School Jargon Busters
Learning the language of school is another way to connect with our children’s learning.

AP – Assistant Principal

Algorithm – A step by step method for solving problems in maths.

BOS – Board of Studies NSW - The body responsible for the development of core syllabuses for Kindergarten to Year 12. It also manages external examinations such as the Higher School Certificate.

CAPA – Creative and performing arts - a key learning area covering visual arts, dance, drama and music

CCSP – Council of Catholic School Parents. Parent association made up of parent representatives from each of the 11 diocese in NSW and The ACT.

Cluster – The Broken Bay Diocese is made up of three geographical clusters – Central Coast, North Shore and Peninsula.

CSO – Catholic Schools Office

Curriculum – The Australian curriculum in NSW is the planned program of teaching and learning constructed by educators, in partnership with learners and others, to achieve agreed educational outcomes.

DEC – Department of Education and Communities (NSW)

DPC – Diocesan Parent Council. Parent body with representatives from schools in each of the 3 clusters in the Broken Bay Diocese.

English – students learn about and learn to use English language and literature. Students respond to and compose texts of many kinds, e.g. film, plays, novels

Exposition – A type of text. Give reasons for a point of view to try and convince others of it.

Grammar – Grammar is a way of describing how language works.

HSIE – In Human society and its environment students study history, geography, civics and citizenship.

ICT – Information and communication technologies.

IEP – Individual education plan

Information Report – A type of text. Classifies, describes and gives factual information about people, animals, things or phenomena.

Information literacy – The ability to find, collect, organise, evaluate and use information.

IWB – Interactive whiteboards, also referred to as electronic whiteboards, are technology tools for

KLAs – Key learning areas: In primary school they are English, mathematics, science and technology, human society and its environment (HSIE), personal development, health and physical education (PDHPE), and creative arts

Learning Stages – Schooling in NSW follows a curriculum based on stages of learning. Each stage is approximately equivalent to two school years.

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Learning support team – school staff who meet regularly and work together to further support students with additional learning needs.

Literacy – The ability to read, write and use information appropriately. It includes speaking, listening and critical thinking.

Mathematics – It’s often shortened to ‘maths’ and includes the study of number, patterns and algebra, measurement, data, space and geometry.
Mufti Day – Casual dress day. Schools sometimes allow students to wear something other than their uniform on a special day. It may be themed (for example on Harmony Day the school may decide everyone can wear orange clothing as part of the school celebrations). Sometimes it's a fundraising opportunity to raise money for charity. The school will always notify parents in advance of a mufti day.

NAPLAN – The National Assessment Program consists of national tests held in literacy and numeracy for all students in Australia at Years 3, 5, 7 and 9.

Narrative - A type of text. Tells a story using a series of events.

Numeracy – Basic skills in mathematics.

OOSH – Centres that offer care for kids out of school hours. Many schools have an OOSH centre located on site, or close by.

Outcomes – The knowledge, skills, values and attitudes expected to be developed by the end of a programme of learning

P and F – Parents and Friends Association give busy parents the opportunity to play an active role in their child's school life. Most schools have a P & F which meets each term to discuss and plan ways they can support the school through parental engagement, community activities and fundraising.

PDHPE – Personal development, health and physical education.

Pedagogy – The art and science of teaching.

Procedure – A type of text. Gives instructions on how to make or do something.

REC - Religious Education Co-Ordinator. Teacher whose role it is to plan, direct or co-ordinate programmes designed to promote religious education or activities within the school and is the 3rd most senior member of the school executive team.

Recount – A type of text. Retells events which have already happened in time order. Eg. A journal or historical report, a science experiment.

Reports – All schools are required to report to parents about student academic and non-academic learning in plain English. Twice yearly reports from your child's teacher give information about how your child is achieving and progressing.

Science – in primary school science students learn about natural and built environments.

Staff Development Day – Pupil free day. Staff engage in professional learning.

Syllabus – The description of what students are expected to learn in a course of study or key learning

Text Type – A variety of spoken, written and visual texts for different purposes and audiences. Different types of writing, eg. Narrative, exposition, recount, procedure, information report.

A more comprehensive listing of school terms is available on the NSW’s Governments School AtoZ website. You can also find tips, help sheets and more in depth definitions and explanations.