Principal's message

Birchgrove Public School was established in 1885 and is located on the Balmain Peninsula. The school community work together to support one another to provide quality education, encourage lifelong learning and build positive relationships in a friendly, supportive environment.

The school is a P to 6 school, with the two pre-school classes and staff involved in whole school planning and organisation. Birchgrove Public School has an established profile within the community as a school that offers its students a wide range of learning opportunities across the broad spectrum of key learning areas.

There is a high level of parent and community participation in the school, with a large number of parents giving up their time and expertise to enhance the opportunities available for students.

As a result of Commonwealth funding this year, the quiet area in the playground has been redeveloped, a disabled ramp that will allow access from the top of the playground to the middle playground has been commenced and all 14 teaching classrooms have been identified to be refurbished. This work will be completed throughout 2010.

I would like to thank the staff, the parents and carers, community members and students for their ongoing contributions to this outstanding 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.

Di Ford
Relieving Principal

P&C message

We started the year with the Welcome Back BBQ which is always a great event where new students and their families were welcomed into the school community by a large group of parents and students. This year we also welcomed in our new principal, Paul Degney.

March saw the Mother's Day Fair, which has become a popular fixture on the local calendar and it was great to see so many former students and their parents back at the school again. Jenny Dennis and her team ran a wonderful event which, as well as being hugely enjoyable, also raised a large sum of money to support school activities.

The fair also saw the official opening of the Covered Outdoor Learning Area (COLA) over the basketball court by Leichhardt Council Mayor, Jamie Parker. Our kids benefited throughout the year from this large shaded area under which they have continued to play whilst being protected from the sun's rays.

The year was not without its difficulties though, as we 'lost' our newly appointed principal early in the year. The school became the victim of Paul Degney's success, as Paul left the school during mid Term 2 to relieve in an administrative position based at the Department's main offices for the rest of the year. We were fortunate that Di Ford, one of the Assistant Principals stepped up to relieve in Paul's position and, together with the staff, rose to the occasion and saw us through to the end of the year in good shape.

The Swimming, Cross Country and Athletics Carnivals were the main sporting event of the year in the Birchgrove Calendar and the efforts of many parents helped contribute towards making these successful events for all involved.

Our other major social and fundraising event of the year was the Casino Royale Big Night Out held at the recently refurbished Balmain Town Hall. This marked a different style of event for our annual Big Night Out, and Danielle Langworth and her team created a wonderful event, at which much fun was had by all whilst again raising a large sum of money to support the school.

Two discos were also held during the year and, after many years of managing these events, Danielle Langworth handed over her ‘disco queen' title to Tina Bligh. Of course, many of the old team were still around to assist along with some new volunteers. Together they pulled off two fabulous events that the kids loved and at which parents took the opportunity to socialise whilst, in the process, helping to raise funds.

The various events I’ve noted were the main P&C events of the year – but I am very conscious that many parents devoted a lot of their time and effort to more activities to support our school, the students and staff.

We ended the year in a good financial position, having hit our target of being able to fund the provision of an electronic whiteboard for every class as well as funding various other important school support such as the maths and literacy support teacher and new reading resources. We look forward to a positive 2010. Many thanks to everyone, especially the P&C Executive, for all their help this year.

David Birds
President
Student representative’s message

During my last year at Birchgrove I was elected Prime Minister in our student parliament. As Prime Minister, I learnt how to be a good leader. Once you become a leader you learn that it is not about bossing people around, it is about helping people and showing people what path to take. It is also about being a role model for other students.

I set myself four goals to achieve during the year and successfully achieved them. They were to become a better public speaker, to help others and be kind, to work to make sure that other students were OK and to support the school.

Being Prime Minister was a lot of fun, as you get to do lots of exciting things like making speeches, running the assemblies, talking to lots of interesting people, representing the school and helping others.

In 2009, the school parliament raised money to support our two sponsor children Tola and Chompa, We supported Canteen and Stewart House and helped dye the student’s hair for the Leukaemia Foundation Fundraiser. We also organised a cake stall for Westmead Hospital.

We successfully organised sporting activities, talent quests, discos, chalk drawing and other fun activities for all students at lunchtime. I particularly enjoyed being a Kindergarten Buddy and a Peer Support leader. Last year I had loads of fun being Prime Minister and learnt a lot.

