2009 Annual School Report
Somersby Public School

NSW Public Schools – Leading the way
Our school at a glance
Somersby Public School is one of the small ‘mountain’ schools, situated in a rural setting about 10 kilometres from Gosford. The grounds are well tended, providing three ovals for sport as well as cricket nets, basketball hoops and modern play-equipment. The COLA and play equipment provide shelter from the elements. Our sporting teams are well-trained and the school regularly attains championship status at Small Schools’ Carnivals. Our school is unique in that it has a large concert band which performs regularly at school assemblies and for community groups. The school environment program is well entrenched, with recycling, vegetable gardens and a worm farm featuring heavily as a regular part of school life. The School Council works with teachers to ensure quality teaching and learning. Our P&C provides support for the school’s students and teachers through various fundraising activities and annual events. The school provides a meeting place for the actively engaged community.

Students
During 2009, Somersby Public School had an enrolment of 85 with students grouped into 4 Stage-based classes made up of an Early Stage 1/Stage 1 class, a Stage 1 class, a Stage 2 class and a Stage 3 class. Numbers were smaller in the Early Stage 1 and Stage 1 classes. A small number of accelerated students from Stage 2 attended daily Literacy lessons in the Stage 3 classroom.

During the year, one student from Year 5 in the Stage 3 class was accepted into Gosford Selective High for 2010 as an accelerated student after extremely high achievement across all Key Learning Areas and in the selective high test. Two students were accepted into Gosford Opportunity class for Stage 3 in 2010 after high achievement on the selective schools’ test.

Staff
The teaching staff consisted of one teaching Principal; one permanent full-time classroom teacher; one full-time temporary casual teacher; one part-time temporary casual teacher and two part-time job share teachers on part-time maternity leave, one of whom was also Librarian. Our non-teaching staff consisted of one full time School Administration Manager, one part-time School Administration Officer, one part-time School Learning Support Officer, one Cleaner and one part-time General Assistant. Our school is also serviced on a regular basis by a Support Teacher Learning Assistant and a School Counsellor.

All professional requirements for teaching in NSW public schools have been met by teaching staff.

Significant programs and initiatives
Technology
During 2009 we continued our focus on technology with teachers and students improving skills using interactive whiteboards for curriculum delivery. The P&C donated a Smartboard to the Early Stage 1 classroom. This board included the latest short-throw projector and was shared with the Stage 1 classroom to ensure all students had access to the latest technology and interactive software available to improve outcomes for all students in Literacy and Numeracy.

Best Start
The Stage 1 teacher continued to utilise the Best Start assessment data which followed the Early Stage 1 students throughout 2008. The 2009 Early Stage 1 students were assessed in early February using Best Start. This information was used to inform programming and to provide information to parents. During Term 4, our temporary Early Stage 1 teacher obtained permanent employment elsewhere and the temporary casual teacher who replaced her was trained in Best Start implementation, along with the Principal.

Premiers’ Spelling Bee
During 2009, our Stage 2 and Stage 3 students entered the Premier’s Spelling Bee. A Spelling Bee was held at our school and winners proceeded to the District Spelling Bee. One of our Stage 2 students then progressed to the State Finals where he excelled in his representation of the school.
Choir

The school choir entered the Central Coast Choral Festival which performed in September. The Choral Festival Choir was made up of students from ten primary schools across the Central Coast and was one of three such choirs performing at Mingara Recreation Club. Each choir consisted of over 300 students. Throughout the year, the choir members joined in a number of rehearsals with the other schools, culminating in a workshop with Paul Jarman, one of the composers. The workshops and performances were the highlights of the choir’s activities throughout the year and provided the students with a very enjoyable set of learning and social experiences.

Dance

Our junior and senior dance groups performed on Open Day during Education Week. The senior dance group, a troupe of Irish dancers, choreographed and trained by our school dance teacher, was selected to perform at the Central Coast Dance Festival at Laycock St Theatre.

During third term students were offered ‘Hip Hop’ dance lessons with Footsteps Dance Company. A large number of students took the opportunity to undertake these lessons for a five week period. The students were divided into a junior and a senior group for teaching purposes.

Students enjoyed these reasonably priced lessons so much we are offering them again in 2010 for a ten week period, followed by a disco to practise the skills learned.

Student achievement in 2009

In 2009, twelve Year 3 students and eighteen Year 5 students were eligible to sit the Naplan Tests.

