Messages

Principal’s message

When reflecting on the highlights and events that took place in 2011 it certainly brings home how busy the year has been. Whether it is the extensive cultural and creative activities, intellectual pursuits, leadership or technological opportunities, our students have access to a vast range of experiences and most of these can be found within the pages of this publication.

I would like to thank my staff for their efforts and commitment to providing a quality educational experience for the students at Mount Colah Public School in 2011.

One of the standout features of the school is the extremely supportive and dedicated community. Without this close partnership between the school and the parent community the programs we provide would not be as effective. On behalf of the staff I would like to thank everyone for their support this year.

This is my final year at Mount Colah and I would like to thank everyone for their support during the time I have spent at the school. I will always have fond memories of Mount Colah and wish the students, staff and community best wishes for the future.

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.

Bill Gillespie – Principal

P & C message

The resources, learning programs and beautiful grounds at MCPS today, are the direct result of the dedication of the teaching staff and the wonderful support that the P&C community provides.

Throughout 2011, our P&C community continued to display an incredible generosity of time and spirit and had an active involvement in a wide range of areas which support our children’s school life. These include such programs as the School Canteen, Music Program, Uniform Shop, Book Club, School Banking, Student Yearbook, Garden Maintenance and more. Volunteers of our community are here every day, whether it’s working in the canteen, helping in the classroom, supporting fundraising and sporting events or mulching the gardens. Every day in some way, someone gives of their time to support MCPS. That’s what our ‘community’ is all about.

This helps to support and enhance the resources, programs and facilities available and benefits the students of MCPS so they have every opportunity to excel, to achieve their personal best, and to participate in a wide range of experiences that will help them to become happy, healthy, amazing people and great future citizens of our community.

This year we were able to implement expenditure from donations of over $50,000 for a variety of projects, including;

- Air conditioning of our newly completed BER classrooms
- New tables and benches for our great library.
- The refurbishment of our brilliant COLA artworks.
- The installation of our second Veggie Garden, a water tank stand and a beautiful mural to enhance this area.
- A new projector for our Hall and two new classroom printers.
- Handmade Sand Pit Covers and additional sporting equipment.
- The installation of Wireless Access points, and funds pledged for the replacement of computers in our Technology Centre, to keep us moving forward with future technology.

My sincere thanks go to the school community for their continuous support and dedication, all of which continues to make our school -one of the best around!

Jen Punt P&C President 2011

Student representative’s message

Representing the school for the opening of our new classrooms and many other fun jobs was
such an honour. Learning so many new skills at leadership camp has helped me to run assemblies and various events. I now know how to meet new people and this is a skill I will need for high school. I wish future captains good luck and hopefully they will have enjoyed being taught at Mount Colah Public School as much as I have, although I can’t wait to go to high school. I wish I could stay at Mount Colah for many more years to come. I wish all the students the best of luck for 2012.

Sinead Byrne – School Captain

My time at Mount Colah has been the best time. The teachers are so nice and kind and so are the students. This is a great school and I will miss going to Mount Colah Public School.

Cooper Thompson – School Captain

My time at Mount Colah has been amazing and I will miss this school dearly as I have learned a lot from my time here. This school is amazing, the teachers are thoughtful and helpful, the students are the same and the lifestyle at Mount Colah is unbelievable.

Melanie Bulmer – Vice Captain

My time at Mount Colah has been fantastic. The school has taught me so much and I have made so many great friends. There are so many nice students. I am going to miss the school as it is the best ever. Thanks a lot Mount Colah.

Gary Khouri – Vice Captain

School context

Mount Colah Public School is a high performing school with a tradition of excellence across a number of areas. We are a co-educational school offering students strong academic, sporting, creative and performing arts programs. Our diverse curriculum and extracurricular programs cater for students with a full range of abilities and interests.

The dedicated, experienced teachers foster a culture of excellence that encourages all students to achieve their personal best. The school respects students as individuals who have rights, but also responsibilities and promotes the values of Respect, Responsibility and Personal Best across the school and within the community in line with the school’s Positive Behaviour Engaging Learners (PBEL) welfare framework.

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

In 2011 there were 373 students attending the school. The gender distribution was 176 boys and 197 girls. This is an increase in enrolment over 2010 numbers.

Student attendance profile

Enrolments

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
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<th>Female</th>
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<tr>
<td>2011</td>
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Student attendance rates

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
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<td>2011</td>
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An historical perspective of student attendance is shown below

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<td>94.4</td>
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Management of non-attendance

All school attendance rolls are checked each term by the Home School Liaison Office (HSLO) to monitor attendance. Where necessary, appropriate procedures are implemented to improve attendance.

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.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Roll class</th>
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<th>Total per year</th>
<th>Total ln class</th>
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</thead>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>KOB</td>
<td>K</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>18</td>
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</table>

Staff establishment

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

The school is staffed with a principal, three assistant principals, 12 teachers and teacher librarian four days a week. A school counsellor works at the school for one day a week. Two school assistants work in the office and a general assistant is employed three days a week.

The National Education Agreement requires schools to report on Indigenous composition of their workforce.

Mount Colah Public School does not have any Indigenous staff members.
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>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Degree or Diploma</td>
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<tr>
<td>Postgraduate</td>
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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 30/11/2011

<table>
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<th>Income</th>
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<td>Global funds</td>
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<td>Tied funds</td>
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<td>School &amp; community sources</td>
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<td>Interest</td>
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<td>Canteen</td>
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<td>Total income</td>
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<table>
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<th>Expenditure</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
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<td>Excursions</td>
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<td>Library</td>
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<tr>
<td>Trust accounts</td>
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<tr>
<td>Capital programs</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total expenditure</td>
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<tr>
<td>Balance carried forward</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

A full copy of the school’s 2011 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 2011

Achievements

Arts

This year the Concert Band and our Music Program has grown to our biggest number of students for many, many years. The junior and senior choirs and the dance group have continued to excel. Here are some of the highlights for 2011:

- Newly formed Waratah Band performed at the Easter Hat Parade
- Concert Band awarded a Distinction at the Hornsby North Band Festival
- Both bands performed at McHappy Day at Mount Colah McDonalds in November
- Senior Choir performed in the Concert Hall at the Opera House
- Dance group showcased their talents at the Metropolitan North Dance Festival at Glen Street Theatre

Sport

Mount Colah Public School took part in the Hornsby Zone Primary School Sports Association (PSSA) summer and winter competitions with teams entered in both senior and junior levels. In terms 1 & 4 the school had teams participating in boy’s junior and senior cricket and girl’s T-Ball and softball. In terms 2 & 3 the school entered teams in junior and senior soccer for boys and junior and senior netball for girls. The school also entered a Year 3-6 girl’s soccer team. Teams also took part in State Knockout competitions in touch football, netball and soccer. The school also participated in Zone Cross-country, Swimming and Athletics Carnivals.

Highlights include:

- Girls’ soccer team making the Zone semi-final
• Junior Boys’ Cricket team making the Zone semi final
• T-Ball team making the Zone semi final
• Five students representing the Zone at the Regional Athletics Carnival
• Two students representing the Zone at the Regional Cross Country Carnival

Maths Olympiad
The school entered a team of thirty students into the Australasian Maths Olympiad. The team was placed in the top 25% of schools in the competition. Nine of the students recorded results in the top 10% of students and another seventeen students were placed in the top 25%.

Gifted and Talented
This year Stage 2 and 3 students entered the NSW Board of Studies Write On writing competition for the first time. Students completed the set writing task in class and from this, teachers selected just one entry from Stage 2 and one from Stage 3 to represent the school in the competition. One of our students was awarded the top honour, a Gold Award, for their narrative.

Students also successfully represented the school at the regional finals of the Premier’s Spelling Bee with all representatives making it through at least four rounds, an excellent result.

Our annual Talkfest public speaking competition focused on persuasive texts and gave our gifted speakers a chance to use their considerable skills.

Other opportunities for GATS students included the Webmasters Group for technology buffs, dance, choir and band groups for those interested in the arts and finally there were the various sports carnivals and weekly PSSA sports competition for those who excel in the sporting arena.

Technology
Mount Colah Public School provides students with an excellent technology-based learning environment with an extensive and reliable computer network throughout the school as well as the latest in interactive technology in each and every classroom.

The boards have become an integral part of the teaching and learning process and they have put the world at our fingertips. For example, as part of their unit on Space, Year Three students participated in a video conference with scientists at NASA who conducted experiments and explained how air pressure works and the importance of the spacesuits astronauts wear.

Students in the Webmasters group and Special Interest group have been experimenting with the animation of photos using the program ‘Crazy Talk’. This program allows students to create movies starring characters they have brought to life by adding voice and facial expressions.

Environmental Education
A second vegetable patch was established thanks to the hard work and dedication of parent, Paul Murphy. Mrs Lacis and Ms Fryer attended a wonderful professional learning course early in the year which has led to the development of an action plan aimed at ensuring the continued success and maintenance of the veggie patch. So far the Gardening Group has expanded to include a new Stage 2 group which has been working wonders with the new vegetable garden. Both gardens have produced a terrific selection of vegetables that have been used in cooking lessons during Special Interest Groups and also in the canteen.

A new water tank was donated by Bunnings, Thornleigh and this has been installed directly adjacent to the vegetable gardens to
ensure easy access to water. Hornsby Council also donated a new compost bin and council education officers will be visiting the school to help train students in the correct use and management of the bins.

Miss Riggs successfully applied to participate in the Climate Clever program which provided resources and training in how to develop sustainability in schools. Miss Riggs implemented the program with her class and conducted audits of all energy and water use in the school.

Other
The school was also involved in a number of diverse programs such as

- Chess at lunch time
- Premiers Sporting Challenge
- Premiers Reading Challenge
- Peer support programs
- Tabloid sports day
- The Grange Reading Program
- QuickSmart
- World Maths Day
- Wrap with Love Knit In

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.

Year 3: from Band 1 (lowest) to Band 6 (highest for Year 3)
Year 5: from Band 3 (lowest) to Band 8 (highest for Year 5)

Literacy – NAPLAN Year 3

Mount Colah PS had 69% of students in the top two bands compared with 46% for the state. The school has 58% of students in the top band compared with 29% for the state.
The school had 73% of students in the top two bands compared to 60% for the state. The school had 23% of students in the top band compared to 17% for the state.

Mount Colah PS had 72% of students in the top two bands compared with 49% for the state. The school had 29% of students in the top band compared to 24% for the state.

The school had 66% of students in the top two bands compared to 49% for the state. Mount Colah PS had 52% of students in the top band compared to 27% for the state.

**Numeracy – NAPLAN Year 3**

Mount Colah PS had 53% of students in the top two bands compared to 38% for the state. The school had 16% of students in the top band compared to 17% for the state. Maths will continue to be a priority area for the school.
Mount Colah PS had 59% of students in the top two bands compared to 35% for the state. The school had 19% of students in the top band compared to 15% for the state.

Mount Colah PS had 48% of students in the top two bands compared to 35% for the state. The school had 30% of students in the top band compared to 13% for the state.

Mount Colah PS had 45% of students in the top two bands compared to 41% for the state. The school had 26% in the top band compared to 16% for the state.

The school had 39% of students in the top two bands compared to 26% for the state. Mount Colah PS had 13% of students in the top band compared to 9% for the state.
Mount Colah PS had 33% of students in the top two bands compared to 29% for the state. Both the school and the state had 15% in the top band. Maths will continue to be a school priority area for 2012.

**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.

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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Percentage of Year 5 students achieving at or above minimum standard (exempt students included)</th>
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<tbody>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Writing</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Spelling</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Grammar &amp; Punctuation</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Numeracy</strong></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**Significant programs and initiatives**

**SRC**

The SRC was an eagerly sought after position from students this year. Every semester two students from each class in Years 2-6 had the opportunity to demonstrate leadership by being involved in the council. The SRC meetings were run fortnightly where many issues were raised and events organised. The SRC raised funds for school initiatives and charities and took a positive action to ensuring Mount Colah Public School is a safe and happy environment for all students. The projects the SRC have completed this year include:

- Organised composting collection and maintenance
- Sold Koori Kids packs which raised money for Naidoc Week
- Organised Maroon Day for the Bushfire Appeal, raising $485
- Designed a Harmony Day plan for the school
- Collected old mobile phones which were recycled to raise much needed funds to build youth cancer centres across the country
- Provided environmental tips for the weekly newsletter
- Raised funds for Surf Life Saving
- Organised the implementation of the ‘Fruit and Veg Challenge’

**Library**

A special thank you to those many parents, grandparents and other school community members, who donate books to the library, help with covering, keep the computers in the library running smoothly, tidy the garden areas around the library, help with fund raising or the many other tasks that enable our library to provide the children and teachers with a wealth of resources and a wonderful learning environment. In particular, a thank you to Mrs Newland for giving her time to run Book Club for the last few years.

As you know, each year purchases from our school community allow the donation of over $1000 free resources to the school, many of which are books chosen based on the children’s ‘favourites’ at the time.

Chess sets are available for use in the library on games day but the big outdoor chess set has been in use as teams of two Year 4, 5 and 6 children verse each other using the chessboard painted on the pavers outside the administration building. The children enjoy the different experience of moving large pieces around a board of pavers and visualising the next few winning moves. The aim is to promote chess as a fun, strategic thinking activity.

**Grandparent’s day**

A highlight every year is Grandparent’s Day held in Education Week. The visitors enjoy perusing the children’s work that is on display, some even taking the time to sit and read, and the children excitedly choose the book they would like to donate to the library. This year’s astounding generosity resulted in over 260 new books, fiction and non-fiction, for our children to enjoy.
National Literacy Week
This year was the first our school participated in ‘Read for Australia’, part of National Literacy and Numeracy Week. After lunch, on Wednesday 31st August, every class participated in activities to promote the enjoyment of reading. Kindergarten joined their Year 5 buddies to read together as did Year 1 and their former buddies now in Year 6. The older children read picture books to the younger ones and the young children shared a reader with their buddy. Year 2 spent news time during this week sharing their favourite book with their classmates and the teachers even read excerpts from some of the books. Year 3 came together in the library to share an e-book on the Interactive Whiteboard and ten children participated in some singing and acting activities associated with the book. Year 4 dramatised some picture books. Small groups of children presented their picture book story to their classmates using actions, sounds or whatever they chose to represent the characters and story line.

Premier’s Reading Challenge
Once again, many children from Mount Colah Public School participated in the Premier’s Reading Challenge (PRC). The Challenge aims to encourage in students a love of reading for leisure and pleasure, and to enable students to experience quality literature. It is not a competition but a challenge to each student to read, to read more and to read more widely. It is a pleasure to see an increasing number of children completing the PRC each year. Congratulations to the 251 children who have successfully completed the PRC. This outstanding achievement is only possible through the support and interest of parents, teachers and support staff. The Certificates of Achievement were presented at a full school assembly at the end of Term 4.

Wrap with love
Term 2 and 3 lunchtime activities in the library include knitting. A group of dedicated children learnt how to knit aided by a few children who already possessed the skill. On Friday 5th August, eight children spent a lovely morning at Hornsby Library attending the regional Wrap for Love Knit In. The children were excited to view the beautiful wraps on display, have their photos taken by the media and be roundly applauded by all the knitting groups present.

The Garden Party
The annual Garden Party was held on the morning of Sunday 22nd May 2011. There were multiple tasks completed with the help of many hands from the wider school community. Over 100 people turned up on the day. Highlights include:

- Clean and clearing up of the lower playground
- Installing mushrooms in the lower playground
- Removal of the BBQ at the front of the school
- Installation of a tank to water the gardens
- Clearing of the bush area near the BASC
- Mulching of the school gardens
- Thorough clean of the Canteen

Progress on 2011 targets
Target 1
*Improve the explicit and systematic teaching of literacy, in particular writing, and improve student outcomes K-6.*

Our achievements include:

- Consistent and systematic approach to assessment across all stages
- Greater recognition of student achievement on external assessment tasks
• Increase student enjoyment in writing as measured on student surveys

**Target 2**

*Improve learning in Mathematics, in particular Working Mathematically, across all grades and to improve student outcomes*

Our achievements include:

• 10% increase in the students in the top two bands in Year 5 NAPLAN testing
• 54% of students in the top two bands in Year 3 NAPLAN testing
• Increased teacher understanding of teaching specific numeracy skills

**Target 3**

*Introduce programs and policies to identify and address the needs of students in the area of student welfare*

Our achievements include:

• Increased number of student recognised for positive behaviour
• Decrease in number of children referred for negative behaviour
• Consistent pastoral care policy

**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 writing, parent satisfaction and student welfare

**Educational and management practice**

**Background**

Student engagement in learning is a vital component in student’s achieving satisfactory outcomes. Random samples of parents and students indicated there was a need to replace the current pastoral care policy with an emphasis on positive behavior and engaging students in learning

**Findings and conclusions**

• 95% of parents either agree or strongly agree that fair discipline exists within the school
• 100% of parents agree that the school teaches and promotes its core values of Respect, Responsibility and Personal Best
• 90% of parents agree or strongly agree that the school has supportive welfare programs
• 80% of teachers believe that Positive Behaviour Engaging Learners (PBEL) has given them a language to talk to students about welfare issues
• 85% of teachers believe the new merit system has been successful and the students have responded in a positive manner

**Future directions**

While the majority of parent and teachers have been extremely encouraging about PBEL there needs to be a continued implementation of the program within the classroom setting. Conduct parent workshops on PBEL and how PBEL can be used in the home setting.

**Curriculum**

**Background**

Previous surveys and NAPLAN data had indicated that writing was an area for improvement and writing was a focus for 2011 and programs were put in place to overcome several issues. The
survey was conducted to determine the effectiveness of the intervention strategies.

Findings and conclusions
- 60% of parents agree or strongly agree that the school has kept them informed about the teaching of writing
- 20% of parents agree or strongly agree that they know how writing is taught at the school
- 100% of parents agree or strongly agree that writing is an important subject
- 100% of teachers agree or strongly agree that their students writing has improved this year
- 100% of teachers agree or strongly agree that they enjoy teaching writing

Future directions
Writing will continue to be a focus area for 2012. Great consultation and communication needs to occur about the teaching of writing at Mount Colah PS.

Parent, student, and teacher satisfaction
In 2011 the school sought the opinions of parents, students and teachers about the school. Their responses are presented below.
- 100% of parents agree or strongly agree that Mount Colah is an attractive and well-resourced school
- 95% of parents agree or strongly agree that they are encouraged to contact the school about concerns relating to their child
- 100% of parents agree or strongly agree that students are the main focus of the school

Professional learning
All staff members attended professional development on anaphylaxis, the use of epi pens, asthma and Cardio Pulmonary Resuscitation (CPR).

All teaching staff participated in regular collegial training sessions during the year on topics pertinent to their stage level.
A committed team of teachers regularly attended technology training 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 - Writing
Outcomes for 2012–2014
Improved performance of all students in Writing
Improved teacher engagement in and implementation of the National Curriculum

2012 Targets to achieve this outcome include:
- Reduce percentage of students at or below minimum standard in writing on NAPLAN by 10% from Year 3 to Year 5
- Increased percentage of students achieving greater than or expected growth in NAPLAN Grammar and Punctuation from 47% to 55%
- Increase in percentage of students from 39% to 45% in the top two bands in Year 5 writing measured against school – based rubrics

Strategies to achieve these targets include:
- Establish Strategies for Writing Success program
- Develop authentic assessment tasks
- Develop evaluation rubrics for writing
- Establishment of new school writing scope and sequence

School priority 2 - Numeracy

Outcomes for 2012–2014

Improved performance of all students in Numeracy.
Improved teacher engagement in and implementation of the National Curriculum

2012 Targets to achieve this outcome include:
- Reduce percentage of students at or below minimum standard in numeracy on NAPLAN by 10% from Year 3 to Year 5
- Increased percentage of students achieving greater than or expected growth in NAPLAN Numeracy from 60% to 65%
- Increase in percentage of students from 22% to 40% in the top two bands in Year 5 numeracy as measured in NAPLAN testing

Strategies to achieve these targets include:
- Establish maths committee whose focus is on raising the profile of mathematics across the school
- Professional development of staff to ensure QT elements are embedded in programs
- Ensure all classes are complying with Board requirements regarding teaching of maths, including time
- Yearly maths day K-6
- Parent workshops

School priority 3- Student Engagement

Technology

Outcome for 2012–2014

Increased use of technology in administration and teaching and learning programs.

2012 Targets to achieve this outcome include:
- All students are safe and sensible citizens of the digital age.
- All staff integrate ICT into their classroom practice.
- All students have access to the latest DEC technology.
- All staff use technology for administration purposes.

Strategies to achieve these targets include:
- Immerse students in cyber safety
- Ensure students and staff have an understanding of cyber citizenship
- Teacher Professional Learning for teachers on the use of Information Communication Technology in the classroom

School priority 4- Student Engagement Environmental Education

Outcome for 2012–2014

A more sustainable school

2012 Targets to achieve this outcome include:
- Reduce waste by 10%
- Reduce energy consumption by 5%
- Reduce water consumption by 10% by 2014

Strategies to achieve these targets include:
- Conduct waste audit
- Increase use of recycling
- Energy monitor for each classroom
- Install tanks to collect rainwater and connect to school toilets
- Work with outside agencies to develop a School Environmental Management Plan

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.

Mr Bill Gillespie Principal 2011.

As the incoming principal I have found the school to be a vibrant and cohesive community with teachers of excellence and a highly supportive parent group. I am delighted to be part of a school that is dynamic and seeking to provide educational programs for students that suit the needs of a diverse group of learners. I look forward to a positive partnership between the school and the community in the coming year.

Dr John Paterson- Principal 2012

Mrs Margaret Cotter Assistant Principal
Mrs Karen Bennett Assistant Principal
Miss Marianne O'Brien
Mrs Alison Winch Parent Representative

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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: