2008 Annual School Report
Kirkton Public School

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

Students
At the end of 2008 there were 51 students enrolled.

Staff
In 2008 the school employed five teaching staff, three administration staff and a general assistant.
There are three full time teaching positions at the school including a teaching principal. One of the full time teaching positions has been shared between two permanent staff members, with one working four days a week, and the other one day a week. A part time staff member fulfils the roles of Release from Face to Face teacher, and Teacher/Librarian.

Significant programs and initiatives
The school ran a number of programs to provide extra support for students in 2008. These included:

- Small Schools Interactive Days, including Indonesian Day and NAIDOC day
- Year 6 to 7 transition program
- Debating and public speaking
- Whole school swimming program
- Participation in Engineering Australia projects
- Instruction in musical instruments through Upper Hunter Conservatorium of Music, through the X Strata “Power of Music” initiative
- Participation in the “Power of Music” concert

- Newcastle Herald School Newspaper competition, with the other Singleton Small schools

Student achievement in 2008

Literacy – NAPLAN Year 3
The average score in Literacy for Year 3 was 409 compared to 407 for the region, and 419.5 for the state.

Numeracy – NAPLAN Year 3
The average score in Numeracy for year 3 was 422.1 compared to 397.2 for the region, and 409.6 for the state.

Literacy – NAPLAN Year 5
The average score in Literacy for year 5 was 523.8 compared to 485.4 for the region and 497.4 for the state.

Numeracy – NAPLAN Year 5
The average score in Numeracy for year 5 was 571.4 compared to 472 for the region and 489.1 for the state.

Messages

Principal's message
Kirkton Public School is a small school in the beautiful rural area of Lower Belford. Most of the families live on properties in the surrounding area, but enrolments also come from Greta, Branxton and Belford. Several children within the school have a long term family connection with the school, with parents and grandparents who completed their primary schooling at Kirkton.

The motto of the school is “Achieve with Pride”. This motto is very apt for a school community in which a number of children make significant achievements across a range of Key Learning Areas and extra-curricular areas. This could not happen without a general attitude of doing your best, trying new skills and a readiness to represent the school in the wider community.

The school remains dedicated to delivering a quality teaching environment and promoting equity for students. The school looks for ways to capitalise on its small size to maximise opportunities for all students, while still providing experiences students could expect to enjoy in schools with a larger population.

Staff take pride in the high level of care given to students. Students are valued as individuals, and are supported in achieving their best results.
The parent body is a real strength to the school. Parents at our school have laid solid foundations for learning and behaviour in their children, and continue to be interested and concerned. The school highly values the support given by parents in many ways which make it possible for our school to realise its educational goals.

Our wonderful students are to be congratulated for the progress and achievements they have made throughout the year.

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.

Eve Field

P&C message

2008 was quite a busy year for our P&C, and was a highly successful period for fundraising.

Our major fundraiser of the year was “An Evening at Baroona”, with the Peterson family opening their home at Whittingham for a wonderful night of entertainment in the grounds of the estate. This event alone raised approximately $14000 for the school through ticket sales, auction items and raffles.

Another large-scale fundraiser was catering at a local clearance sale, and through this we raised approximately $2000.

Our final fundraiser for the year was a raffle of a $500 Fuel Card with Caltex Australia, which was won by a local family. This prize was generously donated by another of our local families who have children attending our school, and through this raffle we raised $720 which will be used to purchase additional equipment for the students.

Along with these events, we also carried out a Pie Drive, Easter and Christmas Hamper raffles plus Mother’s Day and Father’s Day stalls.

In 2009, we envisage that these funds will be used towards the purchase of sporting equipment, additional library books and home readers, along with an Electronic White Board and associated equipment.

Cathy Gallegos
President
Kirkton P&C Association

Student representative’s message

Well what a year it has been. Firstly let us start by saying we hope Mrs Field has had a wonderful first year filled with fun and joy with many more to come. We are very glad that she has taken her place as our new principal. This year is the first in 20 years that Mr.Nebauer is not with us but his replacement Mrs. Field has been an outstanding success for students, teachers and the school.

The fundraisers have been great this year from Wacky Hair days to Pyjama Day and the Baroona function which raised $14 000.

This year we have introduced music lessons which include all sorts of instruments. These have been a huge success with the students.

Just recently we have had the official opening of the multipurpose court and our other new facilities.

Ben Loss and his family took a helicopter flight over our school and have taken a photo of our school. This was blown up and given to the school as an end of year gift by Year 6, so thank you Loss family. Well the Year Six would love to say what a pleasure it has been to attend Kirkton Public School. We wish good luck to all present and future students of Kirkton. The Year 6 feel so warmly towards this little school. So farewell and good bye.

Love from Year Six 2008

Savannah Peterson and Ben Loss
2008 Captain and Vice-Captain
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></th>
<th>2004</th>
<th>2005</th>
<th>2006</th>
<th>2007</th>
<th>2008</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

After school attendance was targeted by the school in 2006, attendance rates had improved in 2007. However they have slipped back below state and regional levels in 2008. In 2009 the school will closely monitor attendance to ensure that attendance rates again improve.

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>2-3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2-3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4-5-6</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4-5-6</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>22</td>
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<tr>
<td>4-5-6</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>8</td>
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<tr>
<td>K-1</td>
<td>K</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>K-1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Structure of classes

There were three classes formed in 2008. Mrs Walter taught a K/1 composite group of 17 students, with Mrs Loss teaching the class on Fridays. Miss Ede taught a 2/3 composite class of 16 students. Mrs Field taught a 4/5/6 composite class of 22 students.

Staff information

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

Our staffing organisation for 2008:

Principal          Mrs E Field
Classroom Teacher   Mrs M Walter
Classroom Teacher   Mrs H Loss
Classroom Teacher   Ms L Ede
Teacher-Librarian   Ms M Maxwell
Administrative Manager Mrs P Gray
Administrative Officer Mrs D Dreaper
Teachers Aide Special Mrs J Marcheff
General Assistant   Mr B Beh
Staff establishment

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Position</th>
<th>Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Principal</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deputy Principal(s)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assistant Principal(s)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Head Teachers</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Classroom Teachers</td>
<td>2.294</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher of Emotional Disabilities</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher of Mild Intellectual Disabilities</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher of Reading Recovery</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Support Teacher Learning Assistance</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher Librarian</td>
<td>.168</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher of ESL</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Counsellor</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>3.462</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Staff retention

Mr Bob Nebauer, who had been Principal of Kirkton for 20 years, retired at the end of 2007. Mrs Eve Field began as Principal at the beginning of 2008.

All other permanent teaching staff remained the same.

Mrs Debra Dreaper the School Administrative Officer took leave during Terms Two and Three of 2008. Mrs Jayne Marcheff, who had joined the staff in a temporary appointment as a Teachers Aide Special, filled Mrs Dreaper’s position during her absence.

Staff attendance

Staff have access to leave entitlements such as sick leave. In 2008 the average daily attendance rate for staff, as determined by the Department, was 97.9.

Note: Staff attendance is determined by subtracting the number of short-term, unplanned days absent from the total available teaching days. The attendance rate is reported as N/A if the school has less than 3.4 staff members.

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>20</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.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date of financial summary:</th>
<th>30/11/2008</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Income</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Balance brought forward</td>
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<tr>
<td>Global funds</td>
<td>62 199.27</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tied funds</td>
<td>73 496.40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School &amp; community sources</td>
<td>33 367.46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interest</td>
<td>9 337.02</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trust receipts</td>
<td>3 708.35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Canteen</td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total income</strong></td>
<td>317 890.91</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Expenditure</strong></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Teaching &amp; learning</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Key learning areas</td>
<td>15 762.58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Excursions</td>
<td>13 148.10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Extracurricular dissections</td>
<td>11 175.61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Library</td>
<td>1 584.70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Training &amp; development</td>
<td>4 460.47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tied funds</td>
<td>79 527.42</td>
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<tr>
<td>Casual relief teachers</td>
<td>3 216.40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Administration &amp; office</td>
<td>26 306.24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School-operated canteen</td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Utilities</td>
<td>3 274.54</td>
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<tr>
<td>Maintenance</td>
<td>15 477.12</td>
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<tr>
<td>Trust accounts</td>
<td>2 982.50</td>
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<tr>
<td>Capital programs</td>
<td>1 164.65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total expenditure</strong></td>
<td>178 080.33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Balance carried forward</strong></td>
<td>139 810.58</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A full copy of the school's 2008 financial statement is tabled at the annual general meetings of the School Council. Further details concerning the statement can be obtained by contacting the school.
School performance 2008

Achievements

Arts

During the year Kirkton Students have enjoyed a number of opportunities to participate in Creative Arts activities, both at the school and externally.

The School has continued to enjoy performances at the school as part of the Musica Viva program. This program brings professional music groups to the school, and is linked with the student’s learning experiences in music both before and after each concert.

Other visiting performances were “Ghana Beat my Drum” and “Masks of Indonesia”. In November students travelled to Singleton Heights Public School to join the other small schools for a performance of a musical production titled “Hercules” by Alphashows.

A Year 4 student Lily Lewis performed in the Junior Back Up Vocalist group in Star Struck. Her success in gaining this featured role in this production was outstanding.

During the year Kirkton became part of a project run by the Upper Hunter Conservatorium of Music supported by X Strata Coal. The program gave students the opportunity to learn instruments at school from trained music teachers. Ten students participated in the program in 2008. At the end of the year they joined together as a band to perform at the Presentation and Concert night, and it was impressive to see how far they had come in such a relatively short amount of time learning their instruments.

The project also involved students joining with other schools in an original concert performance “The Power of Music”. This part of the project was led by Mark Walton OAM. Mark Walton is highly regarded as a leading clarinet and saxophone player and teacher in many parts of the world. He composed and conducted the piece, and came to the school to work with students. As well as instrumental students being involved in playing in a combined orchestra a number of other students sang in the choir for the performance, which was held on September 7 at Singleton Civic Centre. Kirkton had the highest percentage of students participating in the production of all the schools involved.

Choir and Orchestra members for “The Power of Music”

At the end of the year, all students participated in a school musical production “Blue Ribbon Belle”. Students did a fantastic job of acting, singing and dancing, and looked great in their bright and colourful costumes. Parents and community members responded very positively to this performance.

Students talented in Visual Arts were invited to participate in workshops held at Maitland Art Gallery in Term One. During the day the students from years 3 – 6 participated in a variety of art skills and activities.

A significant number of students participated in the Branxton Community Art Show this year. Twelve students and two pre-schoolers presented works. Courtney Martin was awarded Highly Commended in her category. Krystal Hill, Peter Loss and Ben Loss were awarded First Place in their categories.
In Term Four thirteen students from Kindergarten to Year 6 took part in the inaugural Gresford Create Carnival. This carnival covered a range of Creative Arts opportunities. It was a great opportunity for students who have shown particular interest and talent in these areas.

Also in Term Four Steve James, a local art teacher came to the school to work with all students. The students enjoyed his fun and unique approach to art. He also conducted a session for staff which they thoroughly enjoyed. It is planned to invite Steve back in 2009 to work with students.

**Sport**

Sport and fitness are a priority at Kirkton School. The school seeks ways to promote physical and sporting skills amongst all students. We are fortunate to have a community where parents ensure that children are involved in sporting activities outside of school. Kirkton has an outstanding record of success in a range of sports, both in team and individual pursuits.

The focus on swimming skills and water safety has continued in 2008. All students participate in Swimming for Sport at Branxton pool in Terms One and Four. This is also supported by the Intensive Learn to Swim program held over two weeks in December, attended by all students. The continued support of the P&C in covering bus costs is invaluable.

The program has led to excellent levels of participation by Kirkton students at the Small Schools Swimming Carnival each year. In 2008, Kirkton continued its record of success at this carnival. Eight students won individual championships at the Carnival, and three were runners-up. The school won the Total Points Score Trophy, and the Average Point Score Trophy. Thirteen students went on to represent Singleton Small Schools at the Zone Carnival. Ben Loss progressed to the Regional Carnival, where he did very well.

Thirteen students attended the Zone Cross Country event at Muswellbrook. The team performed extremely well, and won the Small Schools Championship. Charlotte Lambert came first in the 10 year girls’ event. Charlotte and Morgan O’Doherty, who came fifth in his event, went on to participate at the Regional Cross Country. Charlotte came 6th in her event at Regional and went on to represent the Hunter/Central Coast at the State Cross Country Carnival.

This year Kirkton were the Convenors for the Singleton Small Schools Athletic Carnival. Congratulations to Mrs Heather Loss and Mrs Pam Gray for their excellent organisation of the event. Kirkton won the Aggregate Point Score Trophy, and the Most Improved School trophy. A number of our students did very well, with several students winning individual championships or coming runners up. Fifteen students went on to take part in the Zone Carnival. Joshua Thompson, Bradley Oldfield, Charlotte Lambert and Lily Lewis went on to compete at the Regional Athletics Carnival. Charlotte and Lily qualified to go on to the State Athletics Carnival in the Junior Girls Relay.

Students from Kirkton played in the Small Schools Knockout teams for Cricket, Netball and Boys and Girls Soccer. The Cricket and Girls Soccer teams progressed to the second rounds of their competitions.

Students also tried out for selection in Zone teams for netball, boys and girls soccer, cricket and rugby league. Charlotte Lambert was selected in a Zone Girls Soccer team.

Students from Years 3 to 6 joined in the netball Gala Day at St Catherine’s in Singleton. This is always an enjoyable day for students. All students from years 1 to 4 participated in a Junior Soccer Carnival at Muswellbrook in September. Three Year 5 students, Harry Skinner, Lucy Nichols and Sophie Nichols helped with training and supporting the junior teams.

Four students represented our school at Horse Sports events at a range of venues across the Hunter, performing very well. These students were Hayley Richards, Savannah Peterson, Kayla Robinson-Bard and Lucy Nichols.

A major highlight of the year was the outstanding performance of our mixed soccer team in Division 2 of the Small Schools PSSA Knockout. With a high level of teamwork and skill, the students made their way into the Finals series held in Sydney. The students lost their semi-final against Curlew 2-1, but won their play-off game against Central Tilba 4-0, resulting in the team coming third in the state.
The construction of the multi-purpose court, which was officially opened in November, has extended the possibilities for PE and Sport available to students and to the community at large. A parent has introduced the students to basketball during the year, and it is hoped that tennis coaching will become available.

Other Competitions

In the Hunter Region Mathematics Competition, four Year 6 students, eight Year 5 students and one Year 4 student competed. In Year 6 two students received Distinctions and two Participation Awards. In Year 5 six students received Credit Awards and 2 students received Participation Awards. The Year 4 student Theo Klok competed as a Year 5 student. He achieved a Distinction.

Several students entered in a range of subjects in the University of NSW Competitions. Results were as follows:

Science – 1 Credit and 7 Participation certificates
English – 5 Participation certificates
Computer skills – 1 Credit and 6 Participation certificates
Writing – 4 Participation certificates
Mathematics – 1 Distinction, 2 Credit and 6 Participation certificates

In Term Two, Year 4 students took part in an Engineering Australia challenge involving working in teams of four to make a straw tower. The towers had to meet set standards, with the winning tower being the one that could hold the largest mass. The students took their towers to a judging at Newcastle Basketball Stadium along with teams from many different schools. The students did not win, but learnt a great deal about the basics of engineering in making their towers.

In Term Four, Year 6 students took part in a different Engineering Australia challenge, involving designing and making mini catapults. They also went to the Newcastle Basketball Stadium for judging. Like Year 4, they did not win, but gained both enjoyment and knowledge from the experience.

Students also entered some competitions involving making DVDs. Students initiated entering a contest supporting children’s health by making a commercial about healthy eating habits at the school. Year 5 students entered a competition run by Australian Centre for the Moving Image. The works developed for both competitions were highly creative, and required excellent team work.

Excursions

The whole school travelled to Maitland for an excursion in Term 2. The excursion was linked to the multi-stage Connected Outcome Groups unit “Making Choices and Working Together”. The unit looked at decision making, levels of government and community facilities. Students sat in the Maitland Council Chamber and chatted with the Mayor of Maitland; looked around the Maitland Repertory Theatre; and had an enlightening tour of Maitland Gaol. The response of the students to the excursion was very positive, and students were extremely well behaved.

Students also travelled to Mount Pleasant Public School for a Wildlife Awareness day, to Singleton High School for an Indigenous Awareness day and to Singleton Heights for a day with the other Singleton Small Schools, involving Tabloid Sports and a performance at Singleton Heights Public School.

The excursion program with Mount Pleasant Public School continued. This year students in Years 4, 5 and 6 combined to travel to Canberra and Snowy Mountains for a week long excursion. This excursion built on studies of government in Australia, and Australian Identify that students had followed in Terms One and Two.

Debating and Public Speaking

This year the school entered the Premier’s Debating Challenge. As all students were new to debating, they did extremely well, developing their skills and understanding of how to prepare and present a debate.

Two Stage 1, two Stage 2 and two Stage 3 students also participated in the Singleton district Public Speaking competition. This again was a new program for Kirkton students and again they acquitted themselves well.
Students in the Senior class have been involved in public speaking and debating in class throughout the year. As a result there has been an outstanding improvement in public speaking for all students.

**Community Involvement**

There were several occasions during the year when we were able to invite community members, family and friends into the school for special events.

These included:

- World Maths Day
- Bike Education Day
- Easter Hat Parade
- Education Week
- Book Week Parade
- Official opening of the multi-purpose court, sports shed and covered fixed equipment area by Joel Fitzgibbon
- End of year concert and presentation

In addition attendance at our fortnightly assemblies has grown steadily during the year.

Parents have also been extensively involved in supporting teaching and learning programs in literacy, PE and sport.

**Student Leadership**

Student leaders at Kirkton traditionally serve as effective role models for younger students. This year was no exception, with Year 6 taking on many roles to help and assist both staff and fellow students in the school.

This year there were many additional opportunities offered to our Senior students related to Leadership. In March two Year 6 students attended the Young Leaders Conference in Sydney together with students from around the State. Two Year 6 students also attended Harmony Day activities at the University of Newcastle. The School Captain and Vice-Captain led Assemblies and special ceremonies, including the opening of the new facilities. They were always prepared to present speeches of thanks to visitors to the school.

Year 6 students led several fundraising activities at school. Along with Year 5 students they also led younger students through tabloid activities in Maths and PE during the year.

This year’s Year 6 students were fortunate to be involved in a Transition program with Mr Drew Davies, an Itinerant Behaviour Support Teacher working with Singleton Schools. They enjoyed these sessions, which helped them work through their anxieties about their transition to high school.

**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.

**Literacy – NAPLAN Year 3**

In Year 3 our schools Overall Literacy results were above Regional average, but below state average. The school performed better in Reading, with results above both State and Regional average, than in Writing, spelling, grammar and punctuation.

The majority of students gained overall literacy bands of 4 or 5.

Item analysis suggests there is a need to focus on connecting ideas in texts, sentence structure and correct punctuation, spelling patterns and common words.

The following graphs show the State and Like School Group performances for Reading and Writing, as well as the school average for the years 2005-2007. Because our school had less than ten students in the year our own scores cannot be shown.
Literacy – NAPLAN Year 5

In Year 5 our school’s Overall Literacy results were significantly above both Regional and State averages. This level of performance was the same for all strands of literacy.

For all strands of literacy the majority of students were in Band 6 and above.

Item analysis indicates a need to focus on use of commas and speech marks in punctuation, use of tense in grammar, and identifying spelling patterns and rules.

The following graphs show the State and Like School Group performances for Reading and Writing, as well as the school average for the years 2005-2007. Because our school had less than ten students in the year our own scores cannot be shown.
Numeracy – NAPLAN Year 3

In Year 3 our Overall Numeracy results were above both state and regional average.

The majority of students were in Bands 4 and above.

Item analysis suggests a need for a focus on place value, fractions and decimals, word problems involving measurement, numerical literacy and understanding tables and graphs.

The following graphs show the State and Like School Group performances for Numeracy as well as the school average for the years 2005-2007. Because our school had less than ten students in the year our own scores cannot be shown.

Numeracy – NAPLAN Year 5

In Year 5 our school’s results were significantly above both state and regional averages.

The majority of students were in the top two bands.

Item analysis indicates a need to focus on problems involving money and other measures, and 3D shapes.

The following graphs show the State and Like School Group performances for Numeracy as well as the school average for the years 2005-2007. Because our school had less than ten students in the year our own scores cannot be shown.

Progress in literacy

Progress in literacy refers to the level of improvement in results for students from Year 3 to Year 5.

Overall growth in reading was 87.5 for our school compared to the state average of 86.8.

Overall growth in writing was 50.7 for our school compared to the state average of 71.2.

Overall growth in literacy was 68.2 compared to the state average of 80.7.

Progress in numeracy

Progress in numeracy refers to the level of improvement in results for students from Year 3 to Year 5.

Overall growth in numeracy was 106.5 compared to the state average of 80.4.

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>Percentage of Year 3 students achieving at and above minimum standard</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reading 100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Writing 89</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spelling 100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Punctuation and grammar 100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Numeracy 100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As this graph shows, one hundred percent of students achieved the national benchmarks in all areas except for Writing.

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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Percentage of Year 5 students achieving at and above minimum standard</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reading 100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Writing 100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spelling 100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Punctuation and grammar 100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Numeracy 100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As this graph shows one hundred percent of students in Year 5 achieved the national benchmarks

Significant programs and initiatives
Kirkton Public School undertook a number of significant programs and initiatives in 2009.

Aboriginal education
The school places a strong emphasis on ensuring an Aboriginal perspective is applied to all studies of Australian history, to develop an informed understanding of Australia’s Indigenous people and their cultures and of the importance of the reconciliation process.

Outcomes of programs are intended to educate all students about Aboriginal history, culture and contemporary Aboriginal Australia. Towards meeting this outcome, students joined with the other small school students to celebrate NAIDOC day at Singleton High School. Students saw performances of music, dancing and story telling. They took part in Indigenous Games, and participated in the painting of Aboriginal Art Murals.

Multicultural education
Our school endeavours to promote understanding and tolerance in our society in all key learning areas.

In classrooms, students learnt about the culture and customs of China in the Term Three unit “China and the Olympics”.

The school learnt about Harmony Day, with two Year Six students going to a special Harmony Day workshop at the University of Newcastle in March.

Year Six students investigated the culture, history, customs and lifestyle of Mexico, and made a presentation to the local CWA.

The school continued its strong Languages Other Than English (LOTE) program in Indonesian. This year we invited other local Small Schools to a special day focussing on Indonesian culture. The day featured a Masked Theatre performance, as well as hands on experiences in music, dance, craft and games.

Respect and responsibility
Values education underpins every area of school life at Kirkton Public School. Core values are embedded in classroom learning programs.

There is a strong focus on student leadership reinforcing the values of respect and responsibility for our senior students, and enabled them to set good role modelling for other students. Students have a number of responsibilities that support the smooth running of the school.

All students have been involved in fundraising for charities during the year, with Year 6 students organising events. In Term One, students participated in Wacky Hair Day for the Leukaemia Foundation. In Term two, the school held Loud Shirt Day to support the Shepherd Centre.

Our students continuously receive acclaim from visitors to the school, and people they encounter while representing the school in the wider community, for their outstanding level of behaviour and attitude.

The school’s Discipline Policy highlights each student’s responsibility for their own behaviour and choices, and the focus in interaction with students for management of behaviour is on helping them understand how their choice of behaviour affects others, and learning to make the right choice.

In 2009, the school will participate with other Singleton schools in an initiative called Positive Behaviour for Learning. This initiative gives schools the opportunity to clarify expectations for students related to behaviour and learning to suit the particular school’s needs and culture.
Other programs

Year 6 to Year 7 Transition

In 2008 Year 6 students took part in Transition to Year 7 program. The program was presented by an Itinerant Behaviour Support teacher, Mr Drew Davis. The program gave students the opportunity to share their anxieties about High School, and to look at positive ways to deal with these anxieties. Students felt they had gained substantially by their participation in this program.

Progress on 2008 targets

Target 1
To improve specific aspects of literacy

Our achievements include:
- Staff TPL in writing to develop resources and strategies for the teaching of writing in all stages
- Use of checklists and rubrics by teachers and students
- Improved performance in Year 5 NAPLAN results in writing
- Growth in performance in NAPLAN results for Year 5 compared to their Year 3 BST results

Target 2
To improve mathematics skills, in particular the application of known facts, to working mathematically

Our achievements include:
- Evidence of use of ‘hands on’ activities in teaching and learning programs, including incorporating Count Me In Too strategies
- High standard of NAPLAN results in numeracy in 2008
- Growth in performance in NAPLAN results for Year 5 compared to their Year 3 BST results

Target 3
To improve social interaction skills among targeted students

Our achievements include:
- Knowledge and awareness of school and community values
- Explicit teaching and discussion of targeted values to all students

Target 4
To improve oral communication skills among some students

Our achievements include:
- Evidence of inclusion of teaching of specific language and communication skills in teaching and learning programs, within the Talking and Listening strand of English
- Increased use and awareness of correct speech patterns

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 Learning and Mathematics.

Educational and management practice

Learning

Background

Each year the school completes an evaluation of one of the following areas: learning, teaching, planning, management, leadership or culture.

This year the school chose to evaluate learning to determine the effectiveness of current practices.

Students, staff and parents were surveyed about Learning. Responses were received from all students and staff. 15 parents responded to the surveys, which represented 45% of families in the school. The following findings were determined from survey responses.
Findings and conclusions
An analysis of teacher, student and parent surveys revealed the following findings from the school community in relation to learning:

- Classrooms are mainly perceived as interesting places to learn
- The school has high expectations of students
- Students take pride in their learning
- Teaching staff work collaboratively to support and promote student learning
- Teachers continually upgrade their skills
- Parents and the majority of students perceive that classrooms provide a balance of independent and group activities
- Parents and the majority of students perceived that children try to do things in the classroom that are new and different

Future directions
Analysis of the information collected indicated that there were some areas for development:

- Increased use of work samples for both students and parents to see improvement over time;
- A greater awareness among students and parents of the people other than the classroom teacher who contribute to the education of the children within the school; and
- Greater communication between parents and teachers about student progress and about what is being taught in schools, and how it is being taught.

Curriculum
Mathematics

Background
A target for 2008 had been to improve mathematics skills, with increase utilisation of hands on activities and Count Me In Too strategies. The Key Learning Area (KLA) of Mathematics was evaluated to gain feedback on how methods of teaching in Mathematics were impacting on the school community, particularly students.

The purpose of the survey is to ensure effective consolidation and continued improvement in the teaching and learning of this key learning area.
Other evaluations

Parent, student, and teacher satisfaction

In 2008 the school sought the opinions of parents, students and teachers about the school.

Their responses are presented below.

The outcomes of the survey indicated a strong level of satisfaction overall.

The parent survey indicated that students were viewed as the school’s main concern, and that the school is connected to its community and welcomes parental involvement. It was largely viewed as a friendly school, and most parents felt they were encouraged to contact the school to discuss concerns. Most parents felt the school was staffed with competent teachers who set high standards. While parents agreed that the school has supportive welfare programs and offered challenging programs for its students, some responses to these questions were in the middle range of indicators of agreement, and these would be areas for development.

Students surveyed were very positive about the school. They liked classroom activities, the sports opportunities and facilities that were available, and the friendly environment the school offered. Some suggestions made were for more sports equipment and facilities, safety upgrading of the fixed equipment and swing area at the back of the school, and development of the school’s Environmental program.

Staff were also very positive about the school and their roles within the school. A change of Principal has identified a need to clarify and document some administrative and management policies within the school, so that information is readily available to new and visiting staff.

Professional learning

All teaching staff and SASS staff participated in professional learning activities. The professional learning activities varied, but were generally aligned with programs being developed within the school. They included courses in literacy, ICT, music, Gifted and Talented Students (GATS), Environmental Education, NAPLAN analysis, PDHPE and middle years of schooling.

Staff shared their professional learning with others and there was evidence of the implementation of professional learning in teaching and learning programs, and in activities organised within the school.

School development 2009 – 2011

Our school has developed a three year plan of improvement with an annual action plan including the targets outlined below.

Targets for 2009

Target 1

To improve literacy skills in writing, spelling, punctuation and grammar

Strategies to achieve this target include:

- Using rubrics and checklists to improve writing through both teacher and student assessment of writing
- Focus on use of language to enrich writing
- Explicit focus on correct use of grammar and punctuation in writing
- Introduction of whole school spelling program with an emphasis on word structure including phonics

Our success will be measured by:

- NAPLAN results show a growth in targeted skills for literacy
- Assessment of student writing shows improvement in spelling, punctuation and grammar
- Continued growth in BST results from Year 3 to 5

Target 2

To ensure the Quality Teaching Framework is reflected in teaching, assessment and reporting practices in mathematics to improve student outcomes

Strategies to achieve this target include:

- Professional learning by staff to imbed working mathematically and numerical literacy
- Integration of technology and connected learning strategies into numeracy initiatives
- Working with parents to develop their understanding of the syllabus in mathematics, how mathematics is taught in schools and how parents can assist students in mathematics

Our success will be measured by:

- Continued high NAPLAN and assessment results in number
- Teaching and learning programs that reflect use of a variety of appropriate strategies to teach maths including use of technology
- High levels of student engagement in mathematics
- Parents indicating they are more aware of how maths is taught, and how to assist their children in mathematics

**Target 3**

*To improve our communication with parents regarding curriculum as well as individual student progress*

Strategies to achieve this target include:

- Development of individual student learning plans
- Ensuring parents are informed regarding programs to support their students
- Additional parent-teacher discussion in Term One
- Presentation of workshops to parents in a range of identified curriculum areas
- Information to parents on matters related to student learning presented in school newsletters

Our success will be measured by:

- parents are aware of what learning takes place in classrooms, and how it takes place
- students progress in their individual learning plans
- school satisfaction surveys indicate parents feel better informed and happy with levels of communication

**Target 4**

*To further enhance student engagement in learning*

Strategies to achieve this target include:

- involvement in the Positive Behaviours for Learning (PBL) initiative with Schools in the Singleton LMG
- Quality teaching across KLAs including linking Connected Outcomes Groups units to literacy and numeracy, and ensuring unit studies are significant to school needs (eg Environmental education)
- Focusing on individual student learning needs, including Gifted and Talented Students
- Integration of technology across key learning areas, including access to Interactive Whiteboards for all students

Our success will be measured by:

- Shared understanding within the school community of expectations for students, reflected in high levels of positive student behaviour and achievement
- Involvement of students in a range of extra-curricular activities
- School community identification of a positive learning culture

**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.

Mrs E Field Principal
Mrs M Walter Teacher
Mrs H Lambert 2009 School Council President
Mrs L Searles 2009 P&C President

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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: