



Macarthur Polish Saturday School

Annual Report 2020

Macarthur Polish Saturday School aims to create a loving and caring environment for children to learn Polish Language, and understand their roots through their tradition, culture and customs. It also aims to shape beautiful souls and minds, creating in the young generation of Polonia appreciation of the lasting ideals of the Polish national traditions and culture while forming strong and long lasting friendships.

Our school's objective is 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.

Without a doubt, the 2020 school year can be described as unique and exceptional. In the past year, students, parents and teachers confronted a new and extremely difficult challenge caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. The necessity to use online education was not an easy transformation for anyone. Nevertheless, despite all difficulties and obstacles, the school, students, parents and teachers rose to the occasion. Therefore, we can claim many successes achieved not only during face-to-face classes, but also during online education (in areas where it was possible).

The following events took place in the 2020 school year:

- ✓ Easter celebrations;
- ✓ Mother's Day;
- ✓ "Drawing for the Pope" Competition;
- ✓ A series of events commemorating the 100th anniversary of the Battle of Warsaw;
- ✓ 102nd Anniversary of Poland regaining her Independence;
- ✓ International Children's Day Celebrations;
- ✓ "JP II as Creator and inspiration for Creators" Competition;
- ✓ 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.

2020_Key students' achievements

➤ Award of the Consul General for Krystian Smutek and Maja Mukherjee

During our 2020 End of the school year celebrations the top students from Polish Saturday Schools were awarded prizes for outstanding results in learning the Polish language. Macarthur Polish Saturday School nominated two year six students: Maja Mukherjee and Krystian Smutek for this award in the 2020 school year. Krystian and Maja started learning Polish 6 years ago. I had the joy and the privilege of being their teacher at Polish school. I remember these quiet, calm, ambitious children who have 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 huge pride and satisfaction I looked at Maja's and Krystian's smiling faces as they were receiving their well-deserved awards. Moments like this are the most meaningful moments of every teacher's life and career and give a sense of a job well done. Their success is also, and perhaps above all, the success of their parents, whom we congratulate with all our heart for raising such a wonderful children. Without your sacrifice, without your hard work, a day like this would never become a reality. Dearest Maja and Krystian, congratulations once again from our entire school community! We wish you nothing but success in the future!



➤ "Drawing for the Pope" Competition

In this extraordinary and certainly difficult year, marked by the coronavirus pandemic that overshadows the lives of millions of people around the world, we also celebrated great anniversaries

related to the life and sanctity of one of the most outstanding Poles in the history of our nation. In May this year, we celebrated the 100th anniversary of his birth, and a month earlier we remembered the moments of his departure from this world to the Father's House, which happened 15 years ago. In connection with these beautiful anniversaries, Dr. Elzbieta Kolo from Melbourne undertook the great project of working on the jubilee edition of the book: "Gift to the Holy Father - Polish community in Australia". The main idea of this work was to collect in one edition both prose and poetry as well as art work dedicated to the memory of this Great Man and Outstanding Pole. A few months before the planned edition of the book, Dr. Elzbieta Kolo made an appeal to children and youth of the Polish community to send in competition entries. The "Drawing for the Pope" competition met with a positive response among children who are the students of the Polish Saturday School in Macarthur. Thirteen competition entries were submitted and sent to the competition organizers. To our great joy, 9 of them have been published in this beautifully published jubilee book. All published works are signed with the name and surname of the child who created the artwork. Let me thank Dr. Elzbieta Kolo for her enormous dedication, passion and enthusiasm with which she undertook the work of publishing this book. I would also like to thank our wonderful students and their parents who contributed to the creation of this work. Our school has purchased 8 copies of this book, which will be presented as a gift to each of the families involved in the "Drawing for the Pope" competition. Thanks to the courtesy of the competition organizers, the children will also receive gifts funded by the EJK Book Publishing House. There will also be prizes, which were purchased for each child taking part in the competition by the Parent Committee at the Polish Saturday School in Macarthur. Please see for yourselves how wonderful their work is! Dear students - I warmly and wholeheartedly congratulate you on this beautiful work, in the creation of which you have your part. Let this beautifully published book, and through it the protection of Saint John Paul II, lead you along the paths of your life 😊



➤ Competition „JP II as a Creator and inspiration for Creators”

Last year, the NSW Polish Teachers' Association, led by Mrs. Marianna Lacek, initiated the competition "JP II as a creator and inspiration for creators". The students of our school took an active part in the preparation of the competition entry - a short film in which each class illustrated some of the most important quotes of the Saint John Paul II. His words, spoken decades ago, changed the course of world's history - to which we, the people of the twenty-first century, are eyewitnesses.

