Our school at a glance

Students
The school enrolled just over 600 students (14% Aboriginal) in 2008.

Staff
There are 24 classroom teachers and 10 support staff.
All teaching staff meet the professional requirements for teaching in NSW public schools.

Significant programs and initiatives
Gifted & Talented
Student Leadership
Literacy on Track
Integration
Defence Support Transition Aide
Positive Behaviour Support (PBS)
Quality Teaching Indigenous Program (QTIP)
Nowra Supported Return to Schools Program
Koori Mentor
Support Teacher Learning Difficulties
Information Technology
Creative & Performing Arts
Library

Messages

Principal's message
Nowra Public School is consistently sought out as a school of choice for a broad range of students located across all of the villages of the Shoalhaven. It surprises me that families from Callala to St Georges Basin would put themselves to so much trouble with travel simply for their child to attend this school.

With this question in mind I worked through a detailed analysis of the just what we achieved in 2008 and arrived at a long list of educational achievements and mile-stones.

Suspensions for anti social/violence down from 346 days in 2004 to 51 days in 2008, our lowest ever!

Parent, student and teacher satisfaction surveys indicate over 90% consider the school to be a good place to be part of – in all measured areas.

Visiting teachers report they enjoy working here and despite the obvious challenges that casual work involves – they want to come back.

Despite the fact that we still have students falling into the bottom bands of the National Assessment Programs we are shifting increasing numbers of students to higher Bands overall.

Large numbers of students have access to leadership opportunities via prefects, Peace-Keepers, Buddy program, House captains and the whole school Student Representative Council.

An active performing, arts program and a sporting program provides students with a range of opportunities outside the classroom. (See more later in this publication).

Staff continue their professional learning on a weekly basis. This learning is supported through State Government funding. The most significant programs are Positive Behaviour for Success, Literacy on Track, Best Start, interactive white boards, gifted and talented and consistent teacher judgement in relation to assessment and reporting. Many of these are reported more extensively later in this report.

My policy is to report clearly and honestly to parents, to acknowledge we do not always get it right and to look to the future with clarity of purpose. I enjoy the opportunity the annual report provides for us to report on the huge job we attempt in providing educational options for the students who elect to attend Nowra Public School.

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.

Mr C. Robertson
MEd., GradDipEd., DipTeach. JP
P&C message

This year the P&C were able to hand over a cheque for $15,000 to the school to assist in the purchasing of new resources for the use in classrooms.

Throughout the year we held a number of fundraisers such as Bunnings BBQ's, Cross country-a-Thon and a very successful exhibition of students art work. These were organised and coordinated by a small group of dedicated parents who make our fundraising as successful as possible. Without their help we would not be able to provide the school with the funding that assists the school achieve their stated goals.

I would like to thank all the parents for the work and dedication either with the P&C or as helpers/volunteers in the any other roles at the school.

I encourage all parents to attend P&C meetings and take an active role in the decision making of the school.

Mrs Sharon Matheson - president

Student representative’s message

The prefects in 2008 were very busy assisting in many school activities throughout the year.

Early in the year we were lucky to be able to participate in Young Leaders Day in Sydney with Mrs Cruickshank. We listened to a number of special guest speakers. It was a long and enjoyable day.

We assisted with assemblies at school as well as conducting special assemblies for Anzac Day, Naidoc Week, Education Week and Presentation Day.

We represented the school by participating in the local Anzac Day march.

At school we had an active role in the Student Representative Council discussing issues raised by fellow students. We helped organise a number of activities such as discos and Rainbow Day.

We learnt a lot about responsibility and leadership and how to work with fellow students and teachers. We enjoyed helping with school discos and other fundraisers.

I hope the captains and prefects enjoy their leadership roles as much as we have during our time as student leaders.

Glenn Matheson for Prefects 2008

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

![Student enrolment profile chart]

Enrolments

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Male</th>
<th>Female</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2004</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2005</td>
<td>200</td>
<td>200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2006</td>
<td>300</td>
<td>300</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2007</td>
<td>400</td>
<td>400</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2008</td>
<td>500</td>
<td>500</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
In March 2003 the Government announced its commitment to publish primary class sizes in annual school reports in order to provide parents with as much local information as possible.

The following table shows our class sizes as reported at the 2008 class size audit conducted on Tuesday 25 March 2008.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Roll</th>
<th>Class</th>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Total per Year</th>
<th>Total in Class</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>K-1C</td>
<td>K</td>
<td>K</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>K-1C</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KB</td>
<td>K</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KG</td>
<td>K</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KR</td>
<td>K</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KY</td>
<td>K</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1-2L</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1-2L</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1H</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1J</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1W</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2A</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2B</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2Q</td>
<td>2</td>
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<td>23</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3R</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3V</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>28</td>
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<tr>
<td>3W</td>
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<td>3W</td>
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<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4-5D</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4-5D</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>29</td>
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<td>4R</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4T</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5-6G</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Staff information

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

Staff establishment

Due partly to increased enrolments and partly to the Federal Government’s reduced class size program we had to form 24 classes for the first time in many years. New teachers were also employed to cover retirements and transfers of other teachers. New teachers included: Ms Sansom (Assistant Principal), Mr Jenkinson, Ms Roddan, Mr Howard, Ms Mackinnon, Ms Todhunter, Ms Ebzery.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Position</th>
<th>Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Principal</td>
<td>1.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deputy Principal(s)</td>
<td>1.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assistant Principal(s)</td>
<td>4.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Head Teacher – emotional disabilities</td>
<td>1.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Classroom Teachers</td>
<td>20.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher of Autism</td>
<td>1.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher release</td>
<td>2.276</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher of Reading Recovery</td>
<td>0.815</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Support Teacher Learning Assistance</td>
<td>1.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher Librarian</td>
<td>1.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>District Guidance Officer</td>
<td>1.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Counsellor</td>
<td>0.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>33.891</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Staff retention

Staff turnover is usually very small. In the past 12 months the only staff to leave have done so either on promotion to higher duties or to a school closer to their family home. These reasons and also the filling of long term vacant teacher positions has meant a higher than average number of new teachers appointed early in the year.

Staff attendance

Staff have access to leave entitlements such as sick leave. In 2008 the average daily attendance rate for staff, as determined by the Department, was 96.4%.
Teacher qualifications
All teaching staff meet the professional requirements for teaching in NSW public schools.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Qualifications</th>
<th>% of staff</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Degree or Diploma</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Postgraduate</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Eistedfodd 2008

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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date of financial summary:</th>
<th>30/11/2008</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Income</strong></td>
<td>$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Balance brought forward</td>
<td>260 257.31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Global funds</td>
<td>278 637.69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tied funds</td>
<td>191 317.20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School &amp; community sources</td>
<td>120 332.96</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interest</td>
<td>19 677.09</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trust receipts</td>
<td>16 204.21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Canteen</td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total income</strong></td>
<td>886 426.46</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Expenditure</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Teaching &amp; learning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Key learning areas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Excursions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Extracurricular dissections</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Library</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Training &amp; development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tied funds</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Casual relief teachers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Administration &amp; office</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School-operated canteen</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Utilities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maintenance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trust accounts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Capital programs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total expenditure</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Balance carried forward</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A full copy of the school’s 2008 financial statement is tabled at the annual general meetings of the P&C. Further details concerning the statement can be obtained by contacting the school.

Celebrating Dance Success

G&T Poetry Workshop
School performance 2008

Achievements

Arts

In conjunction with the P&C and all class teachers, a very successful art exhibition was held in the school hall. The exhibition displayed over six hundred framed art works from students in K-6 and was very well received by the students, parents and wider community. The standard of many of the artworks was exceptional.

Students entered artworks into a number of competitions during the year. Students form K-6 entered works into the Nowra Show with a number of students winning prizes. Fourteen Year 6 students entered Artworks into the Peace Posters competition, an international competition held by the Lions Club. One student’s work was selected to progress to district level. Students from across the school entered the H.M.A.S. Albatross 60th Jubilee art competition.

A group of thirteen students were selected to work with renowned Aboriginal artist Cecily Wellington to develop a logo for the Nowra Public School's QTIP (Quality Teaching Indigenous Project) team.

Student from Years three to six attended a very successful art workshop held at Bundanon.

Term Four saw the completion of a long term art project by gifted and talented students in Years 5 and 6. A mosaic and sculpture were finished in an area adjacent to the school hall. These artworks have joined the other student works adorning the school.

Sport

Sport always has a high profile at Nowra Public School. The curriculum covers class PE and fitness, skill-based programs, stage sport, major carnivals and interschool state knockouts. Students are also given the opportunity to trial for district, regional and state team representation in their chosen sport.

This year our three major carnivals were well supported by both students and teachers. At our swimming carnival records were broken by Macc Carroll and Amy Ramires. Four of our swimmers were selected to attend the Regional carnival with Macc being successful in gaining selection for the State swimming carnival. Students from years 2-4 had the opportunity to participate in the intensive swimming program held at the end of the year which focuses on water confidence, stroke correction and fitness. This program continues to be successful and is now a major part of the school sporting calendar.

The cross country carnival was held in conjunction with a fundraiser by the P&C and involved a high number of students from Kindergarten to Year 6. Our runners competed well at the district level with many just missing out on selection for the Regional carnival.

