School context

Darcy Road Public School is a suburban Sydney school with a student enrolment of almost 600. More than 80% of our students come from Language Backgrounds Other Than English.

Principal’s message

The Annual School Report is a key accountability document, enabling the school to report to the community on the achievements of the past year, as well as identifying targets for improved performance over the coming year.

2014 has been another very positive year for Darcy Road Public School. The school has an excellent reputation in the wider community and is seen as the school of ‘first choice’ by parents.

At Darcy Road Public School our students’ results are outstanding. Our strong results in Literacy and Numeracy, including the National Assessment Plan (NAPLAN), are evidence of our success. Equally the school has a strong culture, a wonderful teaching and support staff and students with strong values who do their personal best in academic, cultural and sporting programs.

The school’s focus remains on creating a caring environment that promotes leadership and the development of positive behaviour by all students. Our valued partnerships with parents have been highlighted by an increase in parent volunteers, strong attendance at parent forums and active participation in our P&C.

During the year we said farewell to Mr Berwick, who retired after 8 years as Principal of Darcy Road. We are grateful to Mr Berwick for his dedication and service to the school and we wish him well in his retirement.

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.

Greg Grinham (Relieving Principal)

Grandparents’ Day

P & C message

The Parents and Citizens Association (P&C) brings together parents, interested community members and school staff to benefit the community of Darcy Road Public School. The P&C works together in partnership with the school to achieve the best possible outcomes (learning, social, and emotional) for all students. The P&C aims to create a positive and rewarding learning environment through the provision of financial, material, and social support. Further, the P&C offers parents opportunities to be involved in the education of their children by providing a forum for parents to have their say on issues and events in the school community as well as to contribute to the future directions of the school. The Darcy Road Public School P&C supports public education, fosters the inclusion of all families in the school community, and encourages students’ pursuit of excellence in the academic, cultural and sporting fields.

During 2014, the P&C continued to contribute to the enrichment of the school with the support of parents, community members, teachers, school staff and students. The contributions of the P&C are discussed in the next section.

Fostering a Stronger School Community

This year, we held the Diwali Festival, other multicultural festivals and the Christmas Festival. These events, organised by P&C members, parents and school staff, brought together the school community and supported the inclusion of all families in the life of our school. The P&C hopes these and other similar events continue to
be a part of the school year and that stronger connections are fostered through the celebration of diversity within our school community.

The P&C was once again involved with the kindergarten orientation to support parents with their children’s transition to school. A ‘Welcome BBQ’ was also held at the beginning of Term 1 for all new families to Darcy Road Public School. This provided an opportunity for parents to meet other parents as well as teachers and school staff.

**Connecting with and Involving Parents in the School Community**

This year, there has been a focus on ways to include the voices of more parents so as to ensure the P&C is more inclusive and representative of the school community. A P&C email address was created to connect more easily with parents, P&C news and updates were regularly included in the school newsletter, and parents were invited to participate in surveys (online and in person) about issues affecting the P&C and school community. Further, during P&C meetings the School Executive spoke with parents about school policies as well as gathered parents’ views on school issues.

The P&C has aimed to promote and represent the interests of parents throughout the year, both at P&C meetings and during meetings with the School Executive. On these occasions, a variety of issues impacting on students’ wellbeing and learning were discussed. From Term 3 this year, P&C meetings were also changed to be held during the evening as another way for more parents to be involved in discussions and decisions about issues that affect the school community.

During this year, a number of parent members of the P&C were representatives on the selection panels for the Principal and teaching staff. The P&C looks forward to working together with our new Principal in 2015 to ensure all children receive an equal and quality education at Darcy Road Public School.