The official presentation of a commemorative diploma for participation in the competition took place on Saturday, December 12, during the end of the year celebrations at our school.

On behalf of the NSW Polish Teachers' Association, the diploma for the whole school community was presented by Mr. Albert Vella, the long-term President of the NSW Federation of Community Languages.

I strongly encourage everyone to view our competition entry.

[VIDEO Link-Click HERE](#)



2020_School Events in Chronological Order

➤ Start of the 2020 school year

On Saturday 08/02/2020 we inaugurated another school year at the Macarthur Polish Saturday School. To my great joy and satisfaction, the school is growing beautifully, which is demonstrated by a large number of new students and their families joining our school community. Despite the rain and bad weather, the atmosphere during the event was really joyful and happy. We started the day at 9:30 with a Holy Mass offered for the Macarthur Polish Saturday School community at Mary Immaculate Catholic Church at Eagle Vale. The Mass was presided over by Father Slawek Plonka – a Polish priest who is the parish priest of a local Australian parish. As the years go by, his Australian parishioners get used to our presence at Saturday Masses for the beginning and ending of each school year which is shown by many nice and warm comments shared with members of our school community. Traditionally, we sang songs in Polish and English with huge enthusiasm. I am very grateful to Michal Macioch and Darek Plust for leading the songs during the Mass and for the beautiful performance of "Barka". Our school students took an active part in the Holy Mass by reading mass readings and prayers of the faithful. The pre-schoolers carried gifts to the altar. Together with us, the Consul General of the Republic of Poland in Sydney – Dr Monika Konczyk, prayed for God's blessing for the whole school. She honoured us with her presence on this special day. Thanks to the attendance of Mrs. Consul General, our event was very unique and special. We are very grateful to the Consul General that despite the rainy weather and the great distance, she joined us at our ceremony.



I am deeply convinced that the moment when Mrs. Consul presented our new students with their new school shirts, will remain in their memory and in the memory of us all for many years. Mrs. Consul General

is an extremely warm and approachable person, and her presence has undoubtedly enriched us all. Among the invited guests, we also welcomed Mr. Adam Gajkowski - President of the NSW Federation of Polish Organisations, who tirelessly supports the activities conducted by our school. We were also happy about the presence of the manager of the Polish Song and Dance Ensemble "Kujawy" - Mrs. Jolanta Zurawski. Our school works very closely with "Kujawy" Ensemble promoting Polish culture, language and traditions of our country of origin. During the organisational meeting, important information was provided to parents regarding school safety regulations. The teachers briefly familiarised the parents with the curriculum in individual classes. During that time, students of our school, under the watchful eye of the Ladies from the Parent Committee, performed artistic works on the subject of "Vacation memories".

After the official part of the event was over, our school's teaching staff met for lunch with Mrs. Consul General and other invited guests. The atmosphere of the meeting was extremely warm and friendly. Once again, thank you from the bottom of our hearts to our Dear Consul General for the precious moments spent with us. We are deeply convinced that Polish education in Sydney will develop happily with such a leader.

➤ Puppet Theatre Performance

On Saturday, 22/02/2020, students from the oldest class presented to their younger school friends a poem by Jan Brzechwa entitled "On the market stall". The performance of the poem in the puppet theatre version was prepared by the actor - Mr. Michal Macioch and his mother Cecylia Macioch. Young viewers were delighted with the performance! Congratulations to our great actors and to Michal and his mother for a delightful spectacle they have prepared for us!

<https://youtu.be/KB57dwxCz-w>



➤ 2020 Easter Celebrations



Students from the Macarthur Polish Saturday School continue to work hard. Although the school was closed – the project of making Easter palms at home has been completed. These stunning Easter palms are the most beautiful testimony to how we as a school community are loyal and dedicated to remembering Polish traditions and customs associated with the celebration of Easter. At the same time, they were an expression of longing for Saturday classes at our Polish Saturday School.

Thank you very much to our beloved students and their parents for the gorgeous photos of the Easter palms that were sent to us last week.

It is amazing how from a tiny spark a hot flame of Love, Joy, Hope and Belonging exploded...

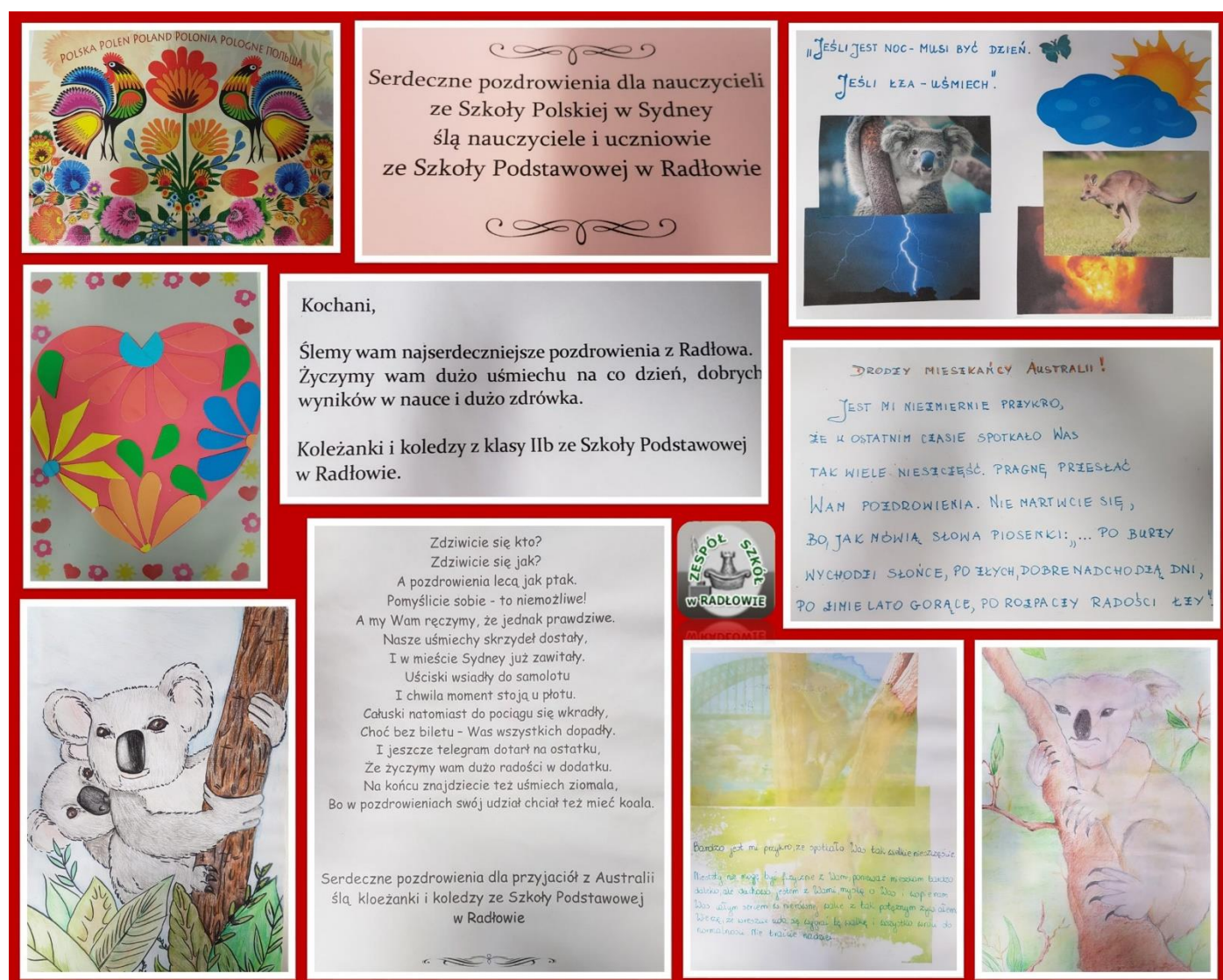
Thank you, Dear Mrs Celinka, for your uplifting initiative. Thanks to these photos for the first time in this extremely difficult year, we've actually managed to feel the atmosphere of the upcoming Easter celebrations. 😊