Harriet Benjamin
Birchgrove Prime Minister

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

The school has currently 328 students from Preschool to Year 6. In 2009, we continued to experience an increase in student enrolments in Years K to 3. This year there are three Kindergarten classes, two Year 1 classes, two Year 2 classes and a composite Year 1 and 2.

Student attendance profile

School attendance rates remain high, at 95% for the school, and consistently above State for the past four years. This will be carefully monitored within the guidelines of the NSW Department of Education and Training Student Attendance Policy.

Management of non-attendance

Non attendance is monitored by regular checks on attendance and contact with parents to discuss non-attendance. The Department of Education and Training Home School Liaison Officer is contacted if a student’s attendance pattern is of concern. The Home School Liaison Officer regularly monitors all classroom roles.

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 2009 class size audit conducted on Wednesday 18 March 2009.
Structure of classes

<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>1/2JC</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1/2JC</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1F</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1K</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2/3D</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2/3D</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2R</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3/4JN</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3/4JN</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3C</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4DF</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5/6W</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5/6W</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5RC</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>K1-HK</td>
<td>K</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>K2-RG</td>
<td>K</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>K3-MB</td>
<td>K</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>19</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>19.890</strong></td>
<td></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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Position</th>
<th>Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Principal</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assistant Principal(s)</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Classroom Teachers</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher of Reading Recovery</td>
<td>0.42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Support Teacher Learning Assistant</td>
<td>0.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher Librarian</td>
<td>0.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Counsellor</td>
<td>0.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School Administrative &amp; Support Staff (SASS)</td>
<td>2.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Primary Part-time</td>
<td>0.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Primary RFF</td>
<td>0.504</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pre-school Teachers</td>
<td>2.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pre-school RFF</td>
<td>0.168</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>19.890</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Teacher qualifications

All teaching staff meet the professional requirements for teaching in NSW public schools.

Qualifications % of staff

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Degree or Diploma</th>
<th>61</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Postgraduate</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Additional School Information

Preschool

Birchgrove Public School Preschool is a Department of Education Preschool located within the grounds of Birchgrove Public School. It is a two unit centre offering a five-day-a-week program in 2009. Our preschool aims to:

- Educate preschoolers within a safe, secure environment and routine;
- Recognise individual differences and thereby encourage sound development intellectually, physically, emotionally and socially;
- Encourage and motivate each child through play, leading to exploration and discovery.

Each preschool class has a qualified classroom teacher and is supported by an experienced teacher’s aide.

The preschool is supported by a cook and an assistant cook with a well equipped kitchen providing children with nutritionally well-balanced meals.

A high quality educational program exists, where well planned units of work meet the individual needs of the children in our care. The students’ day comprises of indoor play, outdoor play, group times and prior to school routines such as recess and lunchtime.

An inclusive philosophy encourages all students to participate in wider school activities such as Easter Hat Parades, Book Parades and some assemblies and special occasions.

Enrolment is highly sought after and is determined by a school panel required to follow the DET enrolment policy.

In 2010, the preschool will be replacing the current 5-day-a-week program with a two year trial 3-day and 2-day-a-week program. This trial will be evaluated in 2011.
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: 30/11/2009

Balance brought forward 208 454.49
Global funds 215 035.82
Tied funds 102 053.64
School & community sources 284 037.98
Interest 7 175.74
Trust receipts 180 225.25
Canteen 104 071.96
Total income 1 101 054.88

Expenditure
Teaching & learning
Key learning areas 88 144.03
Excursions 38 541.72
Extracurricular dissections 156 127.60
Library 9 450.32
Training & development 7 393.31
Tied funds 199 941.59
Casual relief teachers 50 029.10
Administration & office 88 808.28
School-operated canteen 92 503.52
Utilities 28 629.69
Maintenance 16 921.39
Trust accounts 177 698.99
Capital programs 0.00
Total expenditure 954 189.54
Balance carried forward =59 563.18

A voluntary school contribution for students K-6 is set at $35 per student. A full copy of the school's 2009 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 2009

Achievements

Arts

There is an extensive extra-curricula music program coordinated by a parent-run Music Committee. This committee meets regularly to organise music lessons, instrument hire, competition applications and the bands. There are several groups organised by the committee. These include a concert band, training bands, junior and senior string ensembles, recorder ensembles and an early childhood music program.

A combined K-6 choir, consisting of 80 students, rehearsed weekly at lunchtimes. This year, approximately 190 students participated in choir, music groups or music lessons. The music groups have performed regularly throughout the year. The Senior Strings and Recorder performed at the Banksia Concert and at the Opera House. The Concert Band and Training Band performed at the NSW Band Festival at the University of New South Wales. The Concert band was awarded Bronze and the Training Band was awarded Gold. The Concert Band performed at the Ryde East Festival.

The school entered the Wakikirri Story Dance Competition in 2009. As well as having a lot of fun performing at the Bankstown Town Hall, the 116 students involved were awarded a place in the Grand Final held at the Sydney Entertainment Centre. They were also awarded the Best School in Public Award for their overall participation and behaviour throughout the performance day and evening.

Year 6 students worked with renowned Aboriginal artist, Bronwyn Bancroft, to produce a series of artworks depicting the impact of settlement on the local area. These works are displayed in the school.

Four students represented the school in the District final of the Multicultural Public Speaking Competition. One student was a finalist at the State Competition. All students in Years 5 and 6 had an opportunity to represent Birchgrove in the Balmain District debating competition. Throughout the competition, eight students debated each fortnight. They were chosen from a pool of students who trained each week.

Sport
Students in K-6 participate in a range of activities, based on the Department of Education and Training syllabus outcomes, in weekly sport sessions. This includes gross motor and fundamental movement skills, fitness, games, gymnastics, dance and swimming. In addition, all students in Years 3 to 6 were formally tested on fundamental movement skills this year. These tests measured the development of basic fundamental movement and provided data on which to base future physical education development.

The school ran a swimming carnival, cross country and athletics carnival where all students had the opportunity of competing with their peers. Fort Street Public School attended these days also. Students who performed well at the school level had the opportunity of representing Birchgrove at the regional carnival level. Birchgrove had strong representation at each level. Two students represented NSW at the State level in Athletics and one student represented Birchgrove at the State Cross Country. That student went on to compete in the National Cross Country Carnival and was placed 2nd.

All students from K-6 participated in a ten-week gymnastics program in term 1 and term 3, and in a dance program in term 2 and 4 which covered the gymnastics and dance elements of the PDHPE syllabus.

Students in Year 2 attended a two week intensive swimming program at Ian Thorpe Aquatic Centre and students in Years 3 to 6 attended an eight-day water safety, strength and fitness course at Ryde Aquatic Centre. Students in Years 5 and 6 competed strongly in the Primary Schools Sports Association (PSSA) AFL gala days in term 2 and term 3, learning valuable AFL skills and team work.

Other

Birchgrove Public School entered two teams in the Interschool Chess competition in Term 2 and 3 in the Rookies division. The students really enjoyed competing against other schools in this discipline and developed their problem solving and critical thinking skills.

Three teams of students from Years 4 to 6 were entered in the Tournament of the Minds Competition. One team entered the maths and engineering category, the second team entered the literacy category and the third team entered social sciences category.

Three students participated in Create East, a performance opportunity for students who excel in singing, dancing, acting or playing an instrument. The students presented Accidental Hero, an extravaganza in the performance arts.

In the University of New South Wales International Competitions and Assessments for Schools, achievements have included:

- Mathematics: distinctions 4, credit 24, participation 36.
- English: high distinctions 3, distinctions 7, credits 18, participations 36.
- Spelling: distinctions 6, credits 7, participations 46.
- Science: distinctions 11, credits 9, participations 27.
- Computer: distinctions 4, credits 6, participations 15.

Peer Support Program

This program continues to develop leadership skills in Years 5 and 6. It builds on friendship networks K to 6, particularly building on the Kindergarten / Year 6 buddy program. This year, the activities focussed on developing skills to identify bullying and what to do if you are bullied.

Bounce Back! Resiliency Program

This program has been implemented from K to 6 at Birchgrove for a number of years. It is a program that successfully develops resiliency skills in students.

The Student Parliament

Each year the students and staff elect the Student Parliament. There is a male and female Prime Minister and a male and female Deputy Prime Minister from Year 6 and four ministers elected. The roles they take on are Parliamentary Secretary, Sergeant at Arms, Social Functions Minister, Student Activities Minister, Parliamentary Treasurer, Technology Minister, Environment Minister and Charities Minister.

All other Year 6 students make up the Ministries. Each class from Years 2 to 5 elect two representatives to attend and represent their class at the parliament meetings.

The Student Parliament raised a significant amount of funds in 2009 to support two children, sponsored through World Vision, and organised fundraising for Canteen, Westmead Children’s Hospital, The Cancer Foundation and Stewart House. This money is raised by organising multi
days, special fundraising activities and fun activities at lunchtime for all K to 6 students.

**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)

**Literacy – NAPLAN Year 3**

In 2009, fifty-five Year 3 students participated in the NAPLAN Test in the areas of reading, writing, spelling and grammar.

The school’s results showed 97% of students achieving Band 4 or higher in reading, 95% of students achieving Band 4 or higher in writing, 91% of students achieving Band 4 or higher in spelling and 92% of students achieving Band 4 or higher in grammar and punctuation.

**Numeracy – NAPLAN Year 3**

In 2009, fifty-five Year 3 students participated in the NAPLAN Test.

The school results showed 92% of students achieving Band 4 or higher in numeracy, 94% of students achieving Band 4 or higher in number patterns and algebra and 90% of students achieving Band 4 or higher in measurement, data, space and geometry.
Literacy – NAPLAN Year 5
In 2009, thirty-two Year 5 students participated in the NAPLAN Test in the areas of reading, writing, spelling, grammar and punctuation.

The school’s results showed 87% of students achieving Band 4 or higher in reading, 89% of students achieving Band 4 or higher in writing, 90% of students achieving Band 4 or higher in spelling and 81% of students achieving Band 4 or higher in grammar and punctuation.

Numeracy – NAPLAN Year 5
In 2009, thirty-two Year 5 students participated in the NAPLAN Test in numeracy.

The school’s results showed 91% of students achieving in Band 4 or higher in number, 90% of students achieving in Band 4 or higher in number patterns and algebra and 94% of students achieving in Band 4 or higher.
Progress in literacy (Value Adding)

The average rate of progress in literacy between Year 3 and Year 5 for all students across the state is approximately 7 marks or about one skill band.

The graphs below indicate that the value added between Year 3 and Year 5 is stronger in Writing than in Reading. These results indicate that our Year 3 students were achieving at a higher standard in Year 3. The school will carefully monitor this trend in 2010.

Average progress in numeracy (Value Adding)

The average rate of progress in numeracy between Year 3 and Year 5 for all students across the state is approximately 7 marks or about one skill band.

This graph indicates that the progress between Year 3 and Year 5 is a little below the state average. Our students still perform above the state average in numeracy in Year 5, and also in Year 3. The value added progress appears to be the result of the students performing at a higher level in numeracy in Year 3. The school will be evaluating and acting on this information in 2010.

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 in 2009 are reported below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Percentage of Year 3 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

The implementation of strategies to improve the delivery of Aboriginal Education in all P - 6 classrooms continues to be a high priority at Birchgrove School. Outcomes have included:

- Student Acknowledgement of Country at all school assemblies;
- Continued integration of Aboriginal perspective in all classroom teaching and learning programs;
- During Reconciliation Week, all children from P to 6 made a hand and created a giant rainbow serpent on the playground;
- To celebrate NAIDOC week, students attended a cultural performance by Phil Geia, a visiting Aboriginal performer;
- Birchgrove Public School is a member of the Dare to Lead Coalition.
- Staff will further develop understanding of Aboriginal culture through orientation to the new Aboriginal Education Policy.

#### Multicultural Education

Fourteen percent of students at Birchgrove Public School come from a Non-English-speaking Background (NESB). Multicultural perspectives are included in all teaching and learning programs. All students from P – 6 participated in Harmony Day in term 1. Italian is taught in all classes from K – 6 through the Co.As.It Language Insertion Program as part of the weekly timetable. Students in K to 2 have 80 minutes per week lesson time and students in Years 3 to 6 have 120 minutes per week lesson time.

