2009 Annual School Report
Millbank Public School

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

Students

Millbank School currently has an enrolment of 30 students comprising 18 girls and 12 boys. 9 students identify as Aboriginal.

Staff

Our school has a teaching principal and one full-time classroom teacher.

A part-time position of two and a half days per week is made up of release from face to face, library, STLA and Priority Schools Funding Program (PSFP).

The school has a part-time School Administration Manager (SAM), two part-time teacher aides and a general assistant.

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

Significant programs and initiatives

- Aboriginal Education
- Multicultural Education
- Respect & Responsibility
- Priority Schools Program
- Gifted & Talented Program
- Environmental Education

Student achievement in 2009

As there were less than 10 students involved in the National Assessment Program, and in order to comply with privacy and personal information policies, the results from these will be discussed in general

Literacy – NAPLAN Year 3

All students in Year 3 achieved at or above the minimum standard in Reading and Writing, with over 70% of students being represented in the top 3 bands. Writing continues to be an area of strength.

Numeracy – NAPLAN Year 3

All students in Year 3 achieved at or above the minimum standard in Numeracy, with over 70% students of being represented in the top 3 bands. Their average score exceeded both State and Regional averages.

Messages

Principal's message

This year our school has been reclassified, with the appointment of a second permanent teacher. It has been a year of continued growth with significant investment in infrastructure. The school invested in Interactive Whiteboards (IWB’s) for both classes at the beginning of the year, with the State government installing a third IWB and Video Conferencing facilities in the library in September. The Federal Government provided funding to renovate the driveway, completed in July, and to construct a new permanent classroom which will be completed early in 2010.

Our school has continued to participate and collaborate with other schools in the Macleay Educational Community of Schools (MECS). Engagement with other schools in our area enables students to extend social networks and to showcase their work to a wider audience. In addition it allows teachers to explore a wider range of teaching and learning strategies, working together to improve outcomes for students in Public Education.

This year all students at our school have a Personal Learning Plan, developed in consultation with parents through student led learning conferences in Terms 1 and 3. The development of strong school and home learning partnerships leads to significant improvement in student learning outcomes.

I would like to thank the students, parents, community members and staff who have shown commitment to making our great school even better in 2009.

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.

Arthur Bain
P&C message

Despite a lack of support during fund raising efforts this year the P&C has a bank account balance of just over $1000 after expenses. Thanks go to Chris Mitchell for her fund raising efforts with the meat raffles in this regard. Thanks also to long standing members of the P&C who make the effort to attend meetings and arrange where funds should be allocated to benefit the children of Millbank School.

Robyn Kyle

Student representative's message

The S.R.C has helped Millbank in a number ways. We helped make the decision to buy a new sports shed to put sports equipment in, we organised the shed and it is great because we can find stuff anytime. We helped to plan the new building by choosing colours and talking about where the classroom will go. Every Friday we run assembly, we do this so we can build children’s confidence and they can express their feelings about what’s happening at school. We can fix any problems this way. At meetings we talk about safety, we do risk assessments whenever we plan an event, or if something is dangerous around the school. We make our school a safer place. We also talk about bullying, if there is any bullying we first talk to the people and then tell the teachers if they can’t work things out. This term there has been no bullying at our school.

We have had heaps of events this year, we were involved in:

- Walk Against Warming - Human Sign Project
- Pet Days
- Toy Sale (raising money for the Victorian Bushfire Victims)
- Jump Rope for Heart (raising money for the Heart Foundation)
- End of Year Disco
- Teddy Bears Picnic
- Monster Water Fight

Millbank School is becoming a really really good school, and every day we are finding more ways to improve it.

Matilda Robinson

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

Student enrolments were slightly higher than anticipated at the beginning of the year; with 29 students enrolled at the beginning of 2009. The above graph represents enrolments at the end of Semester 1. During the second half of the year enrolments increased and stabilised at 30 students. No students will be leaving to go to High School in 2010, with 2 students starting Kindergarten. Anticipated enrolments for 2010 are for 31 students, with 12 in the junior class and 19 in the senior class.

Student attendance profile

Student attendance rates in 2009 have dropped by nearly 3%, to 88.4%, this is reflected in lower school attendance across both Region and State. High rainfall, with flooding, and health warnings about the H1N1 virus both impacted on student attendance this year. Improved attendance will continue to be a goal in 2010.
Management of non-attendance

Student attendance is closely monitored and parents are expected to notify the school of absences and the reasons for absences. The expectation is that students attend school every day unless sick, or there are significant family reasons, in which case leave can be approved by the Principal, for up to 15 days in a school year.

Attendance is discussed at Parent-Student-Teacher conferences, and if necessary attendance goals are set. Parents are contacted if non-attendance becomes cause for concern and informal discussions are held to identify any underlying causes. A range of more formal procedures are available if required to resolve attendance issues.

Changes in the Child Wellbeing Legislation, formerly, Child Protection, will impact on the accountability of schools in ensuring that students reach their full potential by attending school regularly.

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>JUNIOR CLASS K</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>JUNIOR CLASS 1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>JUNIOR CLASS 2</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>9</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SENIOR CLASS 3</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>18</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SENIOR CLASS 4</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>18</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SENIOR CLASS 5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>18</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The above numbers increased during the second half of 2009, with 11 students in the junior class and 19 students in the senior class during Term 4.

Structure of classes

Two class groups were formed, a junior and a senior class. The junior class includes students from Kindergarten to Year 2, Early Stage One and Stage One, and the senior class includes students from Year 3 to Year 6, Stages Two and Three.

Staff information

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

Our students are supported by a teaching principal, 1 classroom teacher, 1 part time teacher and 3 part-time Student Support Officers.

Staff establishment

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Position</th>
<th>Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Teaching Principal</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Classroom Teacher</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Part Time Teacher</td>
<td>0.168</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Support Teacher Learning Assistance</td>
<td>0.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Priority Schools Staffing</td>
<td>0.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher Librarian</td>
<td>0.084</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher RFF</td>
<td>0.084</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School Administrative &amp; Support Staff (SASS)</td>
<td>0.696</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>3.232</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The above table describes staff establishment paid directly by the Department of Education and Training, in addition 3 Student Learning Support Officers (SLSO’s), formerly known as Teacher Aides, are employed and a part-time specialist Music teacher.

These additional positions are paid from a range of Tied Funds including the Priority Schools Program, to improve educational equity in low socio-economic areas; Integration Funding, used to support students with disabilities; and the Dhungutti Language Program, funded to support student learning of the local Aboriginal Language and improving understanding of the culture.

Under the National Education Agreement (2009) it is a requirement to report on the Indigenous composition of the school’s workforce. The Language tutor, an SLSO position, is a local Dhunghutti elder and one other SLSO also identifies as Aboriginal.

Teacher qualifications

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

The table below indicates the qualifications of all teaching staff, and includes additional part-time teaching staff.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Qualifications</th>
<th>% of staff</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Degree or Diploma</td>
<td>75%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Postgraduate</td>
<td>25%</td>
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</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: 30/11/2009

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Income</th>
<th>$</th>
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<tr>
<td>Balance brought forward</td>
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<tr>
<td>Global funds</td>
<td>42 407.51</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tied funds</td>
<td>46 192.55</td>
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<tr>
<td>School &amp; community sources</td>
<td>3 629.27</td>
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<tr>
<td>Interest</td>
<td>1 895.63</td>
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<tr>
<td>Trust receipts</td>
<td>612.82</td>
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<tr>
<td>Canteen</td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total income</strong></td>
<td><strong>145 584.06</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Expenditure
Teaching & learning

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>$</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Key learning areas</td>
<td>19 653.86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Excursions</td>
<td>3 076.74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Extracurricular dissections</td>
<td>4 407.58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Library</td>
<td>1 405.33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Training &amp; development</td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tied funds</td>
<td>59 391.48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Casual relief teachers</td>
<td>2 109.86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Administration &amp; office</td>
<td>14 288.90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School-operated canteen</td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Utilities</td>
<td>5 705.46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maintenance</td>
<td>4 375.24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trust accounts</td>
<td>567.99</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Capital programs</td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total expenditure</strong></td>
<td><strong>114 982.44</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Balance carried forward** | **30 601.62**

Income for 2009 was about $20 000 less than in 2008, this was due to the Federal Investing in Our Schools Grant in 2008. Global Funds increased by $1 500 due to increased enrolment.

Expenditure increased in Key Learning Areas by $3 700, this area includes teaching resources and has an immediate impact on student learning outcomes. A proportion of this expenditure was a contribution to the purchase of Interactive Whiteboards in both classes.

Spending on Extra Curricula activities increased by $2 600, this was in response to the outcome of the 2008 School Satisfaction Survey, where parents indicated that the range of activities available needed to be extended. The major area of increased expenditure was participation in the “Books in Homes Program”. Training and development was paid for out of tied funds.

Administration and Office expenses increased by $3 500, this was due to costs involved in the forming of Merit Selection panels for the appointment of the second permanent teacher, and administrative time required for building projects and new Occupational Health & Safety requirements.

The balance carried forward this year is about $20 000 less than in 2008. This reflects the belief that money allocated in a specific year is intended to be spent on students enrolled in that year. Provision is also made for the replacement of assets such as the photocopier and mower, and a general reserve of 10% of total income for contingencies.

A full copy of the school’s 2009 financial statement is tabled at the annual general meetings of the P&C. Further details concerning the statement can be obtained by contacting the school.

School performance 2009
Achievements
Arts
Our school prides itself on participating in a wide range of artistic and creative activities.

The school has participated in the following:

- Macleay Music Festival - Education Week is launched each year with a Music Festival that showcases the musical participation of the Macleay Educational Community of Schools (MECS). Eight students from our school took part in the massed choir performance that opened and closed the Music Festival, which was held at Melville High School. It was a great experience for the students who performed as part of a choir of hundreds of voices from all over the Macleay area. The participating students were a credit to our school. They sang beautifully and their behaviour was impeccable.
• Musical Tuition Program - In addition to our curriculum music program, in 2009 we began a comprehensive musical tuition program for students of the senior class. Students could choose to receive free tuition in either or both keyboard and guitar. Keyboard tuition was provided by Ruth Shepherd who holds a Degree in Music Education. Guitar tuition was provided by Ms Lane. Those students not receiving music tuition were able to participate in extension technology activities with the Principal. Students worked in pairs or small groups to learn the basics of playing the instrument as well as the rudiments of musical notation and composition skills. The progress made by the students has been extremely impressive. Our end-of-year concert featured original compositions being performed by the composers, as well as old favourites being performed by budding musicians. We look forward to continuing with this very successful program in 2010.

Keeden, Lily, Kakare and Olivia form the 
basis of the band

• Musica Viva - In June and November students attended performances at Willawarrin Public School. They were entertained and educated by “Tigramuna” and later in the year by “The Chambermaids”, a female woodwind quartet who are one of Australia’s premier chamber music groups. Students experienced music played on instruments ranging from the traditional flute, oboe and piccolo to the more experimental noisy hose pipe horn. Musica Viva is a valuable and engaging cultural experience that supports learning outcomes from the NSW Creative Arts Syllabus.

Millbank & Willawarrin rock with 
“Tigramuna”

• Opera - The Queensland Opera Company visited Millbank School during September to enthrall students with an operatic performance of Hansel & Gretel. Most students had not experienced live theatre and were entertained and amazed by the powerful performance of three singers and a single keyboard. The stage set was cleverly designed, so that the movement of a panel or two transformed the stage from the children’s home, to a scary forest, to the witch’s cottage.

Entertained by the Queensland Opera Company

Sport

Millbank Public School values the participation and achievements of its students in both individual and team events and encourages a positive attitude and an active lifestyle.

Highlights of 2009 included:

• Participation in the Upriver Schools Fun Swimming Carnival, with Bellbrook, Greenhill and Willawarrin Schools. The emphasis in this event is for participation and enjoyment. The carnival includes age races in all common swimming styles, infant’s events and novelty relays.

• During June Millbank School joined Bellbrook, Willawarrin and Greenhill Public Schools in the annual John O’Neill Sports Day. After a number of delays due to rain, the competition was held in Kempsey. Students competed in track and field, and novelty events. The friendly competition encourages students to participate and to establish friendships with students from other schools.

Cody flies in the long jump
• Archery continued this year with students continuing to show marked growth. Students from the senior class are supported in learning archery by Geoff and Chris Mitchell, parent volunteers. They have two ranges, beginners at 15m and advanced at 20m. Scores are graphed and the data is analysed, with recognition for top overall scores and the most growth.

Social & Cultural

Millbank School is committed to the social development of our students and to broadening understanding of the importance of cultural diversity.

Activities in 2009 included:

• In March the school celebrated International Women’s Day, students from the senior class presented information reports about inspiring women who have contributed to making the world a better place. Parents shared an afternoon tea served by the boys.

• Living in Harmony Day- “Everyone Belongs” was the message that students from Bellbrook and Millbank Schools explored for “Harmony Day” an annual celebration of cultural diversity, which aims to promote participation, respect and a sense of belonging. This year students participated in workshops on Buddhist beliefs - including an introduction to meditation; Celtic traditions - exploring the relationship between Celtic peoples and nature, students noticed many similarities to Aboriginal beliefs and practices; and the beliefs and practices of the Baha’i religion, which promotes the unity of all religions and encourages the development of strong personal values. The celebrations began with a welcome to country by Aunty Esther Quinlin, followed by songs, poems and speeches by Millbank students. Students then rotated through the three workshops, sharing a vegetarian feast of falafels, Lebanese bread and a variety of salads. The day was completed with students participating in co-operative games.

• ANZAC Day - Pete Varley, a representative of the RSL, visited the school to talk to parents and students about the importance of ANZAC Day. Pete had a range of memorabilia from various wars and spoke to the students about the role of the Australian Defence Forces in war and during peace time. Students and staff were amazed when he showed us the Occupation currency that Japan had prepared for use after the planned invasion of Australia; this made the history very real. He stressed the importance of remembering ANZAC Day, showing respect to the veterans of so many wars, and understanding how the tragedy of war has had an impact on so many lives.

• Book Week was an all day event held during August. The whole focus of the day was on books and the joys of reading. The students rotated around workshops doing activities on different books from the short list of the Children's Book Council Awards. Of course there was the traditional Book Week parade but the students enthusiastically stayed dressed as book characters all day.

• Astronomy Camp - with the help of a grant from the Science & Technology Association of NSW, and the willing lending of community telescopes, an Astronomy Night Sleepover was held for the entire school during August. After school the students participated in experiments and demonstrations about rockets and the light...
spectrum of bubbles. They learnt about why we have sunsets and made a constellation jar. After dinner they sat around the campfire and listened to Aboriginal Astronomy myths before we turned out all the lights so that we could observe the constellations themselves. The students saw the Southern Cross, the aboriginal constellation of the Emu, the Milky Way, Scorpio, the Magellan Clouds and constellation of Lyra. Through the 5 telescopes set up they saw the moons of Jupiter. We are lucky to live in an area with such unpolluted skies.

Creating constellation jars

- “Books in Homes” was a new initiative at the school which provided each student with 9 brand new books, which they chose themselves, to take home and keep. The children chose the 3 books from 48 quality books (25% by indigenous authors) which are sent to the school for inclusion in the school library each term. The children order the books and these are given out at the end of term assembly. The books each have a name plate on which is written the child's name. The excitement of the children and the amazement that these books are theirs to keep has been a delight to see.

Millbank kids love reading

Academic

In the National Assessment Program, the results across the Years 3, 5, 7 and 9 literacy and numeracy assessments are reported on a scale from Band 1 to Band 10.

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

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

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

As there were less than 10 students involved in the National Assessment Program3 in year and Year 5, and in order to comply with privacy and personal information policies, the results from these will be discussed in general

Literacy – NAPLAN Year 3

Areas of strength include:

- Accurate spelling of most simple words and some common words in writing
- Using paragraphs focused on a key idea in writing
- Identifying the purpose of some writing conventions when reading a simple recount.

Areas for development include:

- Inferring a character’s attitude when reading a narrative
- Sequencing events when reading a narrative
- Developing a wider vocabulary of nouns, adjectives and verbs when writing.

Numeracy – NAPLAN Year 3

Areas of strength include:

- Understanding the relationship between numbers expressed in words and symbols when adding and subtracting
- Recognising 2 dimensional and reflected shapes
- Working mathematically to solve word and number problems.

Areas for development include:

- Solving number problems involving 2 digit numbers with trading
- Measurement of area
- Solving word based division problems with remainders.
Literacy – NAPLAN Year 5

Areas of strength include:
- The use of accurate compound sentences in writing
- Identifying the intended effect of information when reading a persuasive text
- Identifying the meaning of technical expressions in a mainly visual text.

Areas for Development include:
- Interpreting pronoun references when reading a detailed text
- Identifying the characteristics of information when reading a detailed graphic text.

Numeracy – NAPLAN Year 5

Areas of strength include:
- Converting centimetres to metres when measuring length
- Solving number problems involving adding and subtracting 2 digit numbers.
- Reading different sets of scales and ordering items when measuring volume and capacity.

Areas for development include:
- Identifying the most likely outcome in chance events
- Identifying relationships between shapes
- Identifying the relationships between specific graphs and tables

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 2009

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Area</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reading</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Writing</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spelling</td>
<td>86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Punctuation and grammar</td>
<td>86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Numeracy</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Percentage of Year 5 students achieving at and above minimum standard in 2009

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Area</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reading</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Writing</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spelling</td>
<td>75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Punctuation and grammar</td>
<td>75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Numeracy</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Significant programs and initiatives

Aboriginal education

We have continued to implement the recommendations of the Aboriginal Education Review with the goals of improving educational outcomes for Aboriginal students and educating all students about Aboriginal Australia.

The Dhunghutti Language Program has a significant positive effect on both goals. The weekly involvement of elders teaching language and cultural perspectives in the school adds a powerful indigenous perspective to school culture.

Our school performed a song in Dhunghutti this year at the NAIDOC celebrations hosted by Aldavilla public School.

The development of Personal Learning Plans (PLP’s), with parent and student consultation has been identified as best practice for improving student outcomes, this year our school has developed PLP’s for all students.

An Aboriginal perspective is reflected across all Key Learning Areas (KLA’s), an example of this is the use of the Koori Mail as a teaching resource and as a strategy for keeping staff and senior students up to date on Indigenous issues.

School events, including assemblies are opened with a welcome to country in language by a local elder, when available, or an acknowledgement of country by a student representative.

Our school works closely with the Aboriginal Education Consultative Group and has been involved with the Cultural Protocols Working Group in Kempsey.
Multicultural education

All classroom teachers ensure that multiculturalism is a fundamental value and culturally inclusive teaching practice.

The school participates in Living in Harmony Day each year, inviting guest speakers and other schools to join in this international celebration of cultural diversity.

Teaching and learning programs promote the understanding that Australia has a multicultural history and that many different cultural influences have contributed to Australian society, and explicitly promotes the Anti-racism policy.

Promoting the celebration of cultural diversity

Respect and responsibility

Students at Millbank are encouraged to respect themselves and others, to take responsibility for their actions and to develop the skills to become good citizens.

In 2009 students have demonstrated this by:

- The Student Representative Council (SRC) held a Toy Sale to raise funds for victims of the Victorian Bushfires in February. Students were asked to donate unwanted toys and these were sold to other students. The school raised $94.40 which was donated through the NSW Teachers Federation to assist schools affected by the fires.

- Participating in the schools version of Clean Up Australia Day. Teams were led by members of the SRC who briefed them on Occupational Health and Safety issues and ensured they all had hats, gloves and appropriate footwear. Very little rubbish was found in the school grounds. Teams then did a thorough clean up around the Millbank Hall and grounds, students noticed that there was a lot more rubbish there than at school.

- Proud pet owners brought their dogs to school one Friday in May. Following an Acknowledgement of Country, students were given a talk about how to approach dogs safely. The owners introduced their dogs and spoke about why their pets are special to them. This was followed by a demonstration of tricks and skills by the talented pets and their owners. Students were responsible for making sure that their dogs were securely tied up and had access to water. It was a great day with students sharing the joys and responsibilities of pet ownership. The Student Representative Council organised the day, completing a risk assessment, designing safety rules and promoting the day.

- Participating in whole school planning and evaluation; students, parents and staff shared a barbecue and then got down to the business of analysing evaluations and exploring strategies for school improvement. Participants were shown the results of surveys on School Satisfaction, HSIE and Teaching. Concerns were identified and workshop groups brainstormed ideas for effecting positive school change. Four areas were explored – understanding the purpose of assessment, classroom management, the purpose of learning and developing more engaging activities.

Millbank School raises funds for the Victorian Bushfire victims
Other programs

Priority Schools Program

Priority Schools Program (PSP) funding is designed to minimise the impact of educational disadvantage for students from low socio-economic backgrounds. It is a tied fund and can only be used in specific ways to support improved numeracy and literacy learning outcomes for students.

Funds were expended on the purchase of Interactive Whiteboards (IWB’s) for both classrooms, professional development in learning how to maximise the use of IWB’s, for additional staffing to support students in class and to run a transition program for students enrolling in Kindergarten in 2010.

The use of PSP funds has had a significant positive impact on numeracy and literacy outcomes, with data collected since 2006 showing significant improvement in outcomes compared to state and regional averages.

Gifted and Talented Program

- A project was developed for students to promote hands on investigation of movement, energy, machines and physical phenomena. Electrical appliances, which no longer worked, had their cords removed and were made available for students to take apart. Students were supplied with tools and safety rules. This project reinforced classroom learning about electrical circuits and encourages students to think about the design of appliances. It was so popular that it was extended to all students as a recess/lunch activity.

Students learn about the hazards of landfill

- The Senior GATS class again participated in the environmental internet mystery Murder under the Microscope. The students had to solve an environmental mystery using daily clues to eliminate suspects until they found the crime-site, the villain and the victim. This project requires a huge amount of research and persistence to complete, this year we came 170th out of over 6000 entries from both primary and secondary schools.

Environmental Education

- In March the junior class started a vegetable garden, with significant rainfall the garden boomed, providing fresh greens to add nutritional value to sandwiches. This activity reinforced classroom learning about good nutrition, and the environmental benefits of growing your own food. A worm farm was purchased and food scraps are now recycled by the worms into liquid fertiliser and vermicast.

- In June the Kempsey Shire Council “Waste Watchers” team visited our school. They discussed the growing problem of landfill and carbon pollution. They outlined a range of strategies for reducing waste, reusing and recycling to both conserve resources and minimise unnecessary pollution.

- In June our school joined 15 other schools across the Macleay in the “Human Sign” project. Schools each developed a message about global warming and were photographed and filmed by a helicopter. Trees were planted to neutralise the carbon emissions generated by the project.

- During August the senior class went on a Streamwatch excursion to test the water quality of Hickey's Creek at three sites: in the rainforest, in semi cleared land and further downstream in cleared land. The class tested the water temperature, the pH, turbidity and the number of aquatic macro invertebrates. Catching the water organisms was very entertaining as everyone waded in the water with their nets and jars. Mayfly larvae, which are very sensitive to pollution, were found at all three sites which was a positive sign although the diversity decreased as we moved downstream. The excursion made everyone very aware of the importance of our local water catchment.
Progress on 2009 targets

Target 1

90% of students in Years 3 & 5 will achieve Band 3 or above in the Reading Strand of English in NAPLAN 2009.

Target achieved.

Our achievements include:

- 92% of students achieved Band 3 or above in the Reading Strand of English in NAPLAN 2009,
- Increased use of technology to deliver individually targeted programs to meet the learning needs of all students,
- Exceeding state average in Reading by 14% in Year 5 NAPLAN.

Target 2

Students in Years 3 & 5 will equal or exceed State Average in 80% of items in the Working Mathematically Strand of Maths in NAPLAN 2009.

Target not achieved.

Our achievements include:

- Students equalled or exceeded State Average in 40% of items in the Working Mathematically Strand of Mathematics in NAPLAN 2009, it is important to note that with a 10% variation state average was equalled or exceeded in 71% of items.
- Increased use of technology to deliver individually targeted programs to meet the learning needs of all students,
- In both Year 3 and Year 5 overall numeracy scores exceeded state average.

Target 3

100% of staff, 80% of students and 30% of parents report that they have significantly increased awareness of the quality teaching elements in classroom teaching and assessment practice.

Target achieved.

Our achievements include:

- 100% of staff, 88% of students and 68% of parents report that they have significantly increased awareness of the quality teaching elements in classroom teaching and assessment practice,
- Senior class students developed posters outlining the key points of the Quality Teaching Framework in accessible language,
- 90% of families attended Parent-Student-Teacher conferences and collaboratively developed Personal Learning Plans for each student.

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 Teach.ng and in the Key Learning Area of Human Society and It’s Environments (HSIE).

Educational and management practice

Teaching

Background

During 2009 staff, parents and students at Millbank School have worked to develop a deeper understanding of the Quality Teaching Framework. With the support of the School Planning and Evaluation Committee, data was collected using a survey of the Department of Education’s SchoolMap Best Practice Statements. 87% of parents, 100% of students and 100% of teaching staff completed surveys. Participants responded to a series of best practice statements about school leadership indicating that the school “Almost Always”, “Usually”, “Sometimes”, or “Rarely” follows this practice.

Findings and conclusions

Parents were positive overall about the quality of teaching, areas for development were identified as;

- A need for improved parental understanding of assessment strategies,
- Student understanding of the content and purpose of what they are learning,
- Classroom behaviour management strategies.

Students were positive overall, areas for development included;

- Classroom behaviour management strategies
- Teacher knowledge of student ability
- Understanding of assessment records and work samples.
Teachers were positive overall, areas for development included:

- Record keeping and the purpose of assessment
- Communicating assessment strategies effectively
- Classroom behaviour management

Analysis of the survey results clearly indicated two common areas for development:

- Communicating the purpose and process of assessment to students and parents,
- Classroom behaviour management strategies

Future directions

These issues were discussed at a planning meeting that included parents, students and staff. Ideas for whole school improvement were discussed and the following strategies developed:

- Scoreboard of school targets to be updated regularly so the whole school community can understand where we are and where we are going with learning outcomes,
- More immediate outcomes for inappropriate behaviour, including time out. The development of peer tutoring and mediation strategies.
- Presentation to parents via the P&C of an overview of effective planning and assessment.

Curriculum

Human Society and Its Environments (HSIE)

Background

Curriculum areas are evaluated over a six year cycle in order to cover each Key Learning Area, this year HSIE has been evaluated. With the support of the School Planning and Evaluation Committee, data was collected using surveys from the Primary Principal’s Association. Participants were presented with a series of positive statements regarding the importance of HSIE, student engagement and school resources and were asked to “Strongly Agree”, “Agree”, “Disagree” or indicate “Don’t Know” in response to the statements.

Findings and conclusions

This data indicates that students enjoy HSIE; learning about the environment, the past and about other cultures. Most parents, students & staff see the students as developing new skills. There is room for improvement in policy development and communication with parents.

Future directions

- Parent information sessions on how HSIE is taught in integrated themes in conjunction with other key learning areas,
- Continued teaching of HSIE in integrated units with the creation of more HSIE specific assessment tasks.
- Creation of a weekly assembly award for HSIE outcomes.

Parent, student, and teacher satisfaction

In 2009 the school sought the opinions of parents, students and teachers about the school.

Survey participants were presented with a series of positive statements about school culture, resources and programs, their responses are presented below.

This data suggests a high level of satisfaction across the whole school community. It was interesting to note the informal, very positive, comments that students wrote on their survey forms. With new building and infrastructure in place, it is widely perceived that our school is an attractive and engaged workplace.
Professional learning

Staff at Millbank School have participated in the following activities with the goal of improving student learning outcomes:

- Participation in the Quality Teaching Conference. This conference provided concrete examples and useful strategies for encouraging students to become more engaged in learning; Strategies from the conference were shared with other teaching staff at regular staff meetings.

- A significant investment of professional learning resources was dedicated to Information and Communication Technology (ICT) this year. Teachers have participated in Basic, Intermediate and Advanced courses in the use of Interactive Whiteboards in the classroom, and in the use of Video Conferencing facilities in the Connected Classroom. Development of resources using Notebook software has had a positive effect on student engagement and individual learning outcomes. This will continue to be an area of exploration and expansion.

- Continued participation in Accelerated Literacy training. This strategy involves students studying a text to understand ways that authors communicate meaning, it supports students to use higher order thinking and inference when reading. Continued professional learning in this area has deepened teacher understanding of this teaching method and it continues to impact positively on student outcomes, as demonstrated in NAPLAN results.

- Continued use of the Quality Teaching Framework for teachers to reflect on educational practice and improve the delivery of assessment and learning programs.

School development 2009 – 2011

Our school has developed a comprehensive three year management plan that clearly outlines the school’s directions and priority areas.

Analysis of school and departmental data has enabled the school evaluation team to identify areas for development and set targets and strategies to ensure improved learning outcomes for all our students.

Targets for 2010

Target 1

Students in Year 3 will increase achievement in Reading from 71% to 83% achieving above Band 3 in NAPLAN 2010.

The proportion of students in Year 5 achieving growth that equals or exceeds state average in Reading in NAPLAN 2010 will increase from 50% to 80%

Strategies to achieve this target include:

- Deepening teacher understanding of Accelerated Literacy,
- Expanding the use of Interactive Technology to provide students with individually targeted learning experiences,
- Developing teacher, parent and student understanding of assessment strategies, providing meaningful data to improve student outcomes in reading.

Our success will be measured by:

- All students showing consistent growth when regularly assessed using PM benchmarking (K-2) and OPI (3-6),
- Identifying student placement on a Literacy continuum (K-3) and regularly updating progress,
- Identifying growth when sharing relevant reading data when updating Personal Learning Programs in Terms 1 and 4.

Target 2

Students in Year 3 will increase achievement in the Number, Patterns and Algebra strands of Mathematics from 57% to 66% achieving above Band 3 in NAPLAN 2010.

The proportion of students in Year 5 achieving growth that equals or exceeds state average in Overall Numeracy in NAPLAN 2010 will increase from 50% to 60%.

Strategies to achieve this target include:
• Teacher participation in collaborative lesson study programs; identifying learning goals, teaching, reflecting and refining the lesson and reteaching key concepts.

• Expanding the use of Interactive Technology to provide students with individually targeted learning experiences,

• Developing teacher, parent and student understanding of assessment strategies, providing meaningful data to improve student outcomes in numeracy.

Our success will be measured by:

• All students showing consistent growth when regularly assessed using Scaffolding Diagnostic tests (1-2) and OPI (3-6),

• Identifying student placement on the Numeracy continuum (K-3) and regularly updating progress,

• Identifying growth when sharing relevant numeracy data when updating Personal Learning Programs in Terms 1 and 4.

Target 3

The proportion of teachers demonstrating deep understanding of the alignment between the school management plan, professional learning activities and improved student outcomes will increase from 33% to 67% by the end of 2010.

Strategies to achieve this target include:

• Initiating a more cooperative approach to school planning,

• Professional development in Leadership, Quality Teaching and Integrated learning strategies,

• The use of assessment data to reflect on improvements and areas for development in teaching practice.

Our success will be measured by:

• Completion of 3 Lesson Study Cycles in 2010,

• Development display and updating of a scoreboard of school targets,

• Increased staff participation in analysis of NAPLAN data and target setting for 2011.

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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