➤ A Beautiful gift from Poland

I am very delighted to share with you the exciting news, which – I trust – will raise and strengthen the hearts and minds of many of you during these difficult and crazy times... Around mid-March – a week before the sudden closing of the school due to coronavirus, I received a package from Poland sent to me by my very good friend who is an English language teacher at the Primary School in Radlow (Poland). The city of Radlow is located in the region of Poland called Malopolska – about 10 km from the town

where I come from. In January this year when with a great anxiety the whole world was witnessing the tragedy of bushfires, which since November was continuously devastating our continent, my friend – Mrs. Beata Maciaszek contacted me and offered to prepare a gift for our school community. She got one of the grades that she was teaching involved in the preparation of this gift. The goal which Mrs. Beata had set for herself was to “lift our hearts and spirits” during this extremely difficult time. Mrs. Beata also asked me if our school community would be interested in long-term cooperation with Radlow Primary School, which would give us the opportunity to exchange experiences regarding issues related to pollution and protecting the world’s natural environment. In mid-March, when the package from Poland reached us, the whole world was more and more plunged into the tragedy associated with the coronavirus pandemic, which was starting to affect every human-inhabited continent. Recently, I was able to find more time to sit back, take a good look and read carefully the materials received from Radlow Primary School. I have to admit that I was deeply moved and touched while reading the wishes from both children and teachers. Mrs. Beata and her students have put a lot of work and heart into preparing this beautiful package for us...

Included in this gift were hand-drawn cards with Koala bears and more. There were also greeting cards for each of our teachers, which, unfortunately, I have not yet managed to pass on, because coronavirus succeeded in turning our lives upside down, everything went so quickly and the school was suddenly closed...



Among the materials sent to us you could also find a beautiful poem dedicated to us – written with the intention of lifting our spirits – please read it for yourself – I guarantee lots of positive feelings, warm thoughts, and maybe some tears of emotion...

The thought that came to my mind after reading all the submitted materials are primarily related to the fact that TRUE GOODNESS is still very much present in this world that we live in and you don't really need to look far to find it. The proof is children's hearts full of compassion and empathy for the misfortune that happens to another human being. I bow my head low to the work of Mrs. Beata, the School Principal and the entire Teaching Staff at the Radlow Primary School, who, in addition to providing children with knowledge related to subject teaching, also teaches them moral and ethical values.

➤ A 100 Anniversary of birth of Saint John Paul II

On Monday, May 18, 2020, we commemorated the 100th anniversary of the birth of our Great Countryman – Saint John Paul II. On that day in Poland, many occasional concerts and festivities were held to celebrate the memory of this extremely unique Person. We too – the community of the Macarthur Polish Saturday School – expressed our gratitude for the gift of Karol Wojtyla's life by making beautiful frames for the portrait of the Great Saint. I would like to thank Mrs. Cecylia Macioch for her yet another – beautiful initiative.



➤ Our joyful lunch breaks

I think it would be extremely hard to find someone who doesn't like school breaks. In any case, I have never met anyone like that. Breaks are a time of joy, socializing and relaxation for both children and us teachers. Below you will find a collage of photos that I managed to take during a few breaks last term. I must admit that watching the students of our school play happily with each other gives me and other teachers a lot of joy and satisfaction. We see friendships being made. Also the smile and enthusiasm of these children are simply contagious and spread to all of us - while motivating us and giving us strength. I strongly believe that the memories of those breaks spent at play in our Saturday school will remain in the memory of our pupils for many years to come, and the friendships that were made here will survive the passage of time and our kids will take them with them into their adults' lives.



➤ Summary of term 2

Preschool

After a long break, we had to get used to each other all over again, ie remembering the names of teachers and classmates in the group, as well as the rules of behaviour in the classroom and in the school yard. During the first class, we repeated the material processed during the first term:

Graphomotor exercises (drawing with a pencil along a trace)

Developing the ability to pick up and understand children's literature (reading stories or poems out loud to children).

The new topics discussed during Term 2 were:

- Different professions.
- Four Seasons with particular emphasis on WINTER.
- Pets.

The main goal of the topic PETS was to familiarise children with the ways of expressing respect to our domestic pets, such as: cats, dogs or fish in the aquarium, and how to properly care for them. During the lessons, preschoolers played the roles of various pets and imitated their sounds. During art time, we made our favourite animal together.

The main aim of the topic related to different PROFESSIONS was to broaden the children's knowledge of what adults do in their daily work. My observations show that young children (3-5 years old) are keenly interested in what their parents, older cousins ??or grandparents do for work. Children enthusiastically describe what work their mum or dad is doing and they imitate that profession while playing with their peers.

Another topic discussed was introduction of the characteristic features for each of the four seasons based on the analysis of the illustration "FOUR SEASONS". The aim of this lesson was to make the children aware of how many seasons we have and how we can correctly distinguish and recognise each of them (weather conditions, processes occurring in nature, wearing appropriate clothes).



Kinder & Year 1

After a long break caused by the coronavirus pandemic, we enthusiastically returned to school for the last four Saturdays of the second term. I could see the joy painted on the faces of our students when they could finally meet their classmates whom they had not seen for so long.

In class I, the children learned five magic letters, which included: E, Ó, U, P, Y. I think that the biggest problem for boys and girls was the letters "Ó" and "U". It is not easy to understand why a letter that can be written in two different ways is pronounced exactly the same way. For our pupils, this is just the beginning of the adventure with this magical and sometimes problematic letter. During the lesson, we have discussed the ways how honey is made. There were questions like: Where do the bees live? Do bees have their queen? What do bees do in winter? Is honey sweet, sour or bitter? Should we care for the bees and why?

During the introduction of the letter "P" thanks to our imagination, we could see "falling snow", while we sang a joyful song "Winter, winter, winter." We also talked about penguins, which are birds that love to play in the snow. We squeezed together under a large umbrella to shelter from heavy snow. There were also action games pretending we were a train to the rhythm of the well-known song "Jedzie pociąg z daleka".

These were really busy and extremely interesting four Saturdays at our Polish school. We are looking forward to seeing students of classes "O" and I in the next term of the 2020 school year.



Year 2 & 3

In term two, the students of grades 2 and 3 learned more difficult letters from the Polish alphabet. First it was the double sign "sz" and then "cz". Children enthusiastically tried to pronounce words that are sometimes difficult to say phonetically, such as: czapka, szalik, szumi, czas, poszli, czekali and the like. On the second last Saturday of Term 2, we started our adventure with softening some of the sounds in Polish language. The first softening that we have been learning about was "s" and "si". We paid a lot of attention to reading exercises, as well as building simple and more complex sentences with the new words, in which you could find a newly learned sounds. The students also matched the pictures with the written words they had learned in class. It was great fun! The children were very good at understanding the new concept of softening the letter "s" with either a dash or an "i". At the same time, they were able to distinguish in which words they belonged. Learning the song "Siala baba mak" was a great help in learning how to pronounce these difficult sounds correctly. We had a lot of fun singing this famous Polish song.



Year 4, 5 & 6

In the second term of the current school year, students from the oldest class:

Completed their "How to stay healthy" posters. The girls and boys were brainstorming everything that helps develop our physical and mental health, and then worked in groups on posters promoting a healthy lifestyle. Dear children - your work was really great! We strongly believe that this lesson was not only a great opportunity to enrich your Polish vocabulary, but also broadened your knowledge of how each of us should care for our own health and the health of others

Presented to students from younger grades a staging of a poem by Stanislaw Jachowicz "Chory kotek". The props for the poem were made by the children during class time.

They worked on expanding vocabulary around the topic of "Winter" in Poland and Australia. Together with the teacher, the students even "made" their own snowmen.

They focused and practiced the singular and plural forms of nouns. Each of the Saturday class ended with singing the canon "Panie Janie".



➤ The 100th Anniversary of the Battle of Warsaw

ON THE 100TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE BATTLE OF WARSAW THE MACARTHUR POLISH SATURDAY SCHOOL REMEMBERS ITS HEROES

On Saturday, August 15, 2020, we celebrated the 100th anniversary of the Battle of Warsaw, referred to as the 18th decisive battle in the history of the world. *"It was a special moment for Poland, reborn after years of captivity. In the hour of the trial, the entire nation fought to defend the hard-won freedom. The victory, known as the Miracle on the Vistula, became a glue for the next generations of Poles".* (Text Source)

We too, the community of the Macarthur Polish Saturday School, paid tribute to our heroic ancestors through a short program commemorating this great anniversary. Unfortunately, due to the current situation caused by the coronavirus pandemic, we were unable to invite our dear parents, grandparents and guardians to our performance. On Saturday, August 15 - teachers from each class conducted lessons whose main goal was to develop patriotic feelings in our students by learning about this extremely important for Poland and the whole of Europe victorious battle. The lesson content was adjusted to the age and knowledge skills of children. At 12:00 we all met in our school yard. While standing on the grass, students and teachers formed the shape of Poland, and the Vistula River "flowed" through its centre. The background for our performance was a large white and red Polish flag.

