Principal’s message

It is with pleasure that I present the 2013 Annual School Report. This report outlines our students’ achievements throughout the year, monitors our progress towards our targets and identifies areas for ongoing school development during the three year cycle, 2012-2014. The report also highlights the broad range of programs and initiatives offered to students at Bolwarra Public School.

Congratulations to all students for their achievements during 2013. Our students performed at a number of events in dance, choir, sport, public speaking and special ceremonies. Students won writing and art competitions, excelled in literacy and numeracy competitions, represented us at Zone, Region and State in sport and made us all very proud of our school.

I thank teachers and support staff for their guidance and care given to our students throughout the year, and for the pride they take in their work and for the professionalism they exhibit as they carry out their daily tasks.

Parent and volunteer community members are also thanked for their willing support throughout the year. The partnership between parents and school staff is a defining feature of the Bolwarra community. The P&C have provided invaluable financial support throughout 2013 funding numerous programs and initiatives. A major achievement was the building of two new adventure playgrounds for our students, made possible with a $20,000 Community Partnership Grant from the NSW Government.

We fare-welled Assistant Principal Michelle Power after a long and dedicated career in teaching. Michelle was an exceptional educational leader who spent nearly 40 years teaching in various positions across NSW. We wish her all the best in her retirement.

We welcomed Assistant Principals Ashleigh Blayden and Penny Dimmock to our staff during 2013, replacing Bob Collier and Michelle Power. Ashleigh and Penny bring with them a wealth of experience managing and leading staff as well as a strong rapport with the communities in which they have taught. Welcome to Bolwarra Public School.

Throughout the year we participated in a number of events including a Welcome BBQ and Disco, Harmony Day, Grandparents Day, Book Week, Education Week, Anzac Ceremonies, Leadership Days, NAIDOC and Reconciliation celebrations, School Fun Run, Excursions to Point Wolstoncroft, Newcastle and Canberra, choir performances at the Opera House and Sydney Town Hall, Star Struck, various environmental and fun raising activities just to mention a few.

The Maitland Learning Community (MLC) logo and website was launched in Education Week, with banners presented to the participating schools. The MLC consists of Maitland High School and its feeder primary schools of Bolwarra Largs, Morpeth, Tenambit, Metford, Vacy, Iona, Mt Kanwary and Largs.

Thank you for yet another successful school 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.

Susan Swetnam, Principal
P & C message

The Bolwarra Public School P&C had a very successful year running a number of fundraising activities. A total profit of over $40,000 was raised between March and December 2013.

The year began with a *Welcome to Bolwarra BBQ and Disco* early in Term 1 to welcome new families to our school. A Bunnings Sausage Sizzle, election day market stalls and Grandparents Day fund-raiser was also organised. Various fundraisers occurred throughout the year including ‘special canteen days’, pie drives, raffles, Entertainment Books, Welcome Disco and BBQ Canteen ‘special day’

The Playground sub-Committee worked extremely hard throughout 2013 to co-ordinate the construction of two new playgrounds for our school. We received $20,000 from the State Government under the Community Building Partnership Program. The P&C contributed $20,000 to match the school’s contribution of $20,000 as the total cost for both playgrounds was $60,000.

None of these great fundraisers would have been possible without the fantastic dedication from our P&C Committee, volunteers, the school community and Bolwarra staff.

Leah Robson, P&C President

School Council message

During 2013 we welcomed many new families to Bolwarra with parents reporting that the move was a positive and rewarding experience.

Bolwarra is very fortunate to have such an active and effective School Council. Its members consist of school staff, the parent body and community representatives. School Council looks at and implements changes to various aspects of the school, its strategic planning and future directions, working with the principal and staff. Throughout 2012 and 2013 School Council sought advice from the local member and the Department about the growth of the school and the number of temporary buildings on our school site. Projections for future growth of the school were supported by past and present trends. The School Council also co-ordinated the bi-annual *Interrelate* program for students and parents in years 3-6.

