



Macarthur Polish Saturday School

Annual Report 2019

This year was another exciting year for the Macarthur Polish Saturday School with many highlights both socially and academically for the organization. The school continued to enjoy pleasing enrolment rates that positively reflect the high-quality teaching program being conducted 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 rich Polish culture and its traditions. The students are exposed to both traditional classroom learning as well as concerts and performances. The following events took place in the 2019 school year:

- ✓ 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 Parramatta Park (tour of the Old Government House);
- ✓ After-hours drama classes;
- ✓ A series of events commemorating the 80th anniversary of the outbreak of World War II;
- ✓ A money-saving workshop for parents and students;
- ✓ Polish National Reading Day;
- ✓ A workshop on stress handling strategies for parents;
- ✓ End of School Year celebrations.

Involvement in concerts and extracurricular 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 build a sense of community based on a love of the Polish culture and its traditions.

2019_Key students' achievements

➤ Scoutmaster's Szupryczynski Award for Anya Bienkowski –Year 6

On Saturday 4 May, during the occasion of the Anniversary of the Constitution of May 3 at the Polish Club in Ashfield, our year 6 student - Anya Bienkowska received the Scoutmaster's Witold Szupryczynski Award. This award is received by children and young people of the Polish community who proudly affirm their Polish roots by learning the Polish language and actively participating in promoting Polish culture on Australian soil. Anya is a wonderful student, who approaches learning with great enthusiasm and responsibility. Congratulations to Anya, her proud parents, and grandparents! Anya - you are the pride and joy of our school community! We wish you every success in the next years of learning the Polish language!



➤ Minister's Award for Gabriella Helwani

On Monday, September 9th, 2019, a student of our school - Gabriella Helwani from 6th class, received the 2019 Minister's Award for Excellence in student achievement for outstanding results in learning the Polish language. Huge congratulations to Gabriella, her proud parents, and the entire school community. Gabriella began studying at a Polish school at the age of six. I remember very well this beautiful, tiny girl with long, black, braided hair. It was in my class that Gabriella began her adventure with learning the Polish language. 7 years have passed since then. Gabriella is growing up to be a beautiful, smart, ambitious girl, not afraid of challenges. I am sure that with such an attitude towards study and work she will be able to achieve all her goals in the future. Once again, congratulations to Gabriella and her parents. Your success is a great example to follow for many other families where only one parent speaks the Polish language. Gabriella speaks fluently in both languages, which is undoubtedly a credit to you. Gabriella -we are all very happy with your well-deserved success!



➤ Award of the Consul General

On Monday, October 28, at the Consulate General of the Republic of Poland in Sydney, the top students from Polish Saturday Schools were awarded prizes for outstanding results in learning the Polish language. Macarthur Polish Saturday School nominated Julia Koscianska from 6th class for this award in the current school year. Julia started learning Polish 6 years ago. I had the joy and the privilege of being her first teacher at the Polish school. I remember this quiet, calm, beautiful little girl who has never come to school without completed homework – always prepared, always ready to learn. Together we have learned the first letters from the Polish alphabet, together we have read the first simple texts in Polish. With that pride and satisfaction, I looked at Julia's smiling face when she was receiving her well-deserved award from Mrs. Consul General Monika Konczyk. Moments like this are the most meaningful moments of every teacher's life and career and give a sense of a job well done. Julia's success is also, and perhaps above all, the success of her parents, whom we congratulate with all our heart for raising such a wonderful girl. Without your sacrifice, without your hard work, a day like this would never become a reality. Dearest Julia, congratulations once again from our entire school community! We wish you nothing but success in the future!



➤ "This has happened during World War II" Competition

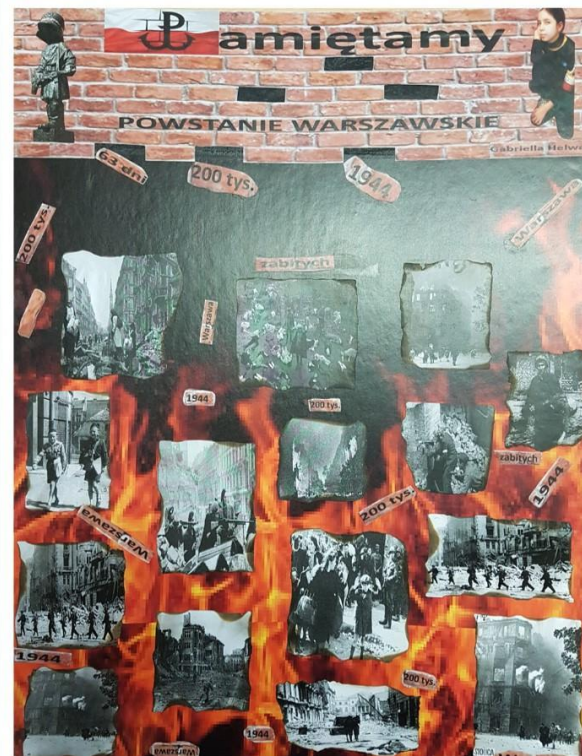
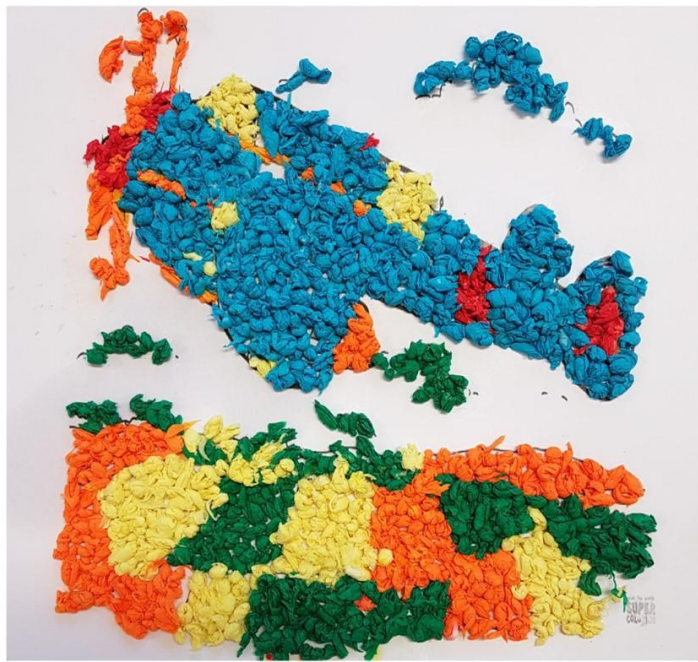
On Sunday 10th Nov 2019 in Marayong, the results of the Competition initiated by the Association of Polish Teachers in the NSW entitled "This has happened during World War II" was announced.

