

Principal's message



NSW School of Languages processed a record number of enrolments (2250) this year. Thank you to the Enrolments team for your patience and perseverance and finding your way to the bottom of the pile. This has also meant that we have a record number of teachers at the school. Welcome!

Our new school name and branding has been very effective. Have you seen our wonderful new flashing sign at the front of the school? We've also had some great success with our Facebook page. I hope you have all 'Liked' it so that you see what else is happening in the school.

We have begun a trial teaching Indonesian in rural schools. This innovation is in collaboration with the Learning and Teaching Directorate in State office. We have also had great support from the Rural and Distance Education team in Bathurst to get the technology working its best for these schools.



Our Deputy Principal, *Cate Chapple*, has been seconded to a Principal position at the Saturday School of Community Languages. We wish her well in this new role and she will be sorely missed. Meanwhile our new relieving Deputy Principal *Sana Zreika* will be working with us until the end of the year. *Tomoko Takahata* (Head Teacher Chinese, Korean and Indonesian) will also be working as a Deputy Principal this year.

Plans are underway for a study tour to France in April 2018. Students will go for 16 days of language study, homestay and sightseeing. What a great opportunity to be immersed in the language!

Home school supervisors are now able to access their students' online record cards so that they can see how the students are working. Many supervisors have responded positively to this initiative.

Our Korean Hana Immersion Centre is taking shape. We are setting up a temporary room here until we can move to Petersham (no news yet). Thank you to *Sophie Choi* for her efforts in bringing the plans to fruition. We hope to have an official opening in early August.

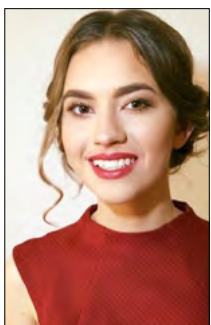
Our staff have been working hard in their professional learning to enhance their online courses in order to present the best teaching and learning for our students. We have now had 2 evening professional learning events at the school.

Several of our staff have been involved in extensive training for the new LMBR system, which will 'go live' in July. This system ties together finance, student records, student wellbeing and a whole lot of other things we've yet to discover. I'll let you know how any of the changes might affect our school community.

Congratulations to all of our staff and students on the wonderful work that they are doing and our students on their ongoing efforts to achieve in their language. Seeing students enjoying their face-to-face lessons days here at NSW School of Languages makes it all worthwhile.

Hilary Hughes
Principal

LETTER FROM STUDENT



KEEN KOKO: A STUDENT SUCCESS STORY

My name is *Koko* and I studied Beginners Japanese for Years 11 and 12 through NSW School of Languages (then known as Open High School).

I chose to study by distance education, because my school (Warrawang High School) was only teaching HSC Beginners Italian,

which I ended up studying as well, and my dad always encouraged me to pursue my passion for Japanese. As I had been taught it previously in Years 5-7 and did self-study in Years 8-10, the HSC course started out being easy for me. But down the track, I also learnt a lot of new things about the language and geography of Japan. I bonded well with my teacher and also made friends with a few of my peers.

When I tell people I did Japanese by distance for my HSC, there is always a look of surprise/horror on their faces. Sometimes I'm asked, "Was it hard?". I say, "Not really."

Why? Well, Japanese is my passion. Because I've always had this strong interest in foreign languages and cultures and worked hard at it from the very beginning, the physical distance between myself and my school made no impact on my learning. Ain't No Mountain High Enough, people?

That's not to say I didn't make mistakes along the way. Given that at the same time I was beginning to study Italian at my home school, the first few phone lessons were very interesting. The worst was when I was revising numbers. One time when translating the number nine, I said "Nove- I mean, kyuu!" But along the way I have had many successes; I was able to converse and make friends with several Japanese exchange students and even adults.

In the end, I received 90 for Japanese and 83 for Italian, my 2 highest marks. I must say, I was really surprised about my Italian mark; I didn't think it would be that good!

So what are my plans for this year? Well, this year I have started a double degree of Bachelor of Arts/Bachelor of International Studies at UOW (Wollongong Campus) and I am majoring in Japanese and either International Relations or Global Sustainable Development. I am also trying my hand at Spanish as a minor. Because I received high marks for HSC Japanese and I passed a placement test, I was able to undertake the 2nd year subject for Japanese. The funniest thing is, one adult Japanese friend I made last year is now my tutorial teacher for that subject!

So, I'd like to thank my teachers from this school who taught me so much. I'd also like to offer current students a few words of advice:

1. Ask questions It doesn't always mean you don't understand, but that you are actually thinking about the topic at hand. Even lecturers at uni will ask at the end of a presentation "Any questions?" and believe me, the silence that often follows is painful!

Remember: the only stupid questions are the ones that aren't asked.

2. Participate In uni, 10% of our final mark is based on our participation. That includes attendance and punctuality, preparation for the class (i.e. doing your homework and research) and engaging in class discussion and group work. By the time I was finishing high school, I learned to love class discussion because it gave me a chance to talk about my understanding and absorb others' perspectives on the same topic.

3. Don't be afraid to make mistakes Knowing the Japanese saying: "even monkeys fall from trees" will help you to learn from your mistakes and move on. Eventually, you will be like me and not get totally embarrassed by small things like stumbling on your words in front of others. Once you put things in perspective and accept that no one is perfect, you can learn not to take yourself too seriously and brush it off. Trust me when I say it's a good trait to have when someone can be passionate about what they're doing and yet have a little laugh at themselves when they know they've made a mistake.

4. Persevere The best feeling is looking back on your achievements and being proud that you did it. The best feeling I had when viewing my results for the HSC was seeing my result for Japanese. Why? Because I knew that was the only subject I did by myself, the only subject where I couldn't ask my parents or teachers at school for help. Sure, I did get a little bit of help for things like speaking practice through my Japanese friends, but my interaction with them wasn't day-to-day. My perseverance, however, was. My advice to you: if you fall down seven times, stand up eight.

5. Watch the entirety of Tim Minchin's UWA Address

No, seriously. If you haven't watched it, watch it. Tim Minchin gives some good tips to the graduates of UWA that I can't really cover in a single email. Here's the YouTube link: [Tim Minchin UWA 2013](#)

On that note, I have to go do some work for uni, so I can one day graduate!

Kind regards,

Koko Woolley
Class of 2016

P.S. Quick tip! Anyone a big fan of Disney songs? Try listening to your favourite songs in your language of study. It's not only funny to laugh at the differences of the songs, but it's also a great way to learn vocabulary and see the different ways in which tenses and grammar are used in songs. For example, the Italian version of 'Let It Go' uses a lot of future tense, so it could be good for those of you who struggle with that.

FRENCH

EXCHANGE IN QUÉBEC

One of our Year 10 French students, *Olivia Saint*, spent all of Term 1 on exchange in Montréal in Québec, Canada. While there, she still managed to complete some of her French studies, thanks to the online nature of the course. After about a month on exchange she shared some of her thoughts with her French teacher, *Mme Lattimore*:

My exchange so far to Montréal has been super fun and a lot different from Sydney. I'm staying in an area just outside of the city called Lasalle. My host family just last week took me sledding on a hill in the local park near us, which I'd never done before in my life.

When I arrived here it was very different from Australia. Most people speak French all the time, but lots of people speak many other languages as well. Everyone seems to be bilingual!

School for me was, at first, extremely nerve-racking. The thought started to sink in "Oh heck, what am I doing? My French is terrible and no one will understand me" and "I'm on the other side of the world, what am I going to do?" It was not like that at all though. All the staff at school are super nice and understanding towards people who don't speak French. I'm in a "welcome class", which is basically a class for people whose French is at a low level. I have friends here from all around the world which is amazing.

One of the things I love about Montréal is how nice the people are here. They don't care if you mess up a word or your pronunciation is a little bit wrong in French, as long as you try. Canadians here have welcomed me like I am one of their own, even though my French is not that good.

The first big difference I've noticed here is the weather. It is very cold here, freezing... minus degrees! This is cold, which I'm still not used to. One thing I think I took for granted was the weather in Australia. It snows a lot here, but there are different types of snow, e.g. icy snow, soft snow, hard snow etc. I learnt the hard way not to run on icy snow just because you don't want to miss the bus... you will fall on the sidewalk and get a bruise!

Another difference is school. The school I am attending here has 1700 students and is the only French school in the whole of the area. This is a lot bigger than the school I go to in Sydney

which has around 600 students.

Here they have massive daunting lockers with combinations like in the movies. The good thing is I've been able to meet people and practise French because of my locker, due to the countless times I can't open it. Another thing that surprised me was the fact that everyone here gets lunch at the cafeteria, they don't take a packed lunch.

I have already learned so much French and many new words from being here in Montréal. I would definitely say to anyone who is learning a language to go on exchange to another country if you get the opportunity."

Olivia has since returned to Australia (how time flies!) and she has written this final chapter to her exchange story:

"I've been home from Montréal for about 2 weeks now. It's surreal to be back. I really miss all the people I was so lucky to meet and the places I went to which I never thought I would be able to visit. Being back in an Australian school, I notice all these funny differences I didn't before, like how over-priced our canteen is, how we really should use lockers and the way people act is really different. I will miss playing in the snow, watching ice hockey and ice skating outdoors, things you are really unable to do here in Sydney.

What I've really enjoyed about this trip is learning about the Québécois culture and improving my French. I feel like this is one of the best experiences I've had in my life so far. I think I have changed as a person a little. I feel like I'm now more independent and more confident in myself. If you ever have the option to go on exchange, I'd say definitely go for it. It is hard at first when you feel a little homesick and think to yourself, "Was this even a good idea?", but you learn so much about another culture and language.

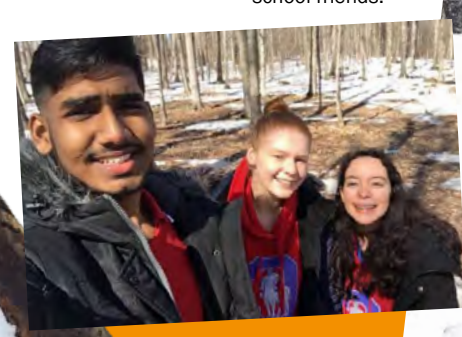
I am forever grateful to my parents, the exchange company and my host family for making this whole trip run smoothly. This trip was like a dream come true to me.

Here are some pictures from my holiday:

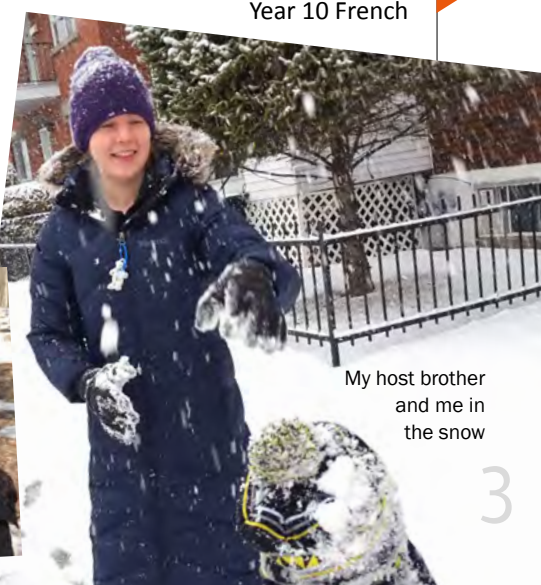
Olivia Saint
Year 10 French



Left: Me, my host brothers and host dad at "Cabane à Sucre" which in English is sugar shack and it's a celebration of maple syrup. They basically cook almost everything with it in Quebec. It's really good! In this picture we are trying "tire de neige", which is a lolly made of frozen maple syrup on a stick



Below: At school excursion with my school friends.



My host brother and me in the snow

FRENCH EXCURSIONS

THE NATIONAL GALLERY IN CANBERRA FOR THE VERSAILLES EXHIBITION

The Palace of Versailles in France is a bit too far away for a quick school excursion, so the Versailles exhibition at the National Gallery of Australia in Canberra seemed like a great alternative.

On Friday 31 March, 23 students of French and two French teachers, Madame Lattimore and Monsieur Hashambhoy, met early in the morning at the NSW School of Languages ready for the long trip to Canberra by bus. Some students travelled from as far as Wollongong, the northern beaches of Sydney and the Blue Mountains to take part in the excursion.

The tour guides at the gallery were very friendly and knowledgeable. They discussed the artistic, cultural and linguistic significance of many of the exhibits, including paintings, sculptures, tapestries and furniture, all part of the exhibition which has left the Palace of Versailles for the first time.

Students were further delighted by the unexpected discovery in a side room of some famous French artworks by the Impressionists and Post-Impressionists, including paintings by Claude Monet and Henri Matisse.

The bus trip to Canberra proved to be a valuable time for the students to rekindle friendships made at the lesson days earlier in the term. Students were also issued with booklets of language and cultural activities they were to complete after being shown through the exhibition.

Here are reports from two of the Year 9 French students who attended:



"The excursion to the Versailles exhibition was a really fun way to learn more about France's history and to get to know our classmates and teachers better. The bus trip was long, but we listened to French music and spoke to the other students. The exhibition displayed some of the actual items from Versailles in France. There were paintings, furniture and decorations from the castle. It was a great day and I really recommend it, especially as we only get to see our teachers and classmates once a term."

Melody Gray

"Going on an excursion to the Versailles exhibition with NSW School of Languages was so much fun and so beneficial! I had such a great time and met so many new students learning French like me, as well as learning all about French history and seeing the incredible artefacts the museum had on display. I can't wait for another excursion like this one!"

Lesley Andelman

Right: Year 11 Beginners French students and a Claude Monet painting



French students from NSL and a Henri Matisse painting



Lesley and Melody with the Royal Family!

JAPANESE

BEAU CARR: A BRIGHT FUTURE

Beau Carr studied Years 9-12 Japanese at the NSW School of Languages, starting as a complete beginner. Beau was determined to become a doctor, move to Japan and work in the hospital system. He is currently completing his last year of medicine at Monash University in Melbourne. Beau is now a fluent Japanese speaker, having worked hard to master the language and even some Japanese medical terminology. While studying with NSL, he used Language Perfect to help him improve his language skills. At present, Beau is working as a trainee doctor in a Japanese hospital. Here is Beau's letter to NSW School of Languages:

"I arrived three days ago in Tokyo for my medical elective here. I took last year off to travel and this year I'm finishing my final year of medicine at Monash. After a lengthy application, I managed to get into the Keio University medical elective program, which so far has been really impressive.

The hospital system here is very different from our own and definitely eye-opening. I'm on the endocrinology and nephrology unit, which is a lot of fun.

The medical Japanese language is a challenge, but I'm gradually picking up on some terms. I just wanted to take this time to thank you for all your support during high school, because getting this far definitely involved a few mentors in my life and the Japanese staff were undoubtedly some of them. So, thank you again for supporting me and believing in me! I've attached a photo of me standing at the entrance of Keio Hospital (and yep, the doctors here still wear white coats!)."

Beau Carr



RAISING CHILDREN BILINGUALLY SEMINAR

On 25 March, one current and one ex-student of NSW School of Languages participated in the seminar 'Raising Children Bilingually' at University of Technology, Sydney. The seminar was organised by the HSC Japanese Committee.

Many parents from the Japanese community in Sydney attended the seminar and enjoyed the inspirational talks given by two guest speakers, Naoko Uchino and Noriko Kojiro. Presenters shared their stories about how they raised their children bilingually. They talked about the challenges they encountered, as well as how to encourage their children to find their passion for Japan and Japanese culture.

Siobhan and Miki participated in a discussion panel, talking about their experiences learning Japanese at NSW School of Languages.



Student comment: At the age of 4, I began studying Japanese kanji and working on my writing and speaking skills at a community language school in Ultimo with other students. The skills I learned at the community school formed the basis for my study at NSL, where I have further expanded my language vocabulary and knowledge of Japanese. Despite being bilingual, and always accepting being both Japanese and Australian, I have always somehow felt I've had a bit of an identity crisis. This seminar made me realise it was not only me who has been through this process and this has further encouraged me to continue studying Japanese.

Siobhan Costello

Far left: Miki Elizabeth Prochazka (Japanese Heritage student 2016)
Left: Siobhan Costello (Year 12 Japanese in Context student 2017)

LATIN



Students at NSW School of Languages have returned in glory from their 'virtual northern campaign' (in a very virtual sense – the competition was based in the USA), *plurimis praemiis aucti*, enriched with very many prizes.

They participated in the annual online international Classical Literacy Exam. The exam includes everything that educated people should know about the classical world, whether it be things mythological, religious, etymological or historical.

Tempus est prosequendoru heroon et clamore et plausu et honorificis verbis! Yes, now is the time to honour, to shower virtual petals and to bedeck these heroes with laurel wreaths.

Our peripatetic photographer has returned with some *imagines* of some of our victors in Year 11, taken during their triumphal march!

Far left: Constance Valais CLE Award
Left: Sierra Penberthy CLE Award

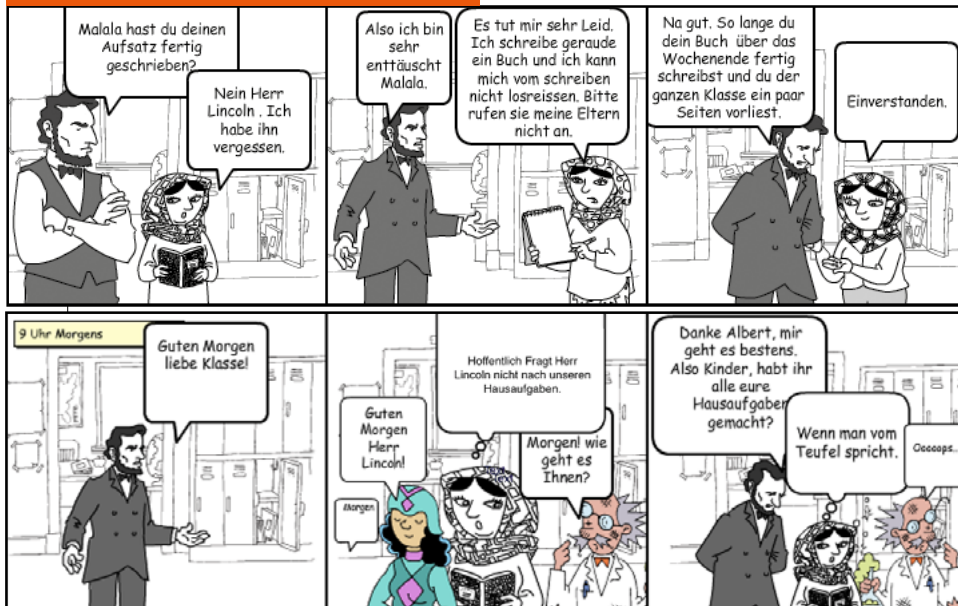
GERMAN

EXTENDING OUR GERMAN STUDENTS

As we regularly encourage our students to challenge themselves, many students have been completing extra tasks to enrich and extend their learning of German. Students can choose from a variety of interesting activities offered in their courses. For example, students demonstrated their creativity by making an original comic strip with www.makebeliefscomix.com

They wrote their own story on the topic of 'Forgotten Homework'. A Year 9 student, Lorena, created the following comic strip.

YEAR 9 EXTENSION- COMIC STRIP



The teacher Mr. Lincoln asks for the homework. Malala has not finished it but has a good excuse as she is finishing writing her book. Mr. Lincoln finally gives her an extension.

RUSSIAN



VICTORY DAY FESTIVAL

Students of Russian and their teacher, Maria Lobytyna, took part in the annual festival on 7 May, to celebrate and remember Victory Day at the end of World War II.

A Year 12 student, *Sofia Dmitreva*, presented a moving speech honouring the veterans and the members of the Russian speaking and Australian communities. Some of our current and former students also participated in the Gala Concert and helped with the preparations for this important event.

Bondi Pavilion, Sydney (photo courtesy of Russian newspaper *Unification*)

INDONESIAN

A TRIAL FOR LANGUAGE LEARNING IN RURAL AND REGIONAL AREAS

NSW high schools are required to teach 100 hours of a language, between years 7-10 and this can be quite a challenge for schools in rural and remote areas. Some schools have a non-language teacher teaching a language and sadly sometimes no language classes are offered at all. So this year, the NSW Department of Education in conjunction with NSW School of Languages (NSL) is running a Trial Program for 100 hours Mandatory Language Learning (years 7 & 8) for rural and remote areas.

Two schools are participating in the program- Tumbarumba High School (34 x Year 7 students) and Merriwa Central School (27 x Year 8 students).

NSW School of Languages has provided the rural students with the course materials and access to NSL's online Moodle course activities. The delivering teacher, *Danielle Elvy*, based at NSL, has been teaching via Adobe Connect as well as via Video Conferencing. Some of our courses at NSL already use Video Conferencing or Adobe Connect. The difference with this trial is that the class sizes are 17 – 27 students per session.

Classes for the trial alternate between online Moodle activities supervised by the home school teacher and the Adobe Connect and Video Conferencing classes with *Danielle* at NSL. The home school teachers are not language teachers. In this trial they are an art teacher and a geography teacher. That said, the participating teachers' enthusiasm and interest in Indonesia has been a positive influence on the students and has added to the success of the program. They have even chosen to take up the learning of Indonesian with their students.

Danielle Elvy and *Ida Harsojo* (Indonesian teacher) visited the participating schools in Term 1. This was an opportunity to make initial face-to-face contact with the students, the supervising teacher and the school executive, as well as provide a half day incursion for each class, consolidating work covered, dressing in Indonesian traditional clothing and introducing some new language concepts, including learning to count and learning an Indonesian rhyme to help students with their counting.

In Term 3 *Ida* and *Danielle* will return to Tumbarumba and Merriwa to simulate an Indonesian market, where half of the students will be given some fake money to spend, whilst other students will be vendors. By creating the Indonesian market atmosphere in the

classroom, these students in the rural areas, who have never experienced Indonesia (and / or bartering), will feel and experience the situation first hand. Items for sale will be rice, spices and (real and plastic) fruit, particularly the kind that is not readily available for them to access in rural NSW, such as rambutan, star fruit, salak, durian and jack fruit. Students will use their language skills to communicate in Indonesian in a familiar situation, as well as using numeracy skills to bargain and use their money wisely. This exercise will be an opportunity to assess the students' speaking and listening skills in a fun and non-threatening atmosphere.

This trial so far, has shown us that distance does not preclude students from learning a language. It has been an opportunity to introduce something new and different to the students of Merriwa and Tumbarumba, which would not have occurred without this trial. It is ultimately

our hope that these students can become 'ambassadors', introducing and promoting Indonesia to their families and friends. Last but not least, the trial has also introduced *Danielle* and *Ida* to the hospitality of rural and regional NSW.



ESL

ESL GOES NORTH

On 11 May, two of our ESL teachers spent the day at Woolgoolga High School, just north of Coffs Harbour. They met with a group of twelve students, six Year 11s and six Year 12s, who worked keenly on their novel study as part of their preparation for their major speech assessment later this term. The teachers, *Deb Mueller* and *Jennifer Mifsud*, thoroughly enjoyed the opportunity to spend a whole day with their wonderful and hard-working students, who come from India, South Sudan, Ethiopia and Thailand.



KOREAN

KOREAN IMMERSION CENTRE

NSW School of Languages is preparing for a special Korean Immersion Centre to open on its premises in Term 3, 2017. It will be known as the Hana Centre, meaning 'Number 1 centre'. As well as language activities, students will now enjoy this wonderful opportunity to be immersed in traditional Korean cultural activities for a whole day when they visit the school. This centre is being made possible with the support of the Korean Education Consul in Sydney and the Sydney Korean Cultural Centre.

KOREAN LESSON DAY

This was an exciting day for Korean students, being introduced to their course and our school, as well as meeting their Korean teachers. Students participated in fun activities and gained a better understanding of Korean culture and language. For lunch, we prepared a famous Korean meal called 'gimbab'. Students enjoyed the meal and finished the day with beautiful fan-dancing.



CHINESE

**YEAR 11 CHINESE BEGINNERS
FACE-TO-FACE LESSON**

Many Year 11 students of Chinese attended their second face-to-face lesson day on Tuesday, 9th May. Other than the language based activities throughout the day, students also enjoyed learning about the Chinese traditional sport called Ti Jianzi (kicking shuttlecock). They had a lot of fun trying their hand (or feet!) at Ti Jianzi after lunch. One group of students was very pleased that they managed seven kicks without the shuttlecock falling on the ground!



MODERN GREEK

YEAR 11 MODERN GREEK FACE-TO-FACE LESSON

An atmosphere of engagement and healthy competition swept through Year 11 Modern Greek during their Term 1 face to face lesson day. Kahoot quizzes and group activities proved to be a fun way to consolidate knowledge of articles and other grammatical points covered earlier in the day. During the break, students enjoyed a taste of Greek cuisine as they sampled τυρόπιτες (cheese pies) and σπανακόπιτες (spinach pies).

The day also had a cultural flavour with students celebrating Greek National Independence Day and enthusiastically singing the National Anthem of Greece.

As with all face to face lessons the value is twofold: yes, the intellect is stimulated, but new friendships and relationships are also forged!



SPANISH

¡ATENCIÓN! CALLING ALL HSC SPANISH STUDENTS!

This is your chance to practise for the oral exam, meet other Spanish students and converse with experienced HSC teachers in Spanish. What a great way of preparing for your final exam. So come and have fun at our annual Spanish Speaking Day on 17 June 2017!



ITALIAN

YEAR 11 ITALIAN FACE-TO-FACE LESSON

On 11 May, about forty Year 11 Italian Beginners students participated in a very successful face to face lesson day. As well as a number of activities aimed at consolidating the course work studied so far, the students were introduced to the importance of gestures in Italian culture. Gelato at morning tea was also very popular! Students appreciated the opportunity to gain a deeper understanding of grammatical concepts and practical language in use. Here are some comments from the students:

“We revised a lot, which was good and I was able to practise speaking, which helped me a lot.”

“Learning gestures was interesting and fun.”

“Everything today was good! The “Speed Dating” was fun!”



STUDY TOURS

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