

Join in our Research Conversations

Tuesday 11 June 2024

4.00pm to 6.00pm

**David MacFarlane Centre
(DMC), Pymble Ladies'
College, Avon Road Pymble**

This event is free to attend.

RSVP HERE

The afternoon will be friendly and informal and we invite you to share ideas and discussion.

If you're considering action research, postgraduate research in Education, adding skills to your practice or connecting with *Pymble* as a research destination, the session is perfect for you.

Join us for a Research Conversations afternoon in Term 2 with Pymble Ladies' College teachers, Elaine Lee, Sandra Nolan, Kate Giles and Victoria Adamovich.

Elaine and Sandra are presenting at the 2024 International Coalition of Girls' Schools (ICGS) conference in Baltimore, along with Kate Giles who is concluding her Global Action Research Collaboration (GARC) project with ICGS. Victoria will present on her Master's Thesis on EAL/D and wellbeing. Each presenter will explain the genesis of their work and talk about the conference or course opportunity that has sparked their presentation.

Pymble staff and colleagues from other schools, universities and organisations are warmly welcome to this informal and supportive gathering which showcases the importance of research in education.

For information, please contact pymbleinstitute@pymblelc.nsw.edu.au.

Pymble Institute

Pymble Ladies' College





Elaine Lee

CHINESE/JAPANESE TEACHER, PYMBLE LADIES' COLLEGE

New for New South Wales: Modern Languages K-10 Syllabus and Program Development

Abstract

The landscape of language education in New South Wales (NSW) K-10 curriculum is evolving, driven by a deep-seated understanding of the interconnectedness of languages with cultural competence, communication skills, and global citizenship. This exploration delves into the core components of the NSW K-10 Modern Language syllabus, shedding light on its rationale, aims, outcomes, content, and assessment strategies.

What prompted this exploration?

The Modern Languages K-10 (2022) Syllabus replaces the language-specific K-10 syllabuses. It recognises the critical importance of communicating in the target language as the central goal in language learning. As we delved into the rationale behind the revisions, emphasising the imperative of equipping students with multilingual proficiency in an increasingly interconnected world, I was struck by the potential impact of these changes on fostering linguistic diversity, intercultural understanding, and cognitive flexibility among learners. Inspired by the depth of thought invested in crafting this curriculum, I embarked on a journey to unravel its complexity and implications for language education practices in a school setting.

About Elaine

Elaine Lee completed her Bachelor of Arts in Linguistics at Macquarie University and her Master of Teaching at the University of New South Wales. Following her graduation, Elaine embarked on a teaching journey in Hong Kong, where she worked as a language teacher in both high school and primary school settings. Since 2015, Elaine has been a member of the Modern Languages faculty at Pymble Ladies' College, where she currently serves as a Chinese and Japanese teacher. Passionate about fostering linguistic proficiency and cultural understanding in her students' learning experiences, she is committed to providing engaging and effective instruction in the language classroom.



Sandra Nolan

ENGLISH TEACHER, PYMBLE LADIES' COLLEGE

Resilience and the English Classroom: Can pedagogical choice improve student wellbeing?

Abstract

In high achieving academic settings, pressure to succeed is no doubt impacting the wellbeing of students. A student's perception of "the grade" often dominates their preparedness to develop essential skills necessary for the agile learner. This session focuses on approaches to learning and feedback that foster not only the critical thinking skills necessary for future fit individuals but emotionally intelligent and resilient young people.

What prompted this study?

At a professional learning opportunity, the College's lead psychologist, Andrew Scott, took staff through a Mental Health First Aid course and provided practical strategies in coping for students who experience anxiety. He explained the power of the breath and its impact on the sympathetic and parasympathetic nervous systems. While Andrew led us through these breathing activities, I found myself thinking about the need for similar "toolkits" in the academic classroom. I started wondering how I could use the power of pedagogy to improve the learning experience of students, their relationship with feedback and assessment, and along the way build the resilience and intrinsic motivation needed for the future.

About Sandra

Sandra undertook her Bachelor of Arts and Master of Education at University College Cork, Ireland, where she completed her Professional Research Paper; "An enquiry into the effects of using intrinsically motivating pedagogies in the English classroom, on extrinsically motivated students". In the field of education, Sandra aims to be a teacher responsible for the holistic development of each student. Sandra places great value on the hidden curriculum and its creation of students who learn by inquiry and think critically. She has taught in a diverse range of educational settings in both Ireland and Australia.



Kate Giles

HEAD OF WELLBEING K-6, PYMBLE LADIES' COLLEGE

Connecting with our feelings - Using collaboration to strengthen social and emotional skill development in Year 3 girls

Abstract

This research project focused on one Year 3 class of 22 (8 and 9 year old) girls at Pymble Ladies' College. The goal was to explore whether active collaboration techniques used in Compass Directions lessons would strengthen girls' social and emotional skills. The Collaborative for Social, Emotional and Academic Learning (CASEL) framework was used as a basis for the teaching of these skills, with a focus on self-management and self-awareness, identified by the Year 3 teachers as a particular area of concern in their students. Through this project, the girls learnt practical strategies to assist them with their emotions. The lessons consisted of explicit teacher-led lessons and opportunities to collaborate in activities and share thoughts and feelings. The student discussions further informed subsequent lessons and activities. The students also collaborated with their parents at home, teaching them the skills learnt in class and reflecting together. The project culminated in the students creating their own 'toolkit' of specific activities and actions they felt would assist them personally in managing their emotions when needed, demonstrating their personal skill development.

Qualitative data was collected through surveys, observations, student work samples, student reflections and interviews. Data was analysed through transcription of interviews, coding and distilling of themes. The results indicate that the girls enjoyed the opportunities to collaborate with each other and with their parents to create the toolkits. They were able to articulate the skills and strategies that were of specific benefit to them when needing to manage and regulate their emotions, showing a growing understanding of themselves and development of their social and emotional skills. Further implications for this research follow the students' reporting of greater feelings of trust and connection with each other, and their parents, following this project. The students indicated that collaborating on the activities and sharing their personal feelings and thoughts helped to build and strengthen connections, leading to consideration of other projects across

different year groups to further grow community across the school. Facilitating more opportunities for this collaboration and connection will be a focus across all grades in the future when considering social and emotional learning opportunities.

About Kate

Kate Giles has a background in Primary teaching and Law and has worked in both Government and Independent schools, predominantly in girls' education. Prior to moving to Education, Kate practised as a Professional Indemnity Litigator in Health law. Kate is currently undertaking a Master of Education with a specialisation in Student Wellbeing. She has held a variety of different middle leadership roles in schools, including House Leader and Grade Co-ordinator. Kate is passionate about personalised learning and the importance of student wellbeing to educational outcomes.





Victoria Adamovich

PYMBLE INSTITUTE RESEARCH ASSISTANT, JUNIOR SCHOOL EALD
TEACHER, PYMBLE LADIES' COLLEGE

"I'm getting used to it": Wellbeing of Skilled Migrant Children in Australia

Abstract

Nearly half of all Australians now have one or more parents born overseas, with the biggest intake of migrants over the last two decades coming from China and India. Skilled migrants now account for 70% of permanent visa grants and they enter Australia wealthier and better educated than the average Australian. They are also much more hypermobile than previously, adopting what has been termed 'flexible citizenship' and 'astronaut parenting'. These families migrate for strategic purposes and sometimes multiple times. Families may also be separated across continents, with children being parented by mothers while fathers work abroad. What are the impacts of these family practices on children? While much research has focused on the wellbeing of migrant children from disadvantaged backgrounds, we need to also understand the children of skilled migrants. Despite their privileged backgrounds, how do children adjust socially and emotionally following migration?

Survey and interview data with students and mothers showed that newly arrived students and those with absent fathers often faced more difficulties in their wellbeing. Immense parental expectations placed on these students to succeed could also negatively affect their wellbeing. The findings are critical to understand the wellbeing of the youngest members of the family unit, who are often voiceless, but strongly impacted by the choices of the parents. The findings should spur schools, teachers, and parents to understand what impacts the wellbeing of the children of the biggest group of new migrants to Australia.

About Victoria

Victoria Adamovich taught in schools in Hong Kong and Shanghai before moving to Australia. Prior to becoming a teacher, she worked in marketing in Asia. As a migrant herself and an avid language learner, Victoria is deeply in tune with the experiences of the young students in her care in the Pymble Ladies' College Junior School who themselves are impacted by migration. Victoria is completing a Master of Research at the University Technology of Sydney and has recently published a picture book, "The Story of My Names", which was illustrated by *Pymble* student, Jacqueline Qin.