Banksmeadow Public School
Annual School Report

2011
Messages

Principal's message

I take great pleasure in presenting the 2011 Annual School Report for Banksmeadow Public School.

It was a very positive year for the Banksmeadow school community. The school was involved in a number of initiatives and programs which provided new opportunities for students. Our first debating teams successfully competed in regional competitions and our involvement in public speaking programs expanded. The Premier's Spelling Bee proved to be extremely popular across the school. A number of students took part in the International Competitions and Assessments for Schools (ICAS) through the University of New South Wales in the areas of English and mathematics. This was the first time in some years that these competitions had been offered to students. The most significant initiative was the utilisation of mobile technologies in teaching and learning programs. As part of a Sydney Region trial using iPads in the classroom, the school had access to innovative equipment and a range of support. The trial clearly showed increased engagement of students and greater productivity and creativity.

The school’s strengths in sport and performing arts continue to be a feature with our dance groups involved in a number of regional showcases and 12 students performing in the Schools’ Spectacular. Our band, guitar group and choir have quickly developed their performance skills. As a small school, our achievements in PSSA sport and regional gala days and competitions have been commendable.

The school hosted the launch of the Schools A to Z website and app in March. The Education Minister, the Hon. Adrian Piccoli, the Regional Director, Dr Phil Lambert and the School Education Director, Dr Sylvia Corish attended the launch and toured the school.

I would like to thank the P&C who have contributed greatly to the provision of resources and equipment to enhance school programs. Their support in assisting the staff to implement innovative programs, in particular the use of iPads and iPods, is sincerely appreciated.

The dedicated staff have continued to focus on creating a caring, supportive and safe environment that provides opportunities for all students to develop their potential.

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.

Cathy Lucantonio

P & C message

In my third year as President of the P&C, I would like to reflect on what a great year we have had at Banksmeadow. I am delighted that our parents and families continued to be well represented by a group of very dedicated P&C members. Our P&C continued to provide good opportunities to work in partnership with the school. We exchanged ideas between parents and the school and created opportunities that enabled parents to participate and contribute. It was wonderful to have our new principal, Cathy Lucantonio, who was very supportive and enthusiastic of all our efforts.

With the wonderful work of parents and the great community spirit that is present at Banksmeadow we were able to achieve the following major purchases:

- Purchase of 24 iPads and 30 iPod Touch
- A new sound system for the school hall
- Interactive whiteboards into every classroom
- Bubbler replacement
- Supporting our community garden

Other exciting events that took place included:
• “Love Banksmeadow Week” which included parents volunteering their time over a week to create an improved school setting
• Trivia night
• Halloween Disco

We launched our own P&C website and a Facebook page to keep our families informed.

If you haven’t attended a meeting, working bee or parent forum I would urge you to do so. Not only will your child benefit but so will our school. Our meetings are very welcoming and are held twice a term.

To the Year 6 families leaving us this year we thank you for your many years of great involvement at Banksmeadow. Good luck and best wishes as you progress through high school.

Finally, I would like to thank all involved in the management of our school, our principal, our wonderful teachers, all support staff, and all the very generous mums, dads and carers from Banksmeadow Public School.

Christina Curry
P&C President

Student representative’s message

Throughout 2011 the Student Representative Council (SRC) and the student leadership team have worked together to set an example to students through our behaviour, organisation and decision making. The leadership team organised and ran weekly and special occasion assemblies. We also greeted and escorted around the school a number of special guests including the Minister for Education, The Hon. Adrian Piccoli and Mr Chris Rees the Australian High Commissioner in Osaka, Japan. We also supported a number of charities, such as Stewart House, the Queensland flood victims and the Japanese tsunami victims through fund raising activities.

We have enjoyed our time as School Captains and know the experience will benefit us in the future. We would like to thank all the staff for their support and we hope the new school leadership team have an enjoyable year.

Sarah Blackburn and Jordan Salas
School Captains 2011

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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>2007</th>
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<th>2010</th>
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<td><strong>92.1</strong></td>
<td><strong>94.4</strong></td>
<td><strong>94.3</strong></td>
<td></td>
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</table>

### Management of non-attendance

An explanation of non-attendance is sought from parents or caregivers following any absences. When explanations are not provided contact is made with the parents or caregivers by telephone, letter and/or interview with the teacher or principal. Unexplained absences are referred to the Home School Liaison Officer for appropriate action.

### Class sizes

Primary class sizes are included in the annual school report in order to provide parents with as much local information as possible. The following table shows our class sizes as reported at the 2011 Class Size Audit conducted on Monday 21 March 2011.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Roll class</th>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Total per year</th>
<th>Total In class</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
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<td>20</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>KT</td>
<td>K</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1/2J</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1S</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1/2J</td>
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<td>25</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6H</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>30</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

### Structure of classes

In 2011 Banksmeadow Public School had nine K-6 classes, one IO support class and two preschool classes.
**Staff information**

Banksmeadow Public School has 12 classroom teachers who are assisted by support staff to meet students’ needs.

The school office is staffed by a School Administration Manager (SAM) and two part time School Administration Officers (SAO). A General Assistant (GA) is employed one day per week.

**Staff establishment**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Position</th>
<th>Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Principal</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assistant Principals</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Classroom Teachers</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Preschool Teachers</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher of Moderate Intellectual Disabilities</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher of Reading Recovery</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Support Teacher Learning Assistance</td>
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<tr>
<td>Teacher Librarian</td>
<td>0.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Counsellor</td>
<td>0.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School Administrative &amp; Support Staff</td>
<td>5.522</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>19.837</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Banksmeadow Public School has three indigenous staff members.

**Staff retention**

Staff retention is very high at Banksmeadow with all staff remaining in their substantive positions in 2011.

**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>87%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Postgraduate</td>
<td>13%</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.

A full copy of the school’s 2011 financial statement is tabled at the annual general meeting of the Parents and Citizens Association. Further details concerning the statement can be obtained by contacting the school.

**School performance 2011**

**Achievements**

**Arts**

Debating and Public Speaking

In 2011 our students were provided with a variety of opportunities in debating and public speaking both in class and in inter school competitions. Two whole school speaking contests were held, the Multicultural Perspectives Public Speaking Competition in Term 2 and the Bondi District Public Speaking Competition in Term 3. Representatives from each class participated in a school final and two students from each Stage were chosen to represent Banksmeadow in the zone finals.
It was a highly successful year for our debating teams who were the first students to represent Banksmeadow in the Sydney Region Debating Competition. They developed their skills by participating in an Arts Unit training day before entering the competition rounds. Eleven students made up the debating squad and the teams managed to win three out of their four debates, coming second in their pool.

The debating program culminated in the Sydney Region Video Conference Debating Gala Day where Year 4 and 5 students were mentored by experienced debaters as they competed against six other schools throughout the course of the day.

Performing Arts

The school’s Performing Arts program continued to be popular and successful in 2011.

Dance

About 70 boys and girls from Years 2 to 6 auditioned to be part of our Junior and Senior ensembles in 2011. Just over 50 students were selected to represent the school in the groups and they participated in weekly lessons run by our professional choreographer Vicki Hunt. The Junior ensemble performed a dance to *Supercalifragilisticexpialadocious* from *Mary Poppins* during Education Week and also at Showcase at the Juniors, the district Performing Arts festival. The Senior ensemble also performed at this festival and successfully auditioned for the Sydney Region Dance Festival at the Seymour Centre. They performed a Spanish style dance called *The Toreador*. Both groups prepared performances for Presentation Day.

Caitlyn in Year 5 auditioned successfully for the South–East Create Workshop. Caitlyn participated in a three day program which culminated in a drama, dance, band and choir performance at the Seymour Centre with other gifted and talented students. Later in the year Caitlyn and Megan from Year 5 participated in the State Dance Workshop at the Walsh Bay dance studios. Both students were involved in workshops run by professional choreographers and commented that the experience was a wonderful opportunity to enhance their dance skills.

Twelve of our dance students successfully auditioned for the School Spectacular at the Entertainment Centre in November. Our performers were part of the Walt Disney tribute.

In Term 3 all students in Kindergarten to Year 6 participated in the Dance Fever program. Students learnt both individual and partner dances as well as a whole school hip hop routine for the primary grades. Students in Years 3 to 6 participated successfully at the Dance Fever Challenge at Homebush Sports Centre with a number of our students gaining places in the tango and jive. Our Year 3 students were the overall winners in their chosen category.