The Year 3 overall Literacy and Numeracy assessment results as compared to state results are shown in the table below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Band</th>
<th>6</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>1</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>State Literacy</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SPS Yr3 Literacy</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>36%</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>State Numeracy</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SPS Yr3 Numeracy</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>27%</td>
<td>36%</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The Year 5 overall Literacy and Numeracy assessment results as compared to state results are shown in the table below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Band</th>
<th>8</th>
<th>7</th>
<th>6</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>1</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>State Literacy</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SPS Yr5 Literacy</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>31%</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>State Numeracy</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SPS Yr5 Numeracy</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Throughout 2009, approximately sixteen students sat the International Competitions and Assessments for Schools tests. These tests are commonly known as ‘the uni tests’.

Distinction and Credit results were as follows:

- **Computer**: 3 Distinctions, 2 Credits
- **Science**: 1 Distinction, 3 Credits
- **Writing**: 1 Distinction, 5 Credits
- **Spelling**: 1 High Distinction, 1 Distinction, 2 Credits
- **English**: 1 High Distinction, 1 Distinction, 1 Credit
- **Maths**: 1 Distinction, 6 Credits
Messages

Principal's message

Throughout 2009, Somersby Public School continued to provide students with quality educational experiences. Literacy, Numeracy and Technology were the focus in classrooms, with programs greatly enhanced by the use of Smartboard technology.

Students were offered the opportunity to be involved in band, choir, dance, environmental education and a variety of sporting teams, as their ages allowed.

Stage 3 students in particular, were encouraged to develop their leadership skills through the environmental program, Kindergarten buddy program, and as library monitors or school leaders.

Teachers worked closely with School Council and P&C to provide students with a safe and friendly school environment.

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.

Mrs Jane Young, Principal

School Council message

The Somersby School Council is responsible for setting the goals and directions the school will take in the future. It is made up of the Principal, two teachers, two parents and one P&C representative and plays an important role in assuring the whole school community is involved in decisions made by the school.

Although not all schools have a school council, commitment from our staff ensures we do. This is a testament to their dedication in achieving the best possible outcomes for our students.

We have had some robust discussions at times on all sorts of issues ranging from the school’s academic aspirations through to discussing and understanding the schools finances, surveying the parent and student community, developing a new school mission statement and contributing to a new school web site.

Our school community has a proud tradition of being one of the most supportive on the Central Coast and it is with this continued support that we are able to make a significant difference to the resources our children receive. The school council thanks the many volunteer parents, grandparents and carers for their contribution to the school.

We would also like to thank previous School Council Representatives for their time and commitment over the past years, the schools support staff for the professional job they do in the upkeep of our classrooms and grounds and the school’s administration staff for the marvellous job they do supporting not only the Principal and teachers but also the needs of students and parents.

We look forward to the challenges of the 2010 year.

Bruce Davis, School Council President

P&C message

2009 was another great year for the P&C. The support of the school community is invaluable as we all work together to provide the best opportunities for our children. I would like to thank those who filled elected positions, your time and energy is greatly appreciated.

As a new parent, my first impression was of a school community who achieved great results and worked to provide for the students. If I was to list all who contributed to the school it would name every family. Time, skills and money are valuable in helping to give students a great learning experience.

Fundraising activities for 2009 have included a Splash-a-thon, Trivia Night and the Bunnings BBQ. Generous support of these and other events has allowed the purchase of equipment for the band, books for the library, access for each student to Mathletics online and a Smart Board for the Early Stage 1 room. The support of P&C activities is very generous by the families at Somersby Public School.

It should be noted that at the request of the students, the money raised through the Splash-a-thon in 2009, over $4,500 was donated to the Victorian bushfire appeal to help schools affected by the fires. I find this action speaks volumes about the heart of the students and our community.

If the strength of a school community can be measured by the level of support given by families, Somersby Public School is very strong and together we can achieve great things. A big thank you is extended to all who contribute, in any way, to our school.

We look forward to your continued support in 2010.

Paul Jacobson, Vice-President, P&C
Student representative’s message

During 2009 the school held many fundraising activities including the Splash-a-thon which raised money for schools affected by the Victorian bushfires. This event was amazing because we had lots of fun and over $4,500 was raised. Year 6 held a carwash in December to raise money for a gift to the school. It was great getting wet on such a hot day!

Challenge Ranch Leadership and Transition for Years 5 and 6 was interesting, we met with the Principal and teachers from Kariong Mountains High and spent time with students from other small schools in the area.

During the year our class had pottery lessons and made ‘cone creatures’. This was a chance to be creative and have something to take home.

Thank you for giving us the opportunity to lead the school, especially leading the assemblies each fortnight. Our Year 6 Farewell was emotional and we were sad to leave the people we had built excellent friendships with at Somersby Public School. Thank you to the parents who worked so hard to make the evening special for us. We would also like to thank the teachers who gave us awesome experiences and a great education in general.

Student enrolment profile

As is shown in the table below, our enrolments follow a steady pattern.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2005</th>
<th>2006</th>
<th>2007</th>
<th>2008</th>
<th>2009</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Student attendance profile

Somersby Public School's student attendance is slightly above the state average. Attendance rates for 2009 were as shown below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2006</th>
<th>2007</th>
<th>2008</th>
<th>2009</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>School</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>K</td>
<td>96.1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>95.9</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>94.2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>91.8</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>96.0</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>94.5</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>95.3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>94.8</td>
<td>93.2</td>
<td>94.0</td>
<td>94.8</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2006</th>
<th>2007</th>
<th>2008</th>
<th>2009</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Region</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>K</td>
<td>94.3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>93.6</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>93.7</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>93.5</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>93.4</td>
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<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>93.9</td>
<td>93.7</td>
<td>93.7</td>
<td>91.5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2006</th>
<th>2007</th>
<th>2008</th>
<th>2009</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>State</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>K</td>
<td>94.3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>93.7</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>94.0</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>94.1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>94.0</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>94.0</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>93.6</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>94.0</td>
<td>94.0</td>
<td>94.1</td>
<td>92.1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Management of non-attendance

When students are absent for 3 or more days, the reason for absence is sought from the parent or carer via a phone call or email. Any repeated late arrivals are monitored and Home School Liaison support requested by the Principal when necessary.

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.

2009 Year 6 students: Ash-Leigh Kerslake, Emily Denniss, Rebecca Newton, Dane Britten, Calin Sebbens, Corey Kemble, Callum Hamilton, Lachlan Dawson, Lucas Fischer
Class sizes
In March 2003 the Government announced its commitment to publish primary class sizes in annual school reports in order to provide parents with as much local information as possible.

The following table shows our class sizes as reported at the 2009 class size audit conducted on Wednesday, 18th March 2009.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Roll</th>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Total per Year</th>
<th>Total in Class</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1-2M</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1-2M</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3-4H</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3-4H</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5-6Y</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5-6Y</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>K-1H</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>K-1H</td>
<td>K</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Position</th>
<th>Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Principal</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Permanent Full-time Classroom Teachers, other than Principal</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Permanent teachers including librarian, working part-time</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Temporary classroom teacher</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School Administrative &amp; Support Staff (SASS) full-time</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School Administrative &amp; Support Staff (SASS) part-time</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

One 2009 teacher was of Aboriginal descent.

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>60%</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>30/11/2009</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Income</td>
<td>$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Balance brought forward</td>
<td>69,363.39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Global funds</td>
<td>64,937.98</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tied funds</td>
<td>31,803.43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School &amp; community sources</td>
<td>54,310.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interest</td>
<td>2,535.30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trust receipts</td>
<td>5,005.65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Canteen</td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total income</td>
<td>227,956.25</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Expenditure</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Teaching &amp; learning</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Key learning areas</td>
<td>10,658.87</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Excursions</td>
<td>13,678.28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Extracurricular dissections</td>
<td>12,891.51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Library</td>
<td>2,801.77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Training &amp; development</td>
<td>4,798.13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tied funds</td>
<td>43,422.07</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Casual relief teachers</td>
<td>9,636.02</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Administration &amp; office</td>
<td>27,773.37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School-operated canteen</td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Utilities</td>
<td>8,636.84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maintenance</td>
<td>11,189.38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trust accounts</td>
<td>5,522.23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Capital programs</td>
<td>17,202.80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total expenditure</td>
<td>168,211.27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Balance carried forward</td>
<td>59,744.98</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A full copy of the school's 2009 financial statement is tabled at the annual general meetings of the School Council and/or the parent body. Further details concerning the statement can be obtained by contacting the school.

Tree planting in our environmental gardens
School performance 2009

Achievements

Band

At the conclusion of 2008 a significant number of band members moved on to high school. They were strong players with a number being from the important bass section of the band. As always, each year a rebuilding phase is required in a small band to create a balanced sound. The level of retention of players was pleasing, a good indication of a positive attitude towards the band program from the general school community.

The number of participants hovered around the mid-twenties throughout the year. This is a high percentage of primary enrolments when taking into consideration the fees involved and the level of commitment required. Attendance at rehearsals was excellent.

Throughout the year the band performed commendably at assemblies, CWA meetings and school functions. At the conclusion of the year a meeting for parents was called to inform them of changes in the organisation of the band program. Mr Mitchell would be relinquishing the tutoring and conducting of the school band, but remaining the school’s contact person. In 2010 Mr Rod Paul will be taking on the teaching/conducting role. We wish Mr Paul well in this role.

Sport

In 2009 students have had the opportunity to participate in a variety of sporting events.

Each class holds daily fitness sessions focusing on fitness, gross motor and games skills needed to successfully participate in sporting events.

Weekly sport is held where students participate in games situations.

Students from Years 3-6 have had the opportunity to participate in AFL Aus-kick, Touch and Walla Rugby Gala Days. These are non-contact, non-competitive days conducted by the respective codes. The teams are trained at lunch time leading up to gala days to ensure the participants have a sound grasp of the required skills. In these events, our teams acquitted themselves commendably and displayed pleasing standards of sportsmanship.

Our school participated in the Small Schools’ athletics, swimming and cross country carnivals as part of the Central Coast PSSZ. Preceding these carnivals the school held a swimming carnival at Gosford Pool and an athletics carnival in our school grounds. Somersby was particularly successful, winning the three small schools’ competitions. A number of students progressed to Zone level and one student represented at Regional level.

Library

Somersby Public School’s library has been a well used resource this year. The Smartboard has provided learning opportunities for all classes, as well as providing a resource that was used for staff development days, training days and community events. This year the library held a Stocktake Training Course involving Librarians from other schools. We have also begun stocktaking our Library resources in preparation for our new library in 2010.

Jump Rope for Heart

Somersby Public School has been a proud supporter of the Heart Foundation for many years. In 2009 students participated in the Jump Rope for Heart fundraising ‘Jump Off’ day and raised $2014.30. Family and friends sponsored the students in the ‘Jump Off’ to help raise money for this worthwhile cause.

Life Education

Somersby Public School participates in the Life Education program that visits schools throughout the Central Coast providing resources and lessons to students about healthy lifestyles, bullying and drug education. As a part of our participation the school held a “Mufti’ day and raise $82 for this wonderful resource.

Friendship Camp

Stage 2 students joined with students from Central Mangrove Public School to attend a Friendship Camp. This camp was an opportunity for teachers to focus on building the personal capabilities of our students to mix with others and to take minor leadership roles whilst discussing personal development issues. This camp proved to be very successful and will be held again in 2010, with invitations extended to other ‘mountain’ small schools who wish to attend.
Academic

In the National Assessment Program, the results across the Years 3, 5, 7 and 9 Literacy and Numeracy assessments are reported on a scale from Band 1 to Band 10.

The achievement scale represents increasing levels of skills and understandings demonstrated in the assessments.

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

Twelve Year 3 students were eligible to sit the Naplan tests in 2009. One Year 3 student was exempted from all tests due to a learning disability and one student did not sit all tests.

Overall our Literacy results for Year 3 were slightly below the state average as our weak results in writing lowered our average.

Literacy – NAPLAN Year 3

Twelve Year 3 students sat the Naplan Reading test. Two students scored in Band 6, the highest band and no students scored in Band 1, the lowest band. Our school scored above average for the region.

Students scored well on interpreting and connecting ideas. Areas for improvement are related to inferential type questions about characters and grammar facts.

Writing was the weakest area for Stage 3 Literacy results. 46% of students scored below the state and region average. During 2010 our literacy program will feature heavily on improving student writing skills through the use of clear and explicit teaching strategies and practise across all Stages.

Eleven Year 3 students sat the Spelling Naplan test. In Spelling, 16% of students fell below the minimum standard.
Throughout 2010, all teachers will focus on assessment and explicit teaching of spelling at the appropriate level for all students to improve spelling results.

Eleven students sat the Naplan Grammar and Punctuation test. One student scored in Band 6 and no students in the lowest Band 1.

Upon analysis of our results, most students who scored poorly did so due to errors in spelling and not grammar. The majority of our students achieved satisfactory results.

Year 5 and 6 Maths Groups

Year 3 students achieved above the state and region average in Numeracy, with 75% of students achieving Bands 4, 5 and 6.

Our students scored better in Number, Patterns and Algebra than they did in Measurement, Data, Space and Geometry.

Areas of improvement will focus on 3D shapes and measurement, especially time. Numeracy was a focus of school improvement in 2009 and the improvement from 2008 results is pleasing.
Literacy – NAPLAN Year 5

Seventeen Year 5 students were eligible to sit the Naplan tests in 2009. One student did not sit any tests and one only sat the Numeracy test.

The achievement scale represents increasing levels of skills and understandings demonstrated in the assessments.

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

Year 5 Literacy results improved in 2009, with the overall Literacy score being above state and regional averages. The Literacy growth for Year 5 students from Year 3 to Year 5 at Somersby Public School was 90.8 points, with 67% of students showing a growth of over 80 points. Growth for both boys and girls was similar.

In Year 5 Reading, the results were spread across all bands, with 2 students achieving the highest Band 8, and 4 students achieving the second highest Band 7. Only one student fell below the state minimum standard in reading.

Our school’s average was above the region average for reading.

Year 5 spelling results were also above average with fifteen of the sixteen students achieving Bands 5 to 8.
Year 5 results in Grammar and Punctuation were spread across all bands, with seven students achieving in the top 2 bands. Those students who scored in the lower bands were affected by spelling and not grammar errors.

**Numeracy – NAPLAN Year 5**

In the Numeracy testing, our results were above regional average and on state average. Four students achieved in the highest 2 bands in Number, Patterns and Algebra, with eight students scoring in the top two bands in Measurement, Data, Space and Geometry. Thirteen students achieved Band 5 and above in overall Numeracy.

Our school focus on improving Numeracy results has demonstrated success with Year 5 Naplan results showing dramatic improvement on the 2008 results. The school average growth for students in Numeracy was 110.4 points. Girls improved an average of 140 points, with boys improving on average 62 points.

**Minimum standards**

The Commonwealth Government sets minimum standards for reading, writing, grammar and punctuation, spelling and numeracy for Years 3, 5, 7 and 9.

The performance of the students in our school in the National Assessment Program – Literacy and Numeracy is compared to these minimum standards. The percentages of our students achieving at or above these standards are reported below.

**Percentage of Year 5 students in our school achieving at or above the minimum standard in 2009**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Percentage of Year 5 students achieving at and above minimum standard</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reading</td>
<td>94</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Writing</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spelling</td>
<td>88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Punctuation and grammar</td>
<td>88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Numeracy</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Percentage of Year 3 students in our school achieving at or above the minimum standard in 2009**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Percentage of Year 3 students achieving at and above minimum standard</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reading</td>
<td>92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Writing</td>
<td>54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spelling</td>
<td>83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Punctuation and grammar</td>
<td>92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Numeracy</td>
<td>83</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Significant programs and initiatives**

**Aboriginal education**

We have finally put our schools’ vegetable garden together and are growing our own fresh vegetables and fruit. Our vision over the past few years has been to make a bush tucker garden part of our vegetable garden. This garden will allow students to realise what a wealth of interesting resources are available in the bush and appreciate our local plants as a source of food and much more.

Next year, I would like to register our school in Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP). A RAP is a simple plan of activities based on building good relationships, respecting the special contribution of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples to Australia, and working together to ensure indigenous children have the same life opportunities as other children in this prosperous country. These actions are under the headings of relationships, respect and opportunities, and are focused on actions the whole school can take, regardless of whether you have Indigenous students or not. RAPs in school aims to build the understanding of non-indigenous students about indigenous history, culture and contemporary life. We know that building such understanding among non-indigenous students will also help indigenous students to succeed.

During 2009, Somersby Public School had four Aboriginal students, three of whom achieved at or above grade standards in all areas of the curriculum.

**Multicultural Education**

Multicultural perspectives are included at all Stages when presenting curriculum across the Key Learning Areas. Teachings in Connected Outcomes Groups (COGs) and Literacy particularly provide provision for inclusion of multicultural ideas and discussion with emphasis on differing cultures, values and anti-racism education.

**Respect and Responsibility**

Somersby’s Student Welfare and Discipline Policy strongly support and encourage students to demonstrate respect and responsibility across all aspects of their school lives. To encourage students’ positive behaviour and attitudes, a rewards program is in place in the classroom and across the whole school.

During 2009 all students were subsidised by school funding to attend a visiting show promoting anti-bullying strategies. There is a strong emphasis for all students to behave in a caring and responsible manner at all times.

**Environmental Education for sustainability**

Our school Environment Group continued to flourish with our parent helper assisting our Stage 3 student leaders in working with younger students to ensure the routine environmental programs continued. The daily fruit break scraps were fed to our worms providing fertiliser for the newly completed vegetable gardens.

All classes were allotted a ‘no dig’ vegetable patch where organic seeds were nurtured to produce a range of vegetables and herbs including cucumbers, tomatoes, parsley, carrots and lettuce.

During Education Week, the Environment leaders led the parents and visitors on our ‘Waste Wise Walk’ to explain our sustainable environmental practices including recycling of food scraps and cans.

All students took part in National Tree Day with plantings of new trees in various parts of the school grounds.

Our school was the proud winner of the Gosford City Council’s Best Eco-Friendly Primary School, and finalists in the council’s garden competition.

**Student leadership**

During late November, the Somersby Principal and staff from Central Mangrove Public School joined forces to hold a combined Student Leadership and Transition to High School camp at Challenge Ranch. This is the first year that Year 5 have been invited to attend these two days and a Leadership component was included for Year 5, whilst Year 6 attended transition activities. Teachers from the new Kariong Mountains High attended to run workshops, as did the school counsellor and the district behaviour team. The success of these two days was evident and they will be expanded to invite more schools to join us in 2010.
Year 6 student abseiling at Challenge Ranch

Community use of school facilities
The school facilities, including the school hall are used on a regular basis by a number of community groups with some paying a nominal rental fee for use of the premises. These funds are put to use to purchase resources for students or plants for our school grounds.

Twice weekly, evening martial arts classes are held in the school hall with students progressing up grades as testing occurs. The classes are taught by a former student and the clientele includes many of our students and past students.

At weekends dog training classes are held in the school grounds. These classes are well-known in the area and are frequented by many community members and their pet dogs.

Terrigal Trotters annually use our school grounds as a station for their yearly running competition. We do not charge a fee for this activity but donate our grounds for this community use.

Each Thursday afternoon, some of our fathers train junior basketballers in the school grounds. Some of these students are part of a team which plays in a weekly community basketball competition. The school does not charge this group.

Occasionally a 'boot camp' group hires the use of our school grounds to run their fitness class.

Progress on 2009 targets
Teachers used analysis of 2008 Naplan results to inform programming for 2009 Literacy and Numeracy teachings. Greater emphasis was placed on explicit criteria teaching and student awareness of expectations.

Target 1

Literacy
- 80% of students will achieve Stage outcomes in English in each Stage as appropriate
- 90% of students will achieve Band 5 or higher in Year 3 and Year 5 Naplan Writing

Our achievements include:
- 80% or more of students achieved Stage outcomes in English across all Stages
- 75% of Year 5 students achieved Band 5 or higher in Naplan Writing
- 20% Year 3 students achieved Band 5 or higher in Naplan writing

All teachers made greater use of Smartboard technology to deliver curriculum and most students accessed computers daily for Literacy and/or Numeracy.

Teachers programmed using explicit criteria, with particular emphasis on spelling and regular student monitoring including formalised criterion-based testing in spelling.

The introduction of Personal Learning Plans for all students fell short of expectations. We will continue to work with parents and students to set up personalised learning goals, particularly for students with special needs.

The success of Best Start was evident with the majority of Early Stage 1 students achieving beyond stage expectations particularly in the area of reading.

Target 2

Numeracy
- 80% of students achieve Stage outcomes in Mathematics in each Stage as appropriate
- 75% of Year 3 and Year 5 students achieve Band 5 or higher in Naplan Numeracy

Our achievements include:
- 80% or more of students achieved Stage outcomes in Numeracy across all Stages
- 76% of Year 5 students achieved Band 5 or higher in Naplan Numeracy
- 42% of Year 3 students achieved Band 5 or higher in Naplan Numeracy

Throughout 2009 greater emphasis was placed on the Working Mathematically strand as more practical work was completed in classrooms.

Naplan support materials were purchased and utilised in all classrooms. These resources included computer software and teacher reference books. The Smartboards provided support for curriculum delivery utilising latest Mathematical software purchases.

Teachers analysed data from previous Naplan tests and worked with the STLTA to develop specific programs for students who had not benchmarked.
Target 3
Quality Teaching

Teaching and learning programs reflect greater emphasis on implementation of the Quality Teaching Framework in areas of planning and assessment.

Our achievements include:
- The setting up of school-based rubrics to monitor student achievement of writing
- The utilisation of a computer data base to track achievement of outcomes in Literacy and Numeracy across all Stages

Teachers worked together to develop assessment schedules and procedures to ensure student achievement of outcomes was more closely monitored. Different rubrics assessment models were trialled for use with writing assessment.

Programming emphasis was placed on Quality Teaching elements of higher order thinking, explicit quality criteria and connectedness. Teachers used peer assessment when visiting each other’s classrooms to discuss the use of these elements and to aid in reflection and self-evaluation.

Teachers attended professional learning courses in Maths, Oasis library and Best Start.

Key evaluations

It is a requirement for all NSW public schools to conduct at least two annual evaluations – one related to educational and management practice and the other related to curriculum. In 2009 our school carried out evaluations of implementation of the Quality Teaching framework in classrooms specifically the Mathematics classroom and an evaluation of Literacy teaching with a focus on spelling and writing.

Educational and management practice

Implementation of the Quality Teaching framework

Background

The School Plan 2009-2011 states that during the period of the plan, teachers will focus on implementing the Quality Teaching framework

Through the utilisation of DET provided professional learning materials, the staff met and decided upon the three elements to be targeted – higher order thinking, explicit quality criteria and connectedness.

Staff were guided by a professional learning DVD which focused on the use of guided reflection coupled with peer evaluations to assess current teaching practice in the area of Mathematics. Teachers used checklists to rate their ‘buddy’ teacher during Maths lessons in relation to the three targeted Quality Teaching elements. In-depth discussion and reflection took place following these observations.

Findings and conclusions

By focusing on these three Quality Teaching elements, teachers were able to provide each other with critical feedback on current classroom practice, related to the use of the elements in everyday classroom practice. By using each other as critical analysts teachers were able to share ideas and to offer realistic peer support during reflection time.

Teachers used checklists to focus on Quality Teaching elements in each other’s classroom. Awareness of their own use of these elements was also heightened and in some cases, programming and teaching style was adapted to include greater use of the targeted elements.

Future directions

The use of peer teachers to critically analyse teaching practice will continue and be expanded into some Literacy areas of the curriculum, particularly reading, writing and spelling.

Curriculum

The 2009 Naplan results reflected room for improvement in Writing and Spelling, particularly in the Stage 2 students.

Background

Teachers met regularly throughout the year to further develop rubrics to assist in the assessment of writing outcomes. School-based writing rubrics were developed to assist teachers in tracking students’ progress.

Findings and conclusions

Teachers found rubrics useful, although they will not be used for all writing. They will be utilised on a regular basis for signs of improvement, to inform the teacher on areas of weakness and to inform further programming.

Stage 3 students began to use student rubrics to rate their own writing which led to a much increased awareness of teacher expectations and Stage standards.

Future directions

Staff will further develop the use of rubrics for writing assessments and research methods of writing assessments used successfully in other
Parent, student, and teacher satisfaction

In 2009 through the School Council, the school sought the opinions of parents, students and teachers about the school.

The survey question sent home to all households was “How likely is it that you would recommend Somersby Public School to a friend or colleague?” Give reasons of would recommend and wouldn’t recommend”

The feedback was very interesting and overwhelmingly positive. We received close to one hundred comments why parents would recommend the school and twenty that would not recommend the school.

Twenty negative comments were evenly spread over the following areas: discipline policies, worn out sports equipment and facilities, homework, job sharing, out of school activities and supervision. Only seven comments related directly to teaching/staff and child issues. These issues have been duly noted.

Of the almost one hundred positive comments we were able to break these down into five evenly spread categories:

- Staff/Teaching: the standard, commitment and dedication;
- Environment: the school grounds, location;
- Community: parents, P&c and community involvement;
- Social Development: social development of students;
- Co-Curricula: activities such as band, sports, environmental club, dancing and basketball.

Teachers surveyed the students with the same question asked of the parents. Once again, the positive feedback heavily outweighed the negative. Students overwhelmingly voted that the positive attributes of our school were in order: the ovals and playgrounds; the sporting opportunities; the school band; Smartboards and technology; friends; teachers; excursions and canteen.

The negative feedback focused on two areas: a dislike of bullies and the fact that our school did not have a swimming pool!

Professional learning

During 2009, the school development days were utilised to enhance the School Plan and the professional learning requirements of staff.

Term 1 - Staff Development Day was centred around the professional learning materials: “What Counts: The quality of teaching makes the difference – Numeracy”

Term 2 - Staff Development Day included most schools in our Local Management Group and was led by psychologist Dr Andrew Fuller.

Term 3 - Staff Development Day discussions centred on defining our school targets and refining the school database which is used for tracking student achievement. We also reviewed the student Conduct, Attitude and Behaviour Cards and processes.

The two staff development days in Term 4 proved to be invaluable as far as planning and review were concerned.

Teachers were involved in mandatory Child Protection training. They reviewed and updated the school’s Technology Policy and commenced the extensive training for Occupational Health and Safety (OH&S). On these two days, staff also established an Assessment Policy and timetabled when assessment procedures would take place throughout 2010.

Throughout the course of the year, all teachers and SASS staff completed a CPR course and the School Administration Manager updated her Senior First Aid and CPR certificates. All staff completed an OH&S manual handling course. Staff attended a variety of professional learning courses as determined by need. These included environment, dance, “Working Mathematically”, curriculum planning and programming, curriculum assessment and planning, financial rollover, cash flow, Oasis, autism, and Best Start. In total, $4798.13 was spent on professional learning which occurred outside the school.

School development 2009 – 2011

The three areas of Target setting identified were Literacy, Numeracy and Quality Teaching.

Targets for 2010

Target 1

Literacy

95% of students in Year 3 and Year 5 will achieve in the top 2 bands for Writing in the Naplan Writing Test

No students will fall below the minimum standard in Year 3 Naplan Spelling Test
Strategies to achieve this target include:
- Working in close consultation with the school Support Teacher learning Assistant (STLA) to ensure individual programs are implemented for students falling below minimum requirements in all areas of Literacy
- Utilising diagnostic ReST and selected support materials including Naplan feedback to support teachers in implementing spelling, targeting areas of weakness
- Providing opportunities for gifted students to access accelerated curriculum to achieve beyond grade level

Our success will be measured by:
- Year 3 and Year 5 achievement in Naplan testing
- Successful implementation of Individual Education Plans as demonstrated by outcomes achievement tracking
- Achievement of accelerated students achieving outcomes beyond grade level

Target 2
Numeracy
- 46% of Year 3 students will achieve in the top 2 bands in Numeracy Naplan testing
- 40% of Year 5 students will achieve in the top 2 bands in Numeracy Naplan testing

Strategies to achieve this target include:
- Classroom emphasis on Working Mathematically strand as demonstrated in classroom programming
- Close monitoring of student attainment of fundamental understandings including place value and times tables
- Use of district and school STLA to support teachers in planning, grouping and curriculum delivery

Our success will be measured by:
- Year 3 and Year 5 achievement in Naplan testing

Target 3
Quality Teaching
Teaching and learning programs continue to reflect the Quality Teaching Framework.

Strategies to achieve this target include:
- Continued use of guided reflection materials to evaluate implementation of specified quality teaching elements and provision of a teacher peer support network in Maths
- Extension of guided reflection materials and peer support in Literacy with emphasis on the teaching of reading, writing and spelling
- Attendance at relevant professional learning courses with emphasis on Quality Teaching

About this report
In preparing this report, the self-evaluation committee has gathered information from evaluations conducted during the year and analysed other information about the school's practices and student learning outcomes. The self-evaluation committee and school planning committee have determined targets for the school's future development.

Mrs Rowena Young, Principal
Mr Neil Mitchell, Teacher
Mrs Kirsty Squires, Teacher
Mrs Belinda Hickey, Teacher
Mr Bruce Davis, School Council President
Mr Paul Jacobson, P&C Representative
2009 Year 6 Leaders
Mrs Merrile Herbert, Administration

School contact information
Somersby Public School
840 Wisemans Ferry Road
SOMERSBY, NSW, 2250
Ph: 0243721233
Fax: 0243721542
Email: Somersby-p.school@det.nsw.edu.au
Web: www.somersby-p.school
School Code: 3078
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: