Our school at a glance

Students
Our enrolment at the end of November 2008 was 46 students comprising 23 boys and 23 girls.

Staff
We had 5 members of the teaching staff in 2008 including 2 full time teachers and other positions filled on a part time basis. The current staff have a wealth of experience and specific talents and expertise that allow for a rich variety of programs within the school to cater for students needs.

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

Messages

Principal's message
Weethalle Public School is a small, rural school located in the township of Weethalle, approximately 56 km west of West Wyalong. It offers all students a broad range of educational opportunities in multi stage classes. It focuses on providing a safe, happy, student-centred learning environment. The staff and community work together as an effective team, to make balanced and well-informed decisions for the betterment of the school and the students. Strong emphasis is placed on the basic skills of literacy and numeracy. Weethalle Public School has a caring, supportive and challenging learning environment. The school provides comprehensive academic, social and physical programs with a strong emphasis on high standards of instruction in literacy and numeracy. Students are recognised for their achievements and are encouraged to achieve high personal goals and staged outcome levels.

This annual school report is a snapshot of the school's achievements for the year 2008.

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.

Cheryle Glyde
Principal

P&C message
As 2008 comes to a close, we can reflect on the P&C's contribution to the school. It all started with Mr White riding out and Mrs Glyde riding in as Principal. The P&C this year has:

• Subsidised the Ballarat Excursion
• Donated Academic Awards
• Donated $1500 for the purchase of Premiers Reading Challenge books
• Catered at our sports carnival
• Catered for the Small Schools Maths Day
• Catered for the Bikies lunch at the pub.
• Held a Pie/Lamington Drive

At the request of the children, we ran the highly successful Pet Show and Billy Cart Race Days with a Webber/Camp oven meal following. The P&C recently held a working bee to remove dead trees, prune dangerous branches and top dress the lawn, to provide a safe play environment for our kids. As President, and also a parent, I thank everyone that assisted the P&C and school during the year, especially the canteen ladies, who kindly did their time each week. Every contribution counts and goes towards making the school a better place to educate our kids.

I'd like to congratulate Mrs Glyde on a productive and progressive first year as our Principal. Keep up the good work.

Mr Brian Johnston
P&C President

Student representative's message
Being School Captains in 2008 was a great experience and a privilege for us. We have tried to be good role models for the students and staff of Weethalle Public School.

We have had many varied activities and sporting highlights throughout the year. Firstly, our PP5 swimming relay team of Jason, Josh, Alicia and Todd came second at the State PSSA Carnival in Sydney in the Peter Dobson Relay. This was the first time that Weethalle has had success in the pool at State level.

Later on we had our Fun Run/Cross Country long distance running which was fun. We had many students represent at our District and Regional carnivals. Mia and Jason represented the Western Region at State level and ran very well.

We then had our Athletics carnival which we ended up completing on the next school day as it was raining. This year we had our largest number of students representing the Western Region at State level and ran very well.

We then had our Sports carnival which we ended up completing on the next school day as it was raining. This year we had our largest number of students representing the Western Region in Sydney for State Athletics. Alicia, Sharnah, Jason, Jay, Simon, Josh and Mathew were competing in individual or relay events. Again we had a great result with our PP5 relay team gaining second place in the Nigel Bagley Relay.
During the year we also did a number of fun activities like the Round Robin at Rankins Springs, Netball/AFL Gala Days at West Wyalong, NAIDOC week and the Mortimer Shield.

This year our SRC conducted many fundraising activities such as Crazy Hair Day, Mad Hatters Day, Fun Run, Jump Rope for Heart and a Cake Stall. The money raised has gone to Cystic Fibrosis, Heart Foundation, St Vincent De Paul’s in West Wyalong and towards the purchase of sporting equipment.

The school has also had great success in the Poetry and Vocal sections of the West Wyalong Eisteddfod. In term 3 a group of students participated in the Griffith KROP concerts which also proved to be a musical extravaganza.

Our Excursion to Ballarat was very informative and packed with excitement and was definitely one of the highlights of 2008.

We would like to thank the teachers Mrs Glyde, Mrs Lumsden, Mrs Studholme, Mrs Wilson, Mrs Sedola and all other staff members for their valuable time teaching and helping us throughout the year.

Alicia and Todd McCarten
School Captains

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
At the beginning of 2008, Weethalle Public School had an enrolment of 46 students. At the end of 2008 we had an enrolment of 48.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2004</th>
<th>2005</th>
<th>2006</th>
<th>2007</th>
<th>2008</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Class sizes
In March 2003 the Government announced its commitment to publish primary class sizes in annual school reports in order to provide parents with as much local information as possible.

The following table shows our class sizes as reported at the 2008 class size audit conducted on Tuesday 25 March 2008.

<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>3-4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3-4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5-6</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5-6</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>K-2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>K-2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>K-2</td>
<td>K</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Structure of classes
Weethalle Public School consisted of three multi-aged classes consisting of 14 students in K12, 13 students in Years 3/4 and 19 students in Years 5/6.

One full-time teaching Principal, one full-time and three part-time classroom teachers, one part-time Senior Administration Manager and two part-time general assistants supported our students in 2008.
Staff information

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

Staff establishment

During 2008, Mrs Cheryle Glyde (Principal) taught the 5/6 class while the 3/4 class was job shared between Mrs Nicole Wilson and Mrs Carrie Studholme. Mrs Claire Sedola taught 3/4 on Mondays when Mrs Wilson went on Maternity leave. Mrs Jenny Lumsden taught the infants class. Mrs Sedola provided additional support to students on an individual basis.

The teaching staff were assisted by General Assistant, Mr Mon MacKellar and Mrs Stephanie Healy, and School Administrative Manager, Mrs Brenda Heaslip. Mrs Sandy Leslie was also employed on a casual basis to assist with library and office administration.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Position</th>
<th>Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Principal (P5)</td>
<td>1.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Classroom Teachers</td>
<td>1.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Primary Part Time Teacher</td>
<td>0.168</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Releases from face-to-face</td>
<td>0.084</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Support Teacher Learning Assistance</td>
<td>0.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher Librarian</td>
<td>0.084</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>2.436</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Staff retention

School funding enabled the employment of a third fulltime teacher during 2008. Finances do not allow for the continuation of the third class in 2009. The school’s class allocation returns to two permanent classes in 2009.

Staff attendance

Staff have access to leave entitlements such as sick leave. The staff attendance figure is not reported as the number of teachers in the school is smaller than the threshold for which this information is provided. Historical data for Weethalle Public School indicates a very high staff attendance rate.

Teacher qualifications

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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Qualifications</th>
<th>% of staff</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Degree or Diploma</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Postgraduate</td>
<td>50%</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.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date of financial summary:</th>
<th>30/11/2008</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Income</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Balance brought forward</td>
<td>$94,651.57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Global funds</td>
<td>$49,808.84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tied funds</td>
<td>$31,449.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School &amp; community sources</td>
<td>$12,694.31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interest</td>
<td>$7,645.86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trust receipts</td>
<td>$1,930.84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Canteen</td>
<td>$0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total income</strong></td>
<td>$103,528.85</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Expenditure</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Teaching &amp; learning</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Key learning areas</td>
<td>$31,722.73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Excursions</td>
<td>$7,500.11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Extracurricular dissections</td>
<td>$2,700.81</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Library</td>
<td>$1,186.94</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Training &amp; development</td>
<td>$647.91</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tied funds</td>
<td>$37,175.99</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Casual relief teachers</td>
<td>$1,852.93</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Administration &amp; office</td>
<td>$13,565.98</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School-operated canteen</td>
<td>$0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Utilities</td>
<td>$8,067.60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maintenance</td>
<td>$4,257.55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trust accounts</td>
<td>$2,158.44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Capital programs</td>
<td>$0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total expenditure</strong></td>
<td>$110,836.79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Balance carried forward</td>
<td>$87,343.63</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Further details concerning the statement can be obtained by contacting the school.

School performance 2008

Our school has a proud tradition of taking part in a diverse variety of performances and sporting events.

Achievements

Arts

The school community is dedicated to offering students as many opportunities as possible to participate in extracurricular activities in the arts. The school successfully auditioned and was selected to perform in the 2008 KROP Spectacular, highlighting performing arts in public schools in the region. This was a first for Weethalle Public School. A group of 12 students (K-6) were involved in performing over two days
and nights. Extensive positive feedback was received from students, staff, parents and the wider community.

Infants and primary groups performed admirably in both verse speaking and choral sections of the West Wyalong Eisteddfod achieving success in all areas. The infants verse speaking group was awarded the most successful performance in that section.

“Boogie in the Bush” was a CAP initiative by Tallimba PS. Our students travelled by bus to West Wyalong and joined other district students in dance workshops. They developed skills and routines that allowed them to be involved in a combined performance at the end. It was fantastic to see students stepping out of their comfort zone, trying new things and enjoying it.

Students were also involved in the CWA International Day, presenting projects and reports on Mexico. Some were selected to compete at the next level. The infants children made Mexican Hats and did a very entertaining dance. Choral groups displayed their expertise by singing to members of the local and district community. Such participation is greatly appreciated by all involved and serves to strengthen the links between our school and the wider community.

All students entered items of handwriting, art and craft in the Weethalle Show. Many students were successful in gaining a place.

All students performed singing and dancing items while dressed in costume at our end of year Presentation Night concert. Our whole school performance of “Madagascar” was a spectacular display of the performing arts of the students at Weethalle Public School. It was a very positive note on which to finish the 2008 school year and was thoroughly enjoyed by all involved.

Sport

Weethalle Public School encourages all students to participate in and endeavour to reach their full potential in all sporting activities. Students participated in annual swimming, athletics and cross country carnivals. Our school received the handicap trophy at the 2008 District swimming and athletics carnivals. Our school PP5 swimming relay team of Alicia McCarten, Josh Hanlon, Jason Young and Todd McCartney represented Western Region at the State PSSA carnival, gaining a silver medal.

Our PP5 athletics relay team of Mathew Caldow, Josh Hanlon, Simon Healy, Jay Richards and Jason Young also gained a silver medal at State. Mathew, Jason, Alicia, Josh and Sharnah Stevens also competed in individual events at State.

At our school Fun Run/Cross Country all students participated with enthusiasm and a great deal of effort. They raised $1181.10, 50% of which stayed with the school. The children decided they would like to use these funds to purchase extra sports equipment (soccer goal posts). Mia McCarten and Jason Young went on to represent the Western Region at State Cross Country.

The primary students travelled to West Wyalong to participate in the AFL/Netball gala day where they enjoyed learning new skills and being involved in team sport. The Rankins Springs Round Robin also enabled our students to interact with other schools while participating in tabloid activities for the infants and soccer and netball games and skills for the primary.

Dean Wymark, the Country Rugby League Development Officer, was a popular visitor. He provided a number of opportunities for our students to develop their rugby league skills. A group of our boys joined Barellan, Ardlethan and Ariah Park CS to form a combined Mortimer Shield team. Chris Judd, Simon Healy, Todd McCartney, Jay Richards, Billy Seimsen and Jason Young were part of a very successful team, reaching the final round of the competition. They were complimented on their effort and great sportsmanship.

Quality Sports Coaching Services provided expert tuition and skill development during their two visits. All students were involved in archery, gymnastics, athletics, cricket and basketball.

The last week of term sees all students participate in a school swimming program at Barellan. We will be travelling by Kelly Coaches Monday to Thursday, with parents providing transport for the Friday where we have our end of year party. The P&C will be providing a BBQ lunch for everyone.

Major Excursion to Ballarat

The highlight of 2008 for many primary students was our excursion to Ballarat. This occurred at the end of term 3 and was the culmination of a HSIE unit on Gold Discovery in Australia. 26 students, 4 parents and 2 teachers enjoyed an action packed week of informative visits to a huge variety of venues. Cost to parents was greatly reduced as a result of the generosity of a number of parties. The school was able to cover the cost of the coach due to a drought relief grant. The P&C subsidised each student $50 and the Catholic diocese contributed $40 per child. Students and staff appreciate these generous contributions which provided an opportunity for our students to participate in this excursion which would otherwise not have been possible. It was an extremely valuable experience for all those in attendance.
Academic

In the National Assessment Program, the results across the Years 3 and 5, literacy and numeracy assessments are reported on a scale from Band 1 to Band 8.

The achievement scale represents increasing levels of skills and understandings demonstrated in the assessments.

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

Nine Year 3 and nine Year 5 students participated in this year’s NAPLAN. Year 5 students showed growth in reading above State and Like School Group (LSG) average but below for writing and numeracy.

Due to the small enrolments of students in Years 3 and 5, we are unable to provide graphical representation of student achievement in line with privacy and personal information policies.

Literacy – NAPLAN Year 3

Average student marks in 2008 for reading, spelling, grammar and punctuation were above that for LSG but below State average. We were above LSG and State average for writing.

Numeracy – NAPLAN Year 3

In numeracy average student marks were above LSG but below State average.

Literacy – NAPLAN Year 5

Average marks in reading were below both LSG and State. In writing, spelling and grammar and punctuation, we were above LSG but below State average.

Numeracy – NAPLAN Year 5

Student average marks in numeracy were below LSG and State averages.

Progress in literacy

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>School</td>
<td>66.2</td>
<td>72.7</td>
<td>46.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LSG</td>
<td>54.9</td>
<td>67.7</td>
<td>67.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>State</td>
<td>69.6</td>
<td>77.5</td>
<td>71.2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Average Progress in numeracy

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>School</td>
<td>153.1</td>
<td>56.4</td>
<td>41.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LSG</td>
<td>90.7</td>
<td>75.1</td>
<td>73.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>State</td>
<td>76.9</td>
<td>83.7</td>
<td>80.4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Minimum standards

The Commonwealth Government sets minimum standards for reading, writing, grammar and punctuation, spelling and numeracy for Years 3, 5, 7 and 9.

The performance of the students in our school in the National Assessment Program – Literacy and Numeracy is compared to these minimum standards. The percentages of our students achieving at or above these standards are reported below.

Percentage of Year 3 students in our school achieving at or above the minimum standard in 2008

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reading</th>
<th>100</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Writing</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spelling</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Punctuation and grammar</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Numeracy</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Percentage of Year 5 students in our school achieving at or above the minimum standard in 2008

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reading</th>
<th>89</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Writing</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spelling</td>
<td>89</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Punctuation and grammar</td>
<td>78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Numeracy</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Significant programs and initiatives**

**Aboriginal education**

Our students travelled to West Wyalong to participate in a variety of activities celebrating NAIDOC Week. Groups were involved in dancing, bush tucker, artefacts and art canvas activities. The school was presented with two canvases painted by our students, as well as a participation certificate and boomerang.

The SRC sold “Respect Bands” when we held a Cultural Respect Day. The students were encouraged to wear red, yellow and black clothes. This year has also seen the introduction of an “Acknowledgement of Country” read by a Year 6 student before our regular school assemblies. A “Welcome to Country” and a one minute silence was held at our end of year Presentation Night and Concert.

Billy Seimsen, Jay Richards and Zachary Richards received awards at the 2008 Indigenous Awards Night which was held at the Griffith Regional Theatre in November.

It is important that the school recognises the need to educate all students about Aboriginal history, culture and Aboriginal Australia in today’s society and to provide the best learning opportunities to improve literacy and numeracy outcomes for Aboriginal students.

All teaching staff are committed to including Aboriginal perspectives, in a balance way, in all Key Learning Areas, and are regularly updated on their responsibilities for implementing the Aboriginal Education Policy. Weethalle Public School encourages acceptance and tolerance at all times.

**Multicultural education**

The majority of students from Weethalle Public School are not from a multicultural background. It is with this in mind that the need to look at cultures other their own, is valued with such importance. All students were involved in the CWA International Day celebrations, researching various aspects of Mexico and presenting detailed reports and posters for display. The infants made Mexican hats and performed a Mexican Hat Dance for a very appreciative audience.

Our school continues to promote tolerance and understanding of people from different ethnic or religious backgrounds. This is done as an integral part of each teacher’s HSIE program. Strategies specifically target broadening cultural awareness and increasing racial tolerance.

HSIE provides the vehicle to study other cultures and encourage attitudes of tolerance and respect for those different to themselves. Stage 3 students were involved in a detailed study of Balinese culture which fascinated all students.

Our school has two Anti-Racism Contact Officers. Both participated in training updates during 2008 with feedback being given to staff on strategies to assist in ensuring the school community understands and responds appropriately to racist behaviour. They are responsible for improvements in school practices to ensure an inclusive school community and a racism-free learning and working environment.

**Respect and responsibility**

The nine core values of the DET underpin our student welfare policy and all school education programs. They are not a separate entity but are seen as the core of every interaction within our school community and school program.

They have been taught explicitly in order that the children understand each value and how they are observable in each classroom, each lesson and each playground interaction. The children’s knowledge and understanding is contributing to consistency in expectations and behaviour.

The children use the language of the values in interactions with their peers, teachers and parents. The Values Education Forum held in Term 2 increased student, parent and community awareness of these core values.

All students K-6 have the opportunity to lead our regular school assemblies, developing responsibility and leadership skills.

During Term 4, all Year 6 students were peer support leaders. They worked with small groups of students in Kindergarten to Year 5. They utilised the peer support module “Promoting Harmony”. It supported students in developing the knowledge, skills and attitudes enabling them to identify their values and align their actions with their beliefs. It focused on four specific values: caring, respect, responsibility and a fair go for all.

A Student Representative Council operates and meets regularly to discuss issues arising at school. They held a number of fundraising activities and made a valuable contribution towards the decision making processes at Weethalle Public School.

The SRC held a Crazy Hair Day in Term 1 and raised money for Cystic Fibrosis. Term 4 was a busy one with Jump Rope for Heart raising $842 for the Heart Foundation. A Mad Hatters Day raised money for sports equipment and a cake
stall raised $100 towards a nativity scene for West Wyalong St Vincent De Paul.

We have used special occasions such as student involvement in the community ANZAC Day March and Remembrance Day to develop in the children a sense of school and community pride. The development of our overall school image has been a foundation for building mutual respect and pride in our school.

Country Areas Program (CAP)

Weethalle Public School receives Commonwealth funding through the Country Areas Program (CAP) to assist in overcoming geographical isolation.

During 2008 CAP funds were used for:
- Student travel to cultural, social and academic activities which occurred in surrounding areas eg swimming program;
- Professional learning opportunities for teachers to assist in the implementation of Quality Teaching strategies;
- Purchasing an interactive whiteboard for the infants classroom;
- Purchasing literacy, numeracy and technology resources;
- Specialist instruction in the use of new technologies eg. Digital storytelling.

Progress on 2008 targets

We have experienced success with our 2008 targets, showing pleasing progress in both Literacy and Numeracy

Target 1

*Improve literacy outcomes for all students as measured by reading recovery levels, stage appropriate outcomes and National Assessment results*

Our achievements include:
- Students reached or exceeded minimum reading recovery levels by the end of the year.
- Majority of students achieved stage appropriate outcomes in school based literacy.

Target 2

*Assessment Criteria in Maths*

*To develop explicit targets and criteria for assessing mathematics Kindergarten – Year 6, with a focus on utilising to aid consistent teacher judgement in student reporting.*

Our achievements include:
- Completion of end of semester one and two maths tasks for each Year K-6.
- Consistent teacher judgement across all strands of mathematics.
- Implementation of whole school Maths Program K-6 ensuring consistency of content.
- Increased teacher confidence in assessing and reporting in Mathematics.

Target 3

*Values Education*

*Raise awareness of the schools values program that incorporates DET core values.*

Our achievements include:
- Staff, parents and students have a shared understanding of DET and school core values and rules.
- High attendance and engagement at the Values Education Forum and the development of a set of shared school core values.
- Successful Peer Support Program using the Promoting Harmony module which emphasised core values among the school community.
Key evaluations

It is a requirement for all NSW public schools to conduct at least two annual evaluations – one related to educational and management practice and the other related to curriculum. In 2008 our school carried out evaluations of School Culture and Science and Technology.

Educational and management practice

School Culture

Background

The school’s scope and sequence guidelines for 2008 indicated that School Culture was to be evaluated. In 2008 surveys were distributed to all staff, parents and students to elicit responses. These results help us to initiate improved practices.

Findings and conclusions

90% of respondents indicated that they strongly agreed that the school often praises and rewards individuals who are successful; that students are aware of the consequences of both positive and negative behaviour choices and the school encourages students to achieve their best.

40% somewhat agreed the school is trying to develop a positive school culture and the school is actively trying to reduce bullying behaviour (60% strongly agreed); 30% somewhat agreed the discipline/behaviour policy has had a positive effect on the school environment (70% strongly agreed).

Comments made include: parent unaware of the school’s Anti Bullying Policy; parents should have the opportunity to read the school’s Discipline and Behaviour Policy and this year is the most positive and enjoyable year my children have experienced at Weethalle PS.

The vast majority of students agreed that Weethalle PS has a good reputation; students are important; the school lets parents come and talk about problems; the staff and students work well together and students receive a good education.

Future directions

There is a need to increase parental awareness of all school policies concerning Student Welfare. Discipline and Anti Bullying Policies will be reviewed in consultation with all stakeholders. Regular information on policies will be included in weekly newsletters.

Curriculum

Science and Technology

Background

The purpose of the evaluation in the area of Science and Technology was to ensure quality learning activities occurred whilst taking into account the teaching of composite classes over a period of years. There was a need to look at the adequacy of resources within the school to support the teaching of Science and Technology.

Findings and conclusions

100% of parents agreed or strongly agreed that Science and Technology is an important subject; that their child has developed new scientific and technology skills; that their child enjoys learning about science and technology issues.

20% disagreed that they were adequately informed about their child’s progress.

Parents indicated that their child enjoyed experiments, learning new technologies eg. Digital storytelling, environmental issues, computer research and anything “hands on”. Students attending Middle School missed the weekly Science lesson.

Students indicated a great variety of responses to how they feel about Science and Technology. The majority liked learning new things, designing and making models and doing experiments. 50% agreed that doing science and technology is important to them. 30% agreed that it was their favourite subject.

Future directions

There is a need to review the schools current Scope and Sequence of Science and Technology units to ensure adequate coverage of all strands of the Science syllabus. A K-6 school integrated Technology Plan and skills checklist is needed to ensure updated technologies are being introduced at all stage levels.

Resources need stocktaking and updating where necessary to ensure the quality teaching and learning programs are maintained.

Parent, student, and teacher satisfaction

In 2008 the school sought the opinions of parents, students and teachers about the school. The majority of respondents were very happy with both the school and the educational programs provided. Parents were asked “What would the perfect school be like?” They were also asked to comment on areas for consideration in the
2009-2011 Weethalle School Improvement Plan: literacy, numeracy, student welfare, technology, school environment and P&C. There was also room for any other comments. They were also asked to use the ‘Parking Lot’ to reflect on our school currently: What is going well, What needs improvement, Ideas for improvement and What are the questions? Only ten out of 25 families responded to the parent satisfaction survey.

Their responses are presented below.

100% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that Weethalle PS is an attractive and well resourced school; the students are its main concern; it has supportive welfare programs; it is connected to its community and welcomes parental involvement; it is a friendly school that is tolerant and accepting of all students; it promotes a healthy lifestyle; fair discipline exists within the school; it has competent teachers who set high standards of achievement; it teaches and promotes core values and there is good student access to computers and strong technology programs and resources.

The perfect school would maintain the existing 3 classes, continue to promote student individuality and participation would outweigh winning. It would be a place where all students feel they are equal to their peers regardless of race, religion, parent wealth or lack of. Students would receive equal treatment from not only staff but their peers and school parents and be proud of who they are and where they have come from.

Parents felt that Weethalle PS was a supportive and friendly environment with a strong social and academic focus where class work was valued. The condition of the school grounds were complimented with particular mention being made of the fantastic work done by Mrs Healy.

There was concern expressed that too much time was spent on extra curricula activities and there needed to be more time spent in the classroom. A focus on the improvement of basic literacy and numeracy standards was a priority. Concern was also expressed with a perceived lack of interest in parent issues and teacher confidentiality within the community. These issues were discussed and addressed at staff meetings with a review of the teacher Code of Conduct document.

Highlighted areas for future improvement include the familiarisation of the school community with current Student Welfare policies such as Discipline, Behaviour and Anti Bullying. Some parents were unaware of the existence of such documents and a review, in consultation with all stakeholders, will occur in 2009. Regular discussions at P&C meetings as well as inclusion of information in the weekly newsletter may improve this lack of awareness.

It was also requested that students without access to home computers be given time at school for this purpose. These requests are always granted where teachers feel it is appropriate.

Thank you to those families who responded. Your feedback has contributed towards the improvement process at Weethalle PS and has been used to guide the 2009-2011 School Plan.

Professional learning
During 2008 all members of the teaching and support staff participated in professional learning which was supported through the school’s allocation of funding specifically for professional learning of staff. Weethalle PS sees teacher Professional Learning as a vital component in providing the best possible educational outcomes for our students. It is the quality of the teacher that has the greatest impact on student achievements. Therefore they need to have access to the latest educational research and best practices and return to school and implement them into their classroom practice.

All staff received compliance training in child protection, OH&S updates, CPR, anaphylaxis and asthma management. Other professional learning experiences included:

- Support teacher learning assistance
- Interactive whiteboard training
- Quality Teaching
- Boys Literacy- Reluctant Writers
- Financial Management
- Count Me In Too – maths program
- Starting Points Maths and Literacy Conference
- Middle Years Schooling Conference
- Principals Preparation Program
- Dance and Drama workshops
- SMART data analysis training

School development 2009 – 2011

Weethalle Public School three year School Plan has been developed in consultation with students, staff, parents and community members. We have collaboratively identified areas of weakness and developed targets designed to improve student learning outcomes and improve whole school performance.
Targets for 2009

2009 will be the first phase of the new 3 year plan and new targets will specifically focus on strengthening areas in need of improvement.

Target 1  Writing

75% of students achieve stage appropriate outcomes in writing.

Strategies to achieve this target include:

- Benchmark student achievement against achievement of BOS Syllabus outcomes and analyse NAPLAN writing results and student work samples against same outcomes.
- Develop stage based expectations based on syllabus outcomes and CTJ rubrics.
- Provide students with explicit criteria of expectations for producing quality writing.

Our success will be measured by:

- National Assessment data and student work samples demonstrate that an increasing % of students are meeting syllabus outcomes.
- Increased teacher and student awareness of the criteria of quality writing for each stage.
- Development of consistent criteria for students and teachers to measure achievement in writing (e.g. Set of school rubrics for all stages).
- Students self assess work samples against rubrics.

Target 2  Numeracy

75% of students achieve stage foundation statements in mathematics strand of working mathematically.

Strategies to achieve this target include:

- Benchmark achievement against ‘sound’ report grading, achievement of BOS Syllabus outcomes and NAP testing.
- Classroom teachers’ programs to include segments of working mathematically and mental computations, with a strong use and emphasis on mathematical terminology.
- Consistent assessment strategies for assessing achievements against K-6 maths syllabus outcomes.
- Staff participation in Best Start, CMIT and Counting On professional learning to ensure the quality of implementation and assessment.

Our success will be measured by:

- National Assessment data and student work samples demonstrate that an increasing % of students are meeting syllabus outcomes.
- Classroom programs and daybooks have evidence of working mathematically, mental computation activities and a high use of mathematical terminology.
- Best Start, CMIT and Counting On analysis evident in numeracy programs.
- Increased student participation in hands on maths lessons aligned with school maths continuum.

Target 3  Environmental Education/School Sustainability

Whole school community participation in planning and implementation of sustainability initiatives.

Strategies to achieve this target include:

- Establish a whole-school vision for sustainability through extensive consultation.
- Promote practices that enable staff, students, parents and key support personnel to engage in decision making and evaluation processes.
- Reporting and celebrating progress with the school community.

Our success will be measured by:

- The development of a SEMP (School Environmental Management Plan) in consultation with the whole school community.
- The integration of site management into curriculum and whole school planning.
- Environmental action plan in place and implemented, and regularly monitored and reviewed.
Target 4  Student Welfare

To develop leadership opportunities for all primary students and improve their skill development.

Strategies to achieve this target include:

- Further develop Student Representative Council to support leadership and decision making skills of students.
- Heighten the status and impact of all school leaders within the School Community.
- Train Year 6 students in Peer Support program to run sessions with younger students.
- Year 6 students to attend Young Leaders Conference in Sydney.
- Fundraising plan developed and implemented.
- All students K-6 to MC school assemblies with Year 6 to do ‘Acknowledgement of Country’ before each assembly.

Our success will be measured by:

- Increased student understanding of leadership and “what is good leadership”.
- Increased leadership opportunities for all primary students.
- Improved student confidence and skills in being a ‘leader’.
- Confident students who value community involvement and assisting in decision making.
- Feedback from students, staff and parents indicate satisfaction with the activities of the Student Leadership Team.

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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Jenny Lumsden       Teacher
Carrie Studholme     Teacher
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Brian Johnston       P&C President/Parent
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Parents can find out more information about Annual School Reports, how to interpret information in the reports and have the opportunity to provide feedback about these reports at: