

Primary entry #14: Cessnock West PS



# Cessnock West Chronicle



**DREAM COME TRUE:** Taylah, Claudia, Brianna and Demi, who performed at Dreamworld.

## Dance dream comes true

By **TAYLAH DALTON, KITANA FERNANCE** and **CHLOE INGLE**

**TALENTED** dancers from Lovett's Dance and Talent Academy travelled to Dreamworld to perform on April 17.

Dancers from all over Australia were chosen to perform at Dreamworld, with dancers in the troupe ranging in age from three to 22 years.

Dancers performed a number of items in various dance styles including jazz, tap, cabaret and funk.

"I enjoyed going to Dreamworld to dance because we got to dance in another state," said Taylah Dalton.

"Most concerts are near where we live. We were special because we got the opportunity to go to Dreamworld."

Dancers spent many hours selling chocolates to raise funds for their travel and necessary equipment.

Many hours were also spent rehearsing, with dancers practising every Saturday leading up to the concert.

One of the performers said it was the most exciting thing she had ever done in her life.

Joanne Galloway, the proud mother of three of the Cessnock West dancers, said that the countdown to the show at Dreamworld was very exciting.

She described the opportunity for the dancers to perform at the biggest theme park in Australia as a chance of a lifetime.

There were 32 students that danced at Dreamworld.

# Inspired school leaders

By **ALEX ROBERTS** and **MADELYN PARSONS**

**SCHOOL** leaders at Cessnock West PS have undertaken many activities around the school to help improve children's social skills and their willingness to participate in school activities.

School leaders have organised a variety of activities and programs for other students in their school.

Some big successes have been a daytime disco, netball competition, handball competition and healthy activities aimed at increasing participation in physical activity.

"The day disco was fun and I wish it went longer than it did," said student Tomi Langdon. "I also think there should be another one and maybe even one in the infants."

"I have noticed a real difference in the playground since the school leader programs have been running," said teacher Anne McDonald.

"The children are engaged, mixing with others and having fun."

Cessnock West's school leaders attended the National Young Leaders' Day, held at Acer Arena in March, and picked up some great ideas about how to be good leaders.

They also learnt how to be good role models and set the right examples.

Leaders have used the skills they learned at the National Young



**GAME ON:** Cessnock West students enjoying school leader-organised activities. — Picture by Alex Roberts

Leaders' Day to encourage people to join in playground activities.

They also use their skills to make sure everyone has fun and nobody is left out of the activity they are running.

The playground space is limited at Cessnock West, with very little

grass, so it is sometimes difficult for students to find things to do.

School captain Oliver Powell said the Young Leaders' Day was interesting and taught him a lot about how to be a good leader and how to help people.

"The leaders have been doing

great things around the school and lots of people enjoyed joining in these activities," Oliver said.

A talent quest is planned for later this term and will showcase a variety of student talents, while also raising funds for school equipment.



**NEW PRINCIPAL:** Mrs Pieper reading with year one students. — Picture by Natasha Rochfort

## Principal with principles

By **MIKAYLA SHEEHAN, COBI EADE** and **NATASHA ROCHFORD**

**THERE** has been a changing of the guard at Cessnock West PS with Robyn Pieper replacing outgoing principal Jenny Blake.

Mrs Pieper said her first impressions of Cessnock West PS were of a happy, hard-working, welcoming

group of people, and that she felt privileged to be at the school.

Mrs Heslop, the school's assistant principal, said Mrs Pieper had slotted in to the Cessnock West team very quickly and was very positive about the school's future directions.

The treasurer of the school's P&C, Julie Hall, said at a recent meeting that

Mrs Pieper had already demonstrated a keen interest in the students and their work, and a willingness to work alongside the whole school community.

Before she arrived at Cessnock West PS, Mrs Pieper was principal at Millfield Public School.

She will be at Cessnock West PS until at least the end of term two.



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# Active technology

## Editorial

By **MADELYN PARSONS, AINSLIE JERRETT, CARLEY HARRISON, ZACHARY JORDAN and KITANA FERNANCE**

WITH technology increasingly being blamed for an increase in childhood obesity, questions are being raised about the relevance of technology in the lives of children.

Technology is a big part of our lives. It is everywhere - in homes, cars, shops and classrooms.

Even riding on a school bus, children must now use an electronic card for their journey.

Children cannot avoid technology.

Because there is no escape from technology, it is important that children are encouraged to use it wisely and safely.

There is no better place to do this than in schools.

Classrooms have evolved over the past 20 years and have become a breeding ground for tomorrow's users and designers of technology.

Schools provide children with a safe place to explore a variety of technologies. All over NSW, students in schools are using computers, interactive whiteboards, scanners, printers, digital cameras, data projectors, the internet, email, chat rooms and the list goes on.

The availability of this technology allows children to apply it to their learning.

The days of school projects on a piece of cardboard with handwritten information are disappearing.

Today, students are handing in multimedia presentations containing digital images and movie clips.

It is important for schools to equip their students with the necessary skills and knowledge for their futures.

When today's primary students leave school and enter the workforce, there will be very few jobs, if any, that do not require them to use technology of some kind.

With technology invading every corner of our lives it is the responsibility of parents, teachers and children themselves to ensure it does not take over completely.

According to the NSW Government, more than 20 per cent of children in NSW are overweight or obese, and this figure is increasing every year.

NSW Health attributes these increases to sedentary activities and decreases in physical activity.

Schools have acted to address this problem by implementing the Healthy School Canteen Strategy and ensuring students participate in physical education lessons and school sport.

In 2006, the Australian Bureau of Statistics examined children's participation in leisure activities and found 92 per cent of children used computers either during or outside of school hours.

For technology to have a positive impact on children's lives it needs to be balanced by plenty of outdoor activity and a healthy diet.

Overuse of technology can make children lazy. To find this careful balance is not always easy, but something we must all do. Technology is not going away.



**ROBO-ACTION:** Ainslie and Sammy with their entry for RoboCup Junior.

# Roving robots

By **JOSHUA HO and JOEL HAFEY**

COMPUTERISED robots are travelling around classrooms as students of Cessnock West PS prepare for RoboCup Junior.

"The robotics program at Cessnock West is a great opportunity for students in stage three to expand upon their existing computer skills and knowledge by learning how to create programs that control a Lego robot," said program co-ordinator Mrs Blair.

"We are currently in the process of preparing programs that will have the robots dance to music so we can compete in the RoboCup junior competition later this year."

This will also involve the students building and decorating robots to match the theme music they've chosen.

"I think it is wonderful that so many students are prepared to give up their lunchtime in order to participate," Mrs Blair said.

"I am looking forward to seeing what great things they will come up with for their robots."

The students involved are eagerly awaiting the competition.

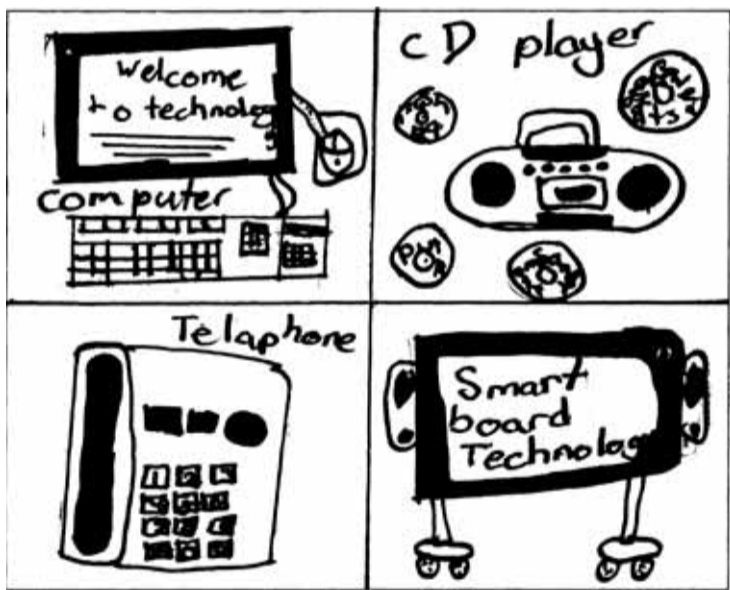
"Robotics is a fun way to learn technical skills," said robotics team member David Cook.

"Robotics is fun, and sometimes hard," Abbie Wills said.

"We program robots and play with them. Now we are building our own robots and programming them in our own dance moves."

Teacher Mrs Heslop said the program, which has been running for the past four years, was a fun and challenging learning experience for the students.

"[It is] challenging to create computer programs which direct the robot in all its functions," Mrs Heslop said. "The children give up free time to further develop their robots to ensure each one is unique while incorporating physics, energy and technology."



- Picture by Sammy Wright

# Clever class preparing for a gifted future

By **JOSHUA KIEM and KHIE CROSSLEY**

GIFTED and talented students come from many schools to the Opportunity Class (OC) at Cessnock West PS to undertake a program of extension and enrichment.

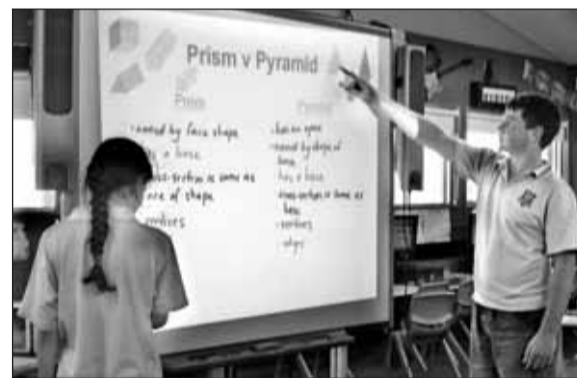
Opportunity classes cater for academically gifted students in years 5 and 6, offering students more challenging topics while mixing with other children of similar ability.

Students from all schools in the Cessnock

area, ranging from Wollombi to Abermain and beyond, can apply for selection to the OC.

Forty five per cent of students entering the Cessnock West OC in 2007 were from schools other than Cessnock West.

"Students are provided with a differentiated learning program that focuses on enriching student learning and compacting the curriculum, offering gifted and talented students the opportunity to reach their potential," said OC teacher Mrs McDonald.



**SMART STUDENTS, SMART BOARD:** Josh and Kodei using the new interactive whiteboard at Cessnock West PS. - Picture by Khie Crossley

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