



Cartoon: Jordan

## How Tony Abbott is ruining the country

### EDITORIAL

By **BRYCE – ROOM 4**

THERE are many things that could be said about Tony Abbott; increasingly few are nice.

Two main areas that really grind the public's gears at the moment with Mr Abbott revolve around his withdrawal of funds from hospitals and schools in an attempt to save money. Frankly, he may be saving money but it is certainly at the cost of Australian people.

Unemployment is on the rise – this might have something to do with Mr Abbott closing 17 public hospitals, forcing 10,000 health workers and 3500 nurses out of their jobs. How can patients be the priority if services are cut? Any guess who will suffer? That's right, the Australian people. In 2015, only 33 per cent of Australians are satisfied with his performance and I would say it's guaranteed to get worse. Mr Abbott tries to blame the reductions on Labor because it was the former government who previously revised the agreement, but the Australian people can see through the Prime Minister.

Unfortunately he has also refused to honour the Gonski agreement – \$1.2 billion has been

stripped and he said it would abandon the agreement completely in 2017. This means that funding for students based on individual need (no matter what problems they might have), is scrapped. This means that kids will not get as much help and support for the careers they might want in the future. The giveagonski website recommends that we need to work together to make the politicians understand that all schools need to be appropriately resourced to deliver a high quality education. So you can go to the website and register your support for the education of young Australians. David Gonski commented on the recent funding cuts, saying "I sincerely hope that in the period between now and 2017 the federal government will change the presently budgeted position".

Abbott is expecting people to do more with less. So that means more patients, fewer nurses; more students, fewer teachers. With less money in schools and hospitals, the average Australian will have to wait and experience crowding because there are too many people and not enough resources. Mr Abbott is expecting to save money cutting \$1.8 billion but what is the cost to the average Australian? These cuts will lead to further separation between the 'haves' and the 'have nots'.

# Students celebrate Indigenous culture

By **MICHAEL – ROOM 1**

NAIDOC stands for National Aborigines and Islanders Day Observance Committee. NAIDOC is celebrated with all Australians to create awareness and acknowledge Aboriginal culture and history.

NAIDOC Day at Wakefield this year celebrated Aboriginal culture in the local area. The school invited an Aboriginal elder as well as Jessica Wegener, the project manager from Biraban Land Council, who shared their stories and knowledge of Aboriginal history of the area.

The Didgeridoo (Yidark) group from Lake Macquarie High School also shared their talents with a short musical performance. Guests were also invited to take the opportunity to taste some traditional foods.

An Aboriginal elder, Uncle Bill Wonnarua Aniwan man, shared his life experiences and stories about the sacred sites within the local Biraban Aboriginal Land Council boundaries.

Students learnt that Mt Yengo at Wollombi is a beautiful site and holds the traditional spirit of the culture, however it has recently been deliberately vandalised by people unknown to the area. Mt Yengo is the ancestral home of Baiame. Baiame is the creator of the local mountains, rivers, lakes and caves. Mt Yengo is the site that he jumped back into the spirit world. For the Aboriginal people the destruction of Mt Yengo is like



Staff and students of Wakefield School enjoyed listening to the stories of a local Aboriginal elder at the NAIDOC Day celebrations.

destroying a school, library or home because this particular site is one of education; it is where the elders pass on oral histories.

There are many sacred sites around Lake Macquarie and the Newcastle area including meeting sites for men and women, as well as other significant educational sites.

However Aboriginal people prefer not to mention the location of these sites, as it puts them at risk of other people vandalising or destroying them. All of these sites are of great importance to Aboriginal people as this helps them to preserve their history and pass on knowledge, culture and traditions.

## Cops CARE so you are safer on the road

By **JACOB – ROOM 2**

POLICE officers on the Central Coast run the Community And Road Education Scheme (known as CARES) to teach school students of all ages about the road rules so they are aware of risks and dangers.

They talk about being safe in a car, bike, scooter or skateboard. All students go through a theoretical lesson on road rules and safety ideas, where they are able to spot hazards and choose the safest options. Once everyone is

confident with the rules, it's time to put them into practice. A course is set up with real traffic lights, roundabouts and intersections. They have designated lanes for directions and you get to practise with 'traffic' in the form of other students.

All students are on push bikes and are wearing appropriate safety equipment, such as a helmet. If you break some rules the police will pull you over and deduct points from your licence.

This is a great way to



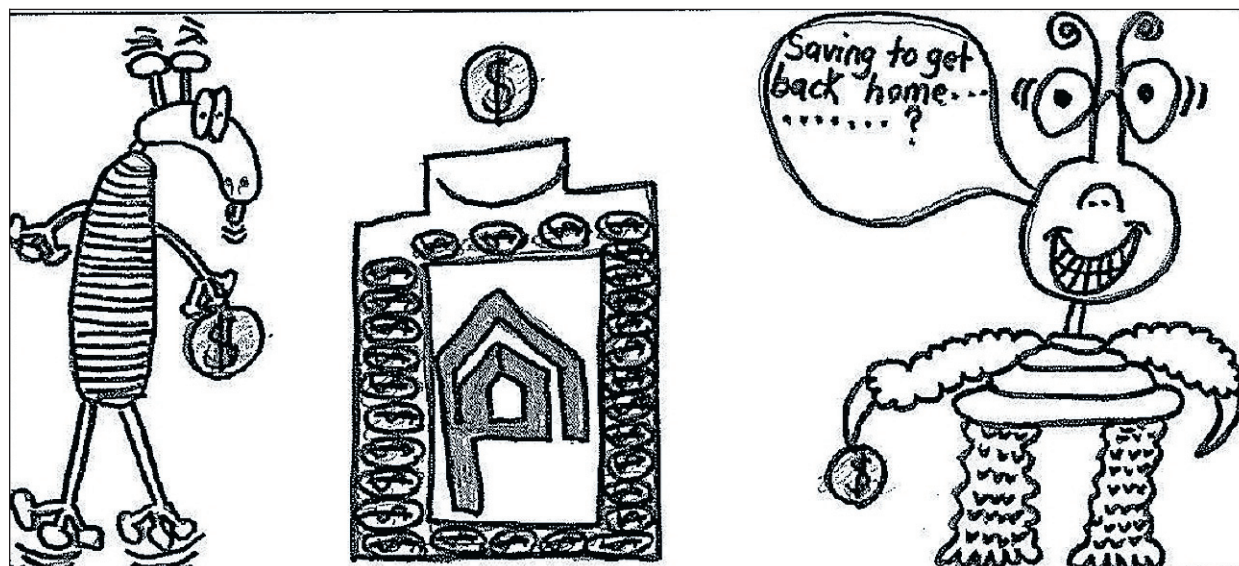
Wakefield School students take part in the Community and Road Education Scheme.

learn the road rules. It was really valuable to be able to work with the police and ask questions to make sure that we are all safe in the future.

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