**Fundraising**

Throughout 2014, the P&C has organised several fundraising events including the Easter Hat Parade raffle, Mother’s and Father’s Day stalls, a trivia night, cupcake stalls, and BBQs. All the money raised from these events as well as all of the profits made by the School Uniform Shop goes directly back into our school to benefit all students through the purchase of additional resources that further enrich student learning. This year the P&C has been able to contribute about $20,000 worth of equipment and resources to the school including:

- Interactive whiteboards: $6,466 (and a commitment to support the purchase of another interactive whiteboard for approximately $7,000 by the end of 2014)
- Mathematics resources: $4,002
- Mathletics (internet maths program): $1,754
- School blazers: $408

However, this would not be possible without the support of the families at our school. It is through the continued support and generosity of families as well as the Principal, Assistant Principals, teachers, and school staff that the P&C can make a significant, effective, and long-lasting difference in creating a better learning environment for all students as well as support improvements to our school.

Finally, as current President of the P&C, I sincerely thank the executive committee members, sub-committee members (fundraising and uniform shop), and all of the many parents who have volunteered their time to support and assist the P&C throughout this school year.

Kelly Baird
President
Darcy Road PS P&C

*Learning about Japanese culture*
Student representatives’ message
In our time at Darcy Road P S we have filled our minds with memories of friendship, happiness and care from the helpful teachers and supportive friends. We, the captains have ensured the school runs smoothly, whilst also hosting events such as assemblies, Kindergarten Orientation and Presentation Day. However, this year we were saddened because of the unexpected departure of our beloved principal Mr Berwick at the end of term 2. Although, the show must go on and we had our Year 6 Fun Day, which was a great success. We’d like to thank all the teachers and staff that made it possible to get the most out of primary school. We have enjoyed working with our fellow leaders, Kevin, Sathyan, Yash, Cerelia, Nikita and Anya. We will forever hold Darcy Road Public School deep in our hearts and we wish all the current Year 6 students all the success in the future.

Davin Shengali                     Sameerah Hassanein

Hi ho, hi ho – teachers dress up for Book Week

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

Student enrolment profile
Student enrolment numbers have grown rapidly in recent years. The current school enrolment of 540 students comprises 275 boys and 265 girls. There has been a gradual increase in enrolments due to larger intakes in Kindergarten each year. It is anticipated that this trend will continue.

Student enrolment

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>2009</th>
<th>2010</th>
<th>2011</th>
<th>2012</th>
<th>2013</th>
<th>2014</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>210</td>
<td>231</td>
<td>233</td>
<td>225</td>
<td>251</td>
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<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>161</td>
<td>163</td>
<td>184</td>
<td>187</td>
<td>225</td>
<td>265</td>
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Enrolments

Darcy Road Public School

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Class Sizes</th>
<th>Roll class</th>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Total in class</th>
<th>Total per year</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>KA</td>
<td>K</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>20</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KB</td>
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<td>19</td>
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<tr>
<td>KE</td>
<td>K</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>18</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KH</td>
<td>K</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>18</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>KL</td>
<td>K</td>
<td>19</td>
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<tr>
<td>KS</td>
<td>K</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>1A</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>24</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1D</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>23</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1J</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>23</td>
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<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>3T</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>28</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3/4C</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>30</td>
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<tr>
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<td>15</td>
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<td>32</td>
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<tr>
<td>5/6C</td>
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<td>19</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5/6D</td>
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<td>31</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>6</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Student attendance profile

Management of non-attendance
At Darcy Road, we value good school attendance. All rolls are marked using the Sentral software system, which allows for secure record keeping and ready analysis of attendance data. Letters requesting explanation are sent to parents of students with unexplained absences. Class rolls are regularly checked by executive staff, with concerns being referred to the Home School Liaison Officer. Parents are informed in our biannual student reports of their children’s absence and partial absence rates.

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

The staff at Darcy Road has a wide range of teaching experience and teaching years, providing the school with an excellent and well balanced mix.

Workforce composition

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Position</th>
<th>Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Principal</td>
<td>1.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deputy Principal(s)</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assistant Principal(s)</td>
<td>4.0</td>
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<tr>
<td>Head Teachers</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Classroom Teacher(s)</td>
<td>20.98</td>
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<tr>
<td>Teacher of Reading Recovery</td>
<td>0.5</td>
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<tr>
<td>Learning and Support Teacher(s)</td>
<td>0.9</td>
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<tr>
<td>Teacher Librarian</td>
<td>1.0</td>
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<tr>
<td>Teacher of ESL</td>
<td>2.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School Counsellor</td>
<td>0.4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The Australian Education Regulation, 2013 requires schools to report on Aboriginal composition of their workforce. No members of staff in 2014 were of Aboriginal background.