A highlight of the Athletics carnival program was the selection of Jamie-Hope Priestley being selected to compete at the State carnival at Homebush in the Junior Girls long jump.

Along with the major carnivals, students also participated in various sports workshops and gala days.

The school took advantage of the Country Rugby League and Auskick organisations conduct development skills programs at the school involving children from Years 3-6. There were also Gala Days for AFL and carnivals for Rugby League which saw the students participate in a fun day with other schools.

Congratulations must be given to Nathan Bartley who was selected for a number of district and regional teams in Rugby League and Rugby Union and was also named Sportsperson of the Year at the school’s Annual Presentation Day. The winning sports house for the year was Eagles.

Performing Arts

In 2008, Nowra Public School continued to foster achievement and talent in the Creative and Performing Arts.

The Primary Choir numbers grew significantly, with many new students joining from Years 3 and 4. The choir performed regularly at school assemblies and special events. In July, they were invited to perform at the Opening Ceremony of the Shoalhaven Entertainment Centre, delighting the crowd with their energetic performance. Over forty students participated in the Shoalhaven Music Festival in September, which featured a range of choral talent from across the school district. The choir also performed at many community events, such as Relay for Life, Spotlight Christmas Celebrations, Bunnings Warehouse and Worrigee House fundraisers.

The school Dance Group continued to impress with their exceptional ability, winning 1st Place at the Shoalhaven Eisteddfod for the second year in a row. The same dancers travelled to Wollongong to participate in Southern Stars at the Wollongong Entertainment Centre, later televised on WIN TV. For the first time, we offered a dancing award at the Presentation Assembly, in order to recognise the achievement of students in this area.

Emma Boxsell, Aden Spencer and Shelby Thornett were selected to perform as part of the
Vocal Ensemble at Southern Stars, a remarkable achievement as very few students are selected for this honour. They represented our school in a fine way, performing at Southern Stars and at many special events and conferences throughout the region.

At school level, all students were invited to showcase their abilities at the Talent Quest, which featured a range of vocalists, dancers and comedians from K-6. A new category was added, which saw a number of staff members demonstrating their ‘abilities’ to the students, which was very warmly received.

In Term 4, we were delighted to receive an offer from Emma Hawthorne to run a Hip Hop Workshop in the hall. 50 students took part in this activity and delivered a highly enjoyable performance to the rest of the school.

**Chess**

This year our school sent three teams away to compete in the Junior Chess League which was held at Vincentia Public School. The teams consisted of students from Years 3-5 as our senior players were away on their Canberra excursion. All three teams played exceptionally well with one team finishing third and just missing out on progressing further. As these students will still be attending the school next year, the continued success of chess at Nowra School looks good. The award for Outstanding Chess Player of the Year was awarded to Dylan Gardner who has been an integral part of the school’s chess team for a number of years.

**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 the 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)
- Yr 7: from Band 4 (lowest) to Band 9 (highest for Year 7)
- Yr 9: from Band 5 (lowest) to Band 10 (highest for Year 9)

---

**Literacy – NAPLAN Year 3**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Percentage of students</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
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<td>20</td>
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<tr>
<td>5</td>
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<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

---

**Summary**

- Vocal Ensemble at Southern Stars, remarkable achievement.
- Talent Quest showcased student abilities.
- Hip Hop Workshop in the hall.
- Chess team continued to do well.
- NAPLAN results reported from Band 1 to Band 10.
Percentage of students in bands:

Year 3 writing

Percentage of students in bands:

Year 3 grammar and punctuation

Percentage of students in bands:

Year 3 spelling

Percentage of students in bands:

Year 3 numeracy

Numeracy – NAPLAN Year 3
Literacy – NAPLAN Year 5

Percentage of students in bands:
Year 5 reading

Percentage of students in bands:
Year 5 spelling

Percentage of students in bands:
Year 5 writing

Percentage of students in bands:
Year 5 grammar and punctuation
Numeracy – NAPLAN Year 5

Percentage of students in bands:
Year 5 numeracy

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Band</th>
<th>Percentage of students</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

School average 2005 - 2007
LSG average 2008
State average 2008

Progress in literacy

Average progress in writing between Year 3 and Year 5

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Progress</th>
<th>School</th>
<th>LSG</th>
<th>State</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2004 - 2006</td>
<td>76</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2005 - 2007</td>
<td>78</td>
<td>74</td>
<td>82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2006 - 2008</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>76</td>
<td>84</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Progress in numeracy

Average progress in numeracy between Year 3 and Year 5

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Progress</th>
<th>School</th>
<th>LSG</th>
<th>State</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2004 - 2006</td>
<td>82</td>
<td>78</td>
<td>84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2005 - 2007</td>
<td>84</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2006 - 2008</td>
<td>86</td>
<td>82</td>
<td>88</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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.

