E.S.L. Support at Parramatta High School

The recognition of cultural diversity underpins many programs and initiatives of E.S.L. Support at Parramatta High School. Multicultural perspectives are firmly embedded in faculty teaching and learning programs, enabling all students to increase their intercultural awareness and understandings.

This, combined with students’ daily interactions with others from diverse backgrounds, equips our students with the skills needed to take their place in the multicultural international workplace.

In 2012, enrolments of students from non-English speaking backgrounds (NESB) were over 86%. The main cultural backgrounds represented at Parramatta High School in 2012 were Indian, Chinese, Afghani, Turkish, Arabic and Korean.

The ESL team of 4.0 teachers in 2012 provides ongoing support to targeted students. Those students who have been in Australia for less than three years are targeted as a priority for across faculty support.

Team teaching with various KLA mainstream teachers and the intensive teaching of withdrawal groups are the two main approaches utilized to further develop the literacy and numeracy skills of NESB students.

Interpreters are made available at parent-teacher evenings and for individual parent interviews as required. Student interpreters are also utilized on Orientation Day to assist parents acquire information and clarify processes for their children enrolling into year 7 in 2013.

NESB students are able to access support through a number of well-established programs. The before-school reading and literacy program continue to provide daily individualised assistance for students, particularly new arrivals to Parramatta High School.

The ESL Peer Reading program continued operating during DEAR and Roll Call each morning, involving 15 trained year 10 students giving one-on-one tuition to targeted ESL students.

Refugee students were further supported through the RAS program run in conjunction with University of Western Sydney, providing after school homework tutoring on Thursdays. This program fostered improved attitudes to homework as well as providing opportunities for refugee students to access specialist teachers and ICT facilities.

International students worked closely with their co-ordinator, Ms Yan, and any welfare issues were promptly addressed in roll call, where international students are grouped together. Their attendance and academic progress have been closely monitored and guardians contacted when necessary.
Contact details have been regularly updated and any issues either within or beyond school have been resolved quickly.

The international students’ co-ordinator works with subject teachers to monitor the progress of international students. An orientation booklet has been developed to assist new international students adapt to their new school and its processes.