It was in this setting that we sang the song "Plynie, Wisla plynie", known to us all since very early age. We are very happy to share with you photos from this event. Let us be united by the pride of the heroism of our ancestors who fought for the freedom of Poland with the sacrifice of their lives. With all my heart I would like to thank our wonderful students for their beautiful performance. I strongly believe that Poland will never be lost again not only because our majestic Vistula River flows as it always have, but also because we have such wonderful students and their outstanding parents and grandparents. It is you, who bring your children to Polish schools every Saturday, to ensure that our Polish language, culture and tradition of the country of our ancestors last here on a continent thousands of kilometres away from our homeland. I would also like to thank our beloved teachers together with Celinka, Michal, Darek and Kris for their ongoing help and support.

WE WILL REMEMBER YOU! <https://youtu.be/Cihl-Tmluk>



➤ Summary of term 3

Preschool

To us teachers – our students are the most important. We want them to be cheerful, happy and to willingly take part in lessons, games and in the broadly understood life of our Polish school. In this very special and unique year, boys outnumber the girls. Almost every Saturday they bring their favourite cars, planes and motorbikes for the "show and tell" activity. And this is what inspired the first topic in Term 3: different means of transport – by land (cars, bicycles, trains, scooters), – air (helicopter, rockets, planes) – and sea (ships, ships, boats). During the lesson, children were presented with illustrations of the different means of transport – they attempted to correctly pronounce the names of individual means

of transport, dividing them into the three above-mentioned groups. There was also a talk about safe cycling or scooter riding and how we should be crossing the road safely.

Art classes - we made traffic lights together that the students could take home with them.

Learning new songs: "The train is coming from afar" and "The wheels of the bus go round and round".

The second topic covered was "Body Parts". Learning and correct pronunciation of different body parts such as: head, stomach, arms, legs, etc. which was based on viewing educational posters presenting parts of the human body. The teacher points and asks: "What is this?" The students build and develop comprehension competences by listening and answering the questions.

Art classes - children used play-dough to make a whole person and then drew a human head.

Another topic was around the theme "We like books", the main aim of which was to make children aware of the importance of books in the life of every human being and the benefits of reading books on various topics.

Based on the question "What's a fairy tale?" we conducted vocabulary building conversations with the children. Illustrations in books and fairy tales were the starting point for the conversation.

The "Dress Up" game was an undoubted hit of Term 3. I would like to thank all the parents for their cooperation - all preschoolers brought their costumes. During play, children learned how to dress independently (buttons, zippers, velcro) and developed their imaginations by dressing up as different fairy-tale characters.

On the occasion of the 100th Anniversary of the Battle of Warsaw, we organised a mini exhibition of items related to Poland in the classroom: the emblem, the flag, and folk crafts.

Learning the poem "Who are you? - Little Pole".



Kinder & Year 1

In Term 3, we managed to conduct 6 out of 9 classes at school face to face, which we were very happy about. Our adventure learning Polish sounds and letters continues, despite the many unpleasant surprises that the coronavirus has brought on us. The new letters we learned include: P, N, S, R and J. Each Saturday is a fantastic, new adventure. For example, during the lesson where I introduced the letter S to the children, we packed a suitcase with clothes for a trip to Poland. The suitcase contained: pants, shorts, sweater, socks, skirt and a dress. Of course, our imaginary journey took place by plane. Each of the children then had to pack their own suitcase, naming all the clothes they put into it. The newly learned words were then divided into syllables and sounds, and then we built sentences based on the above-mentioned words.

Learning letter R, we went on an imaginary family bike trip. We took the bike apart and named each of its parts. We learned that a bicycle must have: wheels, tires, pedals, a chain, a sit and many other elements to be able to ride on it. Lying on our backs, at a safe distance from each other, we turned our legs in the air, pretending that we were riding a bicycle.

The introduction of the letter J was based on the word "egg". We discussed the differences between a boiled egg and a raw egg. We found out what a raw egg looks inside. We talked about the many different ways of making egg dishes and menus where eggs are essential.

One of the patriotic topics planned for this year, were the events related to the 100th anniversary of the Battle of Warsaw. In a manner adequate to the cognitive abilities of the students, I told them briefly about the events related to this great anniversary. On that day, children coloured Polish national symbols, such as the White Eagle or the flag. We also played with puzzles that showed the map of Poland. We had a lot of fun doing it. Together with students from other grades, we also learned patriotic songs: "Plynie Wisla, Plynie" and "Jestesmy Polka i Polakiem".