Percentage of Year 3 students in our school achieving at or above the minimum standard in 2008

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subject</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reading</td>
<td>93</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Writing</td>
<td>96</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spelling</td>
<td>95</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Punctuation and grammar</td>
<td>95</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Numeracy</td>
<td>99</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Percentage of Year 5 students in our school achieving at or above the minimum standard in 2008

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Percentage of Year 5 students achieving at and above minimum standard</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reading</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Writing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spelling</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Punctuation and grammar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Numeracy</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Significant programs and initiatives

Aboriginal education

Ms Simms, our Aboriginal Education Officer continues to assist staff and students at Nowra Public School in gaining a good insight into both ancient and modern Aboriginal culture.

Aboriginal students experiencing difficulties in Literacy or Numeracy were able to access classroom tutors throughout most of the year. It is pleasing to say that Nowra PS Aboriginal students are performing at about the average level of that for all Nowra students and above the State average overall.

The Quality Teaching Indigenous Project (QTIP) is a federally funded state administered project which commenced in 2006 for schools with Indigenous student populations of 10-20%. 2008 is the final year of this project.

The teachers involved in the QTIP project at Nowra Public School in 2008 engaged in professional learning experiences that gave them a better understanding of the learning styles and needs of Nowra’s Indigenous students. Consultation with community members and the Aboriginal Education Officer, Ruth Simms was an integral part of the development of these understandings.

The Nowra Indigenous communities have their own special ways of operating and in order for teachers to maximise student outcomes in learning they need to be aware of these protocols and aware of key contact people in the community. In 2008, the QTIP team developed a ‘guidelines document’ that informs NPS teachers of the protocols that are particular to the Nowra Indigenous community.

In addition, during 2008, the team developed dynamic learning tasks which integrate teaching methods that support and honour both Indigenous and traditional western knowledge building across a range of learning areas.

The achievements of the team during 2008 have been acknowledged at a school and state level and culminated in 2008 with an article in the Sydney Morning Herald promoting the ideas and learning in this Nowra PS project.

Mrs Simms and students working on the QTIP logo

Multicultural education

The school celebrated NAIDOC Week late in Term 2 with significant community participation organised and coordinated by all staff, particularly our Aboriginal Education Officer, Ms Simms.

The major focus for 2008 was studies of China that coincided with the Olympic Games. Students studied the Chinese culture and in doing so developed many interesting classroom displays and assignments of very high quality.

Respect and responsibility – Leadership

The school prides itself on the range of programs available to students to gain leadership experience.

The Student Representative Council (SRC) has been very successful in maximizing student participation in decision making and ensuring that the principles of equity and fairness are reflected in school practice.

A successful ‘Rainbow Day’ organised by the SRC raised more than $1500 to improve classroom and playground resources. Ideas and suggestions from SRC meetings led to changes to playground areas and provided ideas to improve student participation in school assemblies.

The PeaceKeeper Program involving stage 3 students helping staff and students on the infant’s playground continues to be a positive and well-respected leadership program. Now in its fifth year many successful candidates for Prefects and...
Captains gained valuable leadership experience from being a PeaceKeeper.

Once again our Captains and Prefects attended the Young Leaders Day in Sydney. This is has become somewhat of a tradition within the school. Each year our Captains and Prefects return with enthusiasm, inspiration and vision.

Buddies, Doing Things Together (DTT) both enhance the curriculum at Nowra Public. During NAIDOC Week a DTT with Aboriginal Education as the focus was held. All students had the opportunity to participate in many cultural activities, while our senior students gained leadership experience as group leaders.

### Other programs

#### Learning Difficulties

This year with a new STLA (special teacher learning assistance) teacher appointed to Nowra PS, a review of the whole STLA program was conducted. From this, STLA programs were primarily focused on literacy, specifically targeting areas of phonics instruction with an emphasis on team-teaching and training teachers in STLA programs, rather than withdrawing small groups of students from classes. LIPI 1 (a series of structured lessons involving the explicit instruction of ‘letter/sound correspondence’ acquisition) was introduced to selected year 1 students, and LIPI 2 (a series of structured lessons involving the explicit instruction of ‘digraphs’ and ‘diphthongs’, and spelling rules) was introduced into most year 2 classrooms, as well as selected groups from year 3 and 4.

These programs use approaches such as ‘Match to Sample’, mouth shapes, ‘Say, Stretch, Count, Write and Check’, Automaticity and correction at the point of error to teach aspects of critical beginning literacy development such as reading, spelling, handwriting, writing, vocabulary development and comprehension.

Regular testing and monitoring throughout the year indicated that these programs were effective and students were demonstrating improvements in the targeted areas of reading, spelling, handwriting, writing, vocabulary development and comprehension.

In 2009 it is anticipated that all Kindergarten classes will participate in LIPI 1 lessons and LIPI 2 will be introduced to all year 1 classrooms.

#### Positive Behaviour for Success (PBS)

PBS was introduced in 2008 to support the school to develop and implement school wide systems that promote values, positive behaviour and an environment where student learning, engagement and achievement is maximised.

In 2008 a team was formed and trained to effectively introduce the program. PBS is implemented in three phases over three to five years. The first phase, Universal Phase, identifies specific target areas and defines our values and positive behaviour expectations for all students.

To begin the process the team and school community reviewed the Mission Statement and made changes that incorporated the values we aspire to achieve including catering for educational, social and emotional needs of all students. We then reassessed the school values and introduced the STAR Values – Safety, Take Responsibility, Actively Learn and Respect.

PBS relies on statistical information to drive the process; therefore, we collected data about student behaviour and learning. The analysis of this data was used to inform decisions about what needs to be improved and what explicit teaching is required.

PBS will be launched during Education Week 2009.

#### K/3 Enrichment Class for Students with Autism

The K/3 Enrichment Class is situated on the Infants Site in the ASPECT Satellite School Building. It was established in Term 3, 2007. The class has a Teacher and full-time School Support Learning Officer. The class is currently functioning on maximum numbers with seven students.

This class is a Shoalhaven School Group resource and students are selected for enrolment through applications from School Counsellors to Shellharbour District Office.

Students are supported with Individual Learning Plans. There is a strong focus on Social Skill Development to prepare students for integration back to their home schools.
Students practice social skills through explicit board games

Technology
The school Technology Committee consisted of six staff members and two parents. In 2008, we continued to implement our planned 3 year improvement program.

Most students in the school demonstrate knowledge in the general usage of computers and are able to access the internet for research. Surveys and DET data indicated that the internet log on rate for Primary students at NPS in 2008 was 100%. This is a remarkable improvement on the 2006 data, where only 36% of students were regularly accessing their email. The whole school was given access a localised server (SENTRAL) which contains easy shortcuts to familiar web sites. As a staff, we also introduced RISC software in order to track welfare and behaviour. A preliminary school website was launched, with further work needed in the future in order to make this an important outlet for communicating with the school community and for promoting Nowra Public School.

As part of the T4L Program, we were allocated a rollout of ten new computers. The committee selected to order new Apple Macintosh computers. These were allocated to the Infants Site in order to encourage early computer confidence. A new printer was acquired for the Noona Meena block, which enabled localised printing for Stage 3 staff and students. USB drives were made available for staff use as needed.

Utilising Hall User funds, a data projector was permanently fixed in the hall. This has been used in many school assemblies, as well as proving beneficial for staff training and development days.

At the end of Term 4, the Federal Government’s Connected Classrooms Program was rolled out to the Multi-Purpose Room. This saw us allocated with an Interactive Whiteboard (IWB) and the package included a fixed camera and flat screen TV. Six staff members received professional development in incorporating the IWB into classroom planning and also in the use of video conferencing. We anticipate further acquisition of IWB’s in the future will be made available to both sites.

Library
A major focus in the library for 2008 was the use of Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) to support learning opportunities for students. Students communicated with other students across Australia using Web 2 environments. Successful examples include the use of a blog by Stage 1 students for studying character development in narratives and the creation of Imovies by students hosted on wikis.

The use of the large screen projector for explicitly modeling internet search skills was highly successful. Students K-6 were given opportunities to use these skills to research information for tasks that were planned collaboratively between the classroom teacher and the teacher librarian.

The liaison with Bunnings continued and saw the building of a beautiful garden that is flourishing and dramatically improves the entrance to the library.

220 students completed the Premiers Reading Challenge and 8 students received a gold certificate for four years of participation.

Mrs Simms & Mr Robertson Reading Challenge was completed by 30 students.

Two book fairs raised a total of $1800 which was spent wholly in the library to purchase new reading material. An additional $1800 was raised through participating in Scholastic Book Club.

An author visit included writer and comedian John Larkin. This was enthusiastically received by all students.

Gifted & Talented
A teacher was employed to coordinate the whole school approach to gifted &/or talented (G&T) students. Some of the outcomes were:

A data base of G&T students was compiled
8 week Stage 2 literacy program
20 week Stage 1 program

Special interest programs included – debating, public speaking, chess, “Murder Under the Microscope”, “Tournament of Minds”, Premiers Spelling Bee, film-making, drama for the local Eisteddfod, singing and dancing in the Illawarra
based Southern Stars, completion of a mosaic near the school hall.

All teachers participated in a G&T workshop designed to improve classroom teaching strategies.

40 students participated in the University of NSW international competitions in computer skills, science, mathematics, spelling, writing and English. We achieved 1 high distinction, 12 distinctions and 19 credits overall.

**Koori Mentor**

A Koori Mentor was employed in the Suspension Centre in 2008 (Terms 1 -3) to support Aboriginal students during their placement in the centre and return to school phase.

The position was funded using a grant from DEEWR. Eligible students received mentoring, when they returned to their home-school, to reinforce strategies taught in the centre, with the aim of promoting a successful return to school. Twenty three students accessed the program. Compared with baseline data there was a significant decrease in the number of students returning to the centre after their initial suspension.

**Defence Schools Transition Aide**

The DSTA role is to support students of Defence Force families at times of deployment or separation, to assist new families to integrate into the school and to transition students leaving to their new school.

The Lyrebird Club supports defence students by involving them in a range of activities like making Easer eggs, Christmas crafts. Students are also encouraged to become involved in out of school activities such as Cubs, Scouts, Guides, dancing or sporting groups.

Students appreciate the DSTA being available and the fact that there is someone at the school who knows and understands their concerns.

Parents of defence students feedback has been very positive with many saying the extra support has made things easier especially with younger children.

**Progress on 2008 targets**

**Target 1**

27.6% of Year 3 and 36.7% of Year 5 students will achieve Literacy Proficiency (top 2 Bands) in the 2008 National Assessment Program.

Our achievements include:

31% of Yr3 achieved Proficiency level in Literacy with a pleasing reduction by 3% in the bottom Band.

10% of Yr5 achieved Proficiency level in Literacy, our lowest level in 5 years. This was matched by an increase in the percentage located in the bottom Band.
Target 2

33.3% of Year 3 and 41.4% of Year 5 students will achieve Numeracy Proficiency (top 2 Bands) in the 2008 National Assessment Program.

Our achievements include:

22% of Yr3 achieved Proficiency level in Numeracy. While this fell short of our goals we did achieve a 9% reduction in bottom Band students.

14% of Yr5 students achieved Proficiency level in Yr5. This was significantly less than our target, although the same performance as 2007. Yr5 also reduced the percentage of students located in the bottom Bands.

Target 3

Consistent Teacher Judgement (CTJ) procedures fully implemented for all assessment and reporting purposes.

All staff work in grade and stage groups when designing and marking assessment tasks. All students in each grade are assessed in a consistent and common fashion.

Our achievements include:

All students receive the same performance reports. These reports reflect accurately a students performance in relation to syllabus outcomes and also the performance of other students.

All staff have been provided with time to collaboratively plan teaching units of work and also the assessment tasks that accompany the unit.

Implementing the Literacy on Track program was a core focus for teachers, supported by visiting consultants and funded through our professional development allocations. The ability to work in grade or stage groups was very much appreciated by teachers.

Target 4

The percentage of Aboriginal students achieving National Benchmarks in literacy and numeracy will be at, or above, the State average.

We have not achieved our overall goal of equity in performance ie Aboriginal students performing at State average. Nowra PS Aboriginal students are performing just under the average of their non Aboriginal peers. In Yr5 Aboriginal students were significantly over represented in the bottom two Bands.

Our achievements include:

Yr3 achieved significant changes to Aboriginal students performance with no students in the bottom Band in Literacy and none in the bottom two Bands for Numeracy.

All students failing to meet National benchmarks have been able to work on specific tutoring programs with a paid tutor for all of 2008.

The Quality Teaching Indigenous Program involved a small group of teachers, consultants, Professor Brian Cambourne. The Federal Department of Education provided leadership in the development of culturally appropriate lesson formats, protocols for teachers and knowledge on the value and place of “respect” in the broader Aboriginal community.

Accelerated Literacy has been piloted in two classes. This program looks deeply at classroom pedagogy and various strategies that underpin quality teaching. This will be continued in the next three years.

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 2008 our school carried out evaluations of the management and practices for the learning support teacher and teacher implementation of the spelling syllabus.

Educational and management practice

As a result of the appointment of a new teacher (learning difficulties) it was appropriate to review current practices and programs utilised in the learning difficulties area, and make changes if necessary.

Background

A Learning Support Team strategy was used including team members: Mark McCarthy (Principal, Kangaroo Valley), Terry Miller (Leader, Professional Learning & Practice), Ms Mackinnon (teacher, learning difficulties- STLA), Mr Sansom (relieving Principal).

The process included: committee discussion, teacher interviews, data analysis and observations.
Findings and conclusions

- Staff were comfortable with the process and displayed thorough knowledge of their students. They were open and positive.
- There is considerable expertise among the staff at Nowra, with many staff Reading Recovery trained.
- The already established Literacy team supported the concept of early intervention and all ideas offered for change were consistent with Regional policy.

Future directions

- The general consensus was that it was time to make changes as previous practice was not achieving significant outcomes.
- The school needs to take time to establish a set of priorities as the raw numbers of students requiring assistance is high and challenging.
- The literacy committee needs to look at other programs to ensure they meet student needs. An alternative would be to take up offers of early intervention programs such as Best Start.
- The STLA timetable needs to be realistic and allow for movement between classes and school sites.
- Consideration needs to be given to reducing supervision/duty loads for the STLA allowing for more teacher discussions time.
- The referral process needs to be revisited and staff need to understand how it works.
- The Learning Support Team should consider other strategies to assist in implementing the STLA program e.g. Peer and cross age tutoring, parent and volunteers, adaption of 3L, team teaching etc.
- The Learning Support Team to investigate better/improved use of the District Support Teacher, Learning Assistance.

Curriculum - spelling

Over a period of years the accepted policy for spelling at our school has become dated and teacher’s professional opinion was that it required an overhaul to better address student outcomes.

The review included data analysis and staff survey into frequency of lessons, knowledge and strategies taught and assessment of student performance.

Background

Data analysis revealed spelling to be a key area of weakness in previous basic skills tests as well as the most recent National Assessment Plan testing.

Findings and conclusions

- Some stages/grades were approaching spelling in very different ways, and stages were not aware of programs and expectations of the grade/stage before and after their own.
- Year 3 worked their spelling as a grade, using core words, family words, theme words and a spelling rule. This worked extremely well and could be accessed easily by other teachers.
- All staff were accessing the syllabus.
- Spelling was done regularly in all classes at least 3 times a week.
- Most teachers assess spelling weekly.
- Most teachers used theme words in their spelling lists.

Future directions

All the staff supported the need for:

- Continuity of spelling in grades/stages. This ensures the continuous development of spelling skills and strategies throughout the stages of schooling.
- Standard assessments to be done the same across grades/stages as this made reporting much easier and equal. This also allowed programs such as reading recovery and STLA to identify and monitor student progress more effectively.
- Spelling lists that cater to all the individual differences found within the classrooms.
Lessons where the purpose and value of the spelling instruction are made explicit to students.

**Parent, student, and teacher satisfaction**

In 2008 the school sought the opinions of students and teachers about the school.

Their responses are presented below in the form of a report of a formal and lengthy review.

**Quality of School Life (QSL)**

QSL recognises the importance of the affective and social dimensions of schooling.

The school used two student surveys to determine how students feel about their life in primary school. The information gained from these surveys will assist the school to implement strategies that continue to promote students' satisfaction with school.

**Results**

1. **Years 5-6 – School Life Student Questionnaire** results indicate:

   **Quality Teaching/Curriculum**

   Most students
   - believe the things they learn at school are relevant to them now and in the future.
   - are happy with how well they do at school.
   - feel their teacher expects a high standard of work from them.
   - are able to achieve good results in their school work.

   **Discipline**

   - are aware of consequences if they do not follow school rules.

   **Anti-bullying**

   - feel safe at school and have at least one teacher or adult they can talk to if they have a problem.

   **Leadership**

   - would enjoy the chance to represent the school.
   - believe students and teachers like their ideas.

   **Recognition**

   - consider they are recognised for their achievements.

**School Image**

- indicate they are proud to be a student of Nowra Public School and feel a part of the school community.
- believe students show respect for each other and school property.

2. **Year 2-6 Quality of School Life (overall)**

   Major findings of the QSL were consistent with overall trends in the NSW Public School System whereby most students indicated an overall positive view about school life including general satisfaction at school, strong sense of achievement, positive sense of adventure in learning, relevance of schooling and positive student-teacher relationships. The majority of students also gave positive ratings in relation to their status, self-esteem and social integration.

   When comparing responses between male and female students male students were generally less positive than females.

   Both male and female students across the school were positive in all areas of the survey; this was particularly evident in the Year 3 cohort.

   Boys and girls were generally satisfied with learning, however, boys showed less enthusiasm to learning and sense of achievement as they entered the middle years of schooling (Years 5-8). This is consistent across the state in all schools.

**Future Direction**

The school will work with local high schools to address the downward trend in satisfaction with learning in the middle years.

**Professional learning**

The school is provided with funds by the Department of Education and Training to spend on approved activities designed to increase the capacity of staff to deliver quality education programs. The major areas of expenditure included:

- Support for new/beginning teachers
- Use of technology eg interactive whiteboards
- Literacy on Track (Kindergarten to Yr 2 teachers)
- Accelerated Literacy (2 staff)
- Quality Teaching Indigenous Program
• Career development and executive training
• Attendance at district, regional and state meetings

School development 2009 – 2011
All targets are taken from the 2009-2011 School Management Plan.

Targets for 2009
All targets are addressing the major targets from the school 2009-20011 Management Plan.

Target 1
To implement the State Literacy Plan by identifying and addressing the literacy needs of students.

Strategies to achieve this target include:
Staff professional learning
Understanding high school expectations
Staff analysis and follow up of students’ National Assessment Program performance.
Actively implement programs: Best Start, Literacy on Track, Reading Recovery, Learning Difficulties teacher.

Our success will be measured by:
The Literacy Continuum K-8 is part of the school planning cycle.
All targeted programs are in place.
There is a measurable movement of students from lower bands (NAPLAN) to higher bands.

Target 2
To implement the State Numeracy Plan by identifying and addressing the numeracy needs of students.

Strategies to achieve this target include:
Provide professional learning for all staff.
Identify teachers with high level competency in teaching numeracy.
All staff to analyse school NAPLAN results, identify weaknesses and strategies to address these weaknesses.
Fully implement “Go Maths” K-6.
Utilise Linking Conferences and regional consultancy services.

Our success will be measured by:
All teachers include numeracy targets in their teaching programs. All staff have participated in active analysis of NAPLAN results and analysed school and student weaknesses.
There is a measurable shift in student performances to higher bands in NAPLAN.
School implements Best Start processes and procedures.

Target 3
Aboriginal student outcomes match or better outcomes of the broader student population.

Strategies to achieve this target include:
Provide cultural awareness training for all staff.
Support quality teaching frameworks to improve Aboriginal students engagement in learning.
Develop Personal Learning Plans for all Aboriginal students.
Establish effective-home school partnerships.

Our success will be measured by:
Aboriginal students NAPLAN results are the same or better than the broader school population.
More Aboriginal students accept leadership roles across the school.
All Aboriginal students have a current PLP.
Aboriginal policies and plans are evident in all teachers planning.

Target 4
Strengthen the capacity of teachers to improve student outcomes.

Strategies to achieve this target include:
Teachers collaboratively apply the NSW Quality Teaching model.
Education Support Team strategies are utilised to evaluate programs and practices.

All teachers are familiarised with the Institute of Teachers Teaching Standards.

Promote the use of the leadership development website.

Promote innovation, expertise and leadership initiative.

Our success will be measured by:

**Target 5**

The schools’ culture respects and responds to student aspirations, culture, gender and learning potential.

Strategies to achieve this target include:

- Workshops to address student engagement, student and staff well-being.
- Staff training in the use of SMART data.
- Cultural awareness training for all staff.
- Develop teacher capacity to more effectively use integration support funding.
- Fully implement – Pastoral Care Worker, student leadership, nutrition and breakfast, computer based student records (RISC) programs.
- Implement the Curriculum Planning, Programming, Assessment & Reporting to Parents K-12 Policy in relation to all students.

Our success will be measured by:

- Positive Behaviour for Success (PBS) implemented across the school.
- QTIP protocols are understood and included in planning and presentation.
- A Charter of Learning (values) is introduced to staff and students.
- Explicit monitoring protocols are in place (PARS/TARS)
- Differentiated presentation of curriculum is evident across the school.
- Increased parent and community involvement.

Student surveys/forums are in place to allow students to express their thoughts and opinions.

**Target 6**

Computer technology is a fundamental part of the learning options for both students and teachers.

Strategies to achieve this target include:

- Data analysis is used to inform planning at the school and class level.
- Ensure that computer technology is provided with both general and targeted support across the school.
- Teacher training through professional learning courses at either school or district level.
- Adequate planning to ensure that quality teaching practices underpin lessons.
- Encourage the internet and connected classroom technology for sharing communication and curriculum options.

Our success will be measured by:

- All staff utilise computer technology each day in the presentation of lessons.
- Improved student access and capacity to use information and communication technologies in the classroom, library and home.
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.

C. Robertson (Principal), G. Sansom (DP), L. Bird (AP), J. Gardner (Librarian), B. Klein (Teacher, computers, performing arts), J. McCarthy (Autism), A. Mackinnon (learning difficulties), S. Quinell (Teacher, visual arts), J. Ramires (Teacher, sport).

S. Matheson, P&C President plus P&C Executive
G. Matheson, Prefects

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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: