

New Home for Homework Club Spiritus ARMS Literacy Centre moves to Moorooka

Moorooka is the new home of the Spiritus ARMS Literacy Centre and staff, volunteers, students and their families celebrated the opening of the new Centre at 197 – 201 Beaudesert Road, (Lower Ground Floor) on Wednesday 12 November. The newly-refurbished Centre's new location brings this well-known service into the heart of the community it serves.

Those attending included the Primate of Australia, the Most Reverend Dr Phillip Aspinall; Rev Charles Holmes, Spiritus ARMS Manager; Amanda Croker, Director Spiritus Social Services; Moorooka City Councillor Steve Griffiths, Robin Boyne, Simon Finn MP's Electorate Officer, Cathy Malone, DEIR Senior Employment Advisor, Trinh Hoang, DEIR Employment Advisor; Gail Hood, Milpera School Deputy Principal; Machiv Chut, Catholic Archdiocesan African Cultural Liaison Officer; Ken Boyne, DETA and Nicole Mackenzie, Centrelink Stones Corner.



Photo: Lyndal Callister, Spiritus ARMS Volunteer Co-ordinator; Archbishop Aspinall, and Rev Charles Holmes, Spiritus ARMS Manager

The Archbishop spoke about the centrality of literacy in our culture and how vital the acquisition of literacy skills is to enable our newest citizens to feel comfortable and at home in their new surroundings. He reminded all present of the complexities of acquiring what we take for granted – applying for a bank account, accommodation and employment requirements and the number of forms which need to be completed so we may function effectively. He referred to the Old Testament's injunction to care for the widows, children and 'aliens', the old word for newcomers to our society, and how evidence of this care being given appropriately, indicated the health of a society, both then and now.

The Literacy Centre is home to the Homework Assistance Program (HAP), affectionately known as the Homework Club and the Adult Literacy Program which operates five days a week with the assistance of around twenty-five volunteer tutors and provides assistance for beginners through to advanced learners. Additionally, the Centre conducts basic Computer Classes twice weekly which are open to all.

The Homework Assistance programme provides assistance to many students, primarily from Ethiopia, Sudan and Afghanistan and operates three afternoons a week and on Saturday mornings. It began seven years ago in response to a need in the community when parents who attended the Literacy Centre for English lessons during the day would take their children to the centre after school and ask staff to help them with their homework. From this, the club became an entity of its own with students attending for assistance with homework, general numeracy and literacy skills and cultural awareness skills.

HAP tutors are needed for weekday after school sessions and enquiries may be directed to Lallene Tudehope at ARMS on 3892 1188.

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