School context

Austral Public School is located in a semi-rural environment in South West Sydney. The population is diverse from both cultural and socio-economic backgrounds. 47.9% of students are from non-English speaking backgrounds, which are predominately Italian and Arabic. The school has an Italian Community Language program. Austral Public School is part of the Cowpasture Community of Schools and enjoys a strong relationship of collaboration and support from this valuable network.

Principal’s message

It is with great pleasure that I write my first principal’s message for Austral Public School and I’m looking forward to writing many more to come.

I arrived at Austral Public School at the beginning of term three in 2013 and I would like to start by thanking Mr Daniel McKay for the wonderful work he did while relieving as principal during terms one and two.

The staff, students and community have been extremely welcoming towards me and have demonstrated that a dedicated, resourceful and professional learning community is already established at Austral PS.

Austral PS promotes and fosters extremely professional and talented performing arts groups. This year both our Senior and Junior Dance Groups performed very successfully in the Western Liverpool Festival of Performing Arts and the Cowpasture Community of Schools Concert.

All students were offered experiences outside the classroom with Kindergarten visiting Calmsley Hill Farm, Stage 1 went to Fairfield City Museum, Stage 2 attended an overnight camp at Wooglemai and Stage 3 campers challenged themselves at Yarramundi.

Academic progress has been pleasing with students making even further use of technology and becoming reflective of themselves as a learner to direct future goals.

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.

Jan Rogers

P & C message

Austral Public School has a dedicated and motivated P & C committee, involving parents working together with the school staff with the aim of improving our school for the benefit of its students.

Fundraising efforts in 2013 have included:
- Easter and Christmas raffles
- Mothers’ and Fathers’ Day stalls
- Discos
- Jelly Bean guessing competition
- Read a thon
- Calendar sales

The P & C also support the gold chance card draw and the Woolworths’ Earn and Learn program. In 2013 the P & C provided the opportunity for students to participate in CPR training, which was highly valued by the community.

Due to the above fundraising events, in 2013 the P & C were able to donate the funds for the school to subscribe to the ‘Reading Eggs’ online literacy program for every child in the school.

Parent representatives were able to provide support with school programs such as MultiLit, Reading, Year 6 mini fete, Italian Day, and other various fundraising events and P & C meetings.

Mrs M Barnsley
P & C President

Student representatives’ message

At Austral Public School, all students in Year Six are considered to be student leaders. Official student leadership roles include:

- School Captains – one male and one female
- Vice Captains – One male and one female
- School Ambassador

We also have a Student Representative Council (SRC) which is made up of 2 members (one male and one female) from each class as well as our school captains. The SRC leadership committee consists of four Year Six students (President, Vice President, Treasurer and Secretary).

Other student leadership roles include:
Sport House Captains – one male and one female. Sport Vice Captains – one male and one female.

The students represent each of our 4 sporting houses.

At the beginning of the year, the School Captains, School Ambassador and SRC President attended the GRIP Student Leadership Conference held at Homebush along with student leaders from across numerous other schools. They were involved in a number of workshops which helped them understand their roles and responsibilities as a school leader.

Year Six students were involved in a Kindergarten buddy program at the beginning of the year, where they assisted Kindergarten students in the first few weeks of school with their socialisation skills and adjusting to the playground environment.

Throughout the year, students in Year Six have taken on numerous leadership roles within the school, organising fundraisers including mufti days and the Year Six mini-fete which was planned, organised and run by Year Six. Proceeds from these events helped us to fund our Year Six Farewell.

Year Six students assisted teachers by managing the sports shed on a daily basis, helping to supervise the canteen at recess and lunchtime and taking the playground duty bags out to teachers at recess and lunch time.

Year Six students lead team activities during Friday sport, supporting students from Year 3 to Year 5 and were involved in regular tree planting environmental projects run by Western Sydney Parklands.

At the end of the year our Principal, Captains and Vice Captains attended a morning tea at NSW Parliament House which was hosted by our State Member of Parliament Dr Andrew McDonald.

