BANKSTOWN - CANTERBURY
TORCH
THE ONLY LOCAL PAPER PRODUCED AND PRINTED IN THE AREA SINCE 1920

9795 0000 • www.torchpublishing.com.au • 10¢ 90,538 Copies • Volume 90 • Issue 33 • Wednesday, August 19, 2009

Weapons uncovered

page 5

pages 43-45

Stylish and stunning

Domain

YOUNG ones were all ears at Campsie Library ahead of Children's Book Week, August 22-28. As part of Children's Book Week, Ben Yorugao (right) will take children through some of the greatest book adventures at the library to coincide with this year's theme Book Safari. See story on page 10.

New school

$4m mosque comes with primary school

By FATIMA MRAD

A $4 MILLION mosque and primary school for 175 students will be built in Matthews Street, Punchbowl after it was approved by Canterbury Council last week.

The applicant, Australian Islamic Mission (AIM), already operates the Punchbowl prayer hall at 29 Matthews Street, and applied to demolish it along with neighbouring residences to construct the school and mosque at 25-33 Matthews Street.

"There is a community need for a Punchbowl mosque," president of AIM Dr Zachariah Matthews, said, and Canterbury Council agreed.

More than quarter of Punchbowl's population are of Islamic faith, however concerns were raised by residents that there is a sufficient number of schools in the immediate locality.

A council report said "the proposed facility will cater for a growing Islamic/Muslim community within the locality and the proposal will provide this community with a needed facility".

Dr Matthews said it will be a Muslim school "but not restricted to Muslims".

"The school will be a small primary school with a maximum of 25 students in each class," he said.

The seven classroom K-6 school will be built with a mezzanine level for the mosque, and car parking for 164 vehicles, and estimated to cost up to $5 million.

"We need to raise funds before construction begins," Dr Matthews said.

"I'm hoping we will see the school open in three years time."