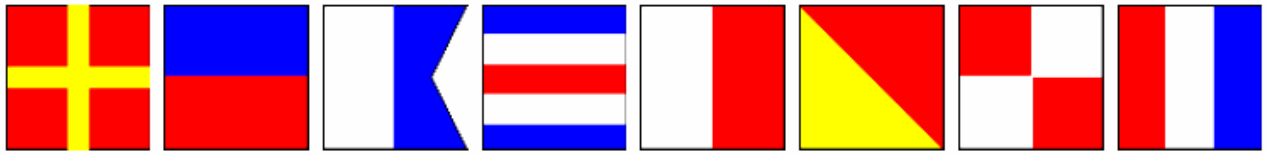


Reach Out ...

Semester 1, 2022



Learning to read at Ocean Reef- How are we teaching it?

Phonological Awareness

A major focus for development and improvement over the past three years at Ocean Reef Primary School has been spelling and reading in the early years. The Early Years Team (kindergarten to Year 2) have worked closely with the Leadership Team to review our teaching practices, programs and resources to provide the best opportunities for

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As part of this focus, all students in the K-2 Cabins start their day with 10 minutes of phonological awareness (PA), through a program called 'Heggerty'. PA refers to the specific ability to focus on and manipulate individual sounds (phonemes) in spoken words. Phonemes are the smallest units comprising spoken language. Phonemes combine to form syllables and words. For example, the word 'mat' has three phonemes:

m / a / t . This learning is done with pace and completely orally - nothing is written down or read.

Synthetic Phonics

The second component of our daily literacy program is synthetic phonics. In the past 18 months, all of our teachers from Kindergarten to Year 4, as well as all of our Education Assistants have undertaken four days of professional learning in a program called Sounds-Write. This has allowed us to provide a whole-school approach to teaching to, what has been identified as, a crucial element in students ability to learn to read, spell and write. Synthetic phonics is a strange, technical name that has nothing to do with being artificial! The 'synthetic' name comes from the synthesising or blending of sounds to make a word and enable children to read. The teaching reading and spelling with synthetic phonics will have the following characteristics:

The English language has 26 letters but 44 unique sounds, each with lots of different ways to spell them. A synthetic phonics approach will teach these 44 sounds from the simple to the more complicated logic.

First off, children are taught that each alphabet letter has its own unique sound. For example: B / A / T



ant



bat



cat

Once children have this concept, the logic is made a little harder. Two (or sometimes three) letters can also come together to make a new sound. For example:



shell



high

The next layer of complexity is where you really start to see spelling improve. Children learn that a sound can be represented in many ways. For example the /ee/ sound:



beach



he



tree

Finally, children will learn that a letter or group of letters can represent different sounds. For example:



bed



she

Home Readers- Decodables

The third component is our home reading program. Our approach here is based upon the use, to start with, of decodable readers. Decodable readers are carefully aligned to the synthetic phonic so that the students can decode the phonics based upon the sounds that they have been learning in class. As a school, and with the support of additional funding raised by the P&C, we have been able to purchase a large selection of resources specifically for this program. Once students are confident and competent with their phonics and PA we are able to move them from our decodable program to the independent reading SURFS program. This will happen for different students at different times, sometimes in Year 1, but more commonly in Year 2.



Further Support

Finally, we realise that not all students learn the same way or at the same pace. We also have students join us from other schools from within WA or further afield. When children need extra support we use a resource called MiniLit or, if they are a little older, MacqLit. All of our Education Assistants have been trained in these programs and are designed to run in small groups for an intensive period of time, in addition to their Sounds-Write classwork. We are now seeing the impact of all of these developments in students' reading and we hope that you are too.

School Board

The School Board meets once a term and is an important pathway for the partnership between the community and the school.

Manuel Requejo has taken on the role of School Board Chair and we were very pleased to welcome Clarissa Wake and Lisa Thomas as new parent representatives and Wanda Vanzetti has joined as a new staff representative. Throughout the cycle of Board Meetings, members review school policies. At this term's meeting, the board reviewed and endorsed the school's Mobile Device and Learning Environment Policies

For more details, they are both available on our website

Partnership with the Royal Australian Navy

Since the very first launch of Ocean Reef Primary School, the school has maintained its proud tradition, beginning in 1988 with the establishment of a maritime theme by our founding principal Mr John Thompson. Mr Thompson took our location metres from the Indian Ocean and as a part of the Ocean Reef Maritime precinct as inspiration to model Ocean Reef Primary School as a virtual ship – The State School Ship Ocean Reef.

Our virtual ship has many naval links, our classrooms are known as cabins, the blocks as Port, Starboard and Stern, whilst our Early Years' Education block is known as the Cadet Block. Our undercover area is a Quarterdeck, the library is the Chartroom and our ship is lead from the Bridge. Unofficially we have a Commanding Officer, the current Principal Peter Blackwell and an XO, our Associate Principal, Chris Smith!

Many schools have senior students, prefects for example. At Ocean Reef, our lieutenants, commanders and School Captains; these students have a range of responsibilities and roles in leading the other junior crew members.

When our keel was laid, our school was built on the foundation of the values of the 7Cs Courage, Courtesy, Commitment, Common sense, Care, Cooperation and

Consideration. We also now have the STAR (Sensible, Thoughtful, Achievement and Respect) that guides our expectations of students, staff and parents.



Whilst building the unique theme for the school John Thompson contacted the commanding Officer of HMAS Stirling to start a relationship that has lasted since that time.

Over the years, building a genuine partnership between the Royal Australian Navy and the School has been hugely valued by our students, staff and the community. We have been fortunate to be supported at many school events, such as

the Graduation, ANZAC ceremonies and our Promotions Muster, when the senior students are awarded their rank.

We have always believed in trying to maintain a genuine partnership. In recent years students from Ocean Reef have visited the Naval base at Garden Island. We were fortunate to visit the submarine escape tower and inspect HMAS Arunta. Our Drum Corps were fortunate enough to perform during the transition of the Commanding Officers' of HMAS Sirius in 2019.

