



4197

2012

Blacksmiths Public School  
Annual School Report

## Our school at a glance

### Students

At the end of 2012, our enrolments totalled 139 students, 68 boys and 71 girls.

Students were divided into five classes, Kindergarten/Year 1, Year 1/2, Year 2/3, Year 4/5 and Year 5/6.

### Staff

During the year our staff numbers remained constant, though we experienced some changes in personnel, due to some staff taking leave and one accepting an appointment at another school.

Our staff at the end of 2012 comprised:

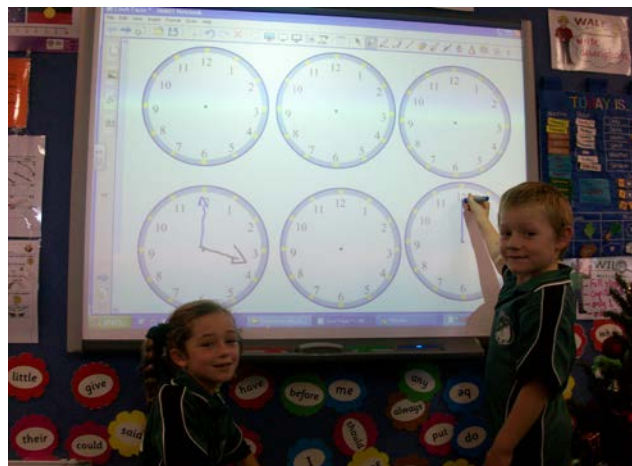
Teaching Principal	Leeanne Young
Assistant Principal (relieving)	Mark Schasser
Classroom teachers	Ellen Smith Robyn Hellier Lisa Brownsmith Laurindah Taylor- Hambleton
STLA/RFF	Leeanne Young
Teacher-Librarian (relieving)	Amanda McLean
Admin Manager	Vanessa Clark
Admin Officer	Margaret White
Learning Support Officer	Sharon Reid
Cleaner	Sue Chambers
General Assistants	Bob Chambers Wally Stevancevic Steve Wilmott

### Significant programs and initiatives

Our school provides a range of programs for students, designed to engage their interest, develop various academic and non-academic skills and allow them experiences which enhance their growth and development. In 2012 we:

- Extended our GATS (Gifted and Talented Students) programs, to cater more fully for students excelling in Maths.

- Participated in Starstruck, with 21 students performing in a dance item.
- Continued our dance program, with infants, junior and senior groups, giving every student the opportunity to participate.



- Continued the Year 3-6 choir.
- Expanded our environmental program.
- Participated in a bicycle safety and maintenance program and national Walk to School Day to promote road safety.
- Provided opportunities for students to participate in a range of external competitions, academic, cultural and sporting.
- Continued our whole school Public Speaking program, including participation in the Galgamba and zone finals.
- Implemented our Kindergarten Orientation and Year 6-7 transition programs to make transitions easier and more effective for students and staff.
- Successfully applied for a number of grants to obtain resources for our school, including:
  1. \$2500 from Pelican RSL Club to create an art mural at the entrance to the school, involving every student.
  2. \$2630 from the Live Life Well at School Foundation, to purchase

and install an extra oven in the canteen, to cater for cooking classes.

3. \$2947 from Climate Clever to research and purchase energy saving resources for the school.
  4. \$2500 from Eco Schools to plant an orchard.
  5. \$878 from the Premier's Sporting Challenge.
- In Book Week, Mrs Hellier organised a very successful parade and book fair, where students were invited to dress up according to the theme "Champions Read". Year 5 students narrated the parade.
  - Successfully competed in a range of sporting competitions and gala days, giving many students the opportunity to represent our school.
  - Provided a range of opportunities for Years 5 & 6 students to develop and demonstrate leadership skills in academic, cultural, environmental and sporting areas.

## **Student achievement in 2012**

### **Naplan**

In 2012, our Naplan results reflected the hard work put in over a number of years and validated the teaching and learning programs in our school.

### **Literacy Naplan Year 3**

100% of our students achieved or exceeded national benchmarks for writing, grammar and punctuation and spelling, while 95% achieved or exceeded the benchmark for reading.

### **Numeracy Naplan Year 3**

100% of our students achieved or exceeded national benchmarks for numeracy.

### **Literacy Naplan Year 5**

In Year 5, 100% of our students were at or above benchmarks for reading and grammar and punctuation, 93% for writing and spelling.

### **Numeracy Naplan Year 5**

100% of our Year 5 students achieved or exceeded national benchmarks for numeracy.

## **Messages**

### **Principal's message**

2012 has been a highly successful and productive year at Blacksmiths Public School, academically and in many other areas.

The school, staff and wider community have continued to work together to achieve optimal outcomes for our students.

We have continued our commitment to providing the very best technology for teaching and learning, with the purchase of more computers, digital cameras for student use and a number of netbooks.

Our students again excelled in the sporting arena, locally and at state and national level.

Similarly, to provide a balance, students were given many opportunities to be involved in the arts, environmental and academic programs, both within and outside the school.

I continue to take great pride in not only the achievements, but also the attitudes of our students, and look forward with great anticipation to the challenges and rewards of 2013.

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.

**Leeanne Young**

### **P & C message**

The school enjoys many benefits as a result of the small but dedicated, hardworking P and C.

2012 was our 50<sup>th</sup> birthday and the P and C market night held in conjunction with the celebrations was a big success and the major fundraiser for the year.

During the year, the P and C supported the school with significant contributions of resources including computer purchase and installation, new atlases, dictionaries and reading resources, Mathletics computer program for all students, upgrade of canteen facilities and assisting with the improved networking facilities.

These resources benefit all the children and staff in the school.

We also assisted with funding towards a mural for the school to celebrate our 50<sup>th</sup> year.

The P and C would like to thank all those local businesses who support our school, especially Pelican RSL and Hollebones Meats, whose ongoing assistance is very much appreciated.

We thank everyone for their support in 2012 and look forward to doing it all again next year.

Damien Connell P and C President

## **Student representative's message**

### **School leaders**

Being school leaders has been a great opportunity for all of us. Being able to represent the school that we love and speak in front of people on lots of occasions such as Anzac Day, Remembrance Day and our 50<sup>th</sup> birthday has given us lots of confidence and improved our skills.

We have also enjoyed being trusted with the responsibility of running assemblies and special occasions, attending leader's lunches, and talking to Miss Young about how we can improve the school.



We have also enjoyed being trusted with the responsibility of running assemblies and special occasions, attending leader's lunches, and talking to Miss Young about how we can improve the school.

We were proud to be role models for the other students and to help them when we could.

It has been a great honour to be school leaders and we wore our badges with pride.

We wish next year's leaders all the best and hope they get as much out of leading our school as we have.

**Makensie, Tahnae, Taj and Jack**

### **Sport leaders**

Being sport leaders was a great opportunity for us as we got to help out at school carnivals and motivate children to participate.

We were also proud to assist with Presentation Day, handing out trophies and awards. It was lots of fun and something we will remember for a long time.

Go Binda and Biwong!

**Bryce, Layla, Kyle and Haylee**

### **Environment Leaders**

Being environment leaders has opened up experiences for us which have taught us a lot and given us more confidence. We will always remember being a leader in the garden, counting the packaging on Nude Food Days, and speaking at assemblies.

We like how the whole school gets to work in the garden and create it ourselves.

### Tyler and Layla



## 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

Gender	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
Male	65	62	66	68	72	69
Female	58	64	70	71	59	56

During 2012, our enrolments remained fairly steady. By the end of the year, however, a small number of families had left the school due to work commitments, once again reducing our numbers.

At the end of the year, we had 118 enrolments, 64 boys and 54 girls.

The majority of our students are from English speaking backgrounds, but we also have students from Indonesian, Samoan, French, Thai, Khmer and Macedonian backgrounds.

We have 3 students of Aboriginal descent.

### Student attendance profile

The attendance rates at Blacksmiths Public School in 2012 were, while satisfactory, impacted by overseas holidays and illness in some cases.

Year	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
K		95.0	94.4	96.6	95.9
1		94.2	97.1	92.4	94.0
2		96.1	95.0	95.2	93.0
3		94.5	96.2	96.3	93.5
4		94.2	94.5	94.1	94.8
5		93.9	93.4	94.6	92.8
6		93.6	91.8	91.6	92.4
<b>Total</b>	<b>94.1</b>	<b>94.4</b>	<b>94.3</b>	<b>94.4</b>	<b>93.7</b>

### Management of non-attendance

Non-attendance is managed in accordance with departmental procedures. Teachers initially discuss any attendance issues with parents and carers. If the concern continues, Home School Liaison Officers are involved to work together with the school and family to set out a clear plan to improve attendance.

### Staff information

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



## Staff establishment

Position	Number
Principal	1
Deputy Principal(s)	
Assistant Principal(s)	1
Head Teachers	
Classroom Teachers	4
Teacher of Emotional Disabilities	
Teacher of Mild Intellectual Disabilities	
Teacher of Reading Recovery	
Support Teacher Learning Assistance	.2
Teacher Librarian	.2
Teacher of ESL	
Counsellor	.1
School Administrative & Support Staff	1.4
<b>Total</b>	<b>7.9</b>

The National Education Agreement requires schools to report on Indigenous composition of their workforce.

At this time, our workforce does not include any indigenous staff.

## Staff retention

Whilst our staff numbers remained stable, we had some changes in personnel during the year.

At the end of 2011, Mrs Smith took leave to teach overseas, with her classroom position being filled by Mrs Hambleton, who has worked in our school since 2010, and was therefore well known by staff and students.

During Term 4, Miss Garry took maternity leave, which will continue into 2013. Her position was filled temporarily by the return of Mrs Smith.

Our teacher-librarian, Ms Stoppini, was appointed to another school, with her position filled by Ms McLean.

Our General Assistant, Mr Chambers was on extended leave, with his position filled by Mr Stevancevic and Mr Wilmott.

## Teacher qualifications

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

Qualifications	% of staff
Degree or Diploma	80
Postgraduate	20

## Financial summary

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

Date of financial summary	30/11/2012
<b>Income</b>	\$
Balance brought forward	55586.39
Global funds	103247.50
Tied funds	43004.80
School & community sources	36352.75
Interest	3179.41
Trust receipts	9149.90
Canteen	0.00
<b>Total income</b>	<b>194934.36</b>
<b>Expenditure</b>	
Teaching & learning	
Key learning areas	26036.31
Excursions	6911.92
Extracurricular dissections	11744.86
Library	1677.41
Training & development	423.94
Tied funds	44927.62
Casual relief teachers	11003.74
Administration & office	27811.27
School-operated canteen	0.00
Utilities	11860.44
Maintenance	19373.88
Trust accounts	8477.77
Capital programs	0.00
<b>Total expenditure</b>	<b>170249.16</b>
<b>Balance carried forward</b>	<b>80271.59</b>

A full copy of the school's 2012 financial statement is tabled at the annual general meeting of the P and C. Further details concerning the statement can be obtained by contacting the school.

## School performance 2012

Blacksmiths Public School prides itself on providing the opportunities and the environment necessary for our students to develop the skills, knowledge, attitudes and values which will allow them to thrive both at school and within the wider community.

We value academic achievement and continually strive to improve learning outcomes for all our students. At the same time, in our quest to develop well rounded, socially competent individuals who see challenges as opportunities and failure as a way of learning, we also place a high level of importance on the sporting, creative and extra curricular activities of our students.

## **Achievements**

### **Arts**

At Blacksmiths Public School we provide opportunities for students in a wide range of creative and artistic areas including music, choir, dance, drama and visual arts.

In Term 3 we were visited by the team from Raw Art. Teachers with expertise in this area presented 90 minute workshops where every student had the opportunity to participate in the creation of an artwork or sculpture. The results were amazing and the children were justifiably proud of their efforts.

Mrs Brownsmith conducted a technology club catering for students with an interest and/or talent in this area. Students were able to use the digital still camera, video camera and computers in their work.



In Term 4, we presented a Christmas Celebration involving every student in the school, incorporating dance, singing, music and poetry. Students were not only involved in presenting items and compering the night, but also acted as props organisers. The event also involved a

community Christmas dinner, organized by the P and C and was warmly received by the community.

Miss Young worked with students, both boys and girls, from Year 2 to Year 6 in a number of dance groups, practising at lunch time and before school. Students performed a number of items at our Christmas Celebration. These groups are all non-selective, allowing all interested students to participate, learning the necessary discipline and experiencing the nervousness and joy of performing. They also provide an opportunity for senior students to act in a leadership role, assisting with the junior groups.

The primary choir, led by Miss Garry, also gave up lots of lunchtimes to learn their items, while infants students experienced music and singing lessons in class.

Mrs Hellier worked with a very talented and dedicated group of girls who participated in Starstruck, spending many hours learning, rehearsing and organising.

Public speaking skills across the school continue to develop and improve. This year we again held our whole school program and competition, with stage winners representing us at the Galgabba and zone finals.

### **Sport**

The school continues to cater for all students through our diverse sports programs.

These activities include regular physical education programs, school sport, inter-school gala days and carnivals. These programs have contributed to a number of very successful outcomes in 2012.

In swimming, the school was again successful in winning both the Zone Small Schools Trophy and the Handicap Points Score Trophy. This is the seventh year in a row the school has won both these trophies. Three students qualified for the Regional Carnival while one student also qualified and competed at the State Championships.

In Cross Country, for the 11th year in a row, the school won both the Zone Small Schools Trophy and the Handicap Points Score Trophy and finished second overall at the zone carnival by a very small margin. Eight students went on to represent at Regional level, with four of these

students qualifying and competing at the State Championships.

In Athletics, the school won the Small Schools and Handicap Points Score Trophies at the Zone Carnival. Five students qualified for the Regional Carnival with one student also qualifying for the State Athletic Championships.

The Blacksmiths Bulls Rugby League team won the Paul Harragon Cup for the second year in a row, against private and public schools from all over the Newcastle region, going through the competition undefeated. This is the third time the team has won the Cup over the last four years.

After winning the Paul Harragon Cup the Bulls represented the Newcastle region at the Telstra State Legends Shield against winners from all over the state. The team played 5 tough matches, with 3 wins and 2 draws, and overall finished equal 5<sup>th</sup> in the State.



Four boys also gained selection in the Eastlakes Rugby League team. One student then went on to earn selection as halfback for the N.S.W. Rugby League team where he travelled to Queensland to compete in the week-long national competition. This was a first for Blacksmiths Public School.

Also a first for the school was the selection of a student in the Hunter Primary Schools Golf team. She was the only female in the Hunter squad and competed in Sydney against primary students from across the state.

Blacksmiths also entered four mixed touch football teams and four mixed netball teams at local gala day events, with all teams very successful. One boy was also selected in the Regional Touch Football team.

Our school continued its participation in the Premiers' Sports Leadership Program, where students demonstrating leadership qualities were given the opportunity to develop their skills in a variety of sports.

## Other

During the year, students participated in a number of excursions to complement class programs and to develop valuable social skills.

- Year 6 students enjoyed an end of year two day excursion to Point Woollstoncroft Sport and Recreation Camp, experiencing a number of activities including sailing, kayaking, archery and high ropes.
- The whole school participated in an excursion to the Australian Reptile Park.
- Year 6 students enjoyed a day at the Science and Engineering Challenge, run by the University of Newcastle. After a day of challenging problem solving tasks, our students were placed third overall.

## 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 these assessments.

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

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

In 2012, our school's Naplan results were, once again, very pleasing.

Of particular note is the growth from Year 3 to Year 5. In all areas of literacy and numeracy assessed, our growth was above the state average, a testament to the quality of teaching and learning programs in our school.



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*.

## Significant programs and initiatives

### Aboriginal education

Aboriginal education is addressed at both classroom and whole school level.

In class, students learn about Aboriginal history and perspectives as part of HSIE units on Australian history, and also where relevant during other lessons, including studies of Aboriginal art and literacy.

Aboriginal perspectives are also addressed at a whole school level at various times, including Australia Day and NAIDOC Week.

All Aboriginal students have an Individual Education Program (IEP), which addresses their particular needs and is monitored on an ongoing basis.

In Term 4, staff attended a professional learning day to investigate Aboriginal sites of significance in the local area and began work on our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education Action Plan.

### Multicultural education

Multicultural perspectives are included in class and school programs where relevant and practical. An appreciation for the diversity of all cultures is developed through studies in HSIE in all grades.

Senior students learn about different religions and also study specific cultures and countries, including Indonesia and Antarctica.

In Term 3, a number of classes participated in the Global Children's Challenge, where we walked our way around the world, visiting children in other countries on our virtual tour, raising awareness of global issues and increasing fitness.



### Student Leadership

The school has a strong focus on giving students a real and meaningful voice in the decisions which affect them and their school.

Every year, four school leaders are elected by the student body. They are responsible for running assemblies and school functions, representing the school at community events and presenting student views, concerns and ideas to the principal at regular leader's lunches.

The sport leaders, also elected by students, assist with the running of all sporting carnivals and with our annual Presentation Day.

Students also have leadership roles in environment, dance and other areas, where they are encouraged to show and develop initiative, responsibility and have a voice in decision making.

Apart from elected leaders, all students are encouraged to have an opinion, express it respectfully and to develop ideas and initiatives which may improve the school. Recently, this has included students organising fund raising events, writing to local businesses with suggestions for improving waste management, running activities for younger students at lunch time and selecting charities for the school to support.

### Sustainability Education

The school continues to be a leader and innovator in sustainability education.

In 2012, we were awarded the Lake Macquarie School's Innovation Award for our work in waste management. Our school has a binless playground, where students are encouraged to

bring waste free lunchboxes and any non recyclable waste goes back home.

We have worm farms, recycling bins in all rooms and offices and compost bins to recycle what waste we can.

Every class learns about different aspects of sustainable living, including energy, waste, water and biodiversity.

Students have created native, herb and vegetable gardens and every student spends time in our organic vegetable patch. In 2012 we received a grant to install a new oven which, in 2013, will allow students to cook the produce we grow.

### **Connected Learning**

The use of technology by both staff and students to engage, remediate, extend and teach students is a high priority at Blacksmiths Public School.

All classes have Interactive White Boards and a minimum of eight computers, which are in constant use.

Staff undergo professional development and sharing on a regular basis to update their skills.

At the end of 2012, we purchased a set of portable netbooks for use by senior students, and the P and C are providing funds to purchase a set of Ipads for student use, further extending our capacity to provide relevant and meaningful lessons involving current technology.

We also invested in wireless technology throughout the school, which will be installed early in 2013.

### **Community Involvement**

Our school enjoys wonderful support from parents and the local community and we appreciate the chance for our students to be involved in community events and functions.

Some results of our great relationship with the local community have been:

- Generous support once again from Pelican RSL, developing community links which allowed us to purchase equipment and develop additional programs for students.

- Support from the Swansea Men's Shed, who ran a bicycle maintenance course for our 4/5 students and hope to become more involved with the school in 2013.
- A bike safety course run by Lake Macquarie Council.
- Year 6 students attended the Science and Engineering Challenge run by Newcastle University and Rotary. They worked in teams to solve a range of problems, and were obviously successful, finishing third for their accumulated scores over the day.
- Community members working in our classrooms, assisting with excursions, working in the gardens, on canteen, and participating in reading, cooking and craft classes.
- Anzac and Remembrance Day ceremonies at both Pelican and Swansea, where our leaders participated in the ceremony and laid wreaths, and a number of students marched in parades.

### **Progress on 2012 targets**

Our 2012 targets included a focus on improving literacy and numeracy outcomes for all students, and further improving numeracy outcomes for high achieving students.

#### **Target 1**

- Increase % of students achieving greater than or equal to expected growth in Y3-5 in reading to 68% in 2012 (from 58% in 2011).

Our achievements include:

- 67% of Year 5 students achieved greater than or equal to expected growth in reading in 2012, only 1% below our target.
- Most class programs and results demonstrate effective guided reading programs are occurring.
- Staff report satisfaction with resources provided to effectively teach guided reading, with more still needed in senior classes.

- Every K-4 student, including those previously uninvolved, participating in home reading program.
- Class programs demonstrate improving differentiation to cater for needs of all students in reading
- Naplan style questions included as part of comprehension program to familiarize students with format and how to answer.
- K-2 continuum being used to effectively track infants students in reading and to target individual needs.

### Target 2

- Increase % of students achieving greater than or equal to expected growth in Y3-5 numeracy to 78% in 2012 (from 68% in 2011.)

Our achievements include:

- 83% of students achieved greater than or equal to expected growth in numeracy in 2012, exceeding our target of 78%.
- Staff participated in significant training with the numeracy consultant, resulting in a more consistent approach to the teaching of numeracy concepts.
- Teachers using SENA data and continuum to inform programming, monitor progress and set individual targets.
- Teachers more confident and competent in using technology as part of maths programs, resulting in improved student engagement.
- All staff explicitly teaching problem solving strategies for word problems, with students demonstrating increased understanding.

### Target 3

- Increase % of students achieving in top 2 bands (proficiency level) in Year 5 numeracy to 35% in 2012 (from 25%, 2009 – 2011 average.)

Our achievements include:

- 29% of Year 5 students achieved at proficiency level in 2012, an increase

from 2011, but slightly below our target of 35%.

- GATS (Gifted and Talented Students) policy has been updated and is being implemented.
- Teaching programs demonstrate that GATS students are increasingly being catered for in numeracy.
- STLA (Support teacher Learning Assistance) spent time assisting with curriculum differentiation in Stage 2 and 3 classes for numeracy.

### Target 4

- At least 75% of K-2 students will achieve grade appropriate Early Arithmetic Strategies levels by Term 4 2012. (Kinder Perceptual, Year 1 Figurative, Year 2 Counting On)

Our achievements include:

- Over 90% of K-2 students achieved grade appropriate Early Arithmetic Strategies levels by the end of term 4, 2012.
- All K-2 students are assessed and monitored using Best Start and SENA (Schedule for early Number Assessment) data on an ongoing basis.
- K-2 staff using the Early Learning Continuum to track students and program to meet individual needs.
- Monitoring shows all students are making progress in numeracy.
- K-2 staff confident in catering for individual numeracy needs.

### School evaluation

NSW public schools conduct evaluations to support the effective implementation of the school plan. In 2012 our school carried out evaluations of guided reading across the school, and the impact of professional learning on the teaching of numeracy.

## **Numeracy evaluation**

### **Background**

In order to improve numeracy results for our students, we felt it was important to first assess how we currently teach numeracy across the school. A survey was developed for staff, parents and senior students.

### **Findings and conclusions**

#### Parent Survey

The parent survey focused on whether or not parents felt they had enough information about teaching practices and expectations in numeracy, the use of technology and what further information they required.

Whilst all parents who returned surveys said that they had confidence that the teacher would contact them if there was a problem with their child's learning in any area, including numeracy, 80% stated that they would like to be more informed as to what the numeracy expectations were for each grade. This would enable them to better support learning at home.

95% of respondents felt that their child's individual needs were being catered for in numeracy, while all respondents agreed that a strong foundation in maths is vital.

All respondents also agreed that technology, used effectively, is a useful tool for developing and practising number skills.

#### Staff Survey

The staff survey was developed to assess the impact of professional learning conducted in 2012, use of technology and how we could improve in this area and the teaching of word problems.

All staff agreed that the training (Best Start, Maths Consultant and other), had impacted significantly upon the structure of their maths lessons. All felt that the ignition activities and the specific tasks to help students move along the continuum were particularly useful. Also, the more defined lesson structure, particularly giving students the "goal" at the start of the lesson, helped children to focus and stay on task.

A number of staff stated that the training had made them question their current teaching practices and reflect more constructively upon what worked and why.

While teachers were already grouping students for numeracy, some had changed the way they grouped (criteria) after the training.

Staff also benefited from learning about new resources and strategies and all agreed that technology (including Mathletics which all classes currently use) was beneficial in both engaging and supporting students in their numeracy learning.

While staff approach the teaching of word problems slightly differently in each stage, due to the children's ability and maturity, all use a version of the Newman's Analysis steps, creating continuity for students.

### **Future directions**

In 2013, in response to the findings, we will endeavour to give more information about numeracy to parents.

Initially, teachers will give a term overview of the topics being taught each term, and we will encourage parents who have any questions to see the teacher.

We will survey parents to find out exactly what they would like to know and will then present a workshop to meet these needs. This would also include information on useful technology tools which can be accessed at home for drill and practice of skills.

We will also create a list of basic numeracy expectations for each grade, which, from 2014, will go home at the beginning of each year.

In terms of technology, we will continue to use the Mathletics program and will also source other programs to meet needs in each grade, with a particular focus on remediation and extension.

While all staff noted the benefits of the training conducted, there is a feeling that we now need time to consolidate and modify our learning. Therefore, in 2013, staff will be given both support and time to discuss changes needed, include them in programming and implement them into lessons, as part of the Teacher Assessment and Review Schedule (TARS).

Time for professional sharing is also important and will be included during regular curriculum meetings.



## Guided reading evaluation

### Background

An evaluation of guided reading practices was conducted to assess consistency, resource availability, professional learning needs and future directions. A survey was developed for all staff and a staff forum was held. Naplan, Best Start and school based data were also assessed.

### Findings and conclusions

Whilst all classes include a guided reading program, there are some differences in implementation between the infants and senior classes.

The focus in infants classes is very much on the skills and strategies (the mechanics of reading), while in the primary classes the focus shifts more to comprehension strategies.

All teachers use a range of data to group students, with benchmarking and Best Start assessment a significant factor in K-2. Groups are constantly changing as students develop.

All teachers noted the importance of the small group tuition to their overall reading program and generally devoted about an hour per day to it.

Things which sometimes presented difficulties when running a successful guided reading program included finding effective, meaningful tasks for students not working with the teachers' group, lack of available parent helpers with younger classes and insufficient resources, particularly for some identified text types.

All staff devoted time to specifically teaching comprehension skills, but each in slightly different ways.

### Future directions

In 2013, we will set aside funding to purchase texts for specific text types, and will ask the P and C to also support this. In particular, we will look at multi-media resources to support implementation of the new English curriculum. This will also require staff training in how to effectively use them.

We will look at ways to encourage more parent helpers in the infants' classes, and also the

possibility of a buddy reading program with senior students.

Some staff development time will be devoted to exploring resources and sharing ideas for new tasks to use for groups not working with teacher. The Best Start Literacy and Numeracy coordinator will be contacted for advice in this area.

Significant time will be spent "unpacking" the new English curriculum and in training staff in the "Super Six" comprehension strategies, to promote consistency across the school.

## Parent, student, and teacher satisfaction

In 2012 the school sought the opinions of parents, students and teachers about the school.

Their responses are presented below.

Parents were invited to complete a survey covering all areas of school life.



Responses were very positive, with all respondents agreeing that children's needs are well catered for academically, particularly those requiring extra help. One parent felt that more could be done to extend older students who excel in English, while all agreed that the range of student needs is well catered for in other areas.



This will be an area for staff discussion and training in 2013.

All respondents were very happy with the opportunities for students in the Creative and Performing Arts, technology and environment areas. Comments included “excellent, well organized, awesome, brilliant and exceptional.”

In the sporting area, respondents all liked the term sports such as gymnastics and tennis. All agreed that the class and school sport programs provided lots of opportunities for students, while one parent commented that a learn to swim program would be appreciated and one wished there were more representative opportunities for younger students.

In terms of communication, most parents were happy, though one commented that the newsletter could be weekly, rather than fortnightly, while another noted that the school website is not always up to date. This will be addressed in 2013.

All respondents agreed that parents had lots of opportunities to be involved in the school, while one commented that “the kids are always happy to come through the gate, so you must be doing something right!”

## **Professional learning**

Throughout the year, all staff were involved in professional learning in a range of areas, based on needs identified in the school plan, mandatory training and individual needs.

The main focus areas selected by staff for 2012 were curriculum differentiation in maths, effective integration of technology for teaching and learning and quality reading programs.

The district maths consultant was engaged to run a series of workshops which proved to be very successful in giving staff tools to differentiate the maths curriculum and promote consistency in how maths is taught in the school.

Teachers shared ideas and resources related to technology use for teaching and learning.

IT personnel worked with staff to identify needs and provide advice about appropriate infrastructure to support effective technology integration.

A staff member attended training on vocabulary and grammar teaching, and will share that with all staff in 2013.

Staff also attended workshops on numerical literacy, teaching children with a range of disabilities, library training, a range of different literacy and numeracy courses, Best Start, ICT and problem solving strategies.

During the year, the principal was also involved in training on the new Australian curriculum, Local Schools, Local Decisions and Every Student, Every School.

## **School planning 2012—2014**

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

### **School priority 1**

#### **Outcome for 2012–2014**

Improve school results in literacy

#### **2013 Targets to achieve this outcome include:**

- Increase % of students achieving greater than or equal to expected growth in Y3-5 reading to 78% in 2013 (from 67% in 2012)
- The percentage of students achieving expected growth in Year 5-7 reading will be equal to or greater than the state average

#### **Strategies to achieve these targets include:**

- Provide staff with time for shared programming and evaluation of guided reading programs to share expertise and promote consistency.
- Access staff training in curriculum differentiation in reading to ensure that individual needs are being catered for.
- Allocate some LAST time to support staff in provision of differentiated curriculum in reading, with a particular focus on comprehension.

- Monitor staff skills and student needs in an ongoing manner to ensure that LAST role is flexible and responsive to emergent needs.
- Include NAPLAN style, multiple choice questions as part of comprehension tasks, and explicitly teach skills for answering.
- Evaluate current resources available for guided reading and purchase new ones as required, with a focus on multi media texts.
- Access training as required to upskill staff in integrating technology into reading programs.
- Access training as available to familiarise staff with new English syllabus, ready for implementation in 2014.

## School priority 2

### Outcome for 2012–2014

Improve school numeracy results

Improve outcomes and achievements for high achieving students

#### 2013 Targets to achieve this outcome include:

- The percentage of students achieving expected growth in Year 5-7 numeracy will be equal to or greater than the state average
- Increase % of students achieving in top 2 bands (proficiency level) in Year 5 numeracy to 35 % in 2013 (from 24% 2010-2012 average)
- At least 85% of K-2 students will achieve Early Arithmetic Strategies levels by Term 4 2013

#### Strategies to achieve these targets include:

- Analyse NAPLAN and school based data to identify individual and school based needs, then use data to program to meet needs.
- Every student in Years 3-6 has individual numeracy targets, set collaboratively by teacher and student. These will be monitored and adjusted on an an going basis.
- NAPLAN style, multiple choice questions included as part of class numeracy programs from Years 1-6, with teachers explicitly teaching skills for answering.

- LAST teacher supports Stage 2 and 3 teachers in providing differentiated curriculum in numeracy, with a particular focus on catering for high achieving students.
- Technology used to engage, remediate and extend students in numeracy.
- Purchase ICT resources as required to support teaching and learning in numeracy.
- LAST teacher supports staff in implementing specific strategies for numeracy teaching learnt during professional learning in 2012, including WALT (What are we learning today?), WILF (What am I looking for?) and Newman's problem solving steps.
- Continue to access professional development in catering for high achieving students.
- Provide differentiated numeracy homework for high achieving students.
- Give students access to and practice at high level tasks, including external competitions, problem solving tasks etc.
- Hold a "Mathathon" for Year 4-6 students to encourage them to attempt high level tasks and to raise profile of high achieving students in community.

## 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.

Leeanne Young Principal

Mark Schasser Assistant Principal (relieving)

Damien Connell P and C President

### School contact information

Blacksmiths Public School

Amaroo Street

Blacksmiths NSW 2281

Ph: 49711519

Fax: 49721407

Email: [blacksmith-p.school@det.nsw.edu.au](mailto:blacksmith-p.school@det.nsw.edu.au)

Web: [www.blacksmith-p.school.com.au](http://www.blacksmith-p.school.com.au)

School Code: 4197

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:

<http://www.schools.nsw.edu.au/asr>