2008 Annual School Report
Merimbula Public School
Our school at a glance

Students
Merimbula Public School’s current enrolment is 434 students. Enrolments include mainstream students, gifted and talented students, students with learning disabilities as well as a small number of Aboriginal students.

Staff
Merimbula Public School employed 36 staff in 2008. Permanent and casual staff members were employed. These staff included: teacher aides, administrative staff, teaching staff, a general assistant and a school counsellor.

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

Significant programs and initiatives
- The school introduced a new Principal-mentoring and team-teaching program trial, facilitated by Breakthrough Coaching whereby the principal spends 60% of time in classrooms.
- Linkages were further developed with local primary and high schools in accord with the launch of the Sapphire Coast Learning Community and its related working parties, training and development initiatives and educational programs.
- Technology remains a focus with computer-based learning and assessment programs having been introduced across K-6, with an emphasis on Mathematics learning.
- Installation of Connected Classroom technology as well as related team-teaching programs to facilitate teacher use across all KLas K-6.
- Implementation of flip charts and Smart Board technologies to support learning programs K-6.
- P&C funding resulted in an additional covered outdoor learning area (COLA) / paved BBQ area being created, and officially opened by the P&C and Andrew Constance, state MP.

Student achievement in 2008

Literacy – NAPLAN Year 3
The percentage of students who achieved at or above the minimum standard in reading was 97%, writing was 99%, punctuation and grammar 96%, and spelling 97%. In 2008 29.5% of students were placed in the top two bands in reading, 52.1% in writing, 31% in grammar and punctuation and 36.6% in the top two bands for spelling. Writing results have been among the biggest improvements for Year 3 students with 22.5% of students attaining the highest band. The school average between 2005 to 2007 is 14.7%.

Only 2.8% of students received results in the lowest band for reading, compared with 4.4% state wide. Only 1.4% of students received the lowest band for reading compared with a state average of 2.5%. 4.2% of students achieved results in the lowest band for grammar and punctuation, compared to a state average of 4.3% and 2.8% of students achieved the lowest band for spelling where as the state average was 3.1%.

Numeracy – NAPLAN Year 3
In numeracy 34.8% of Year 3 students achieved results in the top 2 bands. Results in the highest band were slightly below that of the state average. Only 2.9% of students achieved numeracy results in the lowest band, in comparison to 3.2% state wide.

Literacy – NAPLAN Year 5
In literacy, the average progress rate for student growth in writing was considerably high in comparison to the state and like school group averages. The percentage of students who achieved at or above the minimum standard in reading was 93%, writing was 95%, punctuation and grammar 92%, and spelling 92%.

In writing the school’s average mark was above state average. Less students were in the school’s lowest bands, in comparison to state averages. Students achieving in the highest bands in all areas of literacy are slightly below that of the state average in reading, grammar and punctuation.

Numeracy – NAPLAN Year 5
In numeracy Year 5 students achieved higher than the state average. 32.5% of students achieved results in the highest two bands, compared to the state average of 26.9%. Only 4.1% of students achieved results in the lowest band in comparison to 5.2% across the state.
Messages

Principal's message

Merimbula Public School continues to be committed to excellence, opportunity and success. The school provides a caring, friendly environment in which students experience a variety of activities designed to cater for their individual needs.

The school continues to foster a productive partnership between the community, parents, students and teachers in a climate characterised by flexibility, commitment and teamwork.

I congratulate all students, commend to you the dedicated staff and thank the parents and wider school community for its support throughout 2008.

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.

Michelle Hulme
Relieving Principal

P&C and/or School Council message

The Merimbula Public School Parents & Citizens Association has continued to be actively involved in school initiatives during 2008.

The P&C met each month to continue to provide support for the school in its educational endeavours and to provide advice in current and future planning.

P&C Meetings have enabled guests and committee members to be an integral part in the planning and evaluation of: reporting procedures, programming, new technologies, learning connections, student welfare and well-being strategies, SRC election procedures, Zone Athletics Carnival facilitation and organisation, safety with buses, staffing and strategic planning.

Financial assistance has been provided through fundraising efforts for a new COLA / BBQ Area, a digital camera, a digital video camera, photography accessories, library books and book prizes. Additional funds have also been allocated to purchasing interactive Smartboards in the coming year.

In summary it has been a very productive year.

Mrs Angi High
P&C President 2008

Student representative's message

The Student Representative Council have initiated and been involved in many projects within Merimbula Public School and the wider community. In the past year we have spoken at public functions, raised money for community projects and charity organisations, marched at an ANZAC Day ceremony and organised a Remembrances Day ceremony.

We held assemblies each fortnight in the Jackson Hall as well as a disco each term. We held meetings every second Tuesday where class SRC Representatives bring issues and ideas to discuss.

Our decision making processes have seen additional options for school uniforms, changes to school grounds and environment as well as the development of new procedures and criteria for electing SRC Representatives, House Captains, Library, Bus and Computer Monitors.

We have continued to work on making our school a better place.

Joe Lipsham, Bradley Musgrave, Claire Musgrave, Sarah Mayberry and Blake Schafer.

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

The following table indicates student enrolment trends over the past five years.

![Enrolments Graph](image-url)
Class sizes

In March 2003 the Government announced its commitment to publish primary class sizes in annual school reports in order to provide parents with as much local information as possible.

The following table shows our class sizes as reported at the 2008 class size audit conducted on Tuesday 25 March 2008.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Roll Class</th>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Total per Year</th>
<th>Total in Class</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1-2B</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1-2H</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1-2N</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1-2P</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1-2S</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3-4H</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3-4K</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3-4M</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3-4SV</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3-4Y</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5-6C</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5-6M</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5-6T</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5-6W</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KB</td>
<td>K</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KGH</td>
<td>K</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KH</td>
<td>K</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Structure of classes

All classes, with the exception of Kindergarten, are multi-aged.

Students with special needs continue to be fully integrated and supported by a dedicated team of aides.

Students may have a different teacher for Mathematics classes as these classes are grouped on ability.

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

In addition to the positions indicated in the table below, Merimbula Public School attracts additional staff in the form of administrative support, part time teaching, teacher relief and teacher aides.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Position</th>
<th>Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Principal</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assistant Principal(s)</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Classroom Teachers</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher of Reading Recovery</td>
<td>0.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Support Teacher Learning Assistance</td>
<td>0.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher Librarian</td>
<td>0.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher of ESL</td>
<td>0.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Counsellor</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>21</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Staff retention

Merimbula Public School has an experienced staff as well as two new scheme teachers, all of whom are committed to the school and its ethos.

Staff attendance

Staff have access to leave entitlements such as sick leave. In 2008 the average daily attendance rate for staff, as determined by the Department, was 96.5%.

Teacher qualifications

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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Qualifications</th>
<th>% of staff</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Degree or Diploma</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Postgraduate</td>
<td>35</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.

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

Date of financial summary: 30/11/2008

Income $  
Balance brought forward 131,299.00  
Global funds 181,989.00  
Tied funds 184,565.00  
School & community sources 78,406.00  
Interest 9,721.00  
Trust receipts 30,772.00  
Canteen 0.00  
Total income 616,753.00

Expenditure  
Teaching & learning  
   Key learning areas 40,050.00  
   Excursions 32,939.00  
   Extracurricular dissections 40,053.00  
Library 5,594.00  
Training & development 12,341.00  
Tied funds 178,040.00  
Casual relief teachers 54,193.00  
Administration & office 63,749.00  
School-operated canteen 0.00  
Utilities 31,444.00  
Maintenance 9,637.00  
Trust accounts 31,664.00  
Capital programs 9,811.00  
Total expenditure 509,515.00  
Balance carried forward 107,238.00

School performance 2008

Merimbula Public School continues to offer a range of innovative programs across the curriculum that support students in performing to their highest standard and achieving exceptional results in a range of arts, sport and academic endeavours.

Achievements

Arts

Performing and creative arts continue to be an important focus at Merimbula Public School, enabling students to develop their knowledge, understandings, skills and appreciation in music, drama, dance and visual arts. Highlights in 2008 include:

- Stage 2 students collaboratively developing a musical based on the Fish Philosophy whilst taking part in an Elective Education Program. Students elected to participate as actors, dancers, costume designers, set and props makers or technology and staging managers prior to and during performances for parents, the community, their peers and other schools in the region.

- All students were encouraged to develop their talents through stage-based performing arts programs, by participation with visiting performers and when preparing for and presenting the end of year students’ talent quest.

- Student tuition and mentoring programs took place for the school band / orchestra. The school orchestra performed at the Stage 2 musical, the two end of year awards ceremonies, assemblies and the Launch of the Sapphire Coast Learning Community (SCLC).

- The school choir grew in numbers, especially for boys, with over 40 students performing at awards ceremonies, community Christmas Carol celebrