

CHILDREN LEARNING NEW LANGUAGES

by Robbie Falzon

Learning a new language has a swathe of benefits beyond the obvious ability to converse with people from other cultures.

Learning another language is proven to have a positive impact on children's cognitive ability, problem solving skills and cultural awareness while improving their English at the same time.

The School of Languages has learning centres throughout the Hills for children from reception to year 7.

Five different languages are offered at Nairne, Belair and St John's Grammar primary schools after hours.

Coordinator Lucia Gentilcore said that nearly 1,000 primary school students are enrolled in courses in South Australia with Mandarin, Spanish and French being the most popular languages to learn.

"Everyone that learns a language has a different reason," she said.

"They may choose it because of their family background or because it is one of

the required learning areas in the Australian curriculum."

Lucia said choosing the School of Languages is a popular option because students can choose a language of their choice, which may not be offered at their day school and all of their language courses follow Australian curriculum and SACE requirements.

"From reception to year 10 we use the Australian curriculum and in years 11-12 it can be studied as part of their SACE program which sets us apart from other language schools," she said.

Matt Brown is a coordinator for Asian languages and teaches Japanese at Nairne Primary School.

He said learning an Asian language is becoming increasingly important and beneficial for future employment.

"Learning another language always give you an edge when looking for work," he said.

"We are also in the Asia Pacific region so it's important that



Dahlia Duigan who is studying Japanese with the School of Languages at Nairne Primary school

we can communicate with people from different cultures in our geographical location."

He has been teaching Japanese for over a decade and has seen a rise in interest in learning it. "Tourism used to be the main reason to learn Japanese," he said.

"But among young people Japanese popular culture has infiltrated our culture through

anime, comics and video games."

Languages on offer through the School of Languages in the Hills are Mandarin, French, Italian, Japanese and Spanish.

Classes are run at different times from 3.30-5pm depending on languages and location.

For more information visit www.schooloflanguages.edu.au