Maddison Nunn, Phillip Gigliotti, Ashlyn Rice and Mark Fayad (Year 6 Captains and Vice Captains)

Student information

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

Student enrolment profile

Student Enrolment

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>2007</th>
<th>2008</th>
<th>2009</th>
<th>2010</th>
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<th>2012</th>
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<tbody>
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Student attendance profile

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<th>2011</th>
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<td>95.4</td>
<td>94.9</td>
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<tr>
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<td>94.3</td>
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</table>

Attendance at Austral PS has continued to steadily improve in 2013. The rates are above both regional and state averages.

Management of non-attendance

Austral Public School monitors student attendance closely. This is regularly overseen by teachers, assistant principals and the principal. Letters are sent home to parents of students who have unexplained absences and followed up by phone. The Home School Liaison Officer also monitors school rolls and follows up referrals of attendance concerns. Annual attendance awards are presented at the annual presentation assembly.

Workforce information

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

Austral Public School had 23 members of teaching staff in 2013. The 13 classroom teachers were well supported by our dedicated team of Learning and Support, ESL and Community Language (Italian) teachers and part time teacher/librarian. 2 temporary / part time school learning support officers provide support for identified students in classrooms.

The teachers are very professional and knowledgeable of curriculum documents,
requirements and their students’ individual needs. They are extremely motivated and committed to offering challenging, rewarding and relevant activities to all students. Teachers cater for individual differences and have high expectations for themselves as well as their students.

Austral Public School has a school counsellor for 1.25 days per week.

**Workforce composition**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Position</th>
<th>Number</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Principal</td>
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<tr>
<td>Deputy Principal(s)</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assistant Principal(s)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Head Teachers</td>
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<tr>
<td>Classroom Teacher(s)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Teacher of Reading Recovery</td>
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<td>Primary Part Time Teacher</td>
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<td>Primary Teacher RFF</td>
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<td>Learning and Support Teacher(s)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Teacher of ESL</td>
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<tr>
<td>Community Language Teacher</td>
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<tr>
<td>School Counsellor</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>School Administrative &amp; Support Staff</td>
<td>2.872</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
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</table>
**Academic achievements**

**NAPLAN**

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 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)

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

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

**NAPLAN Year 3 - Literacy** (including Reading, Writing, Spelling and Grammar and Punctuation)
NAPLAN Year 3 - Numeracy

NAPLAN Year 5 - Literacy (including Reading, Writing, Spelling and Grammar and Punctuation)
Other school based assessments

- 93% of Kindergarten students achieved level 3 or above for each critical aspect on the literacy continuum.
- An increased number of students achieved grade benchmarks on literacy continuum.
- An increased number of students achieved grade reading levels or benchmarks.

Other achievements

SPORT

In 2013 sport was once again a feature of the curriculum offered at Austral Public School.

The school participated in three seasons of PSSA sport, with four sports available in each season. Primary students participated in three Gala Days with all students displaying teamwork, sportsmanship and enthusiasm.

This year Austral Public School participated in the Swimming, Cross Country and Athletics Carnivals, with students achieving great success at further levels. This year 22 students attended the Zone Swimming Carnival, with seven attending the Regional Carnival. In Cross Country, 32 students qualified for the Zone level with seven students representing the school at the Regional Cross Country, an increase from six students in 2012. This year, prior to the Athletics Carnival, students attended a training afternoon, facilitating greater success on the day. The Zone Athletics Carnival saw 33 students qualify for both track and field events. Seven of these students qualified for the Regional Athletics Carnival. This was an increase from three students who attended in 2012. Students from K-2 also participated in their own Athletics carnival, rotating around a range of track and field events.

Friday sporting programs have consisted of tabloid activities and programs that have included skill development for upcoming PSSA sports, team competitions, athletics skills including long jump, high jump, shot put and discus as well as the strengthening and development of fundamental movement skills. Students have also had the opportunity to participate in the AFL skill development program which taught students a range of AFL skills and teamwork strategies.

In Term Four, students participated in a dance program run by Footsteps dance where students developed skills in rhythm, movement and coordination.

New sporting equipment was purchased for the school to replace some of the gear used for PSSA through the active participation in the Coles Sport for Schools initiative.

Overall, 2013 has been an extremely successful year in the area of sport.

Significant programs and initiatives

Aboriginal education

Austral Public School provides programs in Aboriginal Education for all its students in a variety of ways ranging from the integration of Aboriginal perspectives in class activities to participation in whole school celebrations. In 2013, the school had 11 students from Indigenous backgrounds spread from K-6.

All Aboriginal students had the mandatory Personalised Learning Plans (PLPs) developed for them in consultation with their families and again this year there were 100% of families involved in the development of these plans. All Personalised Learning Plans are monitored closely throughout the year, where the class teacher is responsible for making adjustments to these learning goals when necessary and in consultation with the child’s family. Students have a personalised tracking folder containing relevant information such as PLPs, work samples and assessment information allowing teachers to gain an overall picture of the student and their previous goals and achievements.
This year, all Aboriginal students at Austral Public School took part in the Cowpasture Community of Schools NAIDOC Day celebration at our neighbouring school, Middleton Grange. Each Aboriginal student invited a friend to attend on the day and participated in a variety of activities with an Aboriginal cultural focus. These activities involved storytelling, arts and craft, singing and dance.

To celebrate NAIDOC Week as a whole school, a special day was organised to explore Aboriginal culture and traditions. Teachers created fun activities incorporating Aboriginal perspectives and the students rotated between classes participating in a variety of activities.

**Learning and Support, English as a Second Language and Multicultural Education**

The position of Learning and Support Teacher (LAST) has continued to be a five day a week position.

Students who need extra assistance across the school have access to small group and team teaching lessons during the week. Specific needs are identified by the classroom teacher. Year 1 have access to the Reading Recovery program. These children are identified through testing and work one to one with a trained Reading Recovery teacher five times a week. 15 out of 51 students (27%) in year 1 have had RR, 14 students were successful in reaching level 16 or above. Students who have been identified as having significant problems in any areas are provided with an individual learning program. Classroom support may be provided by a trained teacher or a Student Learning Support Officer.

In 2013, students received assistance from the LAS or ESL teachers. Support was provided to Kindergarten students, working one on one with students to revise their sounds, sight words and recognising numbers 1-10. In Term 4, NAPLAN data was collated and assessed, with support provided to targeted students, both in literacy and numeracy.

Professional development was provided to staff on catering to the needs of ESL students in their classroom as well as an outline of the ESL scales, ESL phases and the change of terminology to EAL/D. We were able to access New Arrivals Program funding for an Early Stage 1 student which was expended through one to one teaching, classroom resourcing and small group work.

The MultiLit program was administered to students requiring support using parents, SLSO and the LAST teacher as tutors. This program was offered to various primary students reading at a significantly lower level than their peers. 9 students participated in the program for several weeks with one to one tutoring for four sessions a week. Each student has had varying degrees of success. The success of this program can be attributed to ongoing support from tutors and commitment by the students. This program will continue next year with the aim of increasing our tutor numbers to give further assistance in reading to individual primary students.

A buddy tutor program was also started in 2013, approximately 14 year 5 students worked one to one with K-2 students who needed support with sight word, sound and number revision.

The QuickSmart program was implemented by a SLSO and a trained teacher as tutors. This program was offered to various primary students from Year 5 who were identified, through data, as working significantly lower than their peers in mental computation. Fourteen students participated in the program for a total of 34 weeks. Tutoring was provided in pairs of students for three half hour lessons per week for each student. Results yielded much success in the gains by students in both mental computation and problem solving.
The Italian Community Language program continued to be a valued part of the curriculum at Austral PS. In 2013 we were all treated to an ‘Italian Day’, organised by our Italian teachers, Signora Cordi and Signora Strounis.

Children dressed in the colours of the Italian flag and participated in cultural activities which included a traditional Italian pantomime performance and a pasta eating competition.

Teachers have ensured that inclusive teaching and learning activities and resources are implemented in all classrooms.

Information and Communication Technology (ICT)

Improving student outcomes, through the use of ICT as an engagement tool, has been a focus for our school which is strongly represented in our school plan. Austral has increased student engagement in Literacy and Numeracy through the use of innovative technologies by purchasing new hardware, involving students in online learning programs and the continual professional development of all staff K-6 in utilising technology in the classroom.

This year we have purchased 8 surface tablets and 35 more iPads. 20 iPads remain in classrooms and with support teachers to cater for student’s needs. 15 iPads have been added to our bank of resources. All classes are timetabled to use iPads twice each week for a 2 hour session. Students have used the devices for a range of educational experiences including research, literacy and numeracy games and apps, editing and modifying pictures and photos, presentations and comics. We have also purchased a Mac Book to sync all iPads and alleviate management issues.

The Mathletics and Reading Eggs programs were implemented across K-6 by teachers to plan, assess, program and teach students the appropriate content. They have catered for individual students through each activity being tailored to support the students at their level with self-paced, skill-specific levels.

We have also received 14 Easy View projectors from the Woolworths’ Earn and Learn promotion. These Easy Views make it easier for teachers and students to share and discuss work, stories, projects etc.

Environmental Education

Clean Up Australia Day: the whole school participated in Clean Up Australia Day on Friday 1st March 2013. Students brought in gloves and garbage bags and were asked to look after one area of the school. The school was supported by Liverpool Council who provided extra gloves and garbage bags.

Native Tree Planting: Liverpool Council provided the school with 50 native plants and grasses, that were planted by one of the Friday afternoon primary environmental groups, together with GA, Geoff Barnett. Liverpool Council also supports the school’s Environmental Citizen of the Year Award that is awarded annually to one student from infants and one student from primary.

3-6 Environmental Groups: All students 3-6 have had the opportunity to participate in Friday afternoon environmental groups, studying topics such as monitoring recycling, gardening around the school and growing vegetables in the school’s vegetable patch.
Transitional Equity Funding
The funding and staffing supplement received were used to release an Assistant Principal from classroom duties to mentor and support classroom teachers in quality teaching practices, particularly in the areas of literacy, numeracy, student engagement and implementing ICT as a tool for learning.

The aim was to identify areas of focus through the Instructional Rounds process and use data collected to drive professional learning for all staff.

Professional practice was developed by the Assistant Principal working alongside teachers in their classrooms and reflecting on student engagement to improve student learning outcomes. The focus was on supporting students and teachers to be collaborative learners with students taking ownership over their learning in the classroom.

Additional Learning and Support was also provided for targeted students in literacy and numeracy, both in class and through specific programs such as MultiLit and QuickSmart.

School planning and evaluation 2012—2014

School evaluation processes
NSW public schools conduct evaluations to support the effective implementation of the school plan. The processes used include:

- Collection and analysis of school and national assessment data
- Surveys involving students, teachers and parents
- Focus group interviews

School planning 2012—2014: progress in 2013

School priority 1
Literacy

Outcomes from 2012–2014
Increased levels of achievement for every student in literacy.

Evidence of progress towards outcomes in 2013:

- 100% of Year 3 students achieving at or above minimum standard in NAPLAN reading
- 100% of Year 3 students achieved above minimum standard in NAPLAN writing in 2013.
- 93% of year 3 students achieving at or above minimum standard in grammar and punctuation
- 60.4% of Year 3 students achieved in the top 2 skill bands in NAPLAN writing in 2013
- 100% of Year 5 students achieving at or above minimum standard in NAPLAN reading
- 94.1% of Year 5 students achieving at or above minimum standard in NAPLAN writing
- 91.2% in 2013 students in year 5 achieving at or above minimum standard in grammar and punctuation

Strategies to achieve these outcomes in 2014

- Continued professional learning for teachers in the implementation of Australian Curriculum in English
- 2 weekly planning cycles for teaching and learning implemented, focusing on student needs
- 50% of Learning and Support allocation used to support students in Literacy
- Teachers to communicate learning intentions and success criteria in all lessons
- Use of PLAN software to enter and monitor data for all students. Data
analysed and students identified for focused support in literacy

School priority 2

Numeracy

Outcomes from 2012–2014

Increased levels of achievement for every student in Numeracy.

Evidence of progress towards outcomes in 2013:

- 97.7% of Year 3 students achieved at or above minimum standard in NAPLAN numeracy
- 76.5% of Year 5 students achieved at or above minimum standard in NAPLAN numeracy
- 46.9% of students achieved state average in growth in overall numeracy
- 21% of Year 3 students in top 2 skill bands for numeracy

Strategies to achieve these outcomes in 2014:

- Professional learning for teachers in implementation of Australian Curriculum in Mathematics
- 2 weekly planning cycles for teaching and learning implemented, focusing on student needs
- 50% of Learning and Support allocation used to support students in Mathematics
- QuickSmart program implemented to assist Stage 3 students in recall of number facts with speed and accuracy
- Use of PLAN software to enter and monitor data for all students. Data analysed and students identified for focused support in numeracy

Evidence of progress towards outcomes in 2013:

- 100% of teachers use technology (particularly Interactive Whiteboards) as an integral part of lessons on a daily basis
- 47% of all classroom teachers attempted student-directed learning in their classroom
- 100% of stage three students exercised some choice in curriculum design and assessment
- Learning Intentions and success criteria are referred to by teachers and students in stage three

Strategies to achieve these outcomes in 2014:

- Employ a fulltime classroom teacher to release an assistant principal from classroom duties to work with teachers and classes
- Additional Professional learning for all staff in student engagement with Assistant Principal / Mentor
- Instructional Rounds process implemented with principal’s learning alliance to identify strengths and areas for improvement in student engagement
- Participation in Fair Go Project with University of Western Sydney and Fairfied Public School
- Participation in Self Organised Learning Environments (SOLE) action research project
Professional learning

Austral PS carried forward $274.47 in professional learning funds from 2012. The school received $12,827.28 from global funds and spent $16,649.22. School funds were also allocated to cover the important professional learning that was undertaken.

This is an average of $723.87 per staff member.

All teachers collaboratively developed a Personal Professional Learning Plan with their supervisor, which included personal and school priorities.

Staff Development Days provided a forum to present online Professional Learning modules in understanding and implementing new NSW Australian Curriculum in English.

Further understanding was enhanced by participation in the Community of Schools ‘Equity Initiative’ presented by Instructional Leaders. Staff who attended this initiative shared their learning with the all teachers at staff meetings.

All staff attended the annual combined schools’ staff development day in term three, comprising of participants from the Cowpasture Community of Schools. Staff attended keynote speaker presentations and workshops which included literacy, communication, rhythm and drumming and Aboriginal 8 Ways of Learning.

This was followed by the highly successful ‘Cowpasture Connections’, where demonstration lessons and workshops are presented across the schools and attended by staff who were interested in those areas. Austral PS staff presented 15 of these workshops, receiving very positive feedback from participants.

Teachers participated in professional learning in using the SAMR model to enhance the use of technology in the classroom. This model ensures that technology is an integral part of learning. Members of the ICT committee attended courses on using iPads in the classroom.

The Assistant Principal Learning and Support facilitated an online Speech and Language course, which was attended by 10 members of staff.

All teachers completed training in the Disabilities Discrimination Act.

Parent/caregiver, student, and teacher satisfaction

In 2013, the school sought the opinions of parents, students and teachers about the school. Focus group interviews and surveys were conducted.

Their responses are presented below.

- Overall satisfaction rates for students, staff, parents and caregivers is very positive.
- Parents, students and staff are pleased with the positive approach to student welfare.
- All stakeholders agree that student engagement has increased through student self-directed learning.
- Parents and caregivers trust the school to implement programs to develop the skills and strategies required for 21st century learning.
- Parents would like to see communication include the use of a regularly updated school app and website.
- Parents are feeling more welcome and included in school events than in previous years.

Future directions

- Official launch of school’s positive student welfare system. Consistency of language and strategies. Introduce the role of student welfare mentor in the playground.
- Increased opportunities for student self-directed learning to occur in all classrooms. Professional learning for
teachers and participation in action research projects.

- Parent workshops planned to increase parental engagement and understanding of new curriculum.
- Purchase of a new school app which will be regularly updated along with the school website. Hold a parent forum to discuss improvements in communication between school and home.

Program evaluations

**Leadership**

**Background**

2013 saw a change in principal and some executive staff at Austral Public School. It is a good time to reflect on current practices, so that there is consistency of understanding in areas of strength and those in need of improvement.

**Findings and conclusions**

- 100% of those surveyed feel that leaders almost always or usually improve the school through and understanding of the school’s strengths and weaknesses.
- 100% of survey participants feel that staff, parents and students are encouraged to take on leadership roles.
- 95% feel that school leaders show an interest in and accountability for student learning outcomes.
- 60% of those surveyed feel that leaders almost always and 42% usually develop relationships based on trust, collegiality and mutual trust. This is higher than in 2012.
- Semester 2 saw the commencement of an Extended Executive meeting which was attended by 10 people on a regular basis.

**Future directions**

- Extended Executive meetings continued with a professional learning component to develop leadership capacity of all interested staff members.
- Instructional Rounds process implemented to provide opportunities for school and self-reflection. Teaching staff trained to be observers in process.
- Ensure all stakeholders take part in decision making. Build transparency into decisions at all levels.
- Develop quality leadership and learning plans for all staff with SMART goals.
- Provide time for Assistant Principal/Mentor to work with all teachers to support quality teaching and leadership development.
- Opportunities provided to lead or co-lead committees and programs to build leadership density in school.

**Mathematics K - 6**

**Background**

In 2013 Austral Public School undertook rigorous self-evaluation in the curriculum area of mathematics. This is an area that has been previously identified for further investigation, particularly with assessment and data collection. Professional learning for the implementation of the Australian curriculum gave impetus to examine current practices carefully. The opinions of parents, students and staff were sought and are as follows.

**Findings and conclusions**

- An overwhelming number of stakeholders agree that mathematics is an important subject to learn, has relevance in everyday life and future careers.
- 100% of students feel that the activities they do in mathematics are helping to improve their knowledge, skills and strategies in this curriculum area.
- 92% of students are aware of content and purpose of lessons in mathematics.
- 85% of students surveyed agree that feedback given by teachers helps them to improve their learning in mathematics.
- 100% of parents agree or strongly agree that students are completing activities in class which help to improve their results in mathematics.
- 90% of parents feel that the school has high expectations that students will do well in mathematics.
• 100% of teachers feel that they clearly explain to students what they will be assessed on in mathematics.

• 93% of teachers feel that the school is well resourced in the area of mathematics.

**Future directions**

• Professional learning for all teachers in understanding and implementing Australian Curriculum in mathematics.

• Continued collection and analysis of school data in mathematics linked to Numeracy continuum. This identifies gaps in students’ learning that can then be focused upon to move forward.

• 50% of Learning and Support teacher allocation used to support students who are underachieving in mathematics.

• School scope and sequence developed to link with Australian curriculum.

• 2 weekly planning cycles for teaching and learning implemented, focusing on student needs.

• Examine, share and implement best practice by reviewing and analysing data (including NAPLAN and PLAN).

**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.

Jan Rogers Principal
Daniel McKay Assistant Principal
Grace De Giorgio Assistant Principal
Noel Brown Assistant Principal
Stephanie Walker Learning and Support Teacher
Matt Thompson Classroom Teacher
Michele Carter Classroom Teacher
Rosanna Fenato Classroom Teacher

**School contact information**

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School Code: 1077

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