Band

The school started a new band program in 2011. Twenty-three students joined the new program with a mixture of both new and returning students. The students participated in lessons run by two professional tutors as well as whole band practices. The students attended the Daceyville Big Band Bash and performed well at school assemblies and at Presentation Day.
Guitar

The guitar group continued to be another very popular school program with about 35 students choosing to learn guitar. Both experienced and beginner students participated in weekly lessons throughout the year. A combined group performed a Michael Jackson tribute song at the school Education Week assembly and for Presentation Day.

Sport

Students at Banksmeadow Public School participate in a wide variety of sporting activities and lead very active lifestyles. Our enthusiastic participation is supported by strong interest from parents and the local community.

Students competed in the Eastern Suburbs Primary Schools Sport Association competition with teams in six sports (cricket, softball, AFL, rugby league and netball). Two students were selected for the Eastern Suburbs Zone team in Rugby League. Three students represented the Sydney Region in state carnivals, one in rugby league, one in girls’ cricket and another for hockey. One student represented Sydney East at the State Diving championships.

Banksmeadow had a very successful year in the football codes. The senior rugby league team were runners up in the Primary Schools Sport Association (PSSA) competition. They were also runners up in the Bob McCarthy Cup Sevens Tournament, playing their final at ANZ Stadium, prior to a South Sydney National Rugby League (NRL) match. On the same night our senior girls’ rugby league team played in an exhibition match at half time. The senior boys’ side was also runners up in the South Sydney Knockout and in the Oz Tag Gala day. Our senior girls AFL team won the zone finals of the Paul Kelly Cup and went on to play in the Regional Finals.

During Term 1, specialist teachers ran a K-6 PDHPE program which provided students opportunities to develop gross and fine motor skills. This program also supported teachers to teach nutrition and healthy lifestyle lessons. The activities were designed to foster team building skills.

In Term 2, students from K-2 participated in a gymnastics program which was designed to improve agility and flexibility. Students in Years 3-6 were involved in a combined gymnastics and martial arts program which enabled them to develop balance, strength, flexibility, confidence and discipline.

In Term 3, the whole school participated in Dance Fever and many students went on to represent the school in the showcase at the end of term.

During Term 4, primary students participated in the AFL Auskick skills development program. This program helped improve eye-hand coordination, ball handling, kicking skills and team work. Term 4 also saw Year 2 and 3 students participate in the Department of Education Swimming Scheme. This program provides intensive ‘Learn to Swim’ lessons over a two week period to help non-swimmers develop basic swimming and water safety skills.

Academic

In the National Assessment Program Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN), 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 these assessments.

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

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

Literacy – NAPLAN Year 3

Students performed significantly above state and region averages in reading and grammar and punctuation. 58% of students were placed in the top two bands for reading compared with 47% for the state. 89% of students were in the top three bands.
Numeracy – NAPLAN Year 3

Students performed significantly above state and region averages in all aspects of numeracy. 62% of students were placed in the top two bands for numeracy compared with 40% for the state and 47% for the region. 93% of students were in the top three bands.

Literacy – NAPLAN Year 5

Students’ performance in literacy was on par with state averages but below the region. 33% of students were placed in the top two bands compared with 35% for the state.
Numeracy – NAPLAN Year 5

Students performed above state averages but below region. 29% of students were placed in the top two bands which matched the state.

Progress in numeracy

Trend data showed a continuing increase in average progress in comparison with the previous three years.

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 achieving at or above minimum standard (exempt students included)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
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<td>Reading</td>
<td>93.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Writing</td>
<td>93.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spelling</td>
<td>93.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grammar &amp; Punctuation</td>
<td>93.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Numeracy</td>
<td>93.5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Percentage of Year 3 students achieving at or above minimum standard (exempt students excluded)

<table>
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<th></th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<td>Reading</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Writing</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spelling</td>
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<tr>
<td>Grammar &amp; Punctuation</td>
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<td>Numeracy</td>
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### Percentage of Year 5 students achieving at or above minimum standard (exempt students included)

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<td>Writing</td>
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### Percentage of Year 5 students achieving at or above minimum standard (exempt students excluded)

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<td>Grammar &amp; Punctuation</td>
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<tr>
<td>Numeracy</td>
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### Significant programs and initiatives

#### Aboriginal Education

This year saw our Aboriginal Education program continue to thrive with explicit teaching providing opportunities for all students to engage with Aboriginal history, and language. Integration of an Aboriginal perspective into many units of work also helped encourage a deeper understanding of Aboriginal culture.

The artist in residence program during Term 1 saw all students from preschool to Year 6 participating in lessons with renowned musician and artist Mathew Doyle, Wuruniri. Mathew taught each class a song and dance and the students presented the item at a whole school assembly. Year 6 then used the Dharawal *Welcome Song* taught to them by Mathew to open our NAIDOC week assembly in July.

In Term 3, Stage 3 students looked at the reconciliation raps recorded by the “Collie Crew” and hosted a video conference where four schools met to discuss reconciliation. The students from Collarenebri Central School were our special guests and generously shared their *Closing the Gap* experience with us. Year 5 and 6 students also learnt about the impact of tourism and mining on the Aboriginal community at Kakadu.

Students, parents and community members celebrated NAIDOC week with a flag raising ceremony, a visit from Koori Radio, a book drive to raise funds and collect books for remote Aboriginal communities and the Jollybops Aboriginal Science Show.

For the third consecutive year Banksmeadow students participated in Sydney Region Art Project – Koori Art Expressions. This year a second teacher attended cultural awareness in teaching Aboriginal art training as part of this project. The project requires all classes to learn about an Aboriginal artist and the influences on his or her art making practice. Artworks were produced collaboratively with Year 4 having the opportunity to produce an artwork in conjunction with Year 7 students from Matraville Sports High School. Parents and community members were invited to view a school exhibition of the works before four
pieces were selected to submit to the Sydney region exhibition.

Year 6 Aboriginal students were invited to participate in Sydney Region Yarn-Up project at NSW Parliament House. Two students made speeches at the Yarn-Up graduation ceremony.

A Year 6 Aboriginal boy was awarded the Sydney Region Deadly Kids Award for providing an outstanding role model to his younger peers. Two Aboriginal students were elected to the school Leadership Team during 2011. Two Aboriginal students represented the school in debating and three in regional sporting teams. One Aboriginal Kindergarten student represented the school at Bondi District in Public Speaking.

The Learning Support Team worked closely with class teachers to identify and support Aboriginal students working below age appropriate syllabus outcomes and prepare Individual Education Programs (IEPs) as required.

Multicultural education

The school had a multicultural focus during Term 1. Following the earthquake and tsunami in Japan the school held a special day to raise funds for the victims. In the lead up to the day all classes studied aspects of Japanese culture. On the day students wore red and white and the Year 5 and 6 students prepared a Japanese lunch for the whole school. The money raised was given to the Japanese Red Cross and some classes sent packages of essentials to schools in the affected areas. The school was asked by the Australian Consul General in Osaka to make a video about the schools efforts. The video was used at a Gala Fundraising Dinner in Tokyo, organised by the Australian Government and attended by the Australian Prime Minister.

Reading Recovery

Reading Recovery programs have been running at Banksmeadow Public School for 11 years. The allocation for Reading Recovery in 2011 was 0.5, which equates to four students per day. Of the 32 students in Year 1, eight accessed the program and were all discontinued from the program. After spending an average of 16 weeks on the program children achieved reading levels of 16.

Other programs

IO Support Class

K–6 W consists of nine students aged 6 to 12 years with a primary diagnosis of Moderate Intellectual Disability (IO). The class has one full time school learning support team officer and teacher. Students’ development and communication is assisted through the use of visual support, basic makaton sign and IEPs. Students’ are included in all whole school programs and many mainstream excursions. Some students are regularly integrated into age /stage appropriate mainstream classes for a variety of activities and experiences.

K-6 W has participated in weekly community access this year with a focus on developing road safety and community awareness outside the school environment. Students have engaged in activities such as catching the bus to the local shopping centre and parks, shopping for ingredients for weekly cooking lessons and picking and delivering vegetables from our school garden to a local cafe. Community access has provided students with a variety of real life experiences, assisting students to develop valuable living skills.

An interactive whiteboard, iPods and flip cameras have provided greater opportunities for students to access the curriculum. Technology has increased student engagement and success, demonstrated in achievement of individual goals and improved participation in literacy and numeracy sessions.

Connected Learning

Banksmeadow Public School has further embraced technologies and pedagogies that enhance learning for digital natives. This has given our students opportunities to bridge their home and community experiences with their school learning. As well this has empowered teachers with
engaging pedagogy that are more meaningful for the students.

The school has utilised a range of technologies to connect and enhance learning. Augmenting the interactive whiteboards, teachers have used document cameras to instantly connect students work with each other and provide meaningful, constructive feedback. Teachers have also implemented the use of microphones to create podcasts and enhance the blogs being used in each class. Teachers have opened up class blogs to other classes to allow for a wider-viewing and cross-commentating. Technology has also been embedded in the weekly professional development sessions, allowing staff to learn with and through technology.

Furthermore, the school has lead the way in the use of tablet devices in the classroom. Utilising 31 iPads, teachers have participated in a trial of these devices to augment and redesign the curriculum. For example, this innovative technology was used in the Preschool, Kindergarten, Years 1 and 2 as a tool for story-telling. Students created a story and then used the iPods to record their stories. The trial has proven very successful and our findings have informed other schools.

The student led video conferencing project piloted by our school in 2010 continued this year with schools from around the state regularly joining us to share Web2.0 tools.

Students and teachers from across the school continue to develop their skills with video conferencing. Connected learning experiences this year included hosting virtual meetings with other schools, an author “visit”, creating artworks with artists from the Australian Museum and learning about reconciliation from high school students in Collarenebri.

Preschool

The Preschool catered for 45 students in 2011. Students attended five days a week or part time two or three days a week.

The Preschool students participated in whole school activities including the Easter Hat Parade, NAIDOC celebrations, visiting the school library and school assemblies. Mrs Wright planned opportunities for the children to utilise the school’s technology resources including interactive whiteboards, iPods and iPads. In Term 2 the Preschool students participated in the school’s gymnastics program and attended an excursion to Calmsley Hill City Farm with Kindergarten and the Support Class. Both Kindergarten and the Preschool also enjoyed a live chicken experience as part of their project work on growing and changing.

In 2011, the Preschool staff participated in both local, regional and state wide professional learning workshops and conferences to prepare for the National Quality Standards and Regulation that will be mandatory from January 2012. With assistance from the Sydney Region Early Childhood consultant, teachers and support learning officers explored ways of implementing the Early Years Learning Framework into their Preschool practices. The team worked together to develop a Banksmeadow Preschool philosophy that will now underpin all practices and principles within the Preschool. This was established to ensure that all staff held the same beliefs and values.

The Preschool team worked closely with the Early Childhood consultant to improve the learning environment within the Preschool both inside and outside the classroom. Learning Centres were established to ensure the students were involved in enquiry based learning opportunities where their ideas and natural curiosity were the basis for the learning program, with the staff as the facilitator rather than the dictator of the program. New equipment was purchased with a focus on science and technology to assist with the
establishment of the Learning Centres. In the outdoor environment, a new soft fall bike track was built as well as a log climbing area. Also, Early Stage 1 staff participated in evening workshops run by NSW ECEEN to develop a better understanding of building sustainable environmental practices in the Preschool setting.

The NSW Health Munch and Move program was implemented in both classrooms. Parents were also provided with information about healthy snacks to bring to Preschool during orientation, through Preschool newsletters and posters on display throughout the Centre. A Preschool vegetable garden was established with assistance from the local Mitre 10 store for the children to nurture.

Parents were involved in Meet the Teacher evenings at the beginning of the year, parent/teacher interviews midyear and orientation programs for school at the end of the year.

Special social days such as a fundraising morning tea and grandparents’ day were organised and well attended by our community. Twice a term Preschool newsletters were sent home to parents with information about what was happening in the classrooms, upcoming events and ideas to help at home to assist with preparation for school. Portfolios, with developmental updates, were available for parents to look at throughout the year and were sent home at the end of the year.

Students attending Banksmeadow Public School in 2012 were involved in the Kids into Kindy program in late Term 3 and early Term 4 in preparation for school. Kindergarten students from the big school came to speak to the children about school from a child’s perspective. Preschool students were also given a Year 4/5 buddy to meet and play with while attending the big school.

Environmental education for sustainability

Stage vegetable gardens continued to be a feature of our environmental programs with students being actively involved in planting and maintaining their gardens. Produce was sold within the school community and to a local café. The school entered the City of Botany Bay Council Garden awards and received third place in the Community and Schools section. Further work was carried out on our Forever Garden.

A Waste Watchers program was initiated in Semester 2 to improve our recycling habits. Special bins were provided on the playground to allow students to separate their rubbish into different categories for recycling or composting. This program was overseen by Student Representative Council (SRC) members. Students were also encouraged to use “nude” food lunch boxes to cut down on the amount of rubbish generated in the school.

Progress on 2011 targets

Target 1

To improve student learning outcomes in literacy. In NAPLAN literacy results students achieving the top two bands in Year 3 increasing to 65% and in Year 5, 35%.

The percentage of students achieving the top two bands in NAPLAN literacy in Years 3 and 5 met the target levels. This represented an increase for each grade. School based data also showed improvement across all strands of literacy. These improvements were the result of a number of factors. The Accelerated Literacy Program, which explicitly teaches all aspects of literacy, was utilised for a second year in Years 2 to 6. Students experiencing difficulty were targeted to take part in a rigorous one-on-one reading fluency program or receive support from the Support Teacher Learning Assistance (STLA). Mobile technologies, iPods and iPads, were successfully used to engage students in writing and reading tasks.
**Target 2**  
**To improve student learning outcomes in numeracy.** In NAPLAN numeracy results students achieving the top two bands in Year 3 increasing to 60% and in Year 5, 30%.

The percentage of students achieving the top two bands in NAPLAN numeracy in Years 3 and 5 met and in Year 3 exceeded the target levels. Teachers focused on ensuring students improved their basic mathematical skills as well as developing their problem solving and working mathematically abilities. Resources were purchased to support students in developing these skills and mobile and information communication technologies (ICT) were utilised to engage students in their learning.

**Target 3**  
**To increase student skills and knowledge in the application of technology.**

Many opportunities were provided to increase students’ skills and knowledge in the application of technology. Through the support of the P&C the school purchased 30 iPods for use by all students. These were used across all Key Learning Areas. In Semester 2, Banksmeadow was one of three schools in the region to take part in a trial to ascertain the benefits of using iPads in the classroom. The focus for this trial was Years 3 and 6, however all students had the opportunity to engage with this technology. The school had the benefit of the expertise of regional technical advisors, Apple Education staff and lecturers from the University of Western Sydney. Our students gained and developed a range of skills as a result of this trial. Interactive whiteboards were extensively used in all classrooms and all students had access to the computer lab. Students from Kindergarten to Year 2 had weekly assistance from an ICT teacher’s aide.

**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 2011 our school carried out evaluations of learning and science.

**Educational and management practice**

Learning was the educational and management practice area evaluated. Learning encompasses the learning environment and student and teacher learning.

**Background**

Teachers, parents and students had the opportunity to evaluate learning through an online survey based on the Department of Education and Communities (DEC) SchoolMap evaluation tool.

**Findings and conclusions**

Survey results were consistent across the three groups. All believed strongly that students were provided with a stimulating and secure environment and a wide range of appropriate resources. It was also clear that each group felt opportunities were provided for students to work independently and collaboratively on a range of learning activities and are encouraged to take risks and work to the best of their ability. It was considered that teachers were committed to ongoing professional training and development and collaboration amongst staff to improve teaching and learning practices was strong.

**Future directions**

The responses to the surveys were very positive, however results indicated that communication between the school and home about student learning could be improved. As a result the school will provide workshops for parents in the areas of literacy and numeracy to promote understanding of learning and teaching. Teachers will continue to encourage parents to support their child’s learning at home. Teachers will also provide more opportunities for students to reflect on their learning and engage in self assessment.

**Curriculum**

Science and Technology

**Background**

In 2011 the Key Learning Area (KLA) of Science and Technology was evaluated to assess current programs and practices particularly in light of the upcoming introduction of the National Curriculum. A sample of parents, students from Years 2 to 6 and all staff completed an online survey.

**Findings and conclusions**

**Students**

All student respondents enjoyed participating in science and technology activities. Students
particularly liked to be involved in science investigations and have opportunities for design and make tasks. They believed the school had good equipment to carry out science experiments and 62% stated science was their favourite subject.

Staff

The staff agreed that their students enjoyed participating in science activities, however only 63% felt their students were achieving the requirements of the science and technology syllabus. Most teachers felt they did not have adequate resources to teach science. Responses were divided with regard to their students’ abilities to carry out investigations and design and make activities. The open ended responses indicated that teachers believed the Connected Outcomes Groups (COGs) units of work provided limited opportunities to fully meet the science and technology syllabus outcomes.

Parents

All parents agreed that science and technology was an important KLA and most felt their child enjoyed participating in science activities. The majority of parents believed the school had sufficient equipment to teach science and their child’s skills in this area had improved. The open ended responses clearly showed parents would like to see more hands-on activities (investigations, experiments, design tasks) and more feedback from the school with regards to their child’s progress in science and technology.

Future directions

The staff made the decision to no longer use COGs units (which contain a combination of KLAs) and return to separate HSIE and science and technology scope and sequences. In the area of science it was decided to utilise the Primary Connections science units which have been developed by Curriculum Corporation and the Australian Academy of Science. These units have been aligned with the new Australian Curriculum Science and also link science with literacy.

Primary Connections is based on an inquiry-orientated teaching and learning model. Students are engaged actively in the learning process and develop investigation skills and an understanding of the nature of science.

Teaching and learning progresses through five phases: Engage, Explore, Explain, Elaborate and Evaluate. The phases of the Primary Connections 5Es teaching and learning model are based on the 5Es instructional model.

Resources to support these units of work will be purchased and opportunities will be provided to inform parents about the program.

Parent, student, and teacher satisfaction

In 2011 the school sought the opinions of parents, students and teachers about the school.

This was achieved through a variety of sources including formal and informal meetings and discussions. These included parent/teacher conferences, P&C meetings, staff forums and SRC meetings. Responses from staff, parents and students showed an increased level of satisfaction with the programs and procedures operating in the school. Parents appreciated the move to a more academic focus, the increased availability of ICT in the school and the variety of extracurricular programs that were offered. Teachers felt their hard work and commitment to the school was valued and appreciated. Students liked the opportunities available at the school in terms of ICT, sport, performing arts, public speaking and leadership.

Professional learning

All teaching and administrative staff participated in school development days, after school professional learning and sharing sessions and external courses provided by the DEC and outside agencies. All professional learning was aligned to the priorities of the school plan. The expenditure for professional learning in 2011 was $19,117.

School planning 2012—2014

The school planning policy provides direction for the preparation and implementation of school plans including the identification of priority areas, intended outcomes and targets that are consistent with the NSW State Plan and the Department’s planning documents.
School priority 1

Outcome for 2012–2014

NAPLAN and school based data will show consistent growth in overall literacy K – 6.

2012 Targets to achieve this outcome include:

- To increase the percentage of students in Year 3 achieving the top two bands in reading from 58% in 2011 to 65% in 2012.
- To increase the percentage of students in Year 5 achieving the top two bands in reading from 33% in 2011 to 40% in 2012.
- To increase the percentage of students in Year 3 achieving the top two bands in writing from 59% in 2011 to 65% in 2012.
- To increase the percentage of students in Year 5 achieving the top two bands in writing from 12% in 2011 to 25% in 2012.
- To ensure in 2012, 80% of students exit Year 2 reading at Level 23.

Strategies to achieve these targets include:

- Effective analysis of NAPLAN and assessment data to specifically identify areas of strength and areas for improvement in reading and writing.
- Provision of school based and regional professional learning opportunities for teachers to enrich their knowledge of the writing process and strategies to teach and assess the three levels of comprehension.
- Training of a Reading Recovery teacher and a Stage 1 teacher in L2 to assist students experiencing difficulties in Stage 1.

School priority 2

Outcome for 2012–2014

NAPLAN and school based data will show consistent growth in numeracy K – 6.

2012 Targets to achieve this outcome include:

- To increase the percentage of students in Year 3 achieving the top two bands in numeracy from 62% in 2011 to 70% in 2012.
- To increase the percentage of students in Year 5 achieving the top two bands in numeracy from 29% in 2011 to 35% in 2012.

Strategies to achieve these targets include:

- Effective analysis of NAPLAN and assessment data to specifically identify areas of strength and areas for improvement in numeracy.
- Staff participation in regional and school based professional learning opportunities.

School priority 3

Outcome for 2012–2014

To strengthen the teaching of Science and Technology K – 6 by using inquiry based, hands on methodology.

2012 Targets to achieve this outcome include:

- All staff utilising the Primary Connections Science Units.
- To develop Scope and Sequence documents for Science and Human Society and its Environment (HSIE).

Strategies to achieve these targets include:

- Trialling and evaluation of Primary Connections teaching and learning units K – 6.
- On-going professional development.
- Collaboratively developing scope and sequence documents for implementing units over a two year period.
- Purchasing specific resources developed by Curriculum Corporation to support the teaching of science throughout the school.
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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