The School Council throughout 2013 was also involved in the planning, construction and delivery of the double modular transportable classroom block. Construction of the building was made possible by a $500,000 grant from the NSW Government and funding from Public Works. It will be available for occupation by the first day of Term 1 2014.

Louise Trist and Leah Robson inspecting the construction of the new classrooms at Singleton.

School Council is a voice for all parents at our School and we actively encourage parents to express their opinions or to raise any issues by contacting members of the School Council.

Dr. Louise Trist, President School Council
Student representatives’ message

We feel privileged to have been elected the Student Leaders of Bolwarra Public School for 2013. Early in the year, the student Executive participated in a leadership course, run by the Maitland Learning Community. We came together with other leaders from primary schools in our area and learnt how to become better leaders.

We were given the task, at the beginning of the year, mentoring and supporting the new kindergarten students. We have watched our buddies develop into confident and resilient students and we are lucky to have been their mentors and friends.

2013 was a busy year for us as leaders. We have represented our school at Anzac Day ceremonies, the Lord Mayor’s Leadership Breakfast, at Parliament House in Canberra and at the Opera House. Within school we have led assemblies, chaired the Student Representative Council (SRC) weekly meetings, welcomed official guests, led various fund-raising activities to raise money for local charities, coordinated our Leadership Project and undertook Peer Support training.

Thank you to our teachers who have guided us through the last seven years of schooling and we look forward to going to high school. We will take wonderful memories of our time spent at Bolwarra Public School.

L-R: 2013 Student Executive Krishna Nagarajan - Prefect; Logan Smith-Vice Captain; Floyd Mallon -Captain; Katie Herden -Prefect; Claudia Shepherd-Vice Captain; Isabella Glenfield – Captain.

School context

Bolwarra Public School boasts a proud tradition of excellence in education and has served our community since 1852. As one of the high achieving public schools in our area we provide excellence through our academic, creative arts, gifted and talented, environmental and sporting programs. Bolwarra is a vibrant and evolving learning community of 417 students, their supportive families and an experienced teaching staff. The school is located within a community that is experiencing significant housing growth.

New modular, double classrooms.

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

We commenced the 2013 school year with 408 students enrolled, 202 males and 206 females. We finished the year with 423 students which allowed us to advertise for a 17th teacher position. Since 2007 the school has grown from 297 students to 423 by the end of 2013. At the end of the year work commenced on the construction and delivery of two new classrooms, in anticipation of increased enrolments for 2014.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>2007</th>
<th>2008</th>
<th>2009</th>
<th>2010</th>
<th>2011</th>
<th>2012</th>
<th>2013</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>180</td>
<td>175</td>
<td>181</td>
<td>177</td>
<td>181</td>
<td>201</td>
<td>202</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>117</td>
<td>109</td>
<td>123</td>
<td>132</td>
<td>163</td>
<td>192</td>
<td>206</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

![Graph of Student Enrolments 2007-2013](Image)
**Student attendance profile**

Attendance for 2013 was 95.5% which is consistently above the Hunter region and NSW State percentages.

Management of non-attendance

School attendance is monitored on a weekly basis by teaching, office staff and the principal. All students at Bolwarra attend class regularly and all absences are with parental permission. Parents usually contact the school on the day of the absence, by email or phone, explaining the reason for non-attendance. The Home School Liaison Officer audits the attendance patterns of our students each term.

Class sizes and structures

Primary class sizes are included in the annual school reports in order to provide parents with as much local information as possible. The following table shows our class sizes and structures, as reported at the 2013 Class Size Audit conducted on Monday 18th March 2013.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>2008</th>
<th>2009</th>
<th>2010</th>
<th>2011</th>
<th>2012</th>
<th>2013</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>K</td>
<td>94.9</td>
<td>96.8</td>
<td>96.6</td>
<td>96.4</td>
<td>97.1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>94.0</td>
<td>94.2</td>
<td>95.7</td>
<td>96.1</td>
<td>95.8</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>96.7</td>
<td>95.6</td>
<td>94.2</td>
<td>96.3</td>
<td>95.0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>94.7</td>
<td>95.1</td>
<td>95.4</td>
<td>95.1</td>
<td>96.0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>95.4</td>
<td>95.7</td>
<td>94.5</td>
<td>95.3</td>
<td>94.5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>96.4</td>
<td>95.9</td>
<td>95.1</td>
<td>94.6</td>
<td>95.6</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>92.7</td>
<td>94.9</td>
<td>95.6</td>
<td>95.5</td>
<td>94.1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>95.2</td>
<td>94.8</td>
<td>95.4</td>
<td>95.3</td>
<td>95.7</td>
<td>95.5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Region</th>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Total in class</th>
<th>Total per year</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>K</td>
<td>94.3</td>
<td>94.7</td>
<td>94.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>93.6</td>
<td>93.9</td>
<td>93.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>93.7</td>
<td>94.0</td>
<td>94.0</td>
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<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>93.7</td>
<td>94.0</td>
<td>93.8</td>
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<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>93.5</td>
<td>93.9</td>
<td>93.9</td>
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<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>93.4</td>
<td>93.7</td>
<td>93.6</td>
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<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>93.0</td>
<td>93.3</td>
<td>93.2</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>93.7</td>
<td>91.5</td>
<td>93.9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>State DEC</th>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Total in class</th>
<th>Total per year</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>K</td>
<td>94.3</td>
<td>94.7</td>
<td>94.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>93.7</td>
<td>94.2</td>
<td>94.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>94.0</td>
<td>94.4</td>
<td>94.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>94.1</td>
<td>94.5</td>
<td>94.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>94.0</td>
<td>94.5</td>
<td>94.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>94.0</td>
<td>94.4</td>
<td>94.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>93.6</td>
<td>94.0</td>
<td>93.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>94.1</td>
<td>92.1</td>
<td>94.4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In 2013 there were 16 classes catering for students from kindergarten to Year 6. Classes were formed on a stage basis, however two across stage classes were formed to meet the needs of students and the Department of Education and Communities staffing formulae.

**Workforce information**

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

**Workforce composition**

The staff at Bolwarra Public School consists of teams of highly dedicated professionals who exhibit a strong commitment to continued professional growth and development, with all staff holding extra curricula responsibilities.
There were 16 full time classroom teacher positions, with two of those positions ‘job share’ positions. Additional staff provided Library, Science and support for learning and counselling. The school administrative and support staff consists of two office staff and a three day per week library assistant. A general assistant is responsible for ground and building maintenance three days per week.

The Australian Education Regulation, 2013 requires schools to report on Aboriginal composition of their workforce. Two staff members identify as Indigenous.

Teacher qualifications

All teaching staff meets 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>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NSW Institute of Teachers Accreditation</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Financial summary

This summary covers funds for operating costs and does not involve expenditure areas such as permanent salaries, building and major maintenance.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date of financial summary</th>
<th>30/11/2013</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Income</td>
<td>$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Balance brought forward</td>
<td>171,522.20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Global funds</td>
<td>219,958.93</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tied funds</td>
<td>83,866.11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School &amp; community sources</td>
<td>208,152.38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interest</td>
<td>6,160.83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trust receipts</td>
<td>12,356.60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Canteen</td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total income</td>
<td>702,017.05</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Expenditure

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Teaching &amp; learning</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Key learning areas</td>
<td>32,773.84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Excursions</td>
<td>39,890.71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Extracurricular dissections</td>
<td>65,563.52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Library</td>
<td>4,212.58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Training &amp; development</td>
<td>2,583.89</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tied funds</td>
<td>78,988.39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Casual relief teachers</td>
<td>41,178.42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Administration &amp; office</td>
<td>49,115.40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School-operated canteen</td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Utilities</td>
<td>48,850.92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maintenance</td>
<td>26,331.04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trust accounts</td>
<td>12,157.54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Capital programs</td>
<td>96,302.23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total expenditure</td>
<td>497,948.48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Balance carried forward</td>
<td>204,068.57</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A full copy of the school’s 2013 financial statement is tabled at the annual general meetings of the School Council and the parent body. Further details concerning the statement can be obtained by contacting the school.
School performance 2013

Arts

Bolwarra continues its fine reputation as a school of outstanding ability in music and the performing arts. Students have had numerous opportunities to showcase their artistic and musical talents at events both inside and outside the school.

Over eighty students participated in the 2013 Star Struck performances in the mass choir, drama and dance segments.

Students from Year 3 to Year 6 participated in a variety of creative art competitions and excursions including Operation Art, Nagoya Art Exhibition, Stockland Star Competition and the Regional Art Gallery FACE exhibition. Three student works were selected for permanent exhibition in The Armory Gallery in Sydney’s Olympic Park precinct.

The Junior, Senior and Boys Choirs performed at the Sydney Opera House, Sydney Town Hall, Grandparents Day, Book Week, Education Week and Presentation Day. The Senior and the Boys Choirs entered the Lake Macquarie Choral Festival and were both successful in gaining First Place.

Fifteen students were selected to participate in the Maitland Drama Festival with ten of these students selected for the gifted and talented Regional Creative Arts Camp held at Myuna Bay Sport and Recreation Camp in August. From here four students were further selected to attend the Hunter Central Coast Primary Drama Showcase held in Newcastle in September.

The Write Now Writing Competition was run during 2013 by Maitland City Libraries and Newcastle University. The 2013 topic was Water in Our World and all children from Year 2 to Year 6 participated. The Competition was open to students from public, private and home schools in the Maitland area. Peggy Jakes, from year 6 won the Stage 3 section with Grace Bowd a runner-up.
Sport

The school offers a variety of quality sports programs and opportunities for individuals and teams to excel in local, zone, regional and state competitions.

The very popular Learn to Swim Program was conducted for a fourth successive year, in conjunction with Maitland High and Learn to Swim Australia. Students from year 2 to year 6 also competed in our Annual Swimming Carnival held at Maitland Pool with several students and teams progressing to the Zone level.

Bolwarra entered teams in the Primary Schools Sports Association (PSSA) competition in basketball, netball, soccer, cricket and Rugby Union. Our Girls Basketball team were Regional finalists.

Twelve students represented the school and the Hunter region in Athletics (Junior Boys Relay, Shot Put and 200m); Basketball; AFL; Cross Country and Hockey.

Our Athletics Carnival was held off-site for the first time in 2013, at Smythe Park Oval in Maitland. Here we had up-to-date facilities and room to accommodate our growing student numbers.

All students participated in a Golden Circle Fun Run in term 2. Fun run monies went towards the cost of installing two new playgrounds.

Dance2bfit was held for all students in term 3. The program is an energetic, innovative and fun way for students to get fit learning the latest dance styles to the hottest music tracks. This was a great program to improve the fitness levels of students while they were having a great time.
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 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)

Sixty two Year 3 students sat the literacy component of the NAPLAN test. Once again our Year 3 students out-performed the State and Region in reading as indicated by the table below and graph.

Year 3 girls were 21 scale scores above the State average in the test aspect of reading. It is pleasing to see the 75% of students achieving in the top three bands. As it is the last year of our 3 year Strategic Plan our focus on Reading has been very successful.
Grammar

Year 3 students also performed well in the grammar and punctuation strand of literacy, performing above State and regional scores.

Writing

Students were asked to write a persuasive text for the 2013 writing component of the test. The task was to choose a hero who deserved an award and convince an audience of their selection.

Student’s writing was then marked against ten criteria on its success as a persuasive piece of work. Criteria included audience, text structure, ideas, persuasive devices, vocabulary, cohesion, paragraphing, sentence structure, punctuation and spelling. Scores ranged between 0-6 for each criterion.

NAPLAN Year 3 - Numeracy

Sixty-two students completed the numeracy section of the test. The tests consisted of two components: Number, Patterns and Algebra, and Measurement, Data, Space and Geometry.
Student strengths were evident in number (subtraction and addition), chance, three dimensional space and length with seventy-three per cent of students in the top three bands.

**NAPLAN Year 5 - Literacy** (including Reading, Writing, Spelling and Grammar and Punctuation)

**Reading**

Fifty eight year 5 students sat the literacy component of the 2013 NAPLAN test. Bolwarra year 5 students out-performed their regional and State cohorts by 17 and 22 percentage points respectively. 78% of students scored in the top three bands (Bands 6, 7 and Band 8).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Skill Band Distribution</th>
<th>Average score, 2013</th>
<th>School</th>
<th>SSG</th>
<th>State DEC</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>522.3</td>
<td>505.1</td>
<td>500.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number in Bands</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percentage in Bands</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School Average 2009-2013</td>
<td>3.6</td>
<td>7.1</td>
<td>7.1</td>
<td>30.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SSG % in Bands 2013</td>
<td>3.8</td>
<td>6.9</td>
<td>22.1</td>
<td>28.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>State DEC % in Bands 2013</td>
<td>6.9</td>
<td>9.2</td>
<td>21.7</td>
<td>26.2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Strengths were noted in all areas of comprehension, especially applied and inferential, which has been a school target for the last two years.

**Spelling**

Year 5 spelling scores also highlighted the effort of staff in fine tuning our spelling programs.
Grammar scores were also well above State and Regional results, a trend over the last three years.

**NAPLAN Year 5 - Numeracy**

Fifty eight students also sat the numeracy component of NAPLAN.

A highlight of 2013 results was a 7 scale scores above the state average growth in numeracy for year 5 boys. Other strengths noted were in mass, data, fractions and decimals, three dimensional space, addition and subtraction and two dimensional space.

The two tables below show our year 3 and year 5 cohorts achieving at or above minimum standards.

**Percentage of Year 3 students achieving at or above minimum standard (exempt students included)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>School</th>
<th>SSG</th>
<th>State DEC</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reading</td>
<td>96.5</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Writing</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spelling</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grammar &amp; Punctuation</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Numeracy</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Percentage of Year 5 students achieving at or above minimum standard (exempt students included)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>School</th>
<th>SSG</th>
<th>State DEC</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reading</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Writing</td>
<td>92.9</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spelling</td>
<td>96.4</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grammar &amp; Punctuation</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Numeracy</td>
<td>94.5</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Other school based assessments- External examinations**

Students from year 2 to year 6 were given the opportunity to enter the University of NSW external competitions in Mathematics, English, Spelling, Writing, Science and Computer. Two hundred and fifty seven students entered the competitions with a total of 70 credits, 18 Distinctions and 3 High Distinctions awarded.
Other achievements

Public Speaking

Students from Bolwarra Public School were highly successful in local and regional public speaking competitions throughout 2013. Eight students (two from each stage) represented the school at the Hunter Central Coast Public Speaking Competition. The Stage 3 representatives won the Zone Competition and one student went on to achieve a highly commended at regional finals.

Once again our students were highly successful in the Multicultural Perspectives Public Speaking Competition run by the State Arts Unit. Four students represented the school, with two Stage 3 students gaining first and second at zone and one student given ‘highly commended’ at regional level. One Stage 2 student won the zone competition and progressed to be ‘highly commended’ at regional level.

Premier’s Spelling Bee

During 2013 all primary students from Bolwarra had the opportunity to participate in the Premier’s Spelling Bee Challenge. Three students were selected to participate at the regional level with one student, Alice Musgrove progressing to the State Finals held in Sydney.

Significant programs and initiatives

Aboriginal education

Our school is a proud member of the Dare to Lead National Coalition of schools across Australia. All students have had numerous opportunities to explore traditional Aboriginal Culture through the enriched teachings of Aboriginal perspectives within the curriculum and through hosting and celebrating special days of acknowledgement such as NAIDOC Week and National Aboriginal Children’s Day.

A special focus for 2013 was the construction of more plant beds and the installation of totem poles and seating in our Aboriginal Heritage Garden. Mr Roy Warry, student leaders and aboriginal students assisted in the design, construction and planting of selected species native to the area. Trae Moran and Chantelle Tanna, from Maitland High, designed and painted the tree totem poles which signify the three great Aboriginal nations bordering Bolwarra: the Wonnarua, Awabakal and Worrimi.
Multicultural education

The school promotes an all-inclusive school culture that supports tolerance and respect. Our families come from a diverse range of cultural backgrounds including Austrian, Malaysian, Middle Eastern, Ceylonese, German and French.

In Term 1 the school celebrated Harmony Day with a variety of classroom and school based activities which help create an awareness and appreciation of our multicultural society. Students learn how different cultures and religions contribute to our Australian identity.

Environmental Program

Bolwarra Public School continues to be a leader in environmental education. The program is enhanced by the Environmental Life Skills Program, sponsored by Maitland Mutual, which focusses on sustainability, environmental care.

Students earn ‘Enviro points’ by working in our organic gardens and orchard, mulching and tree planting and caring for the free range chickens. Points can be accumulated by recycling cans and ring tops, old uniforms, mobile phones, cardboard, paper, print cartridges and batteries.

Battery World presented Bolwarra students with a cheque for $1000 for the 1000kg of recycled batteries that was collected from our community.

Excursions

The students at Bolwarra have had numerous opportunities to participate in one day and overnight excursions that are embedded in the teaching and learning programs of the school and which enrich learning in the wider community.

Year 5 students participated in a five day excursion to Point Wolstoncroft and Year 6 students ventured off to Canberra for a four day excursion during Term 3.

Kindergarten to year 2 participated in one day trips to Oakvale Farm and the Reptile Park.
School planning and evaluation
2012—2014

School evaluation processes
NSW public schools conduct evaluations to support the effective implementation of the school plan, including the identification of priority areas, intended outcomes and targets that are consistent with the NSW State Plan and the Department’s planning documents. The processes used include:

- focused group discussions and feedback sought from parents, students and teachers;
- analyse and evaluation of the various data sets (school based and external) collected throughout 2013.

School planning 2012—2014: progress in 2013

School priority 1
Improved professional learning and teacher resources to support the implementation of the National Curriculum syllabi.

Outcomes from 2012–2014
National English Curriculum fully implemented.
National Mathematics Curriculum trialled.

Evidence of progress towards outcomes in 2013:

- Action Plan developed to guide the implementation of the English Curriculum.
- All staff trained in the theory and structure of the new curriculum through on-line and face-face training.
- Literacy leaders selected and trained by Maitland Learning Community staff.
- Units of work selected and trialled.

Strategies to achieve these outcomes in 2014:

- Action Plan developed to guide the implementation of the National Mathematics Curriculum.
- Selection and training of Numeracy leaders.
- Training of all staff in structure and theory of National Mathematics Curriculum.
- Teaching and learning programs and learning outcomes reflect the implementation of the National Curriculum in English.

School priority 2
All students have access to an inclusive, relevant, engaging and challenging curriculum.

Outcomes from 2012–2014
Improved social and emotional well-being and learning for all students.
Improved opportunities for all students identified as gifted and talented, maximizing their learning outcomes, to enhance engagement and attainment.
Improved procedures and systems focused on student welfare and data collection.

Evidence of progress towards outcomes in 2013:

- Training and development for all staff on the Literacy and Numeracy Continuums K-10.
- Training and development for all staff on DMGT characteristics of GATS students and year 2 cohort screened with parents, teacher and student nominations.
- Selected staff trained in Kidsmatter.
- Executive staff trained in Seasons for Growth and plan delivery Term 1 2014.

Strategies to achieve these outcomes in 2014:

- Introduce Seasons for Growth for identified students.
- Introduce Kidsmatter to all staff and implement the Better Buddies Program.
- Introduce Friendly Schools Plus Phase 1 to all staff and review existing whole school practices.
- Revise Student Welfare and Discipline Policy and procedures.
- Review LAST(Learning and Support Team) Policy and procedures.
School priority 3

Implement evidence based systems, structures and practices to meet the needs of a growing staff and student population.

Outcomes from 2012–2014

Quality systems established to monitor and track student outcomes.

Evidence of progress towards outcomes in 2013:

- Executive staff trained in implementation of PLAN (Planning Literacy and Numeracy) software.
- TARS (Teacher Assessment and Review) and EARS (Executive Assessment and Review Schedule) process aligned to National Teaching Framework and policy updated.
- Purchase of computerized Attendance Module and training of staff in its use.

Strategies to achieve these outcomes in 2014:

- All staff trained in use of PLAN software.
- Cohort literacy groups selected for each stage and plotted on PLAN continuums.
- Playground, classroom and Planning Room procedures reviewed to improve data capture.
- Use of new PARS and EARS Policy for all staff.
- Executive staff trained in SALM (Student Administration Learning Management) in particular Student Wellbeing and Student Management.

Professional learning

Each year the school is allocated funding to provide opportunities for professional development of all staff. Professional development focuses on our school plan, compliance training and the implementation of school targets. During 2013 staff participated in:

- Weekly professional learning meetings before and after school;
- Groups of teachers released during the day for professional development;
- Individual teachers attending courses in and out of school hours;
- Focus committees meeting before and after school;
- Five School Development Days.

Areas addressed included mandatory training for asthma, anaphylaxis, diabetes, child protection, work health and safety, CPR and First Aid. Curriculum focus was on training for all staff in the National English Curriculum, behavior, autism, spelling, comprehension, problem solving in mathematics, technology, student welfare and discipline, Kidsmatter and Seasons for Growth.

Parent/caregiver, student, and teacher satisfaction

In 2013, the school sought the opinions of parents, students and teachers about the school. Through discussion at school forums and focus group meetings, organized by the school, P&G, Student and School Council meetings, opinion was gained on parent and student satisfaction. The overall satisfaction level of the school was high, particularly in relation to school culture and leadership.

Parents indicated that there was an improvement in communication about teaching and learning programs through grade content overviews, parent information evenings and Classroom
Capers in the weekly newsletter. The Parent’s Facebook page also assisted parents with sudden changes to school events and routines, as well as reminders for upcoming events.

Program evaluations - Reading

Background

Reading has been a major focus for Bolwarra over the last three years. Kindergarten to Year 2 school results indicates students with sound sight vocabulary, good phonemic awareness and achievement of School and Regional benchmark reading targets. In years 3 to 6 a more inclusive approach is used to teach reading which focuses on oral fluency and accuracy and comprehension. Learning Assistance Support Teachers (LAST’s) complement the teaching of reading by providing focused instruction, at point of need, for students not achieving benchmarks.

Findings and conclusions

The school determined that they need to strengthen processes and structures to meet the increased enrolments and classes at Bolwarra.

Future directions

- Identified L3 as a successful program for kindergarten to year 2;
- Use the expertise of new staff to introduce the Daily 5 program of L3;
- Identify Focus on Reading as a successful program and utilize expertise of new staff in incorporating strategies and training of the program;
- Purchase new resources to address increase enrolments and the requirements of the L3 program.

- Sustainability of social and emotional programs that foster student engagement.

Background

Social and emotional learning continued to be integrated into whole school programs through Program Achieve, but is it sustainable as the school grows?

Findings and conclusions

The school needs to embed social and emotional learning into the teaching and learning culture of the school as it continues to grow and extend and enrich existing programs to meet student needs.

Future directions

- On-going focus on training and development for new and existing staff on social emotional learning (SEL);
- Key staff trained in Kidsmatter and join membership of Better Buddies Program;
- Key staff trained in Seasons for Growth;
- Continue Peer Support training for Year 5 and Year 6 students as peer mentors;
- Implement scope and sequence of SEL across 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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Leah Robson, P&C President
Penny Dimmock, Assistant Principal Stage 3
Ashleigh Blayden, Assistant Principal Stage 2
Lee Moore, Assistant Principal Stage 1
Peter Allen, Classroom teacher
Mark Taylor, Classroom teacher
Merena McLaren, Teacher-librarian
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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: