



Macarthur Polish Saturday School Inc.

Annual Report 2018

The year 2018 was another exciting year for Macarthur Polish Saturday School with many highlights both socially and academically for the organisation. The school continues to enjoy pleasing enrolment rates that positively reflect the high quality teaching program being provided by the school. Macarthur Polish Saturday School continues to grow both in student numbers and parental involvement.

Our school aims to teach students to become proficient in the Polish language - both written and verbal. The curriculum includes elements of Polish history, geography and literature. Through our teachings, our students are exposed to the rich Polish culture and its traditions. The students are exposed both to traditional classroom learning as well as concerts and performances. A number of concerts were organised in 2018 for the following events:

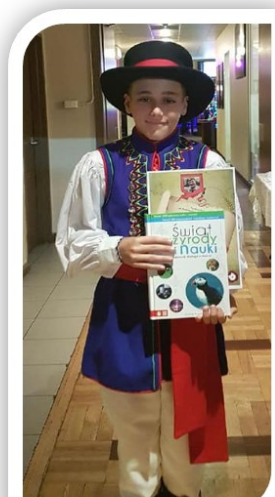
- Easter performance;
- Mother's Day;
- Children's Day - a school disco was held to celebrate International Children's Day;
- Father's Day;
- School Excursion to Calmsley City Farm;
- A series of events celebrating the 100th anniversary of Poland regaining its independence;
- Meet the actor;
- End of School Year celebrations.

Involvement in concerts and extra curriculum activities has significant benefits for children. Not only does it showcase their talents as they sing, recite poetry and are involved in dramatic play; it also promotes confidence and encourages students to learn, participate and be creative. Most importantly, such opportunities enhance a child's cultural identity, and builds a sense of community based on a love of the Polish culture and its traditions.

Key achievements for our school during 2018 include:

◆ Scoutmaster's Szupryczyński Award for Pasquale Lavorato-Year 6

On Saturday 5/5/2018, student of our school Pasquale Lavorato (VI class) received the prize of Scoutmaster Witold Szupryczyński. This prize is awarded every year to children and young people of Polonia, who are proud of their Polish roots and are actively participating in Polish organizations (schools, dance groups, parishes). Congratulations to Pasquale and his parents and grandparents! Pasquale is a wonderful boy who is very proud of his roots Pole!



◆ Award of the Consul General Magdalena Kawa–Year 6

Two years ago, the Consulate General of the Republic of Poland in Sydney introduced an initiative to reward the most accomplished/best student of the Polish language from schools across Sydney and surrounding areas. This year our school nominated Magdalena Kawa from class VI for this award. Magda is an exceptionally diligent and hardworking pupil. We cordially congratulate Magda and her parents and wish her success in future years of continuing to learn and enhance her Polish language skills.



◆ "My Poland" Competition

On Saturday 8th Dec 2018, the results of the Competition initiated by the Association of Polish Teachers in the NSW entitled "My Poland" were announced.

The main goal of the competition was to encourage children and youth to share their knowledge about Poland, to recall memories of their stay in the country, to deepen their knowledge of the Polish language and to strengthen their bonds with the culture of our nation. The competition over which honorary patronage was held by the Consulate General of the Republic of Poland in Sydney along with the Federation of Polish Organizations in the NSW, was inspired by the celebration of the 100th Anniversary of Poland regaining its independence.

Our young school took first place in a number of competition entries submitted. As the school's coordinator, I direct warm words of gratitude and congratulate the class VI teacher - Mrs. Cecylia Macioch, who tirelessly and with great enthusiasm encouraged the students and parents of our oldest class to take part in the competition.

Another reason for pride and joy is that two students of our school: Maya Dole (class V) and Anya Bieńkowska (class VI) - took first place in their age category. Maya drew a map of Poland, and on it everything that she loves about her home country and connected it using a heart line with the map of Australia. She described her poster in one sentence: "Your home is where your heart is."

Anya, on the other hand, described her memories of experiencing Christmas together with her family in Poland. Our school also won two second places in the Competition. Julia Kościańska (class V) and Magda Kawa (class VI) received awards for their work. I also pay tribute to the students Gabriela Helwani and Maja Mukherjee for taking part in the competition.

I am extremely grateful to Mrs Marianna Łacek - the chairman of the competition jury, who came to the Polish Club in Bankstown, to personally award prizes to the students of our school who danced that day at a Christmas concert organized by the Song and Dance Ensemble "Kujawy".



♦ Easter Assembly

On Saturday, the 24th of March 2018, the Macarthur Polish Saturday School held an Easter Assembly, the aim of which was to showcase the extremely rich and colourful Polish Easter traditions and customs. Parents, grandparents, and friends of the school attended our Easter Assembly, as well as the parish community of Eagle Vale. The program prepared by Mrs. Cecylia Macioch was presented by students of our school in both languages—Polish and English. Using colourful language, pupils from particular classes explained Easter palms, traditional Polish 'Easter eggs', 'Easter baskets', and traditional Easter cakes to all who arrived there that day. The children's performances were interspersed with Easter songs. The Song and Dance Ensemble "Kujawy" also performed for the guests. The "Green Gaiczek" dance introduced us beautifully to the theme of the assembly, and the "Zaloty" dance was the culminating moment for the artistic part of our meeting. I would like to thank the students of the Macarthur Polish Saturday School and the members of the "Kujawy" Polish Dance and Song Ensemble for a beautiful performance, which in itself was a lesson in the language, tradition and culture of their country of origin.



♦ Mother's & Grandmother's Day

On Saturday, 12th of May 2018, we celebrated Mother's and Grandma's Day in our school. It was a very joyful celebration with a great family atmosphere. In the morning, teachers in individual classes discussed with students, the topic of: "My mum and me." Together they talked about their mother's everyday chores and struggles. Teachers discussed with our children ways of showing appreciation and gratitude for their mums and grandmothers. During a special performance, students from different grades presented poems dedicated to mums and grandmothers. Pupils from oldest class presented us with a brief history of this special day. Together we sang popular Polish songs for mothers. The atmosphere was really fantastic. The students from class I and II / III prepared a very tasty gift for all mums - very cheerful, colourful looking and at the same time super healthy sandwiches. The mothers and grandmothers present were very appreciative as were the other guests that came to our celebration.



♦ International Children's Day

On Saturday 2nd of June, the Polish Saturday School in Macarthur together with the Song and Dance Group "Kujawy" and ZHP in Sydney celebrated the merriest holiday of the year - Children's Day. Children are our joy and happiness - they give us hope which is so needed in this day and age.

Our event started at 10.00 in the morning. The entertainment was provided and coordinated by Mr Michał Macioch. This talented young man organized various kinds of games and activities for the children, accompanied by cheerful music. Some of the favourite games were: popularly called "limbo" - that is passing under the bar, throwing the ball to the goal and races in two teams. The children were delighted and there was a lot of noise and joy occurred.

Next, Polish Scouts performed for us and they included all of our children in their performance which was very special. There was common singing in the circle holding hands and fantastic active games that involved not only the body but also the soul.

At 11:00 a long-awaited Magician appeared. Lady Magician entertained children with all kinds of magic tricks and at the end of her performance she made very creative balloon animals, which turned out to be extremely popular with all children - those quite young and those little bit older.

The most unforgettable and certainly the most energetic highlight of the day was the performance of Wiesia and Marek Wojnicz - artistic directors of the Song and Dance Group "Kujawy". I have to admit, that I was also delighted with their short program, which included not only children but also their parents. Together we learned the steps to "cheer leaders" dance and I think that we were doing quite well.

After this highlight of the day it was a time for a well-deserved meal prepared by our great parents. Thank you all parents for your support and work on the preparation of this day. Let the payment be the smile and joy of the children who joined us at the Polish Club in Bankstown on this special day.



◆ School excursion to Calmsley Hill City Farm

On Saturday, September 22, 2018, a school trip to Calmsley Hill City Farm took place. The trip was partially sponsored by "Freedom and Democracy" Foundation at the Senate of the Republic of Poland as part of the project "Supporting Polish Education in the World".

We are extremely grateful to the "Freedom and Democracy" Foundation for their financial assistance which allowed our school excursion to occur. It is difficult to find words that would fully reflect the joy that we experienced together as a school community: students, teachers and parents.

Our trip had two basic goals: an educational goal and an integrational goal.

Educational goals:

- That students recognise and name animals living in the countryside in Polish;
- That students build simple sentences in Polish on the subject of farm animals;
- That students recognise the characteristic sounds made by various farm animals.

Integrational goal:

- Strengthening the social bonds and integration of the school community.

On the beautiful, warm spring Saturday morning, in front of the entrance gate to Calmsley Hill City Farm, the students gathered together with their parents and teachers from the Macarthur Polish Saturday School. The first event of the day was opportunity to interact with various types of domestic animals. There were rabbits, goats, sheep and ponies. It was so much fun for the students! This joy was painted not only on the faces of children, but also on the faces of their parents. Some of our students had the unique opportunity to feed a little lamb from a bottle. Another attraction was milking the cows. At 11:00 am, a large crowd of onlookers of all ages and sizes gathered together around the cow, and everyone, without exception, wanted to see if it was possible that chocolate or strawberry milk would flow by accident. Unfortunately, some of our kids were honestly disappointed when it turned out that milk from a cow is always ... only white. Some of our students tried their hand at milking the cow, which was captured in our pictures. At 12:00 we gathered for a lunch together. All parents talked merrily with each other, and the children kicked a ball together on a large open field. Together we sang popular Polish songs. After lunch, some of the parents took their children to the farm yard, where kangaroos were laying lazily in the sun. Others went to watch dog training. Their trainer was just perfect in her profession. Our trip turned out to be a great adventure and success for both children and adults. Once again, we direct the words of gratitude towards the Freedom and Democracy Foundation for making this trip possible.



♦ Father's & Grandfather's Day

On Saturday, 01/09/2018, we celebrated Father's and Grandfather's Day at our school. A joint meeting of our school's students with their dads and granddads who were invited for the occasion turned out to be a huge success for all children, teachers, parents and grandparents. The beginning of the assembly was scheduled for 12:00PM. In the morning, the children under the watchful eye of teachers prepared cards and small gifts for their dads and granddads in their classrooms. Teachers asked students what they like to do the most with their dads and how do they spend time together. There were different answers to that question; boys were talking about kicking a football with dad or fixing a bicycle or other equipment together at home. Girls talked about going with their dads to the movies or for a walk to the park.

Half an hour before the start of the assembly our beloved mums from the Parental Committee; Dominika, Agnieszka and Agatka prepared all necessary elements for children to create delicious and colourful-looking fruit skewers. The children themselves put pieces of various fruits on sticks trying very hard to make their fruit skewers look beautiful and appetizing. It was supposed to be a surprise present for our beloved dads and granddads. The very last piece of work that the children needed to do was attaching a heart at the top of the fruit skewer with the name of daddy or grandfather.

We started our assembly right on time by singing our school song. Next, the school's coordinator - Mrs. Bernadeta welcomed all the guests with special reference to dads and granddads. We were also pleased with the presence of our Priest who also acts as a catechist for the school - Father Edmund Budziłowicz. After the greetings, it was time for performances. Mr. Darek Plust, together with the students sang several songs for dads and granddads. Here are some of the titles: "I'm not scared when it's dark", "What will my father say", "Daddy, Daddy, I'll give you", "Daddy".

The songs were combined with the performances of each individual class. Children starting with our eldest group and finishing with the youngest, recited beautifully read Polish poems for our dear fathers and grandfathers. There was also a competition. Mrs. Bernadeta chose three brave grandfathers, who without hands had to eat donuts from plates supported by their grandchildren. There was a lot of joy, laughter and uproar.



◆ Meet the Actor

On Saturday, 25/08/2018 the students of our school had an amazing opportunity and pleasure to meet the actor - Mr. Michał Macioch, who in a beautiful way shared with us his skills and acting talent by presenting "Stefek Burczymucha." Michał did a fantastic job, and our children had a taste of real theatre in their classrooms. For a moment we found ourselves in a fairy-tale world and completely forgot about problems of everyday life. Children were very enthusiastic about the poem presented by Michał: we could hear laughter and thunderous applause. Michał simply charmed them - not only children were charmed, but also us teachers. In our busy world, we have so little opportunity to meet with real artists. We are very pleased that Michał found time to meet with our students and provided them with unforgettable memories. After the poem, the time has come to read a bilingual book titled "Jego magiczna moc / His secret power", which tells the story of the adventures of Pierog Włodek. We hope that these meetings will be continued in the future, because children are eagerly awaiting the next meeting with Pierog Włodek and the other heroes of the book by Anna Nasiff.



◆ Polish Festival in Plumpton

A week before the end of the school year on December 2 2018, the Polish Christmas Festival in Plumpton took place. Our students actively participated in the artistic part of the Festival, which Mr Michał Macioch was responsible for. Our students sang the carol of Noah's Ark "Świeć gwiazdeczko" and a song entitled "Jesteśmy Polką i Polakiem". The introduction to the concert was the recitation of the poem "Kto ty jesteś? Polak mały" in a beautiful performance by Krystian and Layla Smutek.



- ◆ Celebrating the 100th anniversary of Poland's regaining independence by students of the Polish Saturday School in Macarthur

The first event that commenced the celebrations of the 100th Anniversary of regaining Independence by Poland was that our school agreed to help and organise the accommodation within Sydney for the visit of Professor Tomasz Pudłocki of the Jagiellonian University. (Habilitated doctor of humanities in the specialty: history of culture, science and education, adjunct at the Institute of History of the Jagiellonian University). The Professor came to Australia at the invitation of the Melbourne Polish School.

On Sunday, October 14, at the Polish Club in Bankstown, Professor Prof. Tomasz Pudłocki delivered a very interesting lecture titled: "The role of Polonia in regaining Poland's independence in 1914-1921."

The lecture was preceded by a 15-minute film summarizing the events culminating in the moment when Poland regained its independence in November 1918.



Another event dedicated to celebrating the 100th Anniversary of regaining independence by Poland was "Polish Day", which was initiated by the teacher of Class V and VI - Mrs Cecylia Macioch.

Both students and teachers were asked to bring to school souvenirs brought from Poland which were decorated on tables and made into a mini exhibition for everyone to admire. The students from the oldest class had to additionally provide a verbal narrative about the items they brought and justify why they chose such a souvenir. On the map of Poland purchased this year, students glued tiny flags, marking the place of origin of their families. We sang together with the children a few traditional patriotic songs, such as, for example, "Płynie Wisła płynie" or "Przybyli Ułani pod okienko". Class I students, under the supervision of the teacher, arranged educational puzzles, the subject of which was the map of Poland. Children were also familiarised with the legend of Lech, Czech and Rus.





On Saturday, November 10, on the eve of the 100th Anniversary of the independence of Poland, the school as a whole group participated in an event that occurred in Sydney. Pupils, parents and teachers attended a solemn Holy Mass at the Cathedral of the Blessed Virgin Mary in Sydney. During the Holy Mass, our students listened attentively to the content provided in a beautiful homily given that day by Bishop Dariusz Kaluża. This exceptional homily will be etched in our hearts forever. The Bishop provided a very moving account which demonstrated his patriotism and incredible knowledge – all based on a true love for the homeland. On behalf of the Polish Saturday School in Macarthur, I would like to thank all the organizers (Polish Consulate in Sydney, the Congregation of the Priests of Christ and the Federation of Polish Organizations in NSC), for the opportunity to be part of this extraordinary event.



After the Holy Mass in the Cathedral, a large group of students, parents and teachers went to the Polish Club in Bankstown to represent our school at an Academy on the occasion of the 100th Anniversary of regaining Poland's independence. The students of our school prepared a short presentation titled "Our Independence", which was a summary of key events from 100 years ago. The performance was supported by a multimedia presentation and intertwined with patriotic songs from that period, such as "Rota" or "March of the First Brigade".



Another event, demonstrating the involvement of our school in celebrating the 100th Anniversary of regaining independence by Poland, was the participation in Sunday Mass at the church in Minto on November 11, 2018 - exactly on the very day of this beautiful Jubilee. The students of our school took an active part in the Holy Mass through doing the mass readings, being involved in the Prayers of the Faithful and bringing gifts to the altar. After the Holy Mass, the children presented to the Polish community, gathered on that day in the church, a performance that they had presented the day before at the Polish Club in Bankstown.

It was a great pleasure for the Polish parishioners especially for the older group of listeners, to see such a beautiful rendition as the performance of our students was a beautiful gift that touched them very much. The idea was to share with the local Polish community something we consider to be very special and precious. A common hope: Predominantly Australian born Polish children who speak their mother tongue and are aware of who they are and where their roots come from.

◆ The NSW Premier's Harmony Dinner 2018

On March 21st this year, we celebrated Multicultural Day in Australia. The event is a great celebration in which all cultures can express in a special way the pride and joy of who they are and where they come from. Despite the fact that we come from almost every corner of the world, it connects us to live in this unique place, where different cultures, languages, traditions and religions live side by side in harmony and respect. On this particular occasion, we had the pleasure of representing our school at dinner with the NSW Premier Mrs Gladys Berejiklian.