Year 2 & 3

In term 3, we learned new and rather difficult letters and sounds in the Polish alphabet which are: c, ci, n, ni, z, zi. The following lesson topics were covered:

New sounds and letters - exercises in writing, creating and building words and writing them down;

Reading aloud using correct punctuation;

Simple conversation in Polish describing grandma. Writing and addressing a letter to grandma;

"Miracle on the Vistula" - that is, the 100th anniversary of the Battle of Warsaw. Conversation with children about this important event in Polish history;

Learning the song "The Vistula is flowing, flowing;

Simple conversation in Polish about the role of father and grandfather in the family;

Singing new and well known songs.

At the end of Term 3, a student from our class - Emilka Schlage came back from a trip around the world. Her coming back was received with great joy by all her classmates. Warm welcome Emilka! We are extremely glad that you are with us again.



Year 4, 5 & 6

- The subjects studied in the combined 4th, 5th and 6th grade included the following topics:
- The largest rivers of Poland:
- Finding rivers on the map and cities located by these rivers,
- The poem "Rzeczka",

- From the mountains to the sea - the long run of the Vistula River,
- Learning new vocabulary around the topic of "Rivers" (source, bend, river bank, waterfall, etc ...),
- Water transport.
- Favourite food / food names. What do we eat for breakfast, lunch, dinner and dessert.
- Days of the week.
- The 100th anniversary of the Battle of Warsaw.
- Europe - its history and legends about (her rise)
- European Union.
- Countries neighbouring with Poland (students prepared interesting facts about a selected European country and presented them to the class in the form of posters, slides and homework in their books).
- Grammar: verbs, conjugation of verbs by persons. Numbers 1-1000000
- Last Saturday of Term 3 was dedicated to our dads. We read the poem "My Dad", we collected words describing our fathers, children were asked to write how they like to spend time with their dad. We have created Father's Day cards using our own imagination. Everything has been captured on the WhatsApp application for everyone to see.

We concluded our last day at school with singing songs for our dads.



➤ Celebrating Poland's Independence Day

On Saturday, November 14, on the occasion of the National Independence Day, the community of the Macarthur Polish Saturday School celebrated the 102nd anniversary of Poland regaining its independence with a short program. At 12:00PM the teachers and students of our school proudly sang the Polish National Anthem and our cheerful and uplifting school song. Year 6 students also greeted

their friends from Poland 😊 The classroom where the performance was held was beautifully decorated with souvenirs from Poland brought by our students to school that day. I am very grateful to those who worked hard to prepare this wonderful and eye-catching exhibition of souvenirs and other items brought from Poland. This beautifully decorated table with its rainbow of colours was not only a pleasure for the eyes, but was also a great visual lesson of Polish culture, tradition and history for the students of our school, who for a few minutes looked at all the beautifully displayed items with bated breath.

We are happy to share a video of the events of that day. We hope that this uplifting film will bring a smile to your face and bring back memories of our home country...

<https://youtu.be/QggXCJ7yuLA>



➤ Kid's day Celebrations

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

On Saturday, October 24th our school community celebrated the most beautiful and joyful day of the year - International Kids Day. Despite the fact that the coronavirus pandemic prevented us from celebrating Kid's Day in June - we did not give up and managed to celebrate it at the end of October.

This is the day when in a special way we realise what a great joy and hope for the world children are. Could you imagine a world without children? What would it look like? I definitely would not want to live in such a world.

At 9:15 am, pre-schoolers and students from grades "0" & 1 took part in an hour- long show called "Kitchen Experiments". Our youngest children really liked the program prepared for them by Sonia from the "Mad about Science" Educational Program. In small groups, they made various kinds of experiments and researches and were simply delighted to see with their own eyes how bubbles suddenly appear from nothing in their small cups or how the papers immersed in various liquids change colour. At the same time, in our school yard, students from older grades were doing all sorts of sport activities with Michal Macioch. Our students had the opportunity to take part in sports and dance games. The school yard was full of childish uproar, laughter and shouts of joy, all mixed up with cheerful music. Michal began with a musical warm-up. Children were stretching and jumping and doing all other 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, the time has come for the sports competition. The participants were divided into two groups that rushed to the goal, each team ran with the ball back and forth, put the ball over their head and between their legs and performed many other fun and happy sport activities. It was a really happy, healthy and noisy time - just as it should be during the event such as "Children's Day".

At 10:30 am it was the turn of a well-deserved meal prepared by moms from the Parent Committee. Dear mums - I am still and invariably amazed by your fantastic attitude. On behalf of our school community, I would also like to thank you Lucynka and Wieslaw Pazdzior, whose generous hearts are invariably open to us. Thank you for the tastiest sausages in the world!

After a nice meal there was a change. This time kids from grades 3 to 6 gathered together to participate in the "Forensic Detective" show. The younger children went for fun activities prepared for them by Mr. Michal Macioch. All these attractions have met with a great enthusiasm from all the students.

But wait a minute ... I almost forgot to mention that at the end of the day the kids did not go home empty handed. Each of them was given a gift prepared by one of our mums - Mrs. Dominika Smutek - the President of the Parental Committee. Awww - how much fun did the kids have while they were opening their presents!

It is impossible to mention here all those who supported us in the organisation of this event. However, I am tempted to mention and honour several people. I would very much like to thank the Consul General Monika Konczyk and Mrs Vice-Consul Joanna Splocharska for their help in co-financing the project Children's Day at our school as part of "the Polish Community funds" of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Poland".

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 work on the preparation of this day. Let the payment be the smile and joy of children who have benefited from all the attractions of this special day. To sum it up I would like to quote after Pope John Paul II that ***"children are the spring of the family and society, the hope that is still flourishing and the future that is constantly opening."***



➤ Celebrating the end of 2020 School Year

The year 2020 was an extremely unique, strange and difficult year for many of us - and so was its ending at our school ... Due to the coronavirus pandemic, it was impossible for us to meet together as a school community at various celebrations that traditionally unite our group of students, teachers and parents. Parents could not physically attend assemblies to celebrate Mother's or Father's Day or other events during which we commemorated the 100th anniversary of the "Miracle on the Vistula" or the 102nd anniversary of Poland regaining its independence. It was very important to me that our school family would be able to come together at the end of the year graduation ceremony. Luckily we have managed to find a solution ? It was not the first time that Father Slawek Plonka - the parish priest at Mary Immaculate Parish in Eagle Vale has opened to us not only his big heart, but also the doors of his church. Father Slawek celebrated thanksgiving Mass for our school community, after which in the presence of parents and grandparents our students were handed out their school awards and certificates. We were also honoured by the presence of Mr. Albert Vella - the former long-term President of the NSW Federation of Community Languages, whose presence at our ceremony touched me personally. Mr. Albert Vella has been supporting our school from the very beginning. On the day he handed us a Diploma of Recognition for students of our school for participating in the competition "Saint JP II as a creator and inspiration for creators ". Also present at our ceremony was Mr. Adam Gajkowski

- President of the NSW Federation of Polish Organizations. We thank them both for their meaningful presence.

After that, we sang the Christmas carol "Przybieżeli do Betlejem pasterze" and then we went to the park near the church, where Santa handed out Christmas presents to the children. Ah! How much uproar and childish joy there was! And the gifts this year were really rich ? Each student received a book from the series "I love Poland" entitled "100. Anniversary of the Miracle on the Vistula" and the second about how Lolek became the Pope. These titles were chosen not by accident as last year we were celebrating the 100th anniversary of the birth of St. John Paul II and the 100th Anniversary of the Battle of Warsaw in 1920. The children also received toys and a ticket to the farm.

The event was conducted in a nice and family atmosphere. Not only children but also parents were happy to socialize and spend some time together. This extraordinary year has taught us to appreciate things that we sometimes take for granted...



➤ Annual General Meeting

The Annual General Meeting was held on the 22nd February 2020 and elections for 2020 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 2020, 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 |
| • | Member | Anna Nowicka |

➤ 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 2020 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 2020, the school applied for a grant from "Freedom & Democracy" Foundation and "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 2020. This is the first time that the school has applied for this grant and we are very thankful to receive this support.

In 2020 school also received a grant from STRONGER COMMUNITIES Program. The money was used to purchase Polish national costumes for all students. We kindly thank Stronger Communities Program for their 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)

- Stronger Communities Program
- 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 15th of November - on a beautiful, sunny, spring 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, Hania Beshai and Ania Nowicka 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 parents. 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 2020

2020 was a 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 other Polish Schools in Sydney. 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 website was completed 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.