Teacher qualifications
All teaching staff meet the professional requirements for teaching in NSW public schools. 100% of teaching staff at Darcy Road Public School have a degree or diploma in teaching.

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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date of financial summary</th>
<th>30/11/2014</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Income</td>
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<tr>
<td>Balance brought forward</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Global funds</td>
<td>261425.08</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tied funds</td>
<td>214750.86</td>
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<tr>
<td>School &amp; community sources</td>
<td>135101.00</td>
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<tr>
<td>Interest</td>
<td>4680.20</td>
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<tr>
<td>Trust receipts</td>
<td>18821.50</td>
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<tr>
<td>School Operated Canteen</td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total income</td>
<td>704932.88</td>
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</table>

Expenditure

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Teaching &amp; learning</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Key learning areas</td>
<td>35430.70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Excursions</td>
<td>33290.95</td>
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<tr>
<td>Extracurricular dissections</td>
<td>22085.46</td>
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<tr>
<td>Category</td>
<td>Amount</td>
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<tr>
<td>-------------------------------</td>
<td>--------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Library</td>
<td>7999.88</td>
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<tr>
<td>Training &amp; development</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tied funds</td>
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<tr>
<td>Casual relief teachers</td>
<td>79251.09</td>
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<tr>
<td>Administration &amp; office</td>
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<td>School-operated canteen</td>
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<tr>
<td>Utilities</td>
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<tr>
<td>Maintenance</td>
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<td>Trust accounts</td>
<td>13972.41</td>
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<tr>
<td>Capital programs</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total expenditure</td>
<td>541660.27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Balance carried forward</td>
<td>163272.61</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A full copy of the school’s 2014 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.

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

The My School website provides detailed information and data for national literacy and numeracy testing (NAPLAN).

Click on the link [http://www.myschool.edu.au](http://www.myschool.edu.au) then enter the school name in Find a school and select Go to access the school data.

### Other achievements

**University of NSW Competitions**

Students from the school have again achieved outstanding results when they participated in ICAS (International Competitions and Assessments for Schools) in 2014. Those students whose achievements were outstanding were rewarded with Certificates of Credit, Distinction and High Distinction.

ICAS tests are held annually for students in Years 2 to 12. Each ICAS test is designed to assess students’ academic ability in aspects of Computer Skills, English, Mathematics, Science, Spelling and Writing.

74 students at the school sat for the Mathematics Competition in 2013. Twenty students received Credit Certificates and eight received a Distinction. In English 66 students participated with 9 Credit Certificates and 6 Distinction being presented. In Computer Skills 58 students participated, with 15 Credit passes and 3 Distinction and 2 High Distinction achievements received. In Spelling 58 students sat the test with 22 students receiving Credit passes, 8 Distinction and 4 High Distinction passes. In Science 38 students participated with 12 Credit certificates and 3 Distinction certificates received. Writing was the final competition test sat by our students. Of the 50 students who participated, 14 Credit certificates, 11 Distinction certificates and 1 High Distinction were presented.
Maths Olympiad

Australasian Problem Solving Mathematical Olympiad (APSMO) aims to:
- Stimulate enthusiasm and enjoyment of Mathematics
- Develop flexible problem solving skills and strategies
- Foster creativity and ingenuity and strengthen intuition
- Increase depth of comprehension
- Strengthen the foundation for future studies
- Provide for the satisfaction, joy and thrill of meeting challenges

In 2014 thirty Darcy Road students participated in the Australasian Problem Solving Mathematical Olympiad. Our team was made up of Year 4, 5 and 6 students who competed against 28 456 students across all of Australia and Asia. We had 5 students placed in the top 25%.

Significant programs and initiatives

Aboriginal education

Aboriginal perspectives are integrated across many Key Learning Areas to raise student awareness of Aboriginal culture and heritage to promote mutual respect and understanding. At Darcy Road PS we observe the protocol of acknowledging country at each assembly and all special occasions.

Personalised Learning Plans (PLPs) are completed for all Aboriginal students to support their educational outcomes and set goals for their learning.

Multicultural education

In 2014 a staff member continued to be the Community Liaison for the school. This staff member worked with the parents and the school community to celebrate four festivals which are a part of our school community’s cultures.

We celebrated Chinese New Year in February and for the first time we recognised the Chinese Moon Festival. This occurs on the 15th day of the eighth lunar month. During their Mandarin Chinese lessons, students listened to legendary stories, tasted traditional moon cakes and learned about the customs of this festival. We displayed two Chinese lanterns during Education Week and they have remained hanging outside the office.

We celebrated Eid for the second year in 2014. After Ramadan, which is the month of fasting, we learned about some Islamic customs. The children wore national costumes or their best clothes and donated money to Westmead Children’s Hospital. Donating to charity is a very important aspect of Islam. The children made Happy Eid cards, Eid book marks or hanging mobiles of the moon and stars. These emblems are important in Islam. Parents and children were encouraged to talk in the classrooms about Islam and to discuss their own customs for Eid. Some even brought sweets and snacks for the children.

This was the third year we celebrated Diwali. Again children were encouraged to dress up and money raised was given to Stewart House, which is the school’s favoured charity. Some parent volunteers worked with a few students to create Rangoli designs outside the office with rice flour and powder. The rest of the week, all children were very eager to draw their own Rangoli designs with coloured chalk. Some classes coloured in pictures of scenes from the Festival of Lights story. Others made Diwali, candles in lamps made of clay or plasticine. We had many parent volunteers to paint the children’s hands with Mendhi, which was a huge success.

The P & C organised the Christmas Festival. This year we included school choirs, a recorder group, two dance groups and a teacher band. Everyone enjoyed international food, face painting, tattoos,
a visit from Santa Claus and singing from all in attendance.

EAL/D  
(English as an Additional Language/Dialect)

As of November 2014, there were 536 students enrolled at Darcy Road PS. 414 of these students, or 83%, come from a Language Background other than English. We have students who represent approximately 30 countries. There are 3 teachers who work with these children. Our first priority is to the newly arrived children who have little or no English. Then we target the older children who need help to learn survival language and prepare for high school. We focus on early intervention and so most of the teachers’ time is spent in the Infants classes.

Darcy Road PS is fortunate to have so many musically talented students. We have showcased a variety of students’ individual talents at an impromptu concert in Term 3 and on Grandparents Day in Term 4. At these concerts the Year 1 students who have learned the recorder and the Year 3 students who have learned the Ukulele were able to showcase some short songs. The Trumpet and Flute Ensembles have also been working hard this year and performed at a variety of school events. The Flute Ensemble were also selected to perform at the Celebrating the Arts concert alongside many other talented acts from other schools in the area.

2014 has also been an exciting year for Darcy Road School Choirs. The school has established a K-2 Choir and a Boys Senior Choir. The K-2 Choir has learnt a variety of popular songs this year and particularly enjoyed being part of a 'flash mob' in assembly. The Primary Choir has also shown their talents at school concerts and was able to perform with pride as part of the massed choir at the Celebrating the Arts concert this year. All three school choirs are continuing to develop their love of music, learning the concepts in the art of singing while enjoying different styles of music.

The Arts

The Musica Viva program continued in 2014 with an amazing performance of an opera titled ‘Hercules’ by the wonderful group known as ‘Sounds Baroque’. This talented musical group combines music and instruments from 300 years ago, their own contemporary compositions and a lot of humor to bring the unique and vibrant music of the Baroque period to life for all students from kindergarten to year 6. The students were engaged from the very first minute of the show until the finale. The performance was preceded by class music lessons based on the music and instruments from the baroque period.

Darcy Road PS was once again selected as part of the Australian Business and Community Network Arts Access grant in 2014. Selected students from

Constable Conroy addressing Stage 1 students
Our Teacher Librarians host Book Week Parade

Library

Early this year the School Library was painted and recarpeted and this has improved the physical environment, making it safer for all users.

In 2014 the focus for the School Library was on increasing the Junior Fiction collection to bring it more in line with current interests and authors. Once again out of date and damaged stock was culled and where possible replaced with newer editions. Students were actively involved in the selection process when purchasing new titles. This involvement has been very popular and the collection now reflects the reading interests of our students as well as the curriculum support requested by the staff.

Opening the multicultural library for student borrowing has been a huge success with loans from this area increasing by 20% on last years’ borrowing statistics.

The P & C once again supported the School’s subscription to World Book online and the library purchased the eBook subscription. As the app for the eBooks is added to the iPads these are becoming more popular.

The iPads are now housed in the library and borrowed on a daily basis by class teachers. These are very popular both in the classroom for research and in the library during lunchtimes for recreation.

Also during the lunch break students enjoy coming to the library to play games or just spend some quite time reading.

Over 300 students participated in the 2014 Premier’s Reading Challenge with 22 gold Certificates being awarded to those students who have been part of this incentive for five years.

Throughout the year the library has been involved with all the special celebrations and events held in the school including Book Week, Diwali, NAIDOC and National Literacy Week.

Looking towards 2015 we plan to improve the selection of educational activities available for students to access during lunchtime, continue to increase the collection with a focus on Non Fiction titles and cull and review the senior fiction collection.

Due to the growth in student numbers the library will have a six day allocation in 2015. This means that both Ms Howarth and Mrs Elton will be in the library for three days each.

Sport

Students from the school participated in the Wentworthville/Seven Hills PSSA sporting carnivals and competitions. Representatives from our school participated at district swimming, athletics and cross country, regional athletics and cross country as well as state athletics. Teams participated in Newcombe Ball, AFL, Softball and Cricket during PSSA summer competition. Football (soccer), Girls’ Football (soccer), Netball and Oz Tag teams participated in PSSA winter competition. Congratulations to all our teams for their sportsmanship throughout the year.

This year the school successfully participated in the ‘Premier’s Sporting Challenge’, encouraging students to ensure they exercise regularly to keep fit and healthy. At the completion of this challenge students each received a certificate and the school received a gold award. By participating in this challenge the school received funding to buy new sporting equipment, which the students have started to use.
In Term 4 116 students in Years 2 to 6 successfully participated in a two week program of swimming lessons provided by the Department of Education at Wentworthville Swimming Pool. All students showed significant gains in swimming ability and awareness of water safety.

The school bike track has been in regular use by students with each year group having a designated day to enjoy riding on the track at lunchtime. The track is used by community members after school hours, on weekends and during the school holidays.

School planning and evaluation 2012—2014

School evaluation processes

NSW public schools conduct evaluations to support the effective implementation of the school plan. In 2014 our school evaluated the teaching and learning of English as well as the management of student welfare. The processes used included:

- Student, teacher and parent surveys, both hard copy and online
- ‘Parent Café’ – a discussion forum for parents to participate in the evaluation process
- Individual, small group and whole staff reflections and discussions

Program evaluations

English

Background

2014 was the first year of implementation of the New South Wales K-10 English Syllabus for the Australian Curriculum. All staff had successfully completed an extensive professional learning program, “Focus on Reading” the previous year in preparation for the implementation of the new syllabus. 2014 was also the first year in which all teaching staff used the ‘Progress in Literacy and Numeracy’ (PLAN) software to plot student achievement in eight critical aspects of literacy. Effective use of PLAN enables teachers to ensure that all students are progressing appropriately in their learning. The school conducted a series of online and hard-copy surveys in 2014 to evaluate the teaching of English in this time of rapid change and to identify areas for improving teaching and learning of this KLA.

Findings and conclusions

From a representative sample of 150 school families, there were 60 respondents to the online survey “Learning English at Darcy Road PS (Parent Survey)”. More than 70% of parent respondents selected ‘Strongly Agree’ or ‘Agree’ for the statement My child’s teacher is good at teaching English. More than 70% reported that their child’s teacher planned tasks and activities in English which are interesting, engaging and appropriately challenging. More than 50% of respondents agreed that teachers maintain an appropriate balance between independent literacy tasks and group or whole-class learning activities and discussions. 45% of respondents selected the response “I’m not sure” for this question. Comments for all questions indicated that parents would like to know more about what their children learn in English and how the teachers present this content. This feedback points to a need for improvement in the level of communication to parents and caregivers about the teaching and learning of English in our school.

The student survey “Learning English at Darcy Road PS” was completed by students from three classes in Stages 1 to 3. 82 students responded. More than 70% strongly agreed or agreed that the activities planned by teachers are engaging and help children to learn English. Over 60% said that the school has good English resources which their teachers use in class. Student comments showed strong interest in using more online and multimedia texts as well as hard-copy materials.

Almost 60% of students who responded felt that there was a good balance between independent literacy tasks, teacher-led group work and whole-
class learning and discussion in their English lessons.

12% of students reported that the English tasks and activities presented in class were “Usually too easy” or “Sometimes too easy”. 5% selected “Usually too difficult” for this question, while 16% chose “Sometimes too difficult”.

Teacher surveys, whole-staff discussions and focus group deliberations indicated strongly that the majority of staff felt adequately prepared to implement the new syllabus. All staff agreed that training in ‘Focus on Reading’ had been worthwhile but concerns were raised that the school had not continued with Phase 2 in 2014, opting instead to implement and consolidate professional learning from Phase 1. A majority of staff agreed that students would benefit from greater use of online and digital texts. It was agreed that the school would expand the use of ‘Reading Eggs’ and ‘Reading Eggspress’ so that all students, K-6, would access this resource.

Future Directions

- All teaching staff to engage in ‘Focus on Reading’ professional learning in 2015 – Phase 2 for teachers who have completed Phase 1, and Phase 1 for teachers new to the school who have not had previous experience of the program.
- Teachers planning together in stage groups to improve consistency of content and of teacher judgement across stages.
- Improved communication to parents about content and methods used in teaching and learning English. Strategies could include class and stage newsletters at the start of each term, parent workshops and forums on English teaching and learning, and promoting greater involvement of parent helpers in classrooms.

Student welfare

Background

Student and teacher surveys conducted in late 2013 and early in 2014 demonstrated a need for a restatement of school values leading to clear, consistent and practical school rules. A significant proportion of staff and students were unsure of the existing school values (‘Respect, Excellence, Fairness’) and how these values could inform student behaviour and the day to day running of the school. Extensive consultation with the school community, including staff workshops, parent forums, student focus groups and surveys, led to the introduction of a set of three school rules, (“Be safe”, “Be respectful”, “Be a learner”) aligned to the school values ‘Safety’, ‘Respect’ and ‘Learning’. Further consultation was conducted later in the year to evaluate the impact of the new school rules and agreed values.

Key findings

- All survey respondents were able to list the school rules and explain their meaning.
- All sectors of the school community believe that as our school population grows (the expected enrolment for 2015 is over 600), effective systems to promote positive student behavior and to manage inappropriate behavior become even more important.
All evaluation processes demonstrated strong support for the new school rules. A frequent comment was that they ‘cover everything’ – any issues that arise in the day to day life of the school can be related to one of the three rules.

The school rules and examples of their practical implications are clearly displayed in all classrooms.

Consultation with all groups indicated that the school’s program for promoting and acknowledging positive behavior should also be reviewed. The clear consensus was, however, that this should not take place in 2014. The focus for 2014 should be limited to reviewing and improving school systems for managing student behavior.

There was a high level of staff concern at the lack of an effective system for tracking student behaviour over time. It was agreed that the ‘Wellbeing’ module of the Sentral software suite would be introduced on a trial basis for Term 3, 2014. Staff feedback at the end of Term 3 was strongly in favour of continuing with this Sentral system.

Future directions

The school executive has explored at length the possibility of Darcy Road becoming a ‘Positive Behaviour for Learning’ (PBL) aligned school. This would require considerable investment of time and resources but it would enable the school to consolidate and build on gains made to date in developing a consistent, practical and effective system of student welfare. With a new Principal and Deputy Principal commencing duties at the start of 2015, this area may become a priority for the school.

The introduction of the Sentral Wellbeing module for recording and analysing patterns of student behavior has been a positive change. The school will continue to monitor, evaluate and adapt this system to ensure that it meets the needs of the school community.

School planning 2012—2014: progress in 2014

School priority 1

Outcomes from 2012–2014

Improved outcomes in literacy for all students, with a specific focus on comprehension

Evidence of progress towards outcomes in 2014:

- The percentage of Year 3 students in the NAPLAN bottom band for Reading has decreased (3% in 2014, down from 7.5% in 2012). 52% of Year 3 students scored in the top two bands for Reading.
- The new NSW English Syllabus, aligned with the National Curriculum, is being consistently implemented in literacy teaching and learning programs
- 100% of teaching staff using PLAN software and the Literacy Continuum to assess, plan for and evaluate student literacy learning
- Teaching staff implementing in literacy teaching skills and knowledge gained from “Focus on Reading” training.

Strategies to achieve these outcomes in 2015:

- Staff who have successfully completed Phase 1 of Focus on Reading will train in Phase 2; new staff and those who have not completed Phase 1 will train in Focus on Reading Phase 1.
- Whole-school subscription to Reading Eggs and Reading Eggspress in order to increase student access to online and multimedia texts
- Continued professional development and support for all staff in use of PLAN software and the Literacy Continuum to inform teaching and learning
School priority 2

Outcomes from 2012–2014

Improved outcomes in numeracy for all students with a specific focus on problem solving.

Evidence of progress towards outcomes in 2013:

- Implementation of Focus on Reading program K-6 and application of comprehension strategies applied to problem solving.
- 100% of teachers using PLAN software and the Numeracy Continuum to assess, program and evaluate student progress.
- Maintain the number of students in Year 3 achieving at proficiency in NAPLAN numeracy.
- Increase the number of girls in Year 5 achieving at proficiency in NAPLAN numeracy.

Strategies to achieve these outcomes in 2015:

- Professional learning provided to 100% of staff in the area of the new NSW Mathematics syllabus K-10.
- Development of assessment rubrics for ongoing teacher dialogue and consistency of teacher judgement (CTJ) in alignment with the Numeracy continuum and new NSW Mathematics syllabus.
- 100% of K-6 teachers using the Numeracy Continuum to assess, program and evaluate student progress.
- Continue to promote effective use of 21st century learning technologies in all classes – blogs, video conferencing, interactive whiteboards, ipads, netbooks, online and school server-based digital resources.
- Purchase a further year’s subscription to www.mathletics.com.au for all students, K-6; conduct professional learning sessions for all teachers in effective use of ‘Mathletics’; give priority in staff and stage meetings to effective and consistent use of this suite of resources.

School priority 3

Outcomes from 2012–2014

Increased student engagement and attainment throughout the school.

Evidence of progress towards outcomes in 2013:

- Students, staff and parent surveys indicate increased engagement of students in their learning.
- Increased integration of technology in classroom practice utilising elements of the Quality Teaching Framework with 100% of classrooms equipped with Interactive Whiteboards.

Strategies to achieve these outcomes in 2015:

- Teacher professional learning in the use of technology in supporting students and adult learning.
- School values to be revised and whole school program to be developed and explicitly taught K-6.
- Increased opportunities for all students to participate in extra-curricular activities through the formation of ‘lunchtime clubs’, including dance, music and drama groups, choirs, debating and public speaking groups.
Professional learning

All staff members completed mandatory DEC training in the implementation of the new NSW Mathematics K-10 Syllabus, aligned with the Australian Curriculum. One Staff Development Day involving all teaching staff of the eight schools in the Toongabbie Learning Community was devoted to the new syllabus. This professional learning was led by Miss DiChio and Mr McLoughlin. Several of our Tuesday afternoon whole-staff professional learning sessions focused on exploring the content of the Mathematics syllabus and planning and preparing units of work in stage groups. A K-6 Scope and Sequence document was developed and ratified. All staff were provided with access to the DEC ‘Adobe Connect’ online learning program, consisting of twelve 30-minute interactive sessions. The ‘Adobe Connect’ series also provided a bank of useful online resources which were explored by teachers in their Wednesday afternoon stage meetings.

Staff also completed extensive training in preparation for the implementation in 2015 of the new NSW Science K-10 (incorporating Science and Technology K-6) Syllabus. Mrs Lawson led several whole-staff professional learning sessions. Teachers worked with the syllabus in weekly stage meetings, planning programs and units of work. All teaching staff were supported to access and engage with the ‘Adobe Connect Science Series’, a suite of online sessions supporting implementation of the syllabus.

Two Assistant Principals, Ms Maraga and Mr McLoughlin, successfully completed the final components of the leadership training program entitled “The Art of Leadership”. The skills and knowledge gained by both participants will be of value to the school leadership team and support the drive for continual improvement in a wide range of aspects of school life.

Whole-staff professional learning meetings were held on Tuesdays after school. Stage meetings were held on a weekly basis on Wednesday afternoons. Both staff and stage meetings form important elements of staff professional learning at the school.

Parent/caregiver, student, and teacher satisfaction

In 2014, the school sought the opinions of parents, students and teachers about the school.

Their responses are presented below.

A ‘Parent Café’ was held in the school hall during Book Week, allowing parents the opportunity to provide feedback on their levels of satisfaction with the school in a pleasant and welcoming environment. Most feedback provided was positive and supportive of the school, its staff and the students. Respondents acknowledged the positive atmosphere of the school in general, with students showing high levels of cheerful enthusiasm for their learning and for school activities. Many parents praised the caring, professional and hardworking approach of staff to supporting student learning and wellbeing.

Concerns were raised by some respondents about the impact on their children’s learning of the disruptive behaviour of a small number of students. Another issue raised was the need for more structured activities for students to choose from at lunchtimes, as well as the need for more play equipment and playground resources.

Using ipads in Stage 2
Three classes of students (Years 1, 3 and 5/6) were given a pencil and paper questionnaire to help them evaluate the quality of school life from a student perspective.

95% of the students surveyed selected the responses “Almost Always” or “Usually” for the statements ‘The students are the school’s main concern’ and ‘The school encourages everyone to learn’. 90% selected “Almost Always” or “Usually” for ‘New students are made welcome’ and ‘I am proud of my school’.

Approximately 20% of respondents chose “Sometimes” or “Rarely” for the statement ‘The school is continually finding ways to improve what it does’, suggesting that there is some scope to increase student awareness of our efforts as a school to continually improve.

Teaching staff provided information on their levels of satisfaction with school life by completing written surveys and participating in discussions at staff workshops and during a staff development day. A significant majority of teachers reported that they felt satisfied with the school’s level of support for them in their work. A number of teachers, however, described feeling increased levels of stress compared to previous years due to the rapid pace of change in education in general and to a period of change in the school in particular. There was a general consensus that the appointment of a new leadership team would afford further opportunities to evaluate and refine practices and procedures.

Future Directions
2015-2017 School Plan

NSW DEC is implementing a new school planning process for 2015-17. The new plan will be published on the school’s website from the beginning of Term 2 2015.

The school plan involves identifying three ‘strategic directions’ which will give clear focus for school improvement. A process of consultation with all groups in the school community has resulted in the following strategic directions for the school:

- Student learning – continued improvement in all aspects of student learning, with a particular emphasis on English
- Teacher learning – a strong, targeted program of teacher professional learning aligned to achievement of school targets
- Community partnerships – developing and maintaining effective partnerships with all sectors of the school community to support student learning and wellbeing

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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Parents can find more information about Annual School Reports, how to interpret information in the report and have the opportunity to provide feedback about the report at: