

Secondary entry #9: Callaghan College Wallsend Campus



# The Wallsend Eagle



**TAKE A TABLET:** Students at the Wallsend campus engage in 21st-century learning.  
Picture: Chelsea Beeston

## A new way of learning, new way of life

By **JESSICA HENDERSON** and **CHLOE STEEL**

STUDENTS at Callaghan College Wallsend campus are leading the way when it comes to incorporating technology and learning as one of the state's prominent pilot schools for the Department of Education and Communities' technology trial. This initiative, known as Bring Your Own Device (BYOD), allows students to bring a personal device such as an iPad, laptop or a tablet to school to be used for educational purposes in the classroom.

A survey conducted in 2013 indicated that more than 85 per cent of students would prefer to use their own device rather than something provided by the school; 421 students currently bring their own device.

David Summerville, head teacher of Technology explained that BYOD was born following cuts to state funding for school laptops to keep technology a part of learning.

He describes BYOD as "crucial to teaching and learning in today's technologically globalised world".

It is recognised that 21st-century learning is crucial in allowing students to meet society's sophisticated and ever-developing expectations.

Mr Summerville reflected on the importance of BYOD in facilitating life-long learners in modern-day classrooms, stating "the future is now, we need to embrace it".

# Building blocks for life

By **TANA DICKSON, MADISON LEE** and **ELISE THUMATH**

WALLSEND District Library is emphasising the importance of developing fundamental literacy skills in preschool-aged children through a range of engaging reading programs.

Fundamental literacy refers to the skills and strategies involved in reading, speaking, writing and interpreting numbers.

"Fundamental literacy is necessary in order to build the skills that enable us to communicate and operate in the world. In our modern world this includes signs; even knowing that in our culture red means stop and green means go can have a dramatic impact on our lives. Without this basic knowledge a workplace can be a dangerous place," said Mel Dixon, resources officer at the English Teachers' Association NSW.

Ten Minutes a Day Baby Book Time is designed for parents and their infants, two years and under. This program makes use of stories, rhymes, songs and music to give parents an opportunity to share and experience the love of reading with their baby.

Wacky Wombat Storytime is designed for children aged three to five years and involves craft and dance activities to help prepare



**HIT THE BOOKS:** Matilda Bevin has developed a love for reading at a young age.

young children for school.

When asked what parents and caregivers can do to help their child prior to schooling, Ms Dixon said: "Babies are immediately receptive to so much - talking to children, explaining things, pointing out the world around them, reading and playing games are essential in developing communicating adults".

Recent data collated by the Australian Council for Educational

Research in October 2013 shows that the existence of a large number of Australians with low literacy and numeracy skills is having a negative impact on the individual, the economy and productivity.

"It is a sad reality that there are still illiterate people even in our Australian society. These people feel disempowered and unable to communicate," Ms Dixon said.

The recently developed NSW teaching syllabus, which interprets

the new Australian curriculum, is currently being implemented through the infants and primary years as well as in years 7 and 9.

It aims to target literacy development through a continuum that identifies literacy links that are important in all key learning areas.

Treating literacy as a continuum across all stages of development will value and revisit the fundamentals children acquire as infants.

## A fast-growing population is driving a strong economy

By **SOPHIE BENFELL**

WHEN Fletcher Village opened its doors last year, business owners couldn't have predicted the growth of the local area.

With close to 1000 homes going up in Fletcher in less than two years, it has been a welcome economic injection for businesses.

Located on the corner of Minmi Road and Churn-

wood Drive, Fletcher Village is a single-level shopping centre featuring a Coles supermarket, 10 specialty retailers and two ATMs.

MPC Consulting Engineers conducted the civil and structural engineering design for the new centre.

The area is growing quickly - records show that 878 homes were completed between November 2012 and May 2014.



Mandy Corby, owner of Salon Indigo, commented on the demographic of the area. "Our customer body consists mainly of families with

young children or teenagers. Young couples new to the area also form a significant component of our customer base," she said.

**BOOM:** Fletcher Village services a growing population.

Picture: Chelsea Beeston

"The village means that locals do not have to make the trip to Wallsend Plaza. The click and connect at Coles is especially popular for busy working mums," she said.

Future projections of ongoing growth have been made for the area.



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