#### Respect and Responsibility

#### Restorative Practices

Restorative Practices is in its fifth year of implementation at Birchgrove and, as part of the Birchgrove School Student Welfare, Good Discipline and Effective Learning Policy, it underpins the school culture.

At Birchgrove, students, staff and parents are working towards using a shared language to solve conflict and to shape the future of the school in a respectful environment through:

- A whole school approach to relationship-building, with restorative practices as the basis for pedagogy, resilience and student well-being, has been initiated, with all new staff attending training workshops and induction programs;
- Regular review of strategies to embed restorative practices into the curriculum;
- An anti bullying code that has been implemented and regularly monitored and reviewed;
- The staff will monitor and review the Student Welfare framework at staff meetings, Learning Support Team meetings and Stage meetings by staff.

### Other programs

#### Learning Support

The Learning Support Team meets fortnightly and consists of the specialist teachers in the school, including the Support Teacher Learning, the Reading Recovery teachers, the school counsellor, the school principal and nominated classroom teachers.

Outcomes have included:

- A small number of students have been identified as having special needs for which integration funding has been provided;
- Three Learning Support Aides are employed to assist classroom teachers to implement specific programs for these students;
- District support staff visit and assist teachers with assessing students’ needs and designing programs;
- Two Reading Recovery teachers work with identified Year 1 students throughout the year to improve their reading;
- Individual students with learning needs are monitored and resources allocated to support their learning.

#### Parent and Caregivers

Parents and carers have an important role in decision-making and provide strong financial support for the school. Parent helpers have played an important role this year in the classrooms, on excursions, through P&C activities and the Music program. The class-parent scheme continues to support communication between the home and school and co-ordinates classroom helpers to support many school activities.
The P&C continues to be the major parent body in the school. The Birchgrove Fair was the biggest fundraiser this year, although the P&C successfully raises money at other events as well. The focus for financial support this year has been reading resources K to 6 and interactive whiteboards. The school community is appreciative of the strong support given to the school.

The playground committee has continued to improve the playground with regular working bees and replanting. The redevelopment of the lower playground using the Commonwealth grant from the Investing in Our School Program ($98 000) was successfully completed over the Christmas holidays, ready for the new school year.

The playground committee has now become the environment committee and will be taking on a more active role in environmental issues as well as continuing to improve the playground facilities.

The music committee provides support for an outstanding extra-curricular music program. Opportunities for learning a wide variety of instruments are provided by this committee.

The canteen committee continues to support the canteen manager and staff in maintaining the standard of a Gold award-winning canteen.

The Uniform Shop has instigated online ordering and streamlined many of the school uniform articles, introducing coloured house sports t-shirts. The second-hand uniform stall has been successfully recycling uniforms for sale.

**Community Use of School Facilities**

The music groups use up to six teaching spaces daily for ensemble rehearsals and individual student tuition in various instruments.

The Before- and After-School Care Centre uses one classroom space from 7.00a.m. to 9.00a.m. and 3.00p.m. to 6.30p.m. daily. The Tae Kwon Do group utilise the hall weekly. An electronic keyboard class is available for students before school each Thursday morning. After-school drama classes, a ceramic class and art classes are also held throughout the year.

Funds raised through community use of school facilities are used to improve educational resources for students.

**Canteen**

The school canteen is open five days a week and is run by Karen Peters, a paid employee, and a committee of volunteers.

The school canteen has had a very successful year in 2009, has been able to improve its financial situation and is now operating at a small profit. This profit adds to the schools funds to supply quality teaching and learning resources.

The canteen is seen as a valuable resource for the school community and the improvement in profitability is largely due to Karen and her committee’s hard work and the support of the school community, who actively use the canteen on a regular basis.

**Progress on 2009 targets**

**Target 1**

Develop an explicit plan for the integration of technology into learning.

This year saw the continual improvement of hardware options at Birchgrove which has increased availability of technology and the development of skills for all students P-6. Teacher professional development was targeted at learning new skills to devise and implement classroom ICT programs.

Our achievements include:

- Printer access available from all classrooms. Increased computer printer use shows evidence of technology integrated into classroom practice for a variety of purposes
- School allocation of eight new T4L computers installed. Three allocated to a newly established class. Others located in the Library for research use by all students.
- Seven IWB’s video conferencing facility installed. Adjoining classrooms share the hardware in order that all staff and students have some exposure to the new technology
- New server and backup system installed to meet growing requirements and current standards
- New software licences purchased, installed and in use with students in all stages to complement and consolidate student learning; Jolly Phonics, Maths Blaster, Typing Tournament
- Teacher professional development in courses that led to improved teacher skills and development of programs implemented in classroom practice, resulting in increased student engagement with technology.
- Teachers with IWB involved in Notebook training and projects to devise teaching and learning activities for classrooms
• Computer Coordinator days to update teachers with Regional Developments, new technologies and teaching opportunities with technology

**Target 2**

**To improve Numeracy outcomes K – 6**

Our achievements include:

• Improved student tracking processes through consistent teacher judgement in assessment;
• The increased use of IWB technology in Numeracy lessons;
• Students’ results recorded electronically;
• Targeted support for students who experienced difficulty in the number strand in Years 1 – 6.

**Target 3**

**To improve and embed an explicit assessing and reporting framework.**

Our achievements include:

• The use of technology to collate assessment data K to 6 in all KLAs;
• All staff proficient in the use of a web based report generating tool;
• All staff demonstrating improvement in consistent teacher judgement in assessment and the quality teaching framework.

**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 2009, our school carried out evaluations of Human Society and its Environment and School Communication.

**Educational and management practice**

**Background**

The school self-evaluation committee decided to evaluate School Communication at Birchgrove Public School and use the results of focus groups and surveys to guide our goals for future school, staff and student development.

Year 6 were surveyed. Communication was a focus of discussion at evaluation staff meetings. Parents were asked to comment about what works and what doesn’t and a discussion took place at a P&C and an Environment Meeting.

**Findings and conclusions**

• The Year 6 students didn’t have strong feelings about communication issues;
• Several students suggested using emails to communicate with other students more;
• A small number of students suggested emailing homework;
• 83% of parents felt the school communication was good;
• 85% of parents believed that the Class Parent Scheme was very effective;
• 80% felt that the staff in the office are patient, helpful and a good source of information;
• 80% of parents found the Teacher Information Nights valuable;
• A small number of parents found that communication was repeated and became irrelevant;
• 95% of parents believe the school website should be more relevant and informative and be used to communicate with home about educational issues;
• A small number of parents felt that communication from the school was poor and often late and needed to be delivered earlier;
• 95% of staff felt that, although there are systems in place to communicate information, some fine tuning was needed;
• 80% of the staff would like to increase the use of electronic media for communication.

**Future directions**

• Improve the school website so that it is the centre of communication;
• Expand the use of technology in communicating to students, staff and parents;
• Identify the timeframe for communication;
• Continue to develop additional strategies to streamline school communication.
Curriculum

Background

It was decided to evaluate Human Society and its Environment to determine the effectiveness of school programs in this key learning area. Teachers had been implementing the Connected Outcomes Group (COGS) units of work in 2007 and 2008. In 2009, Stages 2 and 3 have reverted back to the Human Society and its Environment Curriculum Units, while Early Stage 1 and Stage 1 are continuing to use COGS.

Discussions took place with staff, parents and students to evaluate this area.

Findings and conclusions

- All teachers enjoy teaching Human Society and its Environment.
- 90% of students enjoyed participating in Human Society and its Environment lessons.
- 85% of parents agree that students have developed new knowledge and skills in the area.
- 90% of parents believe that Human Society and its Environment is an important subject.
- All teachers believe that they have competent knowledge and skills to teach Human Society and its Environment.
- Most teachers have a sound knowledge and understanding of syllabus outcomes and skills.
- All teachers integrate Human Society and its Environment concepts into class lessons.
- 85% of teachers are confident in teaching Human Society and its Environment.
- Most students enjoyed excursions related to Human Society and its Environment.
- 35% of parents were concerned that they were not informed about the content of the Human Society and its Environment curriculum.

Future directions

- The school will continue to develop strategies that provide parents and carers with information to improve understanding of curriculum and current pedagogy as it relates to teaching Human Society and its Environment.
- The school website will be used more extensively to provide up to date information to the school community.

Parent, student, and teacher satisfaction

In 2009, the school sought the opinions of parents, students and teachers about the school. Some of their responses are presented below:

- The majority of parents and carers feel welcomed and included as part of the school community.
- Students enjoyed being Peer Support Leaders and Kindergarten Buddies, and parents and staff commented on the caring, nurturing role of the older students.
- Students, in general, are happy to attend school.
- Parents commented on the expanding access and use of technology in classrooms.
- Parents enjoyed working in their child’s classroom and would like to be involved in all classes K to 6.
- Students, staff and parents commented on Restorative Justice and how it builds a community and a sense of belonging.
- Students, staff and parents commented on the friendly, patient and helpful office staff.

Professional learning

A significant amount of funds were allocated to staff professional learning in 2009. Along with the allocation of tied funds for teacher professional learning of approximately $12 000, another $12 000 from global funds was allocated to professional learning activities for all staff including SASS.

All members of staff participated in training and development workshops throughout the year, which included staff development days in terms 1, 2, 3 and 4. These activities were directly linked to school targets in the 2009 – 2011 school plan, as well as mandatory annual training in Child Protection, CPR, Emergency Care, Anaphylaxis and Occupational Health and Safety.

Teachers on each stage were released in term 1 and 2 for stage planning days which involved collaborative planning for programming, consistent teacher judgement and assessment and reporting.

School development 2009 – 2011
Targets for 2010

Target 1

To integrate technology into classroom quality teaching and learning.

Teacher professional development focused on the areas of developing IWB skills, understanding Blogs and Wikis and integrating ICT across the curriculum.

Technology learning projects devised, including the use of digital video and audio recording and editing for whole school movie production;

Collaborative student animations of group-devised narratives.

Strategies to achieve this target include:

- Publishing of student work on school website and Blogsites
- Installation of IWBs in all classrooms and Library to improve student access to technology and ICT learning
- A survey will be conducted to collect data about Teaching and Learning programs in ICT to inform future directions for students and staff

Our success will be measured by:

- Increase of 50% of teachers integrating IWBs and Blogsites in classroom programs
- 80% of classes publishing work on Blogsites
- Survey results
- 100% of classes completing an IMovie for 125 years Celebration Movie Night

Target 2

To improve student outcomes in Mathematics K to 6.

Strategies to achieve this target include:

- Evaluate the whole school approach to Mathematics by surveying students, parents and staff in term 2 and term 4 to drive future directions;
- Establish a successful Support Teacher Learning Assistance numeracy program in term 1;
- Integrate Information and Communication Technology (ICT) within Mathematics lessons and provide professional development sessions to show explicit use of technology in teaching programs by term 4;
- Provide professional development in term 3 to increase teacher understanding of the development of number sense;
- Up-skill staff in curriculum differentiation for mathematics groups within the classroom by term 4;
- Review and modify tracking sheets to reflect whole school uniformed assessment sequence by term 4.

Our success will be measured by:

- A 50% increase in teachers using technology in mathematics lessons;
- Entry and exit data to support the success of a learning assistance numeracy program;
- Survey results to guide the future direction of the whole school Mathematics K to 6;
- Demonstrated examples of classroom programs that reflect differentiation and the importance of number sense;
- A tracking sheet that reflects whole school uniformed assessment sequence.

Target 3

To strengthen interpersonal and relationship skills P to 6.

Strategies to achieve this target:

- Restorative Practices workshops for students and staff, developing skills in relational problem solving and healthy relationship building, held in term 1;
- Parent information night to inform the parents of the framework of Restorative Practices and to develop a whole school shared language held in term 1;
- Implement a Restorative Practices Team that responds to relational issues and reports to the staff and communicates to parents, initiated in term 1;
- Raise the awareness of students, parents and staff about what bullying is in term 2 and 3;
• Identify the extent of bullying in the school and evaluate and improve any current policies and procedures in term 3 and 4;
• Develop staff in the use of a web-based tool for tracking student welfare issues in term 3 and 4.

Our success will be measured by:

• Feedback from students, staff and parents evaluating the restorative workshop;
• Developed clear guidelines for the ongoing operation of the Restorative Practices Team;
• 20% reduction of reported incidents of bullying;
• Survey students, staff and parents about incidents of bullying;
• Publishing improved policies and procedures to students, staff and parents;
• All staff will use web-based tracking for student welfare issues.

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

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