The main goal of the competition was to encourage children and youth to share their knowledge about World War II events, to deepen their knowledge of Polish history 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 80th anniversary of the outbreak of World War II.

Four competition entries were submitted by our young school. As the school's coordinator, I direct the warm words of gratitude towards our class teachers who tirelessly and with great enthusiasm encouraged the students and parents to take part in the competition. The following students from our school were awarded the 1-st prize in their age category:

- Heidi Borowiec (4 years old)
- Nathaniel Beshai (7 years old)
- Krystian Smutek (10 years old)
- Gabriella Helwani (12 years old)

Dear students - Macarthur Polish Saturday School Community is very proud of your achievements. Keep up the good work!



2019_Staff Professional Development and Conferences

➤ Methodological workshops for teachers

A very important event for Polish education in Australia was free of charge methodological workshops for teachers of Polish as a second/foreign language. The workshops took place on Saturday 9/2/19 in the building of the Consulate of the Republic of Poland in Sydney. These pieces of training were conducted by Mrs. Irena Stempek, one of the best-selling authors in Europe and America of a series of textbooks "POLISH step by step - junior". The Polish Saturday School in Macarthur was represented by five teachers on that day. We are very grateful to all the organizers Mrs. Marianna Lacek and Mrs. Gosia Vella and to our dear Consul Irena Juszczuk and Joanna Splocharska for allowing us to take part in this extremely fruitful meeting. Workshops led by Mrs. Iwona Stempek and Mr. Tomasz Stempek were absolutely sensational! The presenters have demonstrated many practical games and activities that develop language skills, which we will certainly use during classes with our students. For the school's needs, several sets of this extremely valuable book were purchased, and thanks to the Saturday workshops we have gained the necessary knowledge to make the best use of them during lessons with students. Once again, we thank the organizers of this event!



➤ The NSW Premier's Harmony Dinner_2019

On March 21st this year, the whole of Australia celebrates Multicultural Day. 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 on earth, where different cultures, languages, traditions, and religions live side by side in harmony and respect. On Thursday 28 of February 2019 four Ladies from our school: Agnieszka Godden, Urszula Koscianska, Malgorzata Helwani, and Hanna Beshai represented our school community at Harmony Dinner with the NSW Premier Mrs. Gladys Berejiklian.



➤ Annual State Community language Teachers' Conference & Professional Development Training Day

On Saturday, April 13, an annual Conference for Ethnic Language Teachers in New South Wales took place. That day, together with five other teachers, I once again had the pleasure of representing our school in this extremely important event for ethnic schools. For years I have been extremely impressed with the momentum with which the Conference is organized. The main goal of the Conference is to improve the qualifications of ethnic language teachers. Together with more than 750 people present that day, I had the opportunity to take part in a number of different lectures and workshops. The range and level of training available to participants each year is consistently at a very high level. Congratulations to the entire Organizing Committee for your great success. Thanks to their hard work, the family of ethnic schools, to which we also belong, flourishes and develops like never before. We are extremely impressed and with the enormity of the work and effort put into preparing this and many other events to support ethnic schools in New South Wales. On behalf of the Ladies present at the Conference and the entire community of the Polish Saturday School in Macarthur, we would like to thank the Organizing Committee for the opportunity to be a part of this event and wish you further success in the future!



➤ The Polish language Teachers Conference

A very important event for Polish community education in Australia is the annual Methodological Conference for Polish Language Teachers, which took place last Saturday, 14/9/19 at the Consulate General of the Republic of Poland in Sydney. The conference program was extremely interesting and certainly, each of the people present at the Consulate that day was very content with all the workshops in which we had the pleasure to participate. The main speakers were: Mrs. Liliana Sosnowska (ORPEG – Centre for the Development of Polish Education Abroad); Mrs. Magdalena Debowska (ODN / SWP – Teacher Training Centre / “Polish Community” Association), and Professor Marek Wierzbicki (KUL – Catholic University of Lublin). On this day, the Polish Saturday School in Macarthur was represented by three teachers: Mrs. Malgosia Jagodzinska, Mrs. Gosia Lyzeczarska-Helwani, and Mrs. Bernadeta Kawa. We are extremely grateful to all the organizers, in the forefront with Gosia Vella and Ela Cesarski, and our Dear Hosts – Consul General Monika Konczyk, Irena Juszczyk and Joanna Splocharska for enabling us to take part in this extremely fruitful meeting. The workshops led by Liliana Sosnowska and Magdalena Debowska were absolutely sensational! The presenters demonstrated many practical games and activities developing language skills, which we will definitely use during classes with students in our classrooms. Once again, thank you to the organizers of this event!



➤ NSW Federation of Community languages – Annual Dinner

On Saturday, the 23 November 2019, the Annual Dinner of the New South Wales Federation of Community Languages was held. We were extremely impressed by the energy of this event in which, representatives of almost all ethnic schools from all over the state were represented. Congratulations to the President – Mrs. Lucia Johns and the entire Organization Committee on their huge success. We strongly congratulate you for the work and effort involved in the preparation of this celebration, as well as many other events aimed at supporting community language schools in NSW. The following ladies represented our school in this important event: Dominika Smutek and Urszula Koscianska. On behalf of the ladies present at the Annual Dinner and the entire community of the Macarthur Polish Saturday School, we thank the Federation Committee and all those involved in the preparation of the event for the opportunity to be part of it and wish you further successes in the future!



EUROPEAN Longan SLOVAK SANSKRIT ITALIAN SERBIAN Filipino Macedonian
Pulaar Khmer Amharic Telugu Bangla Filipino Sanskrit U
Khmer Hindi Cook Islands Maori Farsi/Persian UKRAINIAN
Latvian Malay Croatian Nepalese Finnish CZECH Spanish SI
Maori Romanian MANDAEAN LAO Indonesian Russian Finnish
Slovak BULGARIAN Hungarian Kannada Aramaic/Syriac Dinka D
Turkish Filipino Hebrew SERBIAN
French Swahili Maltese Korean Edo Bulgarian Pukapuka Ni
SWEDISH Punjabi Bosnian Armenian Thai ASSYRIAN KOREA
German Assyrian Hungarian Arabic Chaldean Portuguese
Sinhala IANANEA VIETNAMESE Chinese Samoan Thai

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2019_School Events in Chronological Order

➤ Start of the 2019 school year

On Saturday, 9/2/19, we started another year of work at Macarthur Polish Saturday School. Traditionally, the inauguration of the new school year took place at Mary Immaculate Church in Eagle Vale during the Mass celebrated for the students of our school. The Holy Mass was presided over by the parish priest – Father Slawek Plonka, who together with us sang in the Polish and English language the favorite song of our holy Pope John Paul II titled “Barka”. The students of our school took an active part in the Holy Mass. Together with the local parish, we prayed for God’s blessing and protection of the Mother of God for the whole year of education for students, teachers, and parents.



After the Mass, the organizational meeting began, during which important information about the safety rules at the school as well as the curriculum in individual age groups was provided. Coordinator of the school – Mrs. Bernadeta Kawa welcomed the new students and their families with joy and introduced them to the rules of the school’s work. In the meantime, our students under the supervision of Gosia Helwani, Urszula Koscianska and Michal Macioch created beautiful artwork. The theme of which was the memories of past holidays. Our little artists showed not only artistic talent but also great ingenuity. Take a look at the results of their work and judge it for yourselves



➤ Easter Assembly

On Saturday, 6 April 2019, the Polish Saturday School in Macarthur held an Easter assembly, the aim of which was to present rich and colorful traditions and customs associated with the celebration of Easter. As usual, the weather was good for us. In the morning we were greeted by beautiful, smiling autumn sunshine.

We started the day with lessons in individual classes. Of course, Easter was the subject for the day in all age groups. The teachers brought with them lots of props, such as Easter palms, decorated Easter tablecloths, baskets where you could find salt, eggs, bread, sausage, lambs made of sugar – all those products that we bring to church on Holy Saturday for the blessing. Together with the children, we put all items in a basket lined with a beautiful white serviette. Children took turns naming all the products. There were also art classes: children made baskets from a previously prepared template, decorated eggs that magically turned into beautiful, colorful and happy Easter eggs. Class II and III, under the watchful eye of Mrs. Malgosia Jagodzinska, prepared a huge Easter egg for everyone to admire. Look and see for yourself – isn't it great?!

At 11:30 we started the official Easter celebrations. I was happy to watch on one side: the parents, grandparents, and friends of our school gathered on that day, and on the other side, a group of forty beautifully and festively dressed students of our school. The children looked really colorful and cheerful. After a short welcome to all the guests who came to our ceremony – it was time for children to perform. We started with the singing of our school song, which in itself gives both performers and listeners a lot of positive energy each time. Then, students from the 5th and 6th class presented Polish Easter traditions and customs. In words, they painted pictures of Easter palms, Easter baskets, a Sunday breakfast, and a Smingus-Dyngus on Easter Monday. These verbal images were intertwined with songs. The first of them was entitled "Skacze droga zajac" and the second "Ida dzieci ze swieconym". The next performers were class II and III students who used their gigantic Easter egg-shaped cardboard, which they prepared themselves. The main character of their performance was of course ... an Easter egg. Then we sang together another song titled „Pisanki". After class II and III, class "O" and "I" students appeared on the stage. Little performers were reciting a happy rhyme titled "I tell you, I tell you – what I have with this hare". The children delighted the listeners not only with the fact that they learned their texts beautifully but also with their children's joy and a smile painted on their small faces.

The last point of the program was the dancing of all children to the rhythm of the lively and cheerful song "Miala baba koguta. "Ah – how much joy was there! Not only children danced, but also teachers along with them. It was an extremely colourful and energetic dance that gave all of us a lot of positive energy and joy. The originator of the dance part of the performance was the teacher of our oldest class, Mrs. Grazyna Pakulska, whom I would like to thank not only for watching over the whole program but additionally, with her extremely valuable ideas, she undoubtedly enriched our assembly. At this point, I cannot omit a very important element, which was a beautifully decorated Easter table. It was an extremely important component and at the same time the background for all performances. For the third time, Mrs. Krysia Morawski agreed to prepare it for us. The beautifully decorated Easter table was for children and all of us gathered this day a lesson in itself: a lesson of rich Polish traditions and customs associated with the celebration of Easter. I am deeply convinced that the memories and images of the Easter table will be deeply remembered by our pupils. After the performances, it was time for the competitions. The first of these was to peel and eat the eggs as quickly as possible. The winner was the routine and experience as the team that included grandmother, grandfather and granddaughter came first. Grandma took no time to peel an egg, and a grandfather ate it in the blink of an eye. In the next competition, 3 racing teams were holding an egg throughout the length of the room as follows: the youngest participant (child) carried an egg on a large tablespoon, mum carried an egg

on a tiny teaspoon, and dad carried an egg on a large tablespoon that he kept in his mouth. There was a lot of happiness, joy, and applause, and as a reward, all participants of the competition received a chocolate egg. The last point of the program was refreshments prepared by our irreplaceable mothers from the Parental Committee. There was of course coffee, tea and a lot of delicious cakes. I am very grateful to ladies Dominika Smutek, Agnieszka Godden, Agatka Pochanke and Hania Beshai for their great attitude and help. It was also a time for a meeting, a conversation – time for Easter wishes. The atmosphere of the meeting was filled with warmth and kindness. Thank you very much to our dear sponsors: Marysia and Marek Strzemkowski and Lucyna and Wieslaw Pazdzior for funding the lottery prizes.



➤ Children's Day Celebrations

"Project co-financed within the framework of Polonia funds of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Poland"

June 1 is by far the most beautiful and joyful day of the year – the day when in a special way, we realize what great joy and hope for the world our children are. Could you imagine a world without children? What would it be like? I definitely do not want to live in such a world. I am glad that I was raised and grew up in a country where children were celebrated each year. It is a very special day in which we, adults looking at our own children, try to discover the child within us. In my opinion days like "Kids Day" should be celebrated more than once a year.



On Saturday, June 1, together with children from the Song and Dance Ensemble "Kujawy", we celebrated "Children's Day" at our school. Instead of our usual routine, the students had the opportunity to take part in sports and dance games under the watchful eye of Mr. Michal Macioch. From 9:30 am to 11:00 am, the schoolyard was full of childish uproar, laughter and shouts of joy, all mixed up cheerful music. Michal began with a musical warm-up. Children were stretched, jumped and participated in all the physical activities which, by their very nature, define being a child. Children are very often tireless in their need for physical activity and movement. After the warm-up, it was time for the sports competition. The participants were divided into two groups, they rushed to the goal in the races, ran with the ball back and forth, ran with the ball over their heads and between their legs and performed much other fun and happy sport activities. It was a really happy, healthy and noisy time, just as it should be during an event such as "Kid's Day". At eleven o'clock, Paul the Magician appeared out of nowhere and entertained not only our little ones but also parents and teachers who could not refuse themselves the pleasure of meeting this mysterious visitor. Paul the Magician absolutely charmed, or rather "enchanted", every one watching his amazing magical performance. I looked at the laughing and happy faces of our children. It was joy and happiness in the purest form ... Moments like this give life its true meaning. After the show, both children and adults thanked the Magician for his performance with thunderous applause. I allowed myself to notice, that the work he is doing, is one of the most joyful jobs you can imagine. The constant laughter and joy of children are always present while he works. After this highlight of the day, the children enjoyed a well-deserved meal prepared by our wonderful parents. But wait a minute ... I almost forgot to mention. At the end of the day, the children did not go home empty-handed. The children were given a gift prepared by one of our Mothers, Mrs. Dominika Smutek - President of the Parental Committee. How much fun did the kids have while they were opened their packages! It is impossible to mention here all those who supported me in the work on the organization of this event. However, I need to mention and honour several people. I would very much like to thank the Consul General, Mrs. Irena Juszczyk and Mrs. Vice-Consul, Joanna Splocharska, for their help in co-financing the project "Kid's Day" at our school as part of the Polish Community funds of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Poland. Thank you to Lucyna and Wieslaw Pazdzior, whose generous hearts have opened, once again, for us. Thank you very much on behalf of myself and the whole school, for the delicious sausages that you fed our children, parents, and teachers last Saturday. There were enough sausages for everyone. Not one sausage was left. I wish that you could see the enthusiasm, with which the kids were eating your sausages. Once again from the bottom of my heart, A HUGE THANK YOU!

In conclusion - thank you all for everything! It is difficult to express and describe in a few clumsy words, how grateful I am to you, dear Parents for your support and works on the preparation of this day. Let the payment be the smile and joy of the children that benefitted from all the joys of this special day. To sum it up, I would like quote Pope John Paul II *"children are the spring of the family and society, the hope that is still flourishing, and the future that is constantly opening."*



➤ 80th Anniversary of the outbreak of World War II

"Project co-financed within the framework of Polonia funds of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Poland"

Thank you for a beautiful performance. It is difficult to find words describing this event - thanks to you Dear Michal Macioch and Cecylia Macioch we had the opportunity to experience something really special! Let the tears of emotion that flow from the eyes of those who had the opportunity and the privilege of being part of this spectacle be a testimony to how much the scenes you recalled fell into the hearts of viewers. A great performance! Depth of experience! A lot of emotions! Thank you once again for all your efforts you put into preparation of this exceptional spectacle! I strongly encourage everyone to read the article by Marianna Lacek OAM, who amazingly captured the extraordinary atmosphere of this performance. The article entitled *"I believe in Poland so much, Mother"* is available on the websites of [„Puls Polonia"](#) and [„Bumerang Polski"](#).





➤ School excursion to Parramatta Park – tour of the Old Government House

On Saturday, September 21, 2019, our second school trip took place, the main purpose of which was to visit the Old Government House in Parramatta Park. The project of the trip - submitted in the first half of this year - was fully covered by the funds of the "Polish Community" Association 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 "Polish Community" Association for their financial assistance in the implementation of this project. It is difficult to find words that would fully reflect the joy that we could spend this day together as a school community: students, teachers, and parents.

The primary goal of our trip was to show students the contrast between the comfortable - but extremely fast lives that we live today, and the lives of the first white settlers in Australia more than 200 years ago, whose way of life was radically different from ours.

Educational goals of the trip:

- Meeting students' intellectual and cognitive needs.
- To familiarize students with historical buildings in New South Wales.
- To familiarize students with the way of life of the first white settlers in Australia.
- To encourage students to respect people's hard work.
- Improving students' physical fitness and health through contact with nature.
- Strengthening social attitudes and integrating the group of participants and their families.

At 10.00 in the morning we met in the agreed place, which was the park shelter rented by the school. It was marked with white and red balloons to help everyone find its location. The children's faces were full of enthusiasm, curiosity for the new place and joy of being able to spend the day together with their peers exploring and having fun together. The waiting time for the arrival of all participants of the trip was filled with great fun at a nearby playground, which turned out to be a real and undeniable hit of the day. Located in a beautiful place - kind of in the heart of the Park, but out of the way. The list of advantages of this unique playground is really long. Listing them should begin with a clear division into zones for children of different age groups. We found a beautiful, colourful area for toddlers and preschoolers, and one for older children. Even our teenagers enthusiastically climbed the huge rope structure and went down 20 meters with shouts of joy. I think that we adults also found some outdoor

entertainment there for ourselves! Strength is in diversity! It was noticeable that each of the playgrounds is wonderfully equipped and maintained. Surrounded by trees and greenery and stretched so that the individual zones are a bit distant from each other - the playground in Parramatta Park combined a lot of advantages that enchanted our children as well as us adults: there was a little bit of wood and nature, it was colourful, with trampolines and wooden climbing structures. Everyone could really find something interesting for themselves there.

At 11.00 in a joyful procession, we set off to explore the Old Government House. Located on the hill in the heart of the Park, it caught the eye of all of us from the moment we arrived. With great interest we crossed the high thresholds of the building in which the governors of New South Wales had lived about 200 years ago. Interest and joy of visiting the rooms were painted not only on the faces of children but also on the faces of accompanying parents. Although it was forbidden to touch the exhibits in different rooms, everyone was pleasantly surprised by the interior furnishings and compared them with today's lifestyle and technology that is available to everyone and everywhere.

The Old Government House is a heritage-listed former "country" residence used by ten early governors of New South Wales between 1800 and 1847. It is considered a property of national and international significance as an archaeological resource. It also serves to demonstrate how the British Empire expanded and Australian society has evolved since 1788.

The poor quality of the original Sydney Government House, as well as crime and unsanitary conditions in the growing Sydney settlement, convinced successive Governors of the desirability of a rural residence. In 1799 the second Governor, John Hunter, had the remains of Arthur Phillip's cottage cleared away, and a more permanent building erected on the same site.

Old Government House is furnished in the style of the early 1820s. It is situated on 110 hectares of parkland overlooking the Parramatta River, and is Australia's oldest public building. The grounds are of particular interest as they are a relatively undisturbed colonial-era reserve surrounded by what is now Australia's largest urban area. The practice of "firestick" land management conducted by the aboriginal Darug tribe, which once dwelt in the area, is evident from certain scars to be seen on trees still standing (their bark being removed to build canoes).

In July 2010 the Old Government House and Domain was inscribed on the World Heritage List as one of 11 Australian sites with a significant association with convict transportation (i.e. the Australian Convict Sites) which together represent "the best surviving examples of large-scale convict transportation and the colonial expansion of European powers through the presence and labor of convicts".

At 12:00 we gathered for lunch together. I am very grateful to Mrs. Basia Bialas together with her husband and Mrs. Hania Beshai, who made sure that nobody was hungry during the trip and fed us all with delicious hot dogs and sandwiches. Visiting the Old Government House and having fun in the fresh air undoubtedly sharpened our appetite, so we have eaten all previously prepared food with great taste. At lunch, parents spent time talking to each other in a relaxed, family atmosphere. Some children chose to play with a soccer ball on a large field, while others, under the care of their parents, enthusiastically returned to play on the playground mentioned above previously.

Our trip turned out to be a great adventure for both children and adults. Once again, we are grateful to the "Polish Community" Association for enabling this trip to happen.

After a long, exhausting day we returned to our homes at about 4 PM. I think that for many of us, including students from our school, this trip was a great history lesson. It also taught us to appreciate what sometimes goes unnoticed, because the lives of us people living in the 21st century in many

respects differ from that from two hundred years ago. Let us hope that there are many such lessons ahead of us...



➤ Celebrating Poland's Independence Day

On Saturday, November 9, students and teachers from Macarthur Polish Saturday School celebrated the 101st anniversary of Poland regaining her independence.

Like every year around this time, the lessons were aimed at familiarising children with the Polish national symbols such as flag, national colors, national emblem and anthem. These activities were aimed at forming and developing national identity in children who are students of our school. When conducting classes, teachers of individual classes used methods suitable to the age and cognitive abilities of a given age group.

On that day both students and teachers were asked to bring to school - souvenirs brought or received from Poland, with which we then decorated tables and made a mini-exhibition for everyone to admire. The students from the oldest class had to additionally say a few words about the items they brought and justify why they chose such a souvenir. On the map of Poland purchased by the school last year, students glued tiny flags, marking the place of origin of their families. We also practiced the Polish

national anthem, in each of our classes without exception. Class I students, under the guidance of the teacher, arranged educational puzzles, the subject of which was the map of Poland. They liked this game so much that they did it three times in a row – of course, each time they would finish in less and less time. The children were also colouring the Polish national emblem – White Eagle, after they got familiarised with the legend of Lech, Czech and Rus. At 11.00 we all gathered in the schoolyard to sing the Polish national anthem. For the needs of the school, a huge white and red flag was sewn. Each participant in this event was holding it in his or her hands while singing the anthem.



➤ Celebrating the end of 2019 School Year

On Saturday, December 7, the end of 2019 school year celebrations were held at the Macarthur Polish Saturday School. We started the day with a Mass celebrated in the Mary Immaculate Catholic Church at Eagle Vale. The Mass was presided over by the priest of the local Australian parish – Father Slawek Plonka. Father Slawek, who is an extremely warm and open person and very respected by his Australian parishioners, has been supporting our school ever since the school was first established in February 2017. During the Mass, we sang several well-known Polish and English religious songs. We are extremely grateful to Father Slawek for his kindness and hope that this cooperation will continue in the future.

After the Mass, we went to the Robert Townson Public School, where the official end of the school year celebrations was held. We started by reading a congratulatory letter addressed to us by Consul General Monika Konczyk. Mrs. Consul General, who due to the sheer volume of duties could not be present at the ceremony rewarded us with a beautiful letter, which was addressed to teachers, the student community and also, and perhaps above all, to our dear parents.

The next point of the day was the performances presented by students of each class. The first to perform on the stage was our sweet pre-schoolers. They performed the song "They call me poleczka". It was an extremely charming and sweet presentation.

Then the combined classes of Mrs. Malgosia and Mrs. Bernadka were presenting. The students sang the song "Kukuleczka". The last to perform were the students of our oldest class, who, under the watchful eye of Mr. Michal Macioch, presented the puppet theatre, based on the well-known poem by Jan Brzechwa entitled "On the market stall." Our young artists were rewarded with huge applause, which they undoubtedly deserved not only by the beautiful declamation of the poem, but also with the beautifully made puppets they created themselves. The background to all of the performances was a beautiful Christmas decoration prepared by Mrs. Krysia Morawski, who traditionally enriched the day with a Christmas tree brought from home and a beautifully decorated table. The items displayed on it evoked memories of white, snow and Christmas. It was a visual lesson of Polish traditions and customs related to Christmas celebrations.

The end of the school year is always an opportunity to summarise the year-round work of teachers and students. After the student's performances, each student was awarded a school certificate. Awards for the best Library user and prizes for exemplary attendance were also given out. In a special way, with a tear in our eyes, but also with undoubted pride we said goodbye to the students of our oldest class. The following girls said goodbye to us: Gabriella Helwani, Julia Koscianska, Malwina Lesniewicz, and Anya Bienkowska. We wish our dear graduates all successes in the following years of learning the Polish language.

The day ended with a surprise visit from Santa. How much joy this extraordinary and long-awaited guest brought with him! And the gifts he brought were really wonderful. These were: a ticket to Taronga Zoo for each of our students, a book from the series "I love Poland" entitled: "80 Anniversary of the outbreak of World War II". Among the gifts was also a toy and something sweet for our little ones.

2019 was a year of beautiful anniversaries and of hard work in classrooms. Both teachers, students and their parents have earned themselves a wonderful summer holiday. Have a good rest everyone and come back to us with a supply of fresh energy and enthusiasm in the new 2020 school year.



2019_Visits & Workshops organized by the school

➤ Legal and financial presentation at White Eagle Hall in Cabramatta

On Saturday 30 March 2019 a financial and legal presentation took place in the White Eagle Hall in Cabramatta. The first such presentation took place on November 26 last year in the building of the Consulate General of the Republic of Poland in Sydney. The initiator of the meeting was Mrs. Vice-Consul Joanna Splocharska. Mrs. Vice-Consul, who is an extremely energetic person, and at the same time nice, cordial and full of innovative ideas in a noticeable way animates the Polonia Community in Sydney. The presentation, whose theme was: "Pension planning and inheritance law - answers to your questions" was prepared and entirely carried out by experts in their fields - Mr. Michal Brandt and Mr. Rafal Rogusz.

Mr. Michal Brandt (Senior Financial Planner – APT Wealth Partners) has been working in the financial services industry for 10 years. He is passionate about the complexity of the financial world and is enthusiastic about solving the secrets of the world of economics for the real good of his clients. Mr. Brandt skilfully and steadily leads his clients to achieve their financial goals. What's more – he believes that listening and understanding the needs of customers is the most important factor on which skillful financial advice is based. The specialty of Mr. Brandt is planning retirement and building an investment portfolio.

The second speaker was a lawyer, Mr. Rafal Rogusz, from the law firm Benefit Legal Lawyers. This company is a harmonious team of experienced specialists in the field of law and commerce. The main priority of Benefit Legal Lawyers is high-quality cooperation with the client in order to achieve the best results favorable to the client. The company operates based on the “no win – no fees” principle.

Benefit Legal Lawyers has many years of experience in:

- Claims for damages,
- Commercial leasing,
- Matters relating to family law,
- Inheritance law,
- Civil proceedings,
- Claims for negligence,
- Business transactions.

The whole meeting was conducted in a nice and family atmosphere. During the break, the audience gathered in the room had the opportunity to make coffee or tea and buy donuts and other tasty baked goods from the Copernicus Bakery. The proceeds from the sale were entirely allocated for the needs of the Polish Saturday School in Macarthur.

Summing up, I would like to once again express the words of gratitude to the initiator of these meetings – Mrs. Vice-Consul Joanna Splocharska and both Speakers: Mr. Michal Brandt and Mr. Rafal Rogusz, who have dedicated their free weekend time to the good of the Polish community. It is impossible not to mention here our host – the Polish Association in Cabramatta. From the first moment, Mrs. Krystyna Cyron supported our initiative and thanks to the openness of her great heart, we were able to use the White Eagle Room free of charge. I also thank dear mums from our school, without whom the meeting at Cabramatta could not take place and all the listeners present that day.

Federacja
Polskich Organizacji
w NPW



Federation
of Polish Associations
in NSW

ZWIAZEK POLSKI ABRAMATTA



Konsulat Generalny
Rzeczypospolitej Polskiej
w Sydney



Apt.

WEALTH PARTNERS



Macarthur Polish Saturday School



➤ A very successful well-being workshop

On Saturday, June 29, a workshop with Mr. Krzysztof Bakalarz – Polish psychologist, psychotherapist, and trainer took place at our school. During the meeting Mr. Bakalarz in an extremely professional manner answered three important questions:

- Can stress be beneficial for us?
- Is it possible to avoid it, or is it better to learn to deal with it?
- What to do when nothing works and we feel worse and worse?

Despite the fact that the workshop continued for over two and a half hours, all those who participated in it agreed that the time had passed so quickly. I could hear comments like: *"I wish my sister was here", "I wish I had taken my daughter with me", "I have learned so many interesting things today", "great workshop", "what a fantastic idea", "will there be more workshops like this one?"*

The seminar undoubtedly enriched the people who participated in it. We hope to continue these workshops in the future. We are extremely grateful to Mr. Bakalarz for preparing and conducting it.



➤ Polonia Day

On Saturday, May 25, we celebrated Polonia Day at the Bankstown Polish Club. This Function was held under the patronage of the Federation of Polish Organizations in NSW. This Function was funded by the Senate of the Republic of Poland over Polonia and Poles Abroad in 2019 with the cooperation of the "Freedom and Democracy" Foundation.

The running of this Function was entrusted to Mr. Michal Macioch, who in an extremely professional and warm way, introduced the guests to the theme of the evening, and announced all performers presenting their program.

The main act was the performance by the Song and Dance Ensemble "Kujawy". We admired all three groups of dancers performing on the stage. Our Polish hearts were filled with pride and joy, while we watched and admired the various Polish dances performed by "Kujawy". This made us feel like one big Polish family.

During the first half, the oldest group performed two dances. The first dance was "Zywiec Mieszczanski, followed by "Sztajerek ". We also admired the middle group, gracefully performing

"Krakowiak".

"Krakowiak" also began the second half of the program - this time, the performers were boys and girls from the youngest group. The charm of the dancing children brought a smile to the faces of the gathered guests.

This Function was also graced by recitals from two young soloists invited to perform on the day. The audience admired and appreciated the performance by Miss Paulina Pazdzior playing a piece titled "Polonez Oginski" on the violin. We also eagerly listened to Mr. Michal Macioch, soloist, who performed three songs. Both recitals showed artistic impression and experience for the audience gathered that day at Bankstown Polish Club.

Also during the first half of this Function, students of the Polish Saturday School in Macarthur presented a patriotic program entitled "Beautiful Poland - our beloved home country". Despite the fact that the kids had very little time to prepare for the performance, they did a really fantastic job presenting poems and songs about Poland. The highlight of the program was a poem entitled "Beautiful Poland - our beloved home country", which described pigeons disputing over which part of our beloved country is the most beautiful. In the end, all the birds came to the conclusion that our entire country, including every region - without exception, has its own charm and for us Poles, will always be closest to our hearts and the most beautiful.

In the second half, our students presented the program titled "For You Dear Mom". Our Function, Polonia Day coincided with Mother's Day in Poland, which falls on 26 May. This part of the performance by our students consisted of reading their own comments, in which the children described their Mothers and expressed their gratitude for a Mother's work, care and love - a love which is like no other - the most beautiful kind of love...

Thank you very much to our dear school students, for representing our school so wonderfully on Polonia Day. With real pride and joy, I looked at our boys and girls beautifully dressed in their school shirts and who, in the language of their Parents and Grandparents and with a smile on their children's faces, recited poems and sang Polish songs.

I would also like to thank our teachers at Macarthur Polish Saturday School, for the preparation of the program and dear parents who practiced verses and songs with their children at home and devoted their time to come to Bankstown on that day.

We would like to thank the management of the Bankstown Polish Club in Bankstown, for their ongoing hospitality and support. We also extend words of gratitude to Lucyna and Wiesław Pazdzior, for donating the delicious sausages. The children ate them with a great appetite, giving them strength for their performance.

Finally, a big word of thanks, gratitude and recognition to Mrs. Jolanta Zurawski, who coordinated the whole event on the occasion of Polonia Day at the Bankstown Polish Club. We thank Wiesia and Marek Wojnicz - Artistic Directors of "Kujawy".

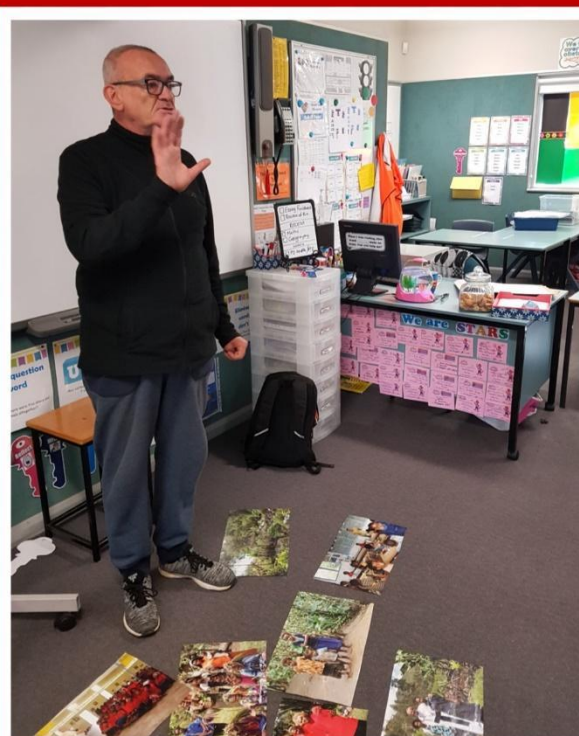
Thank you to the young soloists, Mrs. Paulina Pazdzior and Mr. Michal Macioch. Thank you for the work and dedication of such wonderful people - Poland will remain in our children's hearts.

I strongly believe that these children will carry the language, tradition and culture of their country of origin to the next generations of Polonia in Australia.



➤ A missionary at our school

On Saturday June 15, a group of very interesting guests, including Mr. Andrzej Stalenczyk, the Head of the Pastoral Council at the Minto parish, visited our School. Mr. Stalenczyk brought with him, Father Krzysztof Stachowiak, a Missionary from the Holy Family Fathers who has been working in Papua New Guinea for the past 15 years. Father Krzysztof, who is an extremely charismatic and humble person, met with our children, and in a very pictorial and warm way, described to us the realities of his work in Papua New Guinea. Children and adults listened with great attention to Father Krzysztof, describing the realities of his Missionary work. It is hard to believe that living standards in a country that is geographically so close to Australia, differ radically from the standards of living on our Continent. It was a great lesson for us all, to appreciate things that we take for granted every day. We are very grateful that, despite his busy schedule, Father Krzysztof found time to meet with our school students.



➤ National Reading at Macarthur Polish Saturday School

Co-financed by the "Freedom and Democracy" Foundation at the Senate of the Republic of Poland as part of the "Supporting Polish Education in the World" initiative.

On Saturday, September 19, our school took part in an initiative by the Polish Presidential Couple: The National Reading project. This year, the list of suggested texts for national reading has been enriched by Polish novels, including the following titles:

1. *Dobra pani* - Eliza Orzeszkowa;
2. *Dym* - Maria Konopnicka
3. *Katarynka* - Boleslaw Prus
4. *Mój ojciec wstepuje do strazaków* (ze zbioru: Sanatorium pod Klepsydra) - Bruno Schulz
5. *Orka* - Wladyslaw Stanislaw Reymont
6. *Rozdziobia nas kruki, wrony...* - Stefan Zeromski
7. *Sachem* - Henryk Sienkiewicz
8. *Sawa* (z cyklu: Pamiatki Soplicy) - Henryk Rzewuski

At 10:30, students from all classes gathered in one of the classrooms, and attentively listened to the texts read to them. The readers were dancers from "Kujawy" Song and Dance Ensemble. Two young people dressed in national costumes devoted their free time and came to visit our school to present the aforementioned texts to our students. Monika Potaczala and Jakub Kawa read beautifully in Polish to children who, sitting on the carpet, listened to novellas surrounding the readers in a semicircle.

On behalf of myself and the Macarthur Polish School community, I'd like to thank these two wonderful young people for their enthusiasm and time. We wish you, many future successes. We hope you can pay us another visit in the near future. We also thank the "Freedom and Democracy" Foundation at the Senate of the Republic of Poland for financing this wonderful initiative.



➤ A session on the best ways to save up money

On Saturday, October 26, Mr. Michal Brandt (Senior Financial Planner, APT Wealth Partners), paid us a visit. The main purpose was to give answers to two important questions: "how and why should we save up money?" Mr. Brandt shared with us his deep knowledge and experience in his area of expertise.

During the morning session addressed to parents of our school, Mr. Brandt recalled key points from all financial topics. He presented important nuances that are worth knowing about and whose existence we are often not aware of due to lack of time and an extremely busy lifestyle... After the presentation Mr. Brandt was answering specific questions from individual participants. I am deeply convinced that every person present at the presentation has found at least one thing for themselves.

At 11:45 Mr. Brandt met with the students of our school. Several young girls and boys from the Polish Liverpool High School have also accepted the invitation to the presentation. Mr. Brandt, who made his debut as a lecturer for school-aged children, proved himself excellent in his new role. He explained to the gathered boys and girls what saving money was about in a very matter-of-fact way. The presentation was interactive – the children would answer Mr. Brandt's questions, and their answers were written on the whiteboard. We learned that each of us, without exception, must choose each day whether, for example, should we pay bills first or buy a new phone, and how much depends on our financial priorities. Mr. Brandt explained to our pupils how one, bad and reckless decision can get us into serious financial trouble.

After the presentation, the children presented Mr. Brandt with the cards they had prepared themselves.

To summarise, it needs to be added that there are priceless things in this world that money can never buy and that there are people ready to help others selflessly – people with a heart open to the needs of other people and hands stretched out to comfort and support. These values are priceless, and Mr. Michal Brandt has proved to us that, despite the fact that he is an excellent expert in many areas related to finance, he can at the same time offer his valuable time, enthusiasm and dedication to sharing his knowledge and experience with others. The only payment he received was the smile of our children and the cards they made themselves with the simplest and at the same time one of the most beautiful words in our Polish language "thank you".



➤ Annual General Meeting

The Annual General Meeting was held on the 16th March 2019 and elections for 2019 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 2019, the body that oversees the activities of our school:

- | | | |
|---|---------------------------|------------------|
| • | President | Dominika Herdzik |
| • | Vice President | Agnieszka Godden |
| • | Public Officer | Helen Kokoszka |
| • | School Coordinator | Bernadeta Kawa |
| • | Treasurer | Hanna Beshai |
| • | Secretary | Ewelina Cini |

➤ 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 November 2019 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 2019, the school applied for a grant from the "Wspolnota Polska" Association at the Senate of the Republic of Poland supporting "Polish education abroad". It was with great excitement that funds were received in November 2019. 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
- "Wspolnota Polska" Association
- Officeworks
- APT Wealth Partners

- "Our Polonia" Association
- ADS Group Pty Ltd
- Doctor Kaja Lukasiewicz
- Krakus - Lawson Bros.

➤ Sausage sizzle Fundraising @ Gregory Hills Bunnings

On the seventh of April - on a beautiful, sunny, autumn morning, several enthusiasts from the Macarthur Polish Saturday School met near the entrance to Gregory Hills Bunnings to sell sausages, drinks and donuts, and thereby collect valuable funds for the school. From the early hours of the morning, our dear parents were busy organizing the stand: they set tables, fried sausages and onions, cut rolls, put drinks into ESKYs filled with ice, prepared donuts and buns for sale. Our goal for the day was to sell all of these products. It took many hands to work. Thanks to the diligence and generosity of Dear Ladies from the Parents' Committee: Dominika Smutek, Agnieszka Godden and Hania Beshai, who enthusiastically took care of the organization of this event - we had enough willing hands to help throughout the whole long day. Everyone offered as much time as he could - some came for an hour, others for two or three, and still others were there throughout the whole day. This type of task cannot be done and carried out alone - it needed well-coordinated team of parents. Beloved - I am absolutely impressed by your diligence, generosity, professionalism and completely unique and top-shelf cooperation in the team. Not only we were as usual able to earn valuable funds for the school - additionally we all have had cheerful and super joyful day which is demonstrated by the attached photos. Thank you all for everything - I know how much effort you put in to make this day to be a successful one.



➤ Other key achievements for 2019

2019 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;
- Registered as "Creative Kids" provider;
- 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.