◆ NSW Federation of Community Languages 40th Anniversary Gala Dinner

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◆ Conference for Polish Language teachers

On Saturday 01/09/2018 there was a conference for teachers teaching at Polish Saturday Schools in Sydney. In this important event for the Polish education in Australia, our school was represented by Mr. Michał Macioch, who conducts drama classes with the students of our school, and Ms. Urszula Kościńska - who takes care of our school library. On behalf of myself and all teachers of our school, I would like to thank Mrs. Małgorzata Vella and Mrs. Elżbieta Cesarski for their hard work in organizing this event. We are aware of how much time and effort, how many telephone calls, emails and various other things had to be organised. We greatly appreciate the hard work both ladies put in to promoting the Polish language and culture in the young generation of Polonia in Australia. We are very happy that Ula and Michał could participate in the Conference and I am sure that they will share their knowledge and skills with us.

♦ 2018 Annual Genneral Meeting

The Annual General Meeting was held on the 17th March 2018 and elections for 2018 were conducted. Achievements, planned events, grants applications and financials were also presented to the families.

Below is the full composition of the School Committee for 2018, the body that oversees the activities of our school:

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| • President | Dominika Herdzik |
| • Vice President | Agnieszka Godden |
| • Public Officer | Helen Kokoszka |
| • School Coordinator | Bernadeta Kawa |
| • Treasurer | Agata Pochanke |
| • Secretary | Katarzyna Lavorato |

♦ Funding grants

We received our annual per capita grants from the Community Languages Schools Program – a unit of NSW Education and Communities. This grant was received in December 2018 and is used to purchase much needed teaching and organisational resources. We gratefully acknowledge and thank the Community Languages Schools Program for their ongoing financial assistance and support.

The School has also received additional funding to support the school's organisational needs. We extend our gratitude to the Consulate General of Republic of Poland for its assistance throughout the year.

At the beginning of 2018, the school applied for a grant from "Freedom and Democracy Foundation" at the Senate of the Republic of Poland supporting "Polish education abroad". It was with great excitement that funds were received in July 2018. This is the first time that the school has applied for this grant and we are very thankful to receive this support.

♦ Fundraiser raffle and our sponsors

A big "thank you" to our generous sponsors, who enabled the school to hold a Fundraiser Raffle, with many attractive prizes, which were drawn during the End of School Christmas performance. The proceeds of this raffle raised in excess of \$200 for the school. We also take this opportunity to thank all our other major sponsors for their ongoing support and commitment to our organisation and its aims. This includes:

- Copernicus Café
- Polonez Smallgoods
- Consulate General of the Polish Republic, Sydney
- Narel Wholesale Meats (Narel Smallgoods and Delicatessen)
- NSW Federation of Polish Associations
- Godden Lawyers
- Freedom and Democracy Foundation
- "Our Polonia" Association
- ADS Group Pty Ltd
- Doctor Kaja Lukasiewicz
- Specsavers Ingleburn
- Krakus – Lawson Bros.

◆ Other key achievements for 2018

2018 was an extremely busy and fruitful year for the school. The school became a more active member of the NSW Federation of Community Languages as well as developed partnerships with the Polish Schools in Ashfield and Randwick. The committee was very productive in developing many documents for the school. The following lists only some of the achievements:

- Development of School Constitution, School Policies, Student Code of Conduct, Enrolment package and Accident / Incident forms and protocol;
- Completed all Working with Children" declaration forms for volunteers;
- Actively sought sponsors to assist with purchasing school resources;
- The organisational internet site was upgraded as well as the Facebook page;
- Established a school email;
- A Student Safety Program was developed and sessions conducted;
- Design & purchase of school brochure & banners;
- Established contacts with other Polish Schools in Sydney with plans for further collaboration;
- Affiliation with "Kujawy" Polish Song and Dance Ensemble & Polish Scouts was established.

Macarthur Polish Saturday School is a vibrant community. Our teachers are passionate to ensure that our students receive a high level of Polish language learning. Our parents are active participants and our students have a thirst to learn and appreciate their rich Polish heritage.

We would like to express our sincere thanks to all of our students, parents and families who comprise our unique Polish school community. Through their constant support, dedication and commitment we can be assured of the successful continuation of the Macarthur Polish Saturday School which will continue to thrive and embrace the future.

Macarthur Polish Saturday School acknowledges the ongoing funding and support provided by the NSW Community Languages Schools Program.