2008 Annual School Report
Murwillumbah South Infants School

NSW Public Schools – Leading the way
Our school at a glance

Students
Our school enrolment during 2008 was 31 students including 13 boys and 18 girls. In 2008 we had two classes.
Kindergarten 12
Year 1 / Year 2 19

Staff
The staff consists of two classroom teachers as well as 0.3 support teaching entitlements. Two teachers are employed to deliver support programs on a part time basis. All teaching staff meet the professional requirements for teaching in NSW public schools.

Student achievement in 2008
There are no formal external assessment programs for Kindergarten to Year 2 students. Year 3 basic skills data from MSIS students who transitioned to Murwillumbah East PS, Stoker’s Siding PS and Crystal Creek PS performed at state level or above in Reading and two out of the three Year 2 students performed at state level for numeracy.

Messages

Principal’s message
Murwillumbah South Infants School focuses on the provision of quality educational outcomes for every student in a safe and happy student centred environment. Through effective teamwork, parents, teachers and community members work together to provide the best possible learning opportunities for all students.

Academic excellence in an harmonious, small school setting continues to be well recognised and valued by the school and it’s supportive local community. Parents actively participate in a variety of school activities and this year has seen many parents involved with staff and students to support individual learning programs.

By building strong foundations in the areas of literacy, numeracy and technology, students have the capacity to further develop positive and successful learning experiences as they move into different learning environments.

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.

Helen Atkins

P&C President's message
P&C President’s message.

The P&C this year had a number of committed and dedicated members whose involvement ensured Murwillumbah South Infants had a very successful 2008.

Events organized were the Easter raffle, Christmas in July, Grandparents day, crazy hair disco and the Bunnings sausage sizzle. Sausage sizzles at school events such as the athletics carnival and candles by glow stick were also conducted. Including the several raffles organized through the year, the P&C managed to raise significant funds for the school.

Funds raised allowed extra scope for the school to care and expand the education of the students including the continued supply of a daily piece of fruit for each child and to subsidise excursions – this year to Tropical Fruit World.

A special mention for the secretary Rebecca McVeigh needs to be included for her monumental efforts this year that may well have been more than the rest of us put together.

Thank you to everyone involved with the school for your dedication that allowed 2008 to such a successful year.

John Leighton

Student representative’s message
This year four students formed the Student Representative Council. One student wrote to the editor of the local paper about things that we do at our school. We showed visitors around the school and we presented assemblies for special days like Grandparents Day and the Year 2 Farewell. This year we learned about being leaders and had special leadership activities and a Leadership Lunch.

Matilda Taragel, Jordana Teamo, Devlin Van Hooft and George Townsend
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

Staff establishment

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Position</th>
<th>Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Principal</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Classroom Teachers</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Support Teacher Learning Assistance</td>
<td>0.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher Librarian</td>
<td>0.084</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>2.184</td>
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</tbody>
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Staff retention
There were no staff changes throughout the year.

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>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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Class sizes
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.

Class Sizes

<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>1/2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1/2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>K</td>
<td>K</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>12</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.

Date of financial summary: 30/11/2008

Income $  
Balance brought forward 133,265.75  
Global funds 47,170.09  
Tied funds 68,315.33  
School & community sources 5,454.53  
Interest 9,292.28  
Trust receipts 0.00  
Canteen 0.00  
Total income 263,497.98

Expenditure
Teaching & learning  
Key learning areas 4,567.28  
Excursions 640.00  
Extracurricular dissections 1,176.74  
Library 125.00  
Training & development 4,312.75  
Tied funds 69,242.53  
Casual relief teachers 1,568.20  
Administration & office 23,869.15  
School-operated canteen 0.00  
Utilities 6,223.94  
Maintenance 3,364.70  
Trust accounts 0.00  
Capital programs 4,800.00  
Total expenditure 119,890.29  
Balance carried forward 143,607.69

A full copy of the school's 2008 financial statement is tabled at the annual general meetings of the School Council and/or the parent body. Further details concerning the statement can be obtained by contacting the school.

School performance 2008
The development of a balanced and motivational curriculum is a highlight of MSIS. The involvement of all students in all school activities is a unique attribute of the school and fosters team spirit and personal responsibility.

Achievements
Arts
Throughout 2008 the students participated in a variety of musical and dramatic performances. This included a very popular performance at the local shopping centre and the neighbouring retirement village. This year we fostered a working relationship with the local art gallery including workshops, visits and competitions.

Sport
The school is strongly committed to providing opportunities for all students to develop positive attitudes to physical education through individual skill development, fitness and awareness.

Highlights in 2008 included a daily fitness and nutrition program, participation in Small Schools Sports Day and our own MSIS Athletics Day.

Academic

Literacy
Student achievement in literacy was assessed through Best Start assessment for Kindergarten, Starting with Assessment, continuous assessment of outcomes, consistent teacher judgement of work samples, end of semester assessments and assessment of reading level progress throughout the year.

Findings and conclusions.

- All kindergarten students achieved early Stage One outcomes in phonemic awareness development and talking and listening.
- 80% of students achieved Early Stage One outcomes in reading and writing.
- 95% of Year 1 and Year 2 students achieved expected Stage One outcomes for talking and listening.
- 80% of Year 2 students achieved expected Stage 1 outcomes for reading and writing.
- 80% of Year 1 students achieved expected Stage 1 outcomes.
- 85% of all children in the school improved by six or more reading levels throughout the year.

Numeracy
In numeracy student achievement was measured through continuous assessment of outcomes, student work samples and end of semester assessments.

The Schedule of Early Number Assessment profiles (SENA 1 and SENA 2) were also used at the end of each semester.

Findings and conclusions

- 80% of all students are working at the expected level or beyond in number patterns and algebra.
- 80% of students are working at their expected stage level or beyond in
measurement, space and geometry and data.

- 75% of all children in the school used counting on and counting back strategies for the addition and subtraction of numbers up to 30.

**Significant programs and initiatives**

**Aboriginal education**

All students at the school are provided with opportunities to develop an understanding and sensitivity to Aboriginal culture through an inclusive curriculum. Within the Quality teaching framework, programs were developed which focused on the use of narrative as an effective teaching strategy. Members of the local Aboriginal community were invited to come to the school and tell their stories. The children participated in various talking and listening activities followed by traditional Aboriginal art and craft activities.

**Multicultural education**

The school strives to provide opportunities for its young students to develop an understanding, knowledge and respect for other cultures. Members of the local Indian community were invited to our school to talk to the children about their culture and discuss cultural differences. The children listened to traditional Indian stories and discussed and observed various cultural artefacts.

**Respect and responsibility**

Developing respect for themselves, for others and for their environment is a major focus of the school and embedded in all learning experiences. A well established Social Skills program, merit system and reward days for positive attitudes and behaviour is rigorously implemented. Students are recognised by other students for their personal achievements through the Star of the Week program and weekly newsletter. All students take responsibility for specific jobs throughout the year to encourage a strong sense of responsibility as a member of the school community. Each child is given opportunities throughout the year to take on leadership roles in assemblies and the REDI fitness program. The children take great pride in these positions of responsibility. Children are encouraged to self evaluate their own learning and continually strive to do their best. By taking responsibility for their own learning our young students are given opportunities to develop as lifelong successful learners.

**Progress on 2008 targets**

Our school has a management plan which helps us work out ahead of time how to do our best for every child. Every year we agree on some improvement targets for the plan which we will work together to achieve.

The targets for 2008 covered improvements in Literacy (grammar and punctuation) and the development of a Social Skills and Values Program.

**Target 1**

**Improve student learning outcomes in writing through the development of effective grammar and punctuation skills.**

**Our achievements include:**

Student writing worksamples reflect growth in student knowledge and skill using appropriate punctuation and grammar.

Students approach writing tasks with more confidence and are skilled in editing their work for correct punctuation and grammar.

A whole school scope and sequence for grammar and punctuation has been developed.

Parents attended a workshop to assist children with literacy skills at home.

**Target 2**

**To promote students personal development and positive self worth through the development of a whole school Social Skills and Values Program.**

**Our achievements include:**

Parents were invited to discuss values and social skills at a school forum. Teachers and parents agreed on a common understanding of the values that underpin our school activities.

The “You Can Do It” program was developed and implemented in terms 1 and 2 with information for parents attached to the newsletter. This assisted parents to discuss with their children, the social skills/values taught at school.

During terms 3 and 4 the “Whole Child” program was introduced to further develop children’s understanding of respect for themselves and others.

Parents strongly supported the whole school program and want to see it continued in 2009.

The children developed more positive self talk and talk among their peers. This led to a more harmonious, cooperative and respectful school environment.
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 school culture and student learning.

Educational and management practice

School Environment

Background

Parents, teachers and community members were invited to a School Planning and Review meeting.

A SWOT analysis of strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats showed overwhelmingly that parents were very pleased with the education their children received at the school but felt that we needed to create a higher profile within the community to increase enrolments and that many people were unaware of what the school has to offer.

The Department’s promotions officer Kylie Wilkinson was invited to do a “walk through” the school, to determine what areas of the school environment could be enhanced.

Findings and conclusions

In 2009 we will promote our school more widely in the community through newspaper articles and art workshops for parents and preschool children. We will continue to advertise in the local shopping centre and community.

A very positive image of the school was recorded by the promotion’s team from the Department. It was noted that the school has a beautiful tranquil setting, is well signed from the front entrance and that the overall impression was of a “busy, productive school engaged in exciting learning activities.”

It was recommended that the signage at the River Street entrance be improved and that posters in the office could be replaced with posters of students engaged in learning. These recommendations will be followed up in 2009.

Future directions

A school promotions group will be formed in 2009 comprising teachers and parents.

Advertising in the local paper and the celebration of school events will be made more public.

The local council will be approached to erect street signs for the school in Smith Street and River Street.

Preschools will be invited to join school performances and teachers will continue to visit preschools to develop a positive relationship to assist transition to school.

Curriculum

Reading Comprehension

Background

This year we introduced Best Start Assessment to Kindergarten children. We are continually assessing children for reading using the PM Benchmark Kit to determine instructional and independent reading levels. Throughout the year we have been using Best Start materials and Benchmark Kit tests to assess student comprehension of what has been read.

Findings and conclusions

Our results from these assessments indicate that students’ comprehension levels are often lower than their ability to decode print.

Future directions

In 2009 we will focus on the development of effective reading comprehension strategies to improve student reading comprehension.

Parent, student, and teacher satisfaction

In 2008 the school sought the opinions of parents, students and teachers about the school. Their responses are presented below.

Background

Students surveyed parents, students and teachers about the school. Students were surveyed using a school based survey on quality teaching. The survey consisted of questions about learning at school including teacher expectations, setting personal goals and interest in learning.

The majority of students indicated that they enjoyed:

- Art, Clubs, dancing, maths, reading and writing
- Group work, having choices
• Achieving their personal learning goals, teachers explaining how they can improve their work, getting merit awards and showing their portfolios to their family.

The students results overall indicated that they enjoyed learning and were most motivated when they could share their work with others at assembly and with their parents.

**Teacher survey**

Teachers completed 15 questions based on their use of elements from the Quality Teaching framework. Their responses were indicated on a scale from 1-10.

The results reflected the high level of teacher knowledge and commitment to best practice to improve student outcomes.

**Parent survey**

Parents were invited to a Planning and Pizza meeting and asked to evaluate the schools strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats (SWOT analysis). Surveys were sent home to parents who could not attend.

There was an overwhelming positive response from parents indicating that the school provided excellence in learning programs for their children. Small class sizes, teacher expertise and dedication and a happy environment were seen as contributing factors enhancing student learning.

**Professional learning**

Our teachers participated in regional training in Best Start, Smartboard training, Count Me In Too Online and Quality Teaching (cooperative learning strategies) The Principal attended the regional Principal conferences.

Three professional learning days were held on days one of Terms 1, 2, and 3.

The average number of days of professional learning for teaching and support staff in 2008 was 8 days.

**School development 2009 – 2011**

Our school has established target areas for 2009 with the aim of achieving excellence in educational outcomes for all students. Underpinning these targets is an overarching emphasis on reflective practice and quality teaching.

**Target 1**

To improve student learning outcomes in reading through the development of effective comprehension skills.

Strategies to achieve this target include:

- Students are assessed using Benchmark Kit Reading Comprehension tests and Best Start materials
- Staff meet to analyse and discuss results
- Staff meet to develop a common understanding of syllabus outcomes and discuss effective strategies to develop student learning outcomes.
- Teachers attend professional learning courses to develop effective teaching strategies
- Teachers develop, implement and assess programs targeted at student learning needs in comprehension
- Parents are invited to attend a workshop on how to support their children’s learning needs with comprehension.

Our success will be measured by:

- Results from Best Start and Benchmark assessments indicate an improvement in students understanding of what they have read.
- Teachers develop their knowledge, skills and understanding of how to teach and assess comprehension through effective training and development.
- Parents attend a reading workshop and support their children’s learning at home.

**Target 2**

To improve student learning outcomes in Science and Technology.

Strategies to achieve this target include:

- Teacher training and development using syllabus documents and Board of Studies resources.
- The development of a scope and sequence K-2 in Science and Technology
- Through cooperative learning strategies students are taught skills of designing, making and assessing using a range of technologies

Our success will be measured by:

- Teachers develop a shared knowledge and understanding of syllabus outcomes
- Students are engaged in learning tasks designed to stimulate their interest and excitement in Science and Technology
- Units of work in Science and Technology are developed and implemented across the whole school
- Students demonstrate skills of investigation, designing, making and assessing selecting a range of technologies
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.

Helen Atkins Principal
Karen Kester Teacher
Vicki McBride Senior Administrative Manager
John Leighton President P &C

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