N.S.W. Department of Education each year to encourage awareness of current issues in education and is a week to showcase the achievement of Public Education.

In Term 3 during Education Week activities, assemblies and performances are organised and parents can take the opportunity to visit their child’s class, be involved in lessons and view displays and performances.

EMAIL
Email is an invaluable communication tool and has become the primary mode of communicating school events and news. When communicating with the school via email please be mindful of the purpose of your message and whether the conversation can be better had at a face to face meeting.

END OF YEAR CONCERT & COMMUNITY BBQ
The culmination of our school year is the final concert in Term 4. It is a showcase of student performance and a celebration of the school’s achievements throughout the year.
ENROLMENTS
When enrolling your child, please ensure that you complete the forms so that the School has all the necessary information. You will be required to provide documents to verify your child’s name, birth date and nationality. Immunisation records and original proof of age documents must be sighted at the time of enrolment. Children in the designated ‘local area’ have an immediate right to attend their local school. Enrolment applications for children who are out of our catchment area are currently taken.

Children are eligible to enrol in Kindergarten at the beginning of the year in which they turn 5 if their birthday falls before July 31st.

EXCURSIONS
Class excursions take place to provide extra learning opportunities and to link classwork to the real world. A permission note containing all the necessary information is sent home and must be signed by the parent or caregiver and returned to the class teacher before the child can participate in the excursion. On excursion, children are asked to wear full school uniform including their school hat, unless it is stated otherwise.

FUNDRAISING
During the year the P & C organises fundraising activities to benefit the school community. The money raised provides vital equipment for class programs as well as initiatives to improve the school infrastructure.

HALLOWEEN FESTIVAL
The Nicholson Street P&C Halloween Festival takes place each year on the weekend of Halloween. The event is one of the most popular on the Balmain Peninsula and brings together members of the wider community. All money raised from the festival goes directly back into the school.

HATS
Hats are vital to protect children from the sun while they are engaged in outdoor activities. School hats form an integral part of the school uniform. The ‘bucket hat’ is the sun safe option available to families.

HIGH SCHOOL
All information regarding High Schools and Selective High Schools is received by the School and passed on to Year 5 and 6 students as soon as it is available. We enjoy great relationships with our local high school and work to support the transition of our students into the high school years.

HOME SCHOOL LIAISON OFFICER (HSLO)
The attendance patterns of children are monitored by the HSLO. Notes for whole day and partial absences are not just important but a legal requirement. It is a legal requirement that students of school age attend school every day. For more information see the DEC website: http://www.schools.nsw.edu.au/gotoschool/a-z/attendance.php

HOMEWORK (UNDER REVIEW)

IMMUNISATION
Children enrolling in Kindergarten require a certificate of vaccination. If you choose not to vaccinate your child, and there is an outbreak of a disease, you will be required to keep your child at home until it is safe to return to School.

STUDENT INFORMATION UPDATE FORMS
These forms will be sent home at the beginning of each year, to ensure that our records are up to date. These forms will also ask you to give ‘blanket’ permission for activities such as local walking excursions, participation in Child Protection lessons and photographic media permissions. Your cooperation in returning this information promptly is always appreciated.

KINDERGARTEN ORIENTATION & TRANSITION DAYS
Orientation Morning for prospective enrolments is held in Term 3. This morning provides an insight into the school and the programs we offer. Three transition mornings assist in school readiness. While the children visit Kindergarten and engage in Numeracy, Literacy and other learning programs such as library or music, parents meet school staff and are given relevant information about the teaching and learning programs and overall school organisation.

LATE TO SCHOOL
Children who arrive after 9.15am need to go to the office and have their parents complete a ‘Late Note’ to be given to the class teacher. This note is kept with the class roll. This is a legal requirement.
LEAVING SCHOOL BEFORE 3.15pm
If you need to take your child out of School before the end of the school day, you are required to sign a 'Leaving Early' form at the office before picking up your child. Leaving early for appointments and ‘extra curricula’ lessons should be avoided in line with the NSW Department of Education Attendance Policy.

LIBRARY
Students participate in library lessons each week. We strongly encourage children to borrow books for reading at home. Please provide your child with a library bag so that books are protected from wear and tear. A school library bag is available at the uniform shop.

LOST PROPERTY
The lost property bins are situated outside the school office. Please label all your child's possessions for easier identification. At the end of each term all unclaimed/unnamed school uniforms will be given to the uniform shop for resale and all other clothing will be donated to charity.

LUNCHES (UNDER REVIEW)

MANDARIN LANGUAGE PROGRAM
Students in all year levels at Nicholson Street Public School participate in weekly Mandarin language lessons provided by qualified language teachers. The program builds skills in spoken and written forms of Chinese language.

MEDICAL INFORMATION
Parents are asked to supply information about their child's medical history, particularly if the child is in need of regular medication or is asthmatic or anaphylactic. If you require any medication to be administered to your child during the School day you MUST complete a Medical form at the office and include the exact dosage with the child’s name, class and the amount and time to be administered. The medicine will be kept in the School Office.

Asthma sufferers who use an inhaler are to keep it in their bag where it will be available to them at any time. Asthma Plans (designed by your GP) are kept in the staffroom with ventolin inhalers for asthma sufferers where necessary. It is a parent’s responsibility to ensure that the Asthma plan and inhaler are given to the child’s teacher.

Students who suffer from Anaphylaxis or other serious allergies should have an ASICIA Allergy Plan (designed by your GP). These plans are displayed in the staffroom with the students' epipen where necessary. It is a parent’s responsibility to ensure that the Allergy Plan and epipen are given to the child’s teacher. It is also important for parents to note the expiry date on epipens so that they are replaced when necessary. Staff are trained annually in the administering of emergency care to students with Asthma or Anaphylaxis.

Please be sure to notify the school should your child’s medical circumstances change.

MEET THE TEACHER
This is held soon after the commencement of the school year. As well as meeting your child's teacher and other parents, you will hear about class organisation, homework, rules, expectations, excursions and ways you can help your child and be involved in learning. You may also like to nominate yourself as the class parent, an invaluable connection between teacher, the P&C and the parents in each class.

MONEY
All money sent to the school should be in an envelope marked with your child’s name and class, as well as the purpose for the money. Payments can be made online, cheque, credit card (Visa & Mastercard only) and cash.

NATIONAL LITERACY AND NUMERACY ASSESSMENT PROGRAM (NAPLAN)
Testing takes place in May each year for all students in Years 3, 5, 7 and 9. These assessments are undertaken by all Australian students in these year levels and the data is provided to teachers, parents and caregivers with assessment information for each student in the areas of Literacy and Numeracy. The MySchool website provides comparative data for each school in Australia.

NEW SOUTH WALES BOARD OF STUDIES (BOSTES)
To find out more about the New South Wales curriculum and to access any Syllabus documents or Foundation Statements go to the NSW Board of Studies website http://www.boardofstudies.nsw.edu.au/

NEWSLETTER
A fortnightly student produced Nicho NEWS is published and gives details of school events, as well as other important information for families. The Newsletter is available electronically and is emailed
directly to parents through the School e-news app. This newsletter is complimented by a fortnightly bulletin from the Principal covering other key information.

NON-SMOKING ENVIRONMENT
Smoking is not allowed inside or near the entries to the school grounds and buildings.

OPPORTUNITY CLASSES
Children in Year 4 have the opportunity to sit a test for selection into local opportunity classes. Information about this test will be provided prior to the application period. All applications are online and made through the selective schools unit. Your child’s classroom teacher can provide advice and assistance in completing the application process.

PARENTS and CITIZENS’ ASSOCIATION
Our School has an active Parents and Citizens’ Association. The Nicholson Street Public School P&C provides valuable assistance to the school through fundraising activities and school improvement projects. The monthly meetings provide a forum where parents can participate in decision making and raise matters of interest and concern. These meetings are held on the second Tuesday of each month (within school term), commencing at 7.30pm.

PARENT PARTICIPATION
We are very proud of the level of community participation at Nicholson Street Public School. We encourage parents and caregivers to be involved in your child’s learning at school. Ways to be involved can include:
• introducing yourself to your child’s teacher;
• asking about your child’s progress;
• attending P&C meetings;
• assisting in classroom activities;
• participating in fundraising events;
• attending social functions;
• going on excursions with your child’s class when appropriate; and
• attending school functions, e.g. assemblies, sports carnivals, open days.

PARENT-TEACHER INTERVIEWS
Parent, teacher interviews are held at the end of Term 2 to discuss and celebrate your child’s educational progress. During the meeting you can ask questions about any areas of your child’s education you would like to discuss. If you wish to discuss your child’s progress at any other time during the year this can be done by simply making an appointment with your child’s teacher through the office.

PHOTOGRAPHS
Each year, class and individual photographs are taken by a professional photographer. These photos are available for purchase directly.

PROOF OF AGE
Original proof of age documents must be sighted when enrolling your child. These can be a birth certificates, a passport with a current visa or Australian Citizenship papers.

REPORTS
Parents will receive written reports of their child’s progress at the ends of Term 2 and Term 4. Student progress reports indicate progress in all curriculum areas and describe work habits and social development.

RULES
Children are encouraged to be cooperative, friendly, helpful and well behaved at Nicholson Street Public School. We have 4 core rules: Care – Respect – Cooperate – Be safe.

We firmly believe that the most effective policy for student discipline is one that relies on strong links between home and school. If a child’s behaviour is not satisfactory the school’s Behaviour Management processes will be followed, with the expectation that students will take every opportunity to improve when provided with a framework of support in which to manage their behaviour.

The Principal will contact parents and carers to discuss behaviour if reasonable opportunities to change behaviour are not used by the student.

SCHOOL CAPTAINS & STUDENT LEADERSHIP TEAM
These are elected from our Year 6 students each year. School Captains set a good example for all the children through their positive behaviour and attitudes. They help teachers, guide visitors to our school and act as role models for the younger children. The boy and girl, who gain the most votes at the election, become School Captains for the following year. Two Vice Captains are also elected at this time as well as leaders for the other Student Leadership Teams.
SCHOOL VISION STATEMENT
At Nicholson Street Public School we support our students to be resilient, respectful, locally engaged, globally prepared, critical thinkers, who are curious and creative lifelong learners.

SELECTIVE HIGH SCHOOLS
Children in Year 6 have the opportunity to sit a test for entry into Selective High Schools. Our local Selective High School is Sydney Secondary College, Balmain Campus. However, other schools for specific purposes are available including Newtown High School of the Performing Arts.

Finding out about the local high school options available to your family is as easy as making an appointment with each school to hear about their teaching and learning programs. Information about the Selective High School test will be provided prior to the application period opening. All applications are made online through the selective schools unit during the later stages of the Year 5 school year. Your child’s classroom teacher will be able to assist you with the application process and any questions you may have about selective schools in NSW.

STAFF DEVELOPMENT DAYS
Every NSW government school is provided with 5 staff development days (SDD) a year to update staff on curriculum and policy issues relevant to the school and the community. The first day of Terms 1, 2 and 3 are SDDs. There are also two days at the end of term 4 allocated for school development planning and programming for the next calendar year. Variations to staff development days can only be made in consultation with the school community.

SCHOOL HOURS
The School hours are from 9.15am until 3.15pm. Lunch: 11.15am to 12.05pm Afternoon Tea: 1.35pm to 2.00pm. All students sit for 10 minutes to eat their lunch prior to playing.

SCRIPTURE & ETHICS CLASSES
Special religious education is conducted each week for 30 minutes by visiting teachers appointed by the various religious groups, using a syllabus that they supply.

At the moment we offer Anglican and Catholic Special religious education classes. Children are placed in the scripture classes according to the information supplied by parents and caregivers on enrolment forms.

A change to scripture class can only be made if a letter of request is provided by parents to the class teacher. Children who do not attend these scripture classes may opt to attend ethics classes or take part in non-scripture sessions that are supervised by one of our teachers.

SOCIAL MEDIA
The school has an active presence on social media and encourages you to connect with the school via these channels. Social media awareness and education programs for students, parents and teachers run throughout the year.

SPORT
A physical education program is part of the curriculum for children from all grades K-6 and physical education is taught by class teachers weekly. The emphasis for all grades is on the development of fundamental movement skills and fitness. Students in Kindergarten to Year 2 also participate in an intensive swimming school in Term 4 each year. The aim of this program is for all children to develop their swimming and water safety skills prior to the summer holidays.

Our school is a member of the local PSSA (Public School Sport Association) and students participate in interschool sport competitions.

Students also participate in the annual PSSA District carnivals competing against students from other schools in swimming, athletics and cross-country running.

SPORT HOUSES
The children are divided into 3 houses for all school carnivals: Mort (Red) Johnston (Yellow) Darling (Green)

SPORT CARNIVALS
The K-6 Swimming Carnival takes place each year during Term 1. The Cross Country during Term 2 and the K-6 Athletics Carnival is usually held in Term 3 (although may take place in late term 2). Children compete in a variety of events. A team is selected after Swimming Carnival, cross country and Athletics Carnival to represent the school at the District Carnivals.
SPORT UNIFORM
The school uniform shop sells school uniforms and sport shorts for sports days and carnivals. All students must wear a hat to participate in school sport and physical education lessons.

SUPERVISION
The School grounds are supervised between 8.45am and 3.15pm. Students must not arrive before 8.45am unless attending before school care or an extra-curricular program. During the morning period, children may play on the 'top playground' but not on the play equipment. After School, families are encouraged to make their way home as soon as possible in a safe way.

Parents and caregivers are asked to support staff in keeping the playground safe by not allowing children to ride bikes and scooters in the playground before and after school.

TEACHERS & STAFF
Our school staff is enthusiastic and dedicated, with a wide variety of experience in education. We also have a part time support teacher and the P&C helps us fund a part time Learning Support Officer. We have one Administrative Manager who manages the school office.

TRANSFERRING TO OR FROM ANOTHER SCHOOL
A transfer certificate is issued only when a child leaves Nicholson Street Public School to enrol in another NSW Public School. Prior to students enrolling from another Public School parents are required to complete an enrolment form, providing the required proof of identity documents. This form must be signed by the principal who will need to sight original documents. A student’s previous school principal must be contacted before enrolment is finalised.

UNIFORMS
Students are encouraged to wear full school uniform as a mark of school pride and connectedness to school identity. These are available through the P&C Uniform shop. Children are expected to wear uniforms on excursions, unless stated otherwise.

Orders for uniforms can be made online and uniforms can be collected from the uniform shop. The uniform store is opened on Wednesday Mornings between 8.45am and 9.15am.

VACATION CARE
BESC (see After School Care) offers a full program of activities for children during all school holidays and pupil-free days. This service is used by children from schools across the Balmain peninsula.

Please contact the Centre Coordinator on 02 9810 3161 or refer to the BESC website www.bescaftercare.com.au for more information.

VOLUNTARY SCHOOL CONTRIBUTIONS
This money is requested at the beginning of the year to help the Nicholson Street Public School maintain the high quality of resources currently available to support student learning and engagement. Information about how you can support the school by making a voluntary contribution is sent home at the beginning of the year and reminders sent throughout the year.

WEBSITE
The school website is a wealth of information about school events, organisation and policy. It is also a valuable link to the NSW Public Schools website.

You can access the Nicholson Street Public School Website here: www.nicholson-p.schools.nsw.edu.au.