

Primary entry #51: Irrawang Public School



The Irrawang Issue



Tahleah Manton-Ralph and Ruby Edgar-Jones are learning the Gathang language in the drop-in room.
Picture: Paige Baker

Guudji Yiigu: a place open to everyone

By **XANDER TOWERS** and **TRAVIS STOW**

THE drop-in room at Irrawang Public School is an initiative put forward by the Irrawang Aboriginal Education Group (IAEG), along with the Irrawang P&C, and is used as a place to come together.

It was opened on February 27 – National Apology Day. It was decided that this would be a fantastic opportunity to welcome the whole community into the school.

One of the purposes of the room is to let Aboriginal parents and students have pride in their heritage and for parents of all cultures be a part of the school. It is a comfortable place to have a chat to people from many different backgrounds. It also provides an opportunity to learn what others have overcome.

The name was changed this year to Guudji Yiigu which is a greeting. IAEG Representatives, Mary Bolte and Craig Hammond, school Aboriginal representatives Xander Towers and Ruby Edgar-Jones, plus students, staff and community members were there to enjoy the revelry.

The school celebrated with visiting Aboriginal dancers and a special assembly with past students.

Guudji Yiigu is open every morning from 8.30am to 9.30am. Aboriginal community members share the duties of hosting parents and community members in the room.

By **ASHLEIGH MITCHELL**

FIVE schools in Raymond Terrace are in the process of implementing their very successful Positive Behaviour for Learning (PBL) framework into the wider community.

The five schools are Hunter River High School, Irrawang High School, Irrawang Public School, Raymond Terrace Public School and Grahamstown Public School.

STARS represents the new motto for the community initiative: S for Safety, T for Trust and honesty, A for Acting responsibly, R for Respect and S for Success.

At Irrawang Public School, PBL has been in place since 2010. PBL is a scaffold approach that teaches behavioural expectations as part of a social learning curriculum across the whole school.

Rachael Martin, relieving assistant principal at Irrawang Public School is a firm believer in PBL providing success for students past primary school to assist with their future. "I am always telling my class that these lessons we teach aren't just for school. They are life skills which will help in high school, in the community and later on in life when you are seeking employment," Ms Martin said.

Barry Hunkin and Merri Jamieson are leading the community team to extend the successes that Irrawang has experienced at the



Paige, Paige and Caitlyn in front of one of the student designed PBL murals.

Picture: Tia Hocroft

school. Mr Hunkin said "In Raymond Terrace we are proud citizens that treat each other with respect, take ownership of our daily choices and strive for a safe community."

Sharing successful strategies is one of the ways that the school has benefited in developing their framework. Visiting schools have come from Kurri Kurri, Moree, Tenambit and Karuah. Further reasons for

these great achievements are because of the whole school commitment, from the principal through to the staff and students.

The high five helping hand was introduced this year by Stage 1 teacher, Miss McEvoy. They were implemented to teach Irrawang students how to problem solve and learn some basic steps to assist with getting along with people. The

high five helping hand steps are:

1. Ignore: if somebody is annoying you, just ignore.
2. Friendly talk: say nice and friendly words.
3. Move away: go and take five breaths and move away.
4. Talk firmly: say can you please leave me alone?
5. Report: if the person is still annoying you report to a teacher.



A small group of the noisy bats in the reserve opposite McDonald's.
Picture: Paige Perry

Raymond Terrace driven batty

By **PAIGE BAKER** and **PAIGE-LEA PERRY**

THE people of Raymond Terrace are concerned about the screeching noises of the bat population. This is a major disturbance for residents in the proximity of McDonald's, in the reserve area between Adelaide Street and William Bailey Street.

Around mid- to late-afternoon is when the noise

is at a peak. The bats, technically known as grey headed flying foxes, reside in this area because they are attracted to native trees in this habitat. Several students living in this area have voiced complaints. Their major concerns are the noises, the smell and the damage to property from bat excrement. Resident, Kalan Butler, lives across the road from the reserve and said:

"Some nights I hardly get any sleep." The council relocated the bats into the centre of the park. This has helped although noise is still an issue.

The government has listed them as a vulnerable species and the bats have a role in keeping our ecosystem in good health. Bats are needed to pollinate flowers and also spread seeds to increase tree growth.



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