Our school at a glance

Students

Metford Public School is located close to Maitland in an area of public and private housing, with students from families of diverse structures and economic status. The majority of students are Anglo-Australian with a small variety from other backgrounds and approximately 10% identifying as Aboriginal. The students mainly feed into their zoned local high school, Maitland High School.

Staff

The staff has a diversity of teaching experiences and expertise with a number of staff having been at the school for over ten years. We also have a group of casual teachers who fulfill a range of roles. One staff member retired at the end of 2011 and a long term casual was successful in gaining permanent employment at another school. One permanent teacher continued on long term leave.

A number of student learning support officers work across the school in classrooms with students with disabilities.

The administration staff is relatively new with the senior administration manager starting mid 2010 and a new school administration officer to commence in 2012. The principal’s position for 2011 was shared between the appointed principal (3 days per week) and one of the assistant principals (acting the other two days).

Significant programs and initiatives

Priority Schools Program

Funds from the Priority Schools Program were used to support the school with literacy, numeracy and community participation. The funds allowed for additional resources to be purchased for reading and numeracy and extra books for the library. A part-time support teacher learning assistance and a community liaison officer were also employed with these funds.

Some professional learning of staff in Language, Literacy and Learning (L3), Best Start, Quality Teaching and Targeting Numeracy Teaching occurred through the use of these funds.

The additional resources and professional learning have benefitted our students educationally, as has the employment of the community liaison officer, Mrs Hedges. Her enthusiasm and commitment secured additional funds to run a breakfast club three mornings a week, assisted students to go on excursions and allowed our school magazine to be provided free of charge to our students.

Student achievement in 2011

Literacy

There are some areas of strength within literacy this year resulting from changes that have been made to the teaching of literacy especially in Kindergarten which have shown improvement in results.

The NAPLAN results show areas of strength for Year 3 to include applied comprehension, directly stated information and visual literacy. However, writing and spelling are areas that require additional work.

Year 5 NAPLAN indicate strengths in directly locating information, inferring meaning, interpreting images and making connections to those images.

Results for Year 5 writing show that there is improvement in areas such as text structure, vocabulary, sentence structure, spelling and punctuation.

Spelling and grammar results for Year 5 indicate that our strengths are the use of proper nouns, selecting adjectives, selecting the correct verb to

Some of our talented staff from The Wizard of Aus!
finish a sentence and using contractions correctly.

While there have been some improvements in Year 5, literacy will continue to be a target area for 2012 and further professional learning will be provided to Kindergarten teachers in Language, Literacy and Learning and the processes used will be shared with Year 1 and Year 2 teachers. The school will apply to be included in Focus on Reading in 2013 which will provide professional learning to teachers from Years 3 to 6.

**Numeracy**

Kindergarten, Year one and Year two teachers received professional learning in Targeting Numeracy Teaching during the year which has resulted in changes to their teaching practice. Overall numeracy results in NAPLAN for Year 3 (40 students) saw a growth in student achievement. While there was a 10% drop in students achieving Band 2, the National Achievement Benchmark for Year 3, there was a 60% increase in students achieving Band 3 and Band 4. The results show that 6 students achieved Band 5 or Band 6, while there were no students who fell below the National Minimum Standard for 2011.

Numeracy results for Year 5 (52 students) were increased statistically for the students matched in the NAPLAN for Year 3, 2009 and Year 5, 2011. Results show that just 8% fell below the National Minimum Standard. These students will receive support from the school’s support teacher learning assistance.

There was an increase in students achieving Band 5 (40%) and Band 6 (over 26%), well above the National Achievement Benchmark for Year 5, as well as a number of students achieving Band 7 or Band 8.

The results for Working Mathematically were disappointing for Year 3 and Year 5, and this area will continue to be a target for 2012 and beyond. The mathematics target team will work on delivering continued professional learning to classroom teachers in Newman’s Analysis (comprehending questions) and Schedule for Early Number Assessment (SENA) as well as using common mathematical language across all stages.

To assist in improving numeracy teaching and results, professional learning will be provided to staff 3-6 through involvement in Leading Maths Learning. This will allow teachers to “examine, reflect on, implement, refine, practise and apply new learning to their teaching”, and continue the processes used in K-2.

**Messages**

**Principal’s message**

This year was another positive year at Metford Public School with a number of highlights including Harmony Day and Grandparents’ Day, Education Week, our careers’ day and the maths and literacy expo. However, the responses that we had from the students’ performances of The Wizard of Aus, certainly indicated that this was by far the highlight of the year. Each of the performances was excellent and well attended by parents, carers and the wider community with extremely positive media coverage. The atmosphere in our hall was vibrant with the audience in laughter and tears at our students’ amazing performances. They were wonderful!

The work provided through funds from the Building the Education Revolution was completed early in the year and the school benefitted from the improvements.

The school also received funds through the Premier’s Sporting Challenge and these funds were used to upgrade the netball court. The remainder of the funds will provide play equipment for one of the playgrounds.

The appearance of the school has certainly been improved through the injection of these additional funds.

Our Kindergarten staff has been fortunate to continue their professional learning in literacy teaching through involvement in Language, Literacy and Learning which has shown continued improvement in literacy results. Kindergarten, Year one and Year two teachers have also benefitted from professional learning in Targeting Numeracy Teaching and we anticipate improved results in this area in future as a result of this professional learning.

While, the appearance of the school and its facilities have improved, there is still further work
that needs to be done academically to improve our students’ results in both literacy and numeracy and these will continue to be target areas in 2012.

It has been a very fulfilling year at Metford and I look forward to 2012.

I certify that the information in this report is the result of a rigorous school self-evaluation process and is a balanced and genuine account of the school’s achievements and areas for development.

Nicole Claverie

P & C and/or School Council message

This year our P&C continued to support the school through a number of activities including fund-raising. We held Mothers’ and Fathers’ Day stalls, a number of raffles, a Ladies Night In, photo day, pie drives, a sausage sizzle and sold Christmas badges. These were all very successful. Unfortunately our planned Christmas carols’ night had to be cancelled due to poor weather.

At the end of the year we started to sell book packs as another fund-raising activity and this will continue at the beginning of 2012.

Our P&C canteen continued to operate through the canteen committee and paid supervisor and is showing improvement in profits.

It was a good year for the P&C as we continue to work with our dedicated group of volunteers.

Rebecca Mapstone

Student representative’s message

Our time at Metford was really enjoyable and we have great memories which we will take with us. This year we raised a lot of money which was used to have a new lectern built for our school hall with the school logo attached. We also raised money to buy new letters for the school signs.

Each week we ran assembly and took part in parliament and special events like ANZAC Day ceremonies.

Selena Pham and Michael Foster

School context

Student information

It is a requirement that the reporting of information for all students must be consistent with privacy and personal information policies.

Student enrolment profile

This year there was a slight decline in enrolments, which seems to be a trend, especially with female enrolments. Throughout the year there were some changes with a small number of students leaving and new ones enrolling. However, the student population generally remained constant.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>2007</th>
<th>2008</th>
<th>2009</th>
<th>2010</th>
<th>2011</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>179</td>
<td>175</td>
<td>176</td>
<td>181</td>
<td>171</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>190</td>
<td>172</td>
<td>164</td>
<td>169</td>
<td>154</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Student attendance profile

While the attendance of students was carefully monitored by the home school liaison officer and the school throughout the year, the attendance rates dropped from 92.3% in 2010 to 91.3% in 2011. This drop was due to a small number of chronic non-attending students.
Management of non-attendance

The school’s attendance policy requires teachers to contact parents after two days of unexplained absences which has assisted in reducing the number of unexplained absences. The number of parents/carers completing forms for extended absences also increased.

Class sizes

Primary class sizes are included in the annual school report in order to provide parents with as much local information as possible. The following table shows our class sizes as reported at the 2011 Class Size Audit conducted on Monday 21 March 2011.

Classes were established based on the number of students and teachers available through the school’s staffing allocation. All Kindergarten classes were kept within the recommended number of 20 students and Stage two and three classes were below 33 students.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Roll class</th>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Total per year</th>
<th>Total in class</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>K/S1W</td>
<td>K</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KP</td>
<td>K</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KR</td>
<td>K</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>K/S1W</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S1H</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S1K</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S1/2O</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S1P</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S1/2O</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S2C</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S2Z</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S2/3S</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S2C</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S2Z</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S2/3S</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S3M</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S3N</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S3M</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S3T</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Structure of classes

The spread of student numbers made it necessary to have slightly more than the recommended number of students in Years one and two. Three composite classes had to be established also because of the way the number of students fell. Two of these classes were across stages. However, all teachers operate their classes to cater for the diversity of learners which means that the establishment of classes across stages is not a major concern.

Staff information

It is a requirement that the reporting of information for all staff must be consistent with privacy and personal information policies.

The staff in 2011 had a diversity of teaching experience, from early years teachers to those who have over 30 years’ experience. This allows for a sharing of expertise and new teaching practices across the whole school.

The school administration and support staff changed slightly with one school administration officer accepting a new position through merit selection while another continued to replace staff at other schools. These positions were filled casually during the year.

An English Second Language teacher was employed during the year to support a new student from overseas.

Staff establishment

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Position</th>
<th>Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Principal</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assistant Principal(s)</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Classroom Teachers</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher of Reading Recovery</td>
<td>0.42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Support Teacher Learning Assistance</td>
<td>1.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher Librarian</td>
<td>0.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Support teacher vision</td>
<td>0.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Primary part-time</td>
<td>0.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relief from face-to-face teachers</td>
<td>0.546</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Priority Schools Program</td>
<td>0.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School Administrative &amp; Support Staff</td>
<td>2.922</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>21.288</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The National Education Agreement requires schools to report on Indigenous composition of their workforce. At Metford, two teaching staff members identify as being of Aboriginal descent.

Staff retention

The staff remained constant in 2011, although there were a small number who were on leave because of work related issues and were replaced by casual teachers. At the end of 2011, one
teacher retired and another long term casual was successful in gaining a permanent position at another public school.

**Teacher qualifications**

All teaching staff meet the professional requirements for teaching in NSW public schools. Our staff is highly qualified with degrees, graduate diplomas, some with double degrees, masters degrees and some completing additional studies. This diversity of qualifications adds to our depth of expertise.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Qualifications</th>
<th>% of staff</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Degree or Diploma</td>
<td>90%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Postgraduate</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Financial summary**

This summary covers funds for operating costs and does not involve expenditure areas such as permanent salaries, building and major maintenance.

In 2011 there was an increase in tied funds of over $50,000 from 2010 and in our overall budget, the school carried over approximately $20,000 more than the previous year.

The amount used for casual relief exceeded the school’s allocation and reimbursement will be sought through the Department’s processes.

Our maintenance and utilities’ expenditure was reduced considerably from the previous year by approximately $12,000.

A full copy of the school’s 2011 financial statement is tabled at the annual general meetings of the parent body (P&C). Further details concerning the statement can be obtained by contacting the school.

**School performance 2011**

The school continued to offer a diversity of programs and experiences for all students. These include choir, dance, debating, sport, the Premier’s Reading Challenge and Spelling Bee. These are as well as excursions for all stages which were linked to one of the curriculum areas.

**Achievements**

**Arts**

This year again showcased the artistic talents of the students at Metford, particularly through our representation in Starstruck with 41 wonderful performers who danced in *Capture the Moment*. These students performed exceptionally well and continued Metford’s excellent reputation of being keen, well-behaved and positive role models for other students.

Our senior choir performed with “honour and pride” throughout the year with increasing numbers of students who almost fill our school stage and who performed with confidence and showcased their artistic ability. Part of this choir also performed in Starstruck as part of the moving choir. The positive feedback about their performances from the community was a wonderful acknowledgement of their talents and hard work.

Our junior choir returned in 2011 with great enthusiasm and commitment and performed admirably at celebrations throughout the year including at our expo and Presentation Day assembly where they won over the audiences.
One of the most significant highlights of the year was the school’s presentation of *The Wizard of Aus*. The main cast and every student who performed did so to four packed audiences in our school hall. The atmosphere was vibrant and positive as were all comments from both parents and the media. It initiated a sense of pride within our school community.

One of the amazing lions from *The Wizard of Aus*.

**Sport**

Metford Public School continued to include a number of sporting activities into the curriculum. These included the New South Wales Primary School Sports Association (PSSA) knockout competitions for boys’ and girls’ soccer, girls’ netball, boys’ cricket as well as boys’ and girls’ touch football. Our students also participated in athletics, cross country and swimming at our annual school carnivals. Several students achieved zone and regional representative status.

We trialed a learn-to-swim scheme at the end of the year which was extremely successful and well-supported by students and positively commented on by parents.

Our Active After-School Sport Program continued and included league and cheer-leading.

**Playgroup**

The school playgroup which provides activities for pre-school age children every Monday was again well-supported. The playgroup prepares these children for school and its routines and eases their transition into the school environment.

**Transition from pre-school and home to school**

This year we again held our very successful transition program, but with some changes. These changes included interviews with parents in order to get background information on each of our students, so that they could be placed in the most appropriate class with as much support as possible. Students were also provided with opportunities to become familiar with our school environment. The whole process was well-received and gave us invaluable information to improve the transition for our students into Kindergarten in 2012.

**Academic**

In the National Assessment Program, the results across the Years 3, 5, 7 and 9 literacy and numeracy assessments are reported on a scale from Band 1 to Band 10.

The achievement scale represents increasing levels of skills and understandings demonstrated in these assessments.

Yr 3: from Band 1 (lowest) to Band 6 (highest for Year 3)

Yr 5: from Band 3 (lowest) to Band 8 (highest for Year 5)

**Literacy – NAPLAN Year 3**

While there is an over-representation of students in the lower bands for reading, the maintenance of students in Band 5, consistent with the school average and above the state, is a positive result. However, considerable work needs to be done to shift students from the lower bands.

![Percentage in bands: Year 3 Reading](image)

- **Percentage in bands:**
  - **Year 3 Reading**
  - **School Average 2008-2011**
  - **SSG % in Band 2011**
The number of students achieving in the lower bands for writing, spelling, grammar and punctuation is also of concern and will be target areas for improvement over the next three years.

**Numeracy – NAPLAN Year 3**

Analysis of Year 3 NAPLAN data for number, patterns and algebra show that 52.5% of our students are represented in Bands 2 and 3, 37.5% in Band 4 with only 5% in each of Bands 5 and 6. The data for Year 3 shows that our students are underachieving particularly in multiplication, doubling, fractions and decimals.

**Literacy – NAPLAN Year 5**

These results show that we need to maintain our focus on all areas of literacy as the school is over-represented in the lower bands. However, there are positive signs, with a shift of students from Band 3 in spelling to Band 4 and the school average being almost maintained in reading in Bands 6 and 7.
Numeracy – NAPLAN Year 5

Year 5 data shows that 67.3% of students are achieving in Bands 3, 4 and 5 and while 26.9% are in Band 6, only 5.7% are in the top two bands. Year 5 data shows that multiplication is one area that needs improvement.

Progress in literacy

The data indicates that the progress in reading between Years 3 and 5 was not as strong between 2009-11 as it was in 2008-10.

The progress in spelling, while still better than the state and similar school groups is also not as strong. A similar trend is also evident in grammar and punctuation.
Progress in numeracy

While the average progress in numeracy was not as strong between 2009-11 as it was in 2008-10, it was still stronger than that of similar school groups.

Minimum standards

The Commonwealth Government sets minimum standards for reading, writing, grammar and punctuation, spelling and numeracy for Years 3, 5, 7 and 9.

The performance of the students in our school in the National Assessment Program – Literacy and Numeracy is compared to these minimum standards. The percentages of our students achieving at or above these standards are reported below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Percentage of Year 3 students achieving at or above minimum standard (exempt students excluded)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reading</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Writing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spelling</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grammar &amp; Punctuation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Numeracy</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The data shows that our areas for improvement in literacy are reading, spelling and grammar and punctuation in Year 3. However, all Year 3 students achieved the minimum standard in numeracy which is an excellent result.

The Year 5 results show our students are improving in spelling, punctuation and grammar, but all of these areas need continued focus.

Significant programs and initiatives

Metford continued to implement specific programs and educational initiatives which address school identified areas of need and support the individual needs of all students.

Multicultural education

Multicultural education is acknowledged through activities such as Harmony Day and perspectives in the curriculum. The school’s student population is made up of a diversity of backgrounds which is growing and includes Tongan, Chinese, South African, Lebanese, Iranian and Indian.

A new student arrived from overseas during the year and was provided with English Second Language support by a qualified teacher.

Harmony Day, celebrating our cultural diversity.
Active After School Communities Program

The Active After School Communities (AASC) program continued in 2011. The aim of the program was to involve students in team and individual sports from a variety of sources which included multi-ball skills and rugby league.

The program was very well attended and will continue in 2012.

Aboriginal education

The school’s Aboriginal Education Committee consisting of staff and parents organized NAIDOC activities and the homework centre which operated one afternoon per week.

The school elected two Aboriginal student leaders as part of the school student leadership team. These two leaders represented the Aboriginal students at school assemblies and community functions.

Aboriginal perspectives continued to be an integral part of all key learning areas where relevant and two staff were active members of the Aboriginal Education Consultative Group.

Mentor Program

The Mentor Program continued in 2011 and aimed to support students in their achievements and encourage them to reach their goals.

Students engaged in several activities both academic and extra curricula such as goal setting and gardening as well as making and building during weekly sessions with mentor teachers. The program gave students the opportunity to have a person from the school community to whom they could talk on a daily basis whilst building confidence in their successes and reaching their goals.

Other programs

The Maitland Baptist Church continued to provide an after school and vacation care facility which supported children from our school and the wider school community.

Progress on 2011 targets

The school plan for 2009-2011 focused on literacy, numeracy, community participation, technology and student engagement. During this time, Kindergarten and Year 1 teachers were provided with professional learning in Language, Literacy and Learning and K-2 teachers in Targeting Numeracy Teaching. The literacy results, particularly in Kindergarten, have shown significant improvement, as have teachers’ expectations of students in this area. Targeting Numeracy Teaching has improved the way teachers deliver numeracy, which is now very student focussed and has increased professional dialogue and sharing of teachers’ expertise. K-2 staff involved in both of these programs has found that the professional learning model used for these programs to be most effective in supporting improved teaching practice, professional dialogue and student results. Technology expertise has improved across the school and teachers use Smartboards, associated programs and the internet as part of their daily teaching.

While there has been improvement in literacy results particularly for Kindergarten, the results in NAPLAN show that our spelling in writing needs improving with a focus on difficult and more challenging words and that the strategies used in Language, Literacy and Learning need to be shared across the school. To assist 3-6 teachers, the school will apply to be involved in Focus on Reading professional learning in 2013.

Target 1

Literacy

Analysis of school-based data and NAPLAN results indicated literacy as an area which needed a continued focus across the school, although the results for Kindergarten showed great improvement.

Our achievements include:

- Kindergarten reading results exceeding regional targets;
a scope and sequence of punctuation and grammar implemented;
the extension of the Language, Literacy and Learning program to Year 1 staff;
the use of rubrics and explicit teaching of writing with one text type analysed each term;
participation in the Premier’s Reading Challenge and Spelling Bee; and
an improved knowledge of teachers in the teaching of literacy.

Target 2

Numeracy

This is an area that NAPLAN results and school data showed as a priority area. While some work has been done in Newman’s Analysis and the use of Schedule for Early Number Assessment to inform teachers of students’ knowledge, further professional learning is needed.

Our achievements include:

- the professional learning of staff in Targeted Numeracy Teaching and Best Start from Kindergarten to Year 2;
- information sessions held on the use of the region’s Collaborative Online Workspace (COW) and learning objects; and
- 100% of Year 3 students achieving at or above the national minimum standard in numeracy.

Target 3

Student Engagement

School satisfaction surveys, behaviour data and the suspension register indicated that a percentage of our students are not engaged in, or have ownership of their learning.

Our achievements include:

- continued implementation of Quality Teaching in all aspects of learning from Kindergarten to Year 6;
- provision of opportunities for gifted and talented students across all KLAs through the introduction of rich tasks and other enrichment activities;
- professional learning of staff in the use of technology and the connected classroom;
- increased engagement of students in learning as identified in students’ school satisfaction surveys; and
- suspensions decreasing 33% from 2010.

Target 4

Community Participation

Metford Public School has a history of extensive community participation as evidenced in attendance rates at Harmony Day, Grandparents’ Day, the maths and literacy expo, Kindergarten transition and Education Week. This participation has occurred through the development of strong links with the community over a long period. The school aims to not only maintain these strong links, but further develop them.

Our achievements include:

- the extension of parent workshops and expos;
- the continued employment of a community liaison officer;
- extensive positive promotion of school activities through the media;
- parents participating on target teams and in classrooms; and
- increased satisfaction of parents as evidenced in school satisfaction surveys.

Key evaluations

It is a requirement for all NSW public schools to conduct at least two annual evaluations – one related to educational and management practice and the other related to curriculum. In 2011 our school carried out evaluations of school culture and sport.
Educational and management practice

Surveys on school culture were given to parents, staff and students.

Background

The surveys on school culture were used to determine the school community’s perception of the school which is often portrayed as negative in the wider community, particularly through oral comments.

Findings and conclusions

Only a small number of parents responded to the survey. However, the majority of their results agreed with comments from students that:

- the school leaders have a positive influence on the school;
- the school appreciates having their child at school;
- the school encourages everyone to learn; and
- the school caters for the learning needs of all students.

While some parents were not proud of the school and felt that the school does not encourage new parents to be involved in school activities (also indicated by teachers), students felt that new students were made to feel welcome.

While teachers surveyed agreed with parents and students in some areas, they also felt that:

- the school recognises and celebrates achievement;
- they are proud of the school;
- the school encourages everybody to be a continuing learner; and
- the school is continually finding ways to improve what it does.

Teachers were of the opinion that the school culture does not always support a sense of ownership of the school.

Future directions

In order to address some of the concerns raised particularly by parents and teachers, community participation will be a focus in our target area of student engagement.

Curriculum

The sport program within the school was surveyed, with surveys going to parents, students and staff.

Background

Sport is a critical component of the curriculum and its effective implementation is vital to any school. Our school sport was run mainly through the use of paid programs which were not effective due to the number of students who were unable to pay.

Findings and conclusions

Students commented on the effectiveness of rotations of activities which allowed for variety. However, they indicated that they would like more variety of activities such as fencing, archery, athletics, softball, tennis, swimming and dancing. The majority of students felt that sport should be run from Kindergarten to Year 6 and that their parents would agree to pay around $3 per week.

The teachers surveyed agreed that whole school sport was effective, but not implemented consistently and that resources within the school were under-utilised. Teachers agreed with students in that other sports such as tennis, bowls, swimming and league should be introduced into the school. However, they were not as supportive of parents having to pay as the students were.

Future directions

The school will establish a team of staff to oversee the implementation of sport across the school which will support a more cohesive approach from Kindergarten to Year 6. However, these sports will be mainly limited to those that have no cost, as although the students indicated that parents would be willing to pay, historically this has not been the case.

The staff has been trained in the implementation of the Jack Newton Golf program and this will add to the diversity of skills which staff have. The employment of a teacher skilled in the teaching of league will also further expand the range of sports available to students.
Other evaluations

Focus groups were held with parents who indicated a number of areas where improvement could be made and these included student behaviour and consistency in its management.

Aboriginal parents were also interviewed individually by the community liaison officer and they indicated that they were generally happy with what the school was doing, but some areas for improvement included:

- developing closer links with Mindaribba, the local Aboriginal Land Council;
- a continued focus of Aboriginal perspectives; and
- not singling out Aboriginal students for special programs.

Parent, student, and teacher satisfaction

Background

In 2011 the school sought the opinions of parents, students and teachers about the school through the school satisfaction survey. The findings will assist planning through our target teams. Their responses are presented below.

Findings and Conclusions

The majority of parents (although only a small sample returned surveys) agreed that:

- the learning that was occurring was important;
- they knew the behaviour expectations of our school and that obeying rules was important;
- the school looks good;
- they feel welcome at our school and that teachers and staff are friendly and made them feel good about visiting the school;
- their child got along well with other students;
- they would prefer their child to have more challenging schoolwork; and
- extra curricula activities were important.

Some parents indicated in the survey that they felt that their child’s belongings were not always safe at school and a minority of parents raised concerns in their comments about feedback from teachers, the amount of leave taken by some staff, communication between staff and behaviour concerns in relation to some challenging students.

The students indicated that:

- they need more support to develop friendships;
- they have lots of friends at school;
- they have been bullied at school;
- they feel safe in the playground (although some disagreed with this); and
- they feel safe in the classroom.

Teachers’ responses indicated that:

- student discipline practices and policies are fair;
- most students care about learning and getting a good education;
- are enthusiastic about teaching and communicate this to students;
- they are respectful towards parents;
- the principal models respectful behaviour;
- they treat one another with respect;
- they prepare students for high school; and
- they teach students to get along with one another.

However, there were some areas which require improvement including teachers learning about their students’ lives outside of school and teachers and students treating each other more respectfully.

Future Directions

The results of these surveys support the need for:

- the introduction of the Positive Behaviour for Learning (PBL) program;
- the continuation of our social skills and anti-bullying programs;
- the need to improve communication between school and home in relation to students’ progress;
- whole school implementation of Quality Teaching practices into the teaching/learning sequence;
• the inclusion of professional learning of Quality Teaching in the school management plan to support its implementation; and
• the school executive to encourage and support staff to constructively challenge their educational practice.

Professional learning
The professional learning of staff was directly linked to the school plan with the focus on Language, Literacy and Learning and Targeting Numeracy Teaching. Additional in-school learning occurred through peer support with Quality Teaching observations and feedback sessions.

School planning 2012—2014
The school planning policy provides direction for the preparation and implementation of school plans including the identification of priority areas, intended outcomes and targets that are consistent with the NSW State Plan and the Department’s planning documents.

School priority 1 - Literacy
Outcome for 2012–2014
Improve writing skills of all students with a focus on spelling.

2012 Targets to achieve this outcome include:
• increase the percentage of students performing at proficiency in spelling in Year 3 from 13% in 2011 to 23%;
• increase the percentage of students performing at proficiency in spelling in Year 5 from 11% in 2011 to 22%;
• increase the percentage of students performing at proficiency in writing in Year 3 from 8% in 2011 to 18%; and
• increase the percentage of students performing at proficiency in writing in Year 5 from 4% in 2011 to 18.9%.

Strategies to achieve these targets include:
• allowing additional stage meeting time for increased collaborative planning, building of consistency of teacher judgement, programming support and sharing of resources and assessment strategies for spelling;
• collecting spelling data and writing samples every 5 weeks, analysing and using the data to inform the teaching and learning cycle;
• reviewing writing rubrics, revisiting the scope and sequence for grammar K-6 and analysing whole school writing rubric results each term;
• introducing scrap writing K-6 based on the Language, Literacy and Learning model (with a focus on audience, vocabulary, paragraphing, sentence structure and punctuation) through professional learning;
• providing opportunities for discussion by all staff of the Quality Teaching overview and timetable observation and debriefing sessions for all staff that focus on improving Quality Teaching within literacy sessions;
• developing Personalised Learning Plans for Aboriginal students with parents and/or caregivers and updating at least once a semester; and
• providing literacy support to target individual students through student learning support officers, the Norta Norta tutor and the support teacher learning assistance.

School priority 2 - Numeracy
Outcome for 2012–2014
Increase numeracy performance of all students.

2012 Targets to achieve this outcome include:
• increase the percentage of students performing at proficiency in numeracy in Year 3 from 13% in 2011 to 27.5%; and
• increase the percentage of students performing at proficiency in numeracy in Year 5 from 6% in 2011 to 11.5%.

Strategies to achieve these targets include:
• focusing teaching on number (fractions, decimals, multiplication), patterns and algebra (word problems, multi-step problems), data (word problems, interpreting data, fractions and decimals and multi-step problems);
• participating in Leading Mathematics Learning training 3-6;
• providing professional learning to staff in Schedule for Early Numeracy Assessment and Newman’s Analysis;
• continuing professional learning of K-2 staff in Targeting Numeracy Teaching strategies and processes;
• co-operatively programming numeracy;
• utilising the Sarah Rose units in years 3-6; and
• introducing and utilising the Mathletics website K-6.

School priority 3 – Student Engagement

Outcomes for 2012–2014

• Improve student engagement in learning.
• Improve teachers’ understanding of the Quality Teaching framework.
• Improved support for Aboriginal students and those with special needs.

2012 Targets to achieve this outcome include:

• improve attendance from 91.3 % in 2011 to 92.3%;
• improvement in results in student, parent and teacher satisfaction survey; and
• a 25% reduction in suspensions.

Strategies to achieve these targets include:

• introducing Positive Behaviour for Learning across the whole school;
• expanding organised games and increased equipment in playground;
• implementing our social skills program K-6;
• revising the student welfare and discipline policy and award system;
• providing a positive parenting program to parents/carers;
• expanding the operation of the Learning Support Team through sharing of leadership, development of a roster, training other staff and notification to staff of agenda items;
• implementing the school’s attendance procedures K-6;
• providing professional learning for all staff in the use of Rich Tasks and Gifted and Talented activities;
• involving students in the Tournament of the Minds, Newcastle Permanent and University of NSW tests;
• providing opportunities for partner visits between teachers to observe Quality Teaching lessons, debrief and provide feedback; and
• using the connected classroom to develop links with other schools e.g. debating.

About this report

In preparing this report, the self-evaluation committee has gathered information from evaluations conducted during the year and analysed other information about the school’s practices and student learning outcomes. The self-evaluation committee and school planning committee have determined targets for the school’s future development.

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Parents can find out more information about Annual School Reports, how to interpret information in the reports and have the opportunity to provide feedback about these reports at: http://www.schools.nsw.edu.au/asr