2009 Annual School Report
Darcy Road Public School

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

Students

2009 saw another year of student growth. We began the year with 3.5 Kindergarten classes and finished the year with a total of 15 classes. Students were provided with a sound curriculum base for their education and the school also provided additional educational learning experiences such as excursions, music programs, artistic endeavours, gardening and environmentally responsible practices which the school has fully embraced. During the year the school organised for bicycles to be made available to responsible students to encourage them to use our local roads safely as well as developing good environmental practices.

We finished 2009 with a student enrolment of 378 students. 77% of our students either speak an additional language in their homes and/or were born overseas which adds to the diverse cultural knowledge and experiences. We celebrated this diversity with our first Multicultural Day Flag Ceremony this year.

In 2010 we look forward to supporting our many students who speak two or more languages with 2 ESL (English as a Second Language) Teaching positions as well as a specially designed ESL room.

Staff

Due to the increasing popularity and reputation of our school, we were able to attract additional teachers to our school. Each of them has brought a variety of skills, talents and professional understanding to meet the ever-changing needs of our diverse student population.

All teachers have university qualifications specially designed to equip them to provide quality learning programs to your children.

Significant programs and initiatives

In 2009 we aimed to continually develop the skills of each and every student at Darcy Road Public School. The programs which we offered to our students in 2009 were:

- Learning Support;
- School band;
- English as a Second Language and New Arrivals Program;
- Science Fun Days both here and at local primary schools;
- Debating and public speaking;
- Adult Migrant English classes;
- Pre-school playgroups for both English speaking and Non-English speaking parents and children;
- Access to a before and after school services;
- Dedicated bus service from Westmead Hospital to and from our school each day;
- Healthy living skills initiative with the promotion of ‘free’ bikes to responsible students as part of our bike education;
- Establishment of community gardens with produce being donated to canteen;
- Worm Farm as part of our recycling project;
- Native gardens established around buildings;
- Wentworthville Playgroup Association where local parents and their pre-school aged children become part of the wider community; and
- Anglicare working closely with our migrant and refugee community members.
Students and parents celebrating “Ride to School Day”.

Teachers and students working together to make a better school environment.

Messages

Principal's message

The 2009 school year was yet another of change and achievement in many areas.

The school enrolment rose to over 380 students. With the projected growth of school-age children expected to continue in our local area for the next ten years, this number will continue to rise.

This is a positive trend, as it attracts additional funding to our school as well as new teaching and support staff positions. With the increase in teachers we are now in a position to expand our creative and performing arts programs, our multicultural education programs as well as offering our students a variety of challenging and rewarding experiences.

Darcy Road students continually demonstrate their appreciation of their school and their teachers. We have received many positive reports from other schools, members of our local community and visiting principals about the high level of responsible behaviour that our students demonstrate. The National Assessment Program Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN) was introduced in 2008. Our students performed well in comparison to like schools within the Hills District of schools.

The school community has continued to be supportive, cohesive and involved in school life. The partnerships between home and school encourage and support our students to strive for their ‘personal bests’ across the curriculum. We look forward to expanding our parent involvement through the Parents and Citizens Association (P&C) in 2010.

We justifiably share great pride in our public school as we continue to value a proud tradition and shape a positive 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.

Harry Berwick

P&C message

Liz Harris – President

Parents and Citizens Association Darcy Road Public School.

P&Cs are a vital part of any school. It allows for extra involvement of parents of the school and any community members who are concerned with the every day running of their local school. The P&C works closely with the Principal, Assistant Principals and staff and are very grateful for their continued contributions to our meetings.
The P&C meets once a month and is run by a committee who will make important decisions concerning the school. Every year the P&C try to commit to a major work to improve the students comfort, education and general happiness in and out of the school grounds. We also pay for ambulance cover for the students while in school time. The P&C has sub committees which are all run by volunteers who work very hard throughout the year. We raise funds through events like mother’s and father’s day stalls, Easter raffles, the canteen, uniform shop and this year our first Spring Fair committee. Without these vital sub committees, the P&C would not be able to provide financial support for things like the Year 6 Farewell, representative t-shirts and swimming caps, curtains for one of the demountables, plants for the beautification of the school grounds, books, fun literacy and numeracy educational items. This year our major work was called “Century 21 Kids”, which involved purchasing ergonomic chairs for the computer room so that every student could sit comfortably while using the computers as well as providing funds to ensure that suitable connections were throughout the school for the use of our new interactive whiteboards.

There is always something for the P&C to be involved in which would benefit the school, students and the surrounding community. The P&C meets on the first Monday of the month (during school term) at 7:00pm in the staffroom and invites all parents, carers and community members to join us.

Liz Harris
P&C President 2009

Student representative’s message

As the 2009 student leaders of Darcy Road Public School we were honoured to have the important role of leading our school. We are very thankful to this year’s prefects, Wang Wang, Victoria, Anita, Keedan, Jacob, and Ousman. As school leaders we had many responsibilities such as running morning and special assemblies and lowering and raising our school flags. We also enjoyed welcoming new students to our school throughout the year. This year we have been part of SRC and raised money for our school and for charities such as Canteen Cancer Research for children with cancer. As school leaders we must be responsible role models for younger students at Darcy Road Public School. We, along with the rest of Year 6, have been proud to be peer support leaders at the school. Our last year at Darcy Road Public School has been very enjoyable and we wish all the best to the new school leaders of 2010.

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 information below reflects the increasing popularity of our school, which reflects the confidence and good esteem in which we are held in the local community.

This graph reflects the growth of our student body as well as reflecting the ratio of boys to girls. We are aware that this imbalance of boys to girls impacts upon the learning of our students and we are addressing this concern. We expect in 2010 that our student enrolments will go beyond 400 students.

Student attendance profile
Management of non-attendance

One of the key aspects of our management plan was to investigate and implement strategies to address student ‘engagement’. The school embarked upon a term long project to closely monitor those students who were late to school. Morning assemblies were postponed till later in the day and support staff were stationed at the two main entrance gates to the school, thereby encouraging all students who arrived late to go to the office and have their late arrivals monitored. We followed this up by informing parents of their children’s late arrival at school and sought their support. We also implemented ‘fun’ activities for the first 15 minutes of each morning, based upon the belief that children would be more engaged and willing to arrive at school on time. Many classes introduced a variety of sporting activities which provided a wonderful start to the school day.

Unfortunately, the number of students who arrived late did not diminish over the ten week trial period. Most staff were very positive in the concept of starting the school day off with some physical activity, as they reported back that more students were actively engaged in their learning due to their physical engagement.

It was noted that students in Kindergarten were the highest represented in arriving at school after the bell had gone. Without the support of parents the school will find it very difficult to address this issue. We report to parents twice a year where we clearly state the number of days a child has missed school and the number of ‘partial’ absences.

In regards to full days away from school, our school compares well with that of the state average.

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.

<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>1H</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1K</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2F</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2M</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3-4C</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>24</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3S</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4-5E</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>11</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4D</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>15</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5-6M</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6A</td>
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<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>K-1B</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>9</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>K</td>
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<td>20</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>KA</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>20</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KDE</td>
<td>K</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KL</td>
<td>K</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Structure of classes

We have been informed that in 2010 a National Curriculum will be introduced throughout Australia. This new curriculum is based upon ‘grades’ and not stages as our current NSW curriculum is based. Therefore, we will aim to create ‘grade’ classes across the school in 2010.

Having said this, we are guided by the recommendations from the Department of Education and Training NSW for the ideal number of students in each class. We began 2009 with 15 classes, of which 4 were multi-aged (composite) classes. After an increase in student enrolments, in Term 2 we formed new classes. For the second
half of the school year we had 16 classes, of which only two were multi-aged.

Staff information

During 2009 the school interviewed for an additional two Assistant Principals. These positions were filled by Mr McLoughlin and Mrs Buckham.

During the year we advertised for two additional classroom teachers. These positions were filled by interview with Mrs Ganendran and Mrs Lawson.

With the formation of our 15th class, we were fortunate to appoint Ms Howarth as a temporary teacher to this position for the remainder of 2009.

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>
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<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>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher of Reading Recovery</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Support Teacher Learning Assistance</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher Librarian</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher of ESL</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Counsellor</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School Administrative &amp; Support Staff (SASS)</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Indigenous Workforce

There are currently no members of staff who are of Aboriginal heritage.

Teacher qualifications

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

We currently have 4 staff members who have post-graduate degrees.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Qualifications</th>
<th>% of staff</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Degree or Diploma</td>
<td>94.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Postgraduate</td>
<td>5.5%</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: 30/11/09

Income $429,669.81

Balance brought forward from 2008 47,801.82
Global funds: 167,334.00
Tied funds: 93,747.69
School & community sources: 120,526.75
Interest: 2,541.25
Trust receipts: 45,519.83
Canteen: (operated by P&C) nil

Total Income: 429,669.81

Expenditure $441,044.58

Teaching & Learning:
  Key Learning Areas: 55,115.49
  Excursions: 30,583.68
  Extracurricular dissections: 29,694.84

Library: 18,486.83
Training & development of staff: 1,785.36
Tied funds: 103,128.35
Casual relief teachers: 53,036.75
Administration & office: 43,318.45
Committee operations: nil.
Utilities: 16,774.69
Maintenance: 33,641.81
Trust accounts: 46,143.42
Capital programs: 9,334.91

Total Expenditure: 441,044.58

Balance carried forward to 2010: 36,427.05

A full copy of the school's 2009 financial statement is tabled at the annual general meetings of the Darcy Road Parents and Citizens Association. Further details concerning the statement can be obtained by contacting the school.

Explanation of key elements:

The canteen is operated by the P&C and therefore all monies earned by the canteen are recorded in the financial records of the P&C.
Tied Funds are either an income or expenditure which the school receives to be spent on specific programs. For example, a student with specific learning needs may receive additional funding to support their education. The money that this student attracts can only be spent on this specific student and not on other areas of the school.

“Trust receipts” refers to money received from students or parents which is kept in trust. This money is usually collected when students are going on an excursion, and the money is kept in trust until it is expended.

Key Learning Areas are our subject areas (English, Mathematics, PDHPE, HSIE, Science & Technology, Creative & Performing Arts).

“Casual relief teachers” refers to the money the school spent in replacing staff members when they are unwell or when they take Long Service Leave under ten days. Although we spent nearly $3,000 more in 2009 compared to 2008, with the increase in staff members this is seen as a slow down in the overall expenditure in this area.

“Utilities” refers to electricity, water and gas.

School performance 2009

Five students from Mrs Martin's class chose to sit for the Australasian Maths Olympiad which was held throughout the year. Grace was successful and received a trophy for gaining the ‘highest individual score’ plus a cloth badge for being in the top 25% of all students as well as a metal badge for being in the top 10%. Lavan, Shirley and Clinton all received a cloth badge indicating that their performance was in the top 25% of the region. Serena did very well also and received an encouragement award. This is the first year that our students participated in this event and we look forward to more students undertaking this wonderful challenge in 2010.

Achievements

2009 University of NSW International:

Students from this school have again sat for the University of New South Wales International Competitions in Spelling, Writing, English, Mathematics, Computer Skills and Science. While the numbers of students is growing, the growth is only commensurate with the growth of the school and the percentage of students is still approximately a third.

In the Writing competition we had 49 students participate and of these 14 students received Credit Certificates, 2 students received Distinction Certificates and 1 student received a High Distinction Certificate, while all the others who sat the test received Participation Certificates.

In the Computer Skills Competition we had 42 students participate and of these 12 students received Credit Certificates, 6 students received Distinction Certificates and 2 students received a High Distinction Certificate, while all the others who sat the test received Participation Certificates.

In the Mathematics Competition we had 68 students participate and of these 21 students received Credit Certificates and 17 students received Distinction Certificates, while all the others who sat the test received Participation Certificates.

In the Science Competition we had 47 students participate and of these 12 students received Credit Certificates and 5 students received Distinction Certificates, while all the others who sat the test received Participation Certificates.

In the English Competition we had 63 students participate and of these 21 students received Credit Certificates and 4 students received Distinction Certificates, while all the others who sat the test received Participation Certificates.

In the Spelling Competition we had 54 students participate and of these 14 students received Credit Certificates, 14 students received Distinction Certificates and 2 students received a High Distinction Certificate, while all the others who sat the test received Participation Certificates.

Overall, these are very gratifying results and I congratulate all the students who entered these competitions on the effort they put into their work and especially congratulate those who received a Credit, Distinction or High Distinction Certificate for their outstanding effort and magnificent results.
Mrs Barbara Mills – Competitions Co-ordinator.

Arts

During 2009, Darcy Road students participated in a variety of cultural activities. They included

- Establishment of the school band with weekly tuition;
- Establishment of a boys dance group;
- School choir performing at the Hills Festival;
- Recorder instruction for all students in Year 1 and Year 2;
- Art work being donated to the Principal’s office (our front cover is made from some of these artworks); and
- Our very first Performance Day.

Sport

Students participated in the Wentworthville/Seven Hills Primary School Sports Association (PSSA) sporting carnivals and competitions. Representatives from our school participated at district swimming, athletic and cross country carnivals and regional swimming, athletic, soccer and cross country carnivals. This year our school had a representative at the state swimming and athletics carnivals.

Teams participated in PSSA Newcombe Ball, AFL and cricket during summer competition and football (soccer), girls’ football (soccer) and Oz Tag for winter competition. Our Junior and Senior Oz Tag teams were successful as Premiers in the 2009 competition. Both football teams participated in the NSW PSSA Knockout competitions. K-6 classes received one-off specialist awareness raising and skills sessions in cricket, Australian Rules, football and league.

During Term 2 students from K-6 participated in a term of Sports in Schools lessons provided by an external provider. In Term 4 110 students in Years 2-6 successfully participated in a two week program of swimming lessons provided by the Department of Education at Wentworthville Swimming Pool. Ninety-five percent of children progressed by one level or more.

During the year Darcy Road received two grants totalling $5000 from the NSW Government as part of the Premier’s Sporting Challenge. All teachers took part in choosing the equipment needed to develop students’ gross motor skills and equipment for minor games at school and PSSA.

Public Speaking

Through a class public speaking competition four students were selected to represent the school in the Multicultural Perspectives Public Speaking Competition.

Years 5 and 6 took part in two debating competitions this year. A friendly competition was set up as part of Toongabbie Learning Community against local schools. We participated in another debating competition with schools outside our local area; we have participated in this competition for several years.

Students participated in a poster competition offered by the Parramatta Sun newspaper. Students were assigned a shop to promote through this design.

Student achievement in 2009

Students at Darcy Road Public School are offered two standardised assessments across the school on a yearly basis.

NAPLAN is offered to all students in Years 3 and 5 each year and a detailed analysis of these results is displayed later in this report.

ACER (Australian Council for Educational Research) offer all schools a number of assessments and at Darcy Road Public School we offer all students in Years 2 to 6 tests in Literacy/Comprehension and Mathematics twice a year. These assessments are given to students in Term 1 and Term 3 and the same assessment test is given at each of these times so that we can compare the performance of each child from Term 1 to Term 3.

Parents are offered a copy of these results for a small amount of money to cover costs.
Academic Achievements

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.

Literacy – NAPLAN Year 3

In 2009 there were 54 students enrolled in Year 3. One student was away on the day of these assessment tasks. 34 boys and 14 girls sat for the 2009 NAPLAN tests. 39 of our students who sat for this test were from Language Backgrounds Other Than English (LBOTE).

Our overall literacy results for Year 3 were on a par with schools in our region but slightly below the average performance for the State. Year 3 boys scored above the State in Reading and in Writing. The results for all Year 3 children in Grammar and Punctuation were disappointing, but Spelling scores were significantly above the State average, indicating that this is an area of strength in our school.

Reading – NAPLAN Year 3

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

Grammar and Punctuation – NAPLAN Year 3

Numeracy – NAPLAN Year 3

Overall our Year 3 students performed above their peers in our region by 3.1% but were below the State by 8.8%. The boys’ results overall were below the State and the Region, although their performance was the second highest that our
school had achieved in the history of these assessments.

**Numeracy – NAPLAN Year 3**

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

**Literacy – NAPLAN Year 5**

There were 36 students enrolled in Year 5 when this assessment took place. One student was away on the day of these assessments. From this cohort there were 21 boys and 14 girls who participated in this assessment of which 22 students were from Language Backgrounds other Than English.

Overall our students performed poorly when compared to their peers in the Region and the State. Our area of greatest concern was in our performance in the area of Writing where we were 38.8% below the State and 29.2% below the Region.

When we compare the performance of boys to girls we see that our female students performed exceptionally well. In all areas of Literacy our girls performed above the State and the Region! Overall in Literacy our students performed 15.4% above the State. In Reading they performed 20.8% above the State and in Writing they performed 7.4% above the State.

**Reading – NAPLAN Year 5**

**Spelling – NAPLAN Year 5**

While we are exceptionally pleased with our girls’ results, we need to be aware of this huge disparity between boys’ and girls’ performance across the school.

**Writing – NAPLAN Year 5**

Overall in Literacy our students performed 15.4% above the State. In Reading they performed 20.8% above the State and in Writing they performed 7.4% above the State.
Grammar and Punctuation – NAPLAN Year 5

Progress in Numeracy from Year 3 to Year 5

Numeracy – NAPLAN Year 5

Our overall result for our students in this area is below the State and the Region. While we were just a few points below the Region, we were 11.7% below the State. The same pattern appears in our overall Numeracy results as in our Literacy.

Our female students performed above the State by 13.9% and outperformed their peers from the Region by 21.9%. The results for the boys were disappointing. They were below the State by 31.3% and the Region by 21.2%

Progress in Reading from Year 3 to Year 5.

Progress in Writing from Year 3 to Year 5
**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 students in our school in the National Assessment Program – Literacy and Numeracy is compared to these minimum standards.

Percentages of students achieving at or above these standards are reported below.

Percentage of Year 3 students achieving at or above minimum standard.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subject</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reading</td>
<td>94%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Writing</td>
<td>94%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spelling</td>
<td>94%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Punctuation and grammar</td>
<td>89%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Numeracy</td>
<td>96%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Percentage of Year 5 students in our school achieving at or above the minimum standard in 2009.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subject</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reading</td>
<td>91%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Writing</td>
<td>82%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spelling</td>
<td>88%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Punctuation and grammar</td>
<td>91%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Numeracy</td>
<td>94%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Significant programs and initiatives**

**Bicycle Education**

More than 100 students, 2 teachers and several parents came to school by bicycle or scooter on 25 March, 2009 to celebrate "Ride to School Day". Mrs Fardoulis arranged Bicycle Safety Talks and a range of cycling activities for all of our students. A nutritious free breakfast was provided for all and a 500m cycling trail was prepared in the school grounds.

In April the students and teachers of our Year 2 classes collaborated to produce a two minute movie about cycling in our school. The movie was our entry for the Western Sydney Environmental Showcase which was judged “Highly Commended”

Another new initiative in 2009 was the “Earn Your Bike” program. Twenty students were given refurbished bicycles and new helmets. The students earned the right to keep these bicycles by cycling to and from school 20 times. 18 students successfully earned their bicycles.

As a result of all of these cycling activities and initiatives, the number of students cycling to school each day has increased, students have become more active and all students have an increased awareness of bicycle safety.

**Aboriginal Education**

Teachers in all grades include an Aboriginal perspective in their teaching and learning programs. Studies in Human Society and Its Environment, English and the Creative Arts allow students to gain a greater understanding of the issues facing the Aboriginal community, past and present. They also allow students to appreciate the contributions of the Aboriginal people to the Australian identity.

When studying the British colonisation of Australia, the impact of European settlement on Aborigines is covered in depth and students gain an insight into this part of our history. In the Creative Arts curriculum our students are given the opportunity to appreciate the distinctive nature of Aboriginal art and its place and significance in the Aboriginal culture.

Welcome to Country is now a part of all school assemblies.

Through participation in these events, students continue to improve their understanding of the Aboriginal community.
Multicultural education

We currently have 44 different nationalities represented in our school. While this does pose some challenges to our teaching and learning programs, it also enriches our school with practical experience of being able to work peacefully with parents and students from such a diverse background.

In 2009 we celebrated our school's unique diversity with the celebrations of flags, which will be a regular event. We also, through the help of local Coca Cola Amatil, established a multicultural library resource which is available to local schools.

In 2010 we will be promoting multicultural understanding by displaying the flags of many of the countries represented in our school community. We also plan to showcase some of our community languages at our morning assemblies and through our school website.

Respect and responsibility

The school continues to promote respect and responsibility through:

- Students’ goal-setting which encourages students to take increasing responsibility for their learning and conduct;
- Annual participation in the Multicultural Perspectives Public Speaking competition which promotes positive values, tolerance and understanding;
- Harmony Day activities which celebrate the different backgrounds of students and promotes respect across the school;
- Highly effective buddy activities which encourage the senior students to respect and support their junior peers via the Peer Support Program;
- Recognition of excellent performance by our students at assemblies and the presentation day awards
- A student representative council which demonstrates respect and responsibility at individual and group levels;
- Captains, vice-captains and prefects who all model respect and responsibility to all students; and
- Environmental initiatives to encourage student participation and responsibility for the environment.
- Promoting and supporting students in taking responsibility for their actions;
- International Flag Ceremony initiative, where students from 44 different cultural backgrounds proudly waved their flags;
- Adopting the homework matrix in Stage 1 to promote student responsibility in a range of in-school and out-of-school activities; and
- Trained Anti-Racism Contact Officers on staff to implement departmental policy, if and when the need arises.

Other programs

Environment Achievements

On Friday 27th February all of our students worked with their teachers in making our school environment clean for Clean Up Australia Day. Each class was allocated a section of the playground and most students brought gloves
from home to wear. Our playground and gardens looked beautiful after the clean up.

On May 15th Darcy Road participated in Walk Safely to School Day. 204 of our 356 students decided to walk to school on this day.

On Friday June 5th Darcy Road participated in a Rubbish Free Lunch Day to highlight environmental issues on World Environment Day. Students were encouraged to:

- Bring their recess and lunch in reusable containers;
- Put sandwiches inside lunch boxes without gladwrap or foil;
- Bring drinks in reusable drink bottles; and
- Bring fruit which comes in its own wrapping.

Many families made an effort to reduce the amount of rubbish on this day.

In preparation for National Tree Day on July 31st students in each class planted wattle seeds and collected sponsorship (Green Up) to raise money for the school vegetable gardens. On August 7th the sponsorship money was collected for the Green Up. Students who raised $10 or more were able to choose a prize. August 7th was also our schools Tree Day and every student planted a number of native grasses, shrubs and trees in our school. Most of these were donated to us by Parramatta Council. On this day gum trees were also planted in conjunction with the Koala Retreat's Mr Marcus Zorich who spoke to the infant classes about koalas and the different leaves they like to eat. Our primary classes participated in worm farm, compost bin and recycling lessons run by Parramatta council. On this day the council donated 2 worm farms and a compost bin to the school.

On the 1st September Darcy Road participated in National Wattle Day. The Golden Wattle was officially proclaimed our national floral emblem in 1988. In celebration of this, every family at Darcy Road received a wattle to plant in their garden. Many families asked for more than one wattle tree.

At the end of Term 3 KDE and 2F prepared the four vegetable gardens using the no dig procedure. Classes put in their order of vegetable seedlings which were purchased during the holidays. At the beginning of Term 4 students and their teachers planted vegetables such as spinach tomatoes, lettuce and beans.

In 2009 Darcy Road continued to recycle printer and photocopier ink cartridges, paper and cardboard in each classroom and office in the school. In an attempt to reduce the use of paper, Darcy Road encouraged parents to receive and read the school newsletter by email and by accessing it on the school website.

The next big challenge is to reduce the schools overall waste through educating everyone about Rubbish Free Lunches and introducing a comprehensive recycling program that includes recycling plastics, aluminium and food scraps not just paper. The various coloured bins for recycling have been purchased and in consultation with the Council we are in the process of having illustrated labels and pictures for each bin to help our students K-6 better recycle.

Progress on 2009 targets

The school worked collaboratively to develop three main focus areas, which are reflected in our 2009-2011 School Plan. The teachers met on numerous occasions both as a whole group and as smaller focus groups when required. As our school is growing and various changes are taking place, we are continually refining our targets and overall school plan to meet the needs of our students.

Target 1

To continue to improve student outcomes in Literacy:

The school has embraced the K-6 State Literacy strategy for the past two years where each class allocated the first two hours of each morning to their literacy sessions, developing their own literacy units with the opportunity to work individually with each student on a weekly basis.

From late 2008 we have been giving our students the opportunity to sit for the Australian Council for Education Research (ACER) assessments in Literacy. These results guide our teaching practices as well as identifying those students who require additional support.

We use the NAPLAN results and the resources provided with these to assist us in developing and implementing our teaching strategies.

Regular class based assessments are another strategy we use to give us an informed decision about individual and group trends when it comes to Literacy in our school.

Our achievements in 2009 included:

- Greater consistency in the delivery of literacy throughout the school;
- Improved literacy resources in the library, as well as additional purchases of home readers and ‘levelled’ reading texts;
- Greater use of the Reading Recovery program to assist students specifically in Year 1
- An overall improvement in the performance of our students in the ACER results from Term 1 to Term 3.

**Target 2**

**Continue to improve student outcomes in numeracy.**

Since 2008 the school has provided a minimum of one hour a day for the teaching of mathematics. In 2009 we have developed and implemented a mathematics scope and sequence to ensure that all areas and aspects of the curriculum are being covered in a timely manner.

The use of the ACER results from students in Year 2 to Year 6, which are given twice a year illustrate those students who require additional support as well as the ‘growth’ of our students knowledge in this area of the curriculum

**Our achievements in 2009 included:**

- Additional resources and greater organisation being provided to Mathematics throughout the school;
- An improvement in our students’ performance this year over that of previous years
- No students were recorded in the lowest Stanine of the ACER results at the end of 2009.
- Staffs were given professional development on the use and application of the Newman’s strategy as well as Count Me In Too (CMIT).
- A problem a day was introduced to all classes as part of the Newman’s strategy.

**Target 3**

**Continue to improve student engagement.**

The staff agreed at the end of 2008 and early 2009 that one of our key areas for improvement is the engagement of students at our school in their learning.

Our attendance data indicated that one of our major areas for improvement was student punctuality.

To achieve this we collapsed our morning assembly and implemented ‘fun’ and engaging activities centred around sporting games to encourage all students to arrive at school by 9:00am. We also utilised support staff at entry points throughout the school to encourage students to go to the office to record their late arrivals.

**Our achievements in 2009 included:**

- The recording of students’ late arrival after 9:00am improved and indicated that the number of late arrivals was greater than originally thought;
- Staff felt that starting the day in a fun and active way had positive benefits to the overall learning ‘engagement’ of our students
- The library purchased additional books specifically to meet and engage boys in reading which led to a 17% increase in boys level of borrowing from our library.
- Students in Stage 1 were all fully engaged in the recorder music program.

**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 School Management and Planning and the teaching of Mathematics.

**Curriculum**

**The Teaching of Mathematics**

**Background**

The school has had a major support of Literacy for the past years and the executive felt it would be of benefit to research and evaluate the mathematics curriculum.

Mathematics is provided with time allocation of one hour a day compared to two hours a day given to literacy. The executive and the evaluation team wanted to know the level of competency, knowledge, skills and attitudes of our teachers at the end of 2009 when it came to the teaching of Numeracy.

The full questionnaire results were provided to the staff at the end of the year.

**Findings and conclusions**

Overall teachers enjoyed teaching mathematics and felt very confident with their knowledge of the curriculum. Staff reflected a high level of enthusiasm and valued the teaching of this subject highly.
The collegial support to discuss problems with the teaching of mathematics was evident but the area of resourcing was of concern to some members of staff.

Catering for individual differences, student backgrounds and their prior knowledge was high on the agenda of most members of staff.

**Future directions**

While 99% of staff felt confident in the teaching of mathematics it was discovered through this process that more training and development would be appreciated, direction in accessing appropriate web site resources and demonstration of some aspects of this curriculum area would be of benefit.

Time restraints and interruptions were reported as being some of the major issues when staff were asked to report on their level of completion of the mathematics syllabus during the year. Most staff reported that they had completed between 80% and 90% of their planned mathematical experiences for their students.

Higher parent involvement and support for the full implementation of the Count Me In Program would be of great benefit to our students and assist our teachers.

**School Planning and Management.**

**Background**

The evaluation committee felt it was important that we survey the school’s learning community about our overall school planning and management.

The school has grown rapidly over the past few years, there has been a complete change in executive staff in this same period of time and we have implemented many changes.

The committee felt it was timely to review our current practices to see if our community was responding in a positive way.

In 2009 the school sought the opinions of parents, students and teachers about school planning and management. 56 survey forms were returned. Their responses are printed below.

**Findings and conclusions**

66% of parents, students and teachers believe the school’s purpose reflects the school community’s understandings of needs, pressures and directions. As priorities emerge they are catered for within the school’s purpose.

72% of those surveyed believed the main purpose of school targets is to improve student learning outcomes. We achieve this through quality teaching and learning.

50% of parents believed that structures exist to ensure that staff, students and parents are able to participate in school planning, policy development and implementation.

60% of those surveyed thought the school’s plans, policies, programs and practices are continually changing to meet changing circumstances.

80% of staff, students and parents believe the school sets realistic timeframes for monitoring and evaluating student outcomes and the evaluations results influence the future school priorities.

84% believed the school is well organised and all teaching and learning programs and associated teaching strategies are supervised and evaluated.

**Future directions**

The results above are quite positive, although they do reflect need to keep improving our communication with our school community.

While most parents and staff appear to be happy with the various planning and management decisions, the survey does indicate that we still need to focus upon sharing the information with the wider community.

**Parent, student and teacher satisfaction**

During 2009 the evaluation team undertook various surveys to seek the opinions of parents, students and teachers about the school. The SchoolMap “Student School Life Survey – Student Satisfaction” was used. Parents were invited to submit their comments via the school newsletter. Unfortunately this year only 8 parent results were tabled out of a possible 189, which is statistically insufficient to make comments on.

In 2010 we will review our methods of gaining data from our school community by possibly offering surveys in a variety of languages.

**Student Satisfaction Results**

Overall, the majority of students are very happy with the school. 85.5% of students felt that they were happy with how well they do in their school work and 95.4% of our students reported that they try their best while at school.

94.2% of our students felt proud to go to Darcy Road Public School and 95.4% felt safe. 93% understood the consequences of their own actions and 91.8% of students felt that the teachers cared about their feelings.
While most of the responses were very positive there were some issues which need to be addressed in 2010.

51.8% of students felt that the work they received in class was either occasionally or rarely challenging. This will need further investigation. 61.9% of students felt that they could learn more in class if students would behave better. This does not reflect our other data which shows that most children are fully engaged and ‘on task’ with their learning.

**Parent Satisfaction**

While parents did not respond statistically to the survey, the evaluation team undertook information gathering via informal interviews and chats with parents.

The Principal spoke to many parents either before or after school and gained a very strong impression that the overall majority of parents were very pleased and happy with the support their children were receiving in the classrooms and the overall direction of the school.

Parents commented positively about the overall happy tone of the school and expressed their appreciation for how the school supports the various cultures within the school.

**Teacher Satisfaction**

Teachers were provided with opportunities during Stage and Staff meetings to comment on their level of satisfaction with the overall direction of the school.

While a few mentioned their concerns about the rate of change and the growing size of the school, individuals shared their excitement about the future and the benefits of a growing school population.

Staff were appreciative that they are consulted on a regular basis through meetings and felt supported by the parents on many occasions. The staff expressed their appreciation and gratitude to the Parents and Citizens Association in providing additional resources to support them in the teaching of their students.

**Professional learning**

In 2009 the school received $13,340 for the training and development of our staff. The school also supported this activity with an additional $1,785.36.

This money was spent on a range of activities for all staff – teachers, administrative staff and Learning Support Officers.

Many activities were completed in the workplace as a whole staff and specific events were attended outside school by groups or individuals.

Three school development days were used for professional learning and the topics included the clarification of school values, mandatory training in a variety of areas for the safety and welfare of our students and the revision of our Student Welfare Policy and procedures.

Three teachers developed their skills by learning about the needs of students who have Autism Spectrum Disorder.

Members of the Technology Team developed new skills in the integration of technology with teaching and learning programs.

The Principal and his executive team attended a holiday conference in the Blue Mountains to refine their leadership skills, review current policies and practices and clarify leadership issues.

Individual teachers attended courses that included “The Literacy Project”, environmental education, Choir, Crunch’n’Sip program and dance.

As well as formal courses, all staff attend weekly Stage and Staff meetings where professional development and collegial discussions are promoted.

**School development 2009 – 2011**

**Targets for 2010**

**Target 1**

To improve outcomes in Literacy K-6 with a specific focus on Writing.

Strategies to achieve this target include:

- Supporting all staff in developing and deepening their knowledge of the NAPLAN assessment tool with a focus on the writing aspect;
- To support teachers with specific training and development opportunities by specialists to improve the delivery of the curriculum to our students;
- To investigate the disparity between boys’ and girls’ performance in literacy with a specific focus on writing; and
- To purchase additional resources to support both our teachers and students to improve our writing results.

Our success will be measured by:

- The gap between boys’ and girls’ performance will be narrowed;
- Year 5 boys’ writing skills will be improved and match that of the region and state in NAPLAN results
- Boys will be more engaged in the teaching and learning process as reflected in their satisfaction with the school.

**Target 2**

To improve outcomes in Mathematics K-6 with a specific focus on Space and Measurement.

Strategies to achieve this target include:

- Targeting training and development resources to support teachers in delivering of these aspects of the mathematics syllabus;
- Providing additional funds to ensure that each classroom is equipped to teach the various substrands involved with measurement; and
- Closely looking at both ACER and NAPLAN results to ensure that teachers are supported in their own professional knowledge and understanding of where our students need additional support.

Our success will be measured by:

- Students in both Year 3 and Year 5 improving their NAPLAN results with more than 66% achieving Stage level;
- Students across the school who participate in the ACER assessment achieve Stanine 2 or higher; and
- All teachers have improved their knowledge and skills in teaching measurement to their students.

**Target 3**

To improve Stage 3 boys’ engagement in the learning process of literacy and numeracy.

Strategies to achieve this target include:

- Teachers to be provided the support and skills on how to engage boys in the learning process;
- Seeking ways in which to provide more gender balance on staff; and
- Investigating the purchasing of resources which are more suitable to boys’ learning styles and interests.

Our success will be measured by:

- Narrowing the gap between boys’ and girls’ performances in the NAPLAN results in both Literacy and Numeracy;
- Boys overall performance in both literacy and numeracy will either equal or be higher than that of the region; and

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**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.

Harry Berwick Principal
Sharon Buckham Assistant Principal
Sean McLoughlin Assistant Principal
Michael Leverett Assistant Principal

**School contact information**

Darcy Road Public School
98a Darcy Road, Wentworthville, NSW, 2145
Ph: 02 9631 3067
Fax: 02 9896 3372
Email: darcyroad-p.school@det.nsw.edu.au
Web: www.darcyroad-p.schools.nsw.edu.au
School Code: 2444

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: