

**MEDIA RELEASE**

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***'Equality'* trends in school yard conversation**

***Oxford University Press announces the 2017 Australian Children's Word of the Year***

After countless hours reviewing hundreds of entries, Oxford University Press Australia and New Zealand (OUP ANZ) today announced its 2017 Children's Word of the Year: equality.

Primary school children across Australia were invited by OUP ANZ to take part in the inaugural competition. Participants nominated their 'Word of the Year' through a piece of free writing up to 500 words based on their chosen word. Students were encouraged to be creative or factual, funny or serious – whatever they desired.

A judging panel, consisting of academics and experts in children's English language, evaluated competition entries based on a word's popularity, use of the word in context, and frequency, to determine the Australian Children's Word of the Year.

OUP ANZ director of School Publishing, Lee Walker, says 'equality' is a topical example of how Australian primary school children are tuned in to the social conversations happening today.

"The prevalence of the word 'equality' seems a fitting reflection of the current social landscape, with children incorporating the word in their stories across topics of gender, pay, culture, marriage, disability, religion, race and sport.

"It warmed our hearts to see the diverse range of issues that were top-of-mind amongst Australian children, and further confirmed how observant children are of the conversations that make up the daily news and social discussions around them," Walker said.

Other words to appear in the children's entries were traditional favourites including family, friends and sport, alongside words that previously have not been as prevalent, including soccer (as well as AFL football), bullying and war.

OUP ANZ managing director Peter van Noorden said the competition provided valuable insights into what Australian primary school students are thinking and talking about.

"The competition was important in furthering our understanding of the language used in the modern Australian school yard. We also wanted to see how we differed from our global counterparts.

"In the UK, the 2016 Children's Word of the Year was 'refugee', and this year was 'trump', so it was fascinating to see how Australian primary school students absorb similar social and political news that make up the daily news cycle."

OUP ANZ is dedicated to recording Australian English and improving literacy. For more information about the competition visit the Children's Word of the Year at [oup.com.au/cwoty](http://oup.com.au/cwoty).

For more information and interview opportunities, please contact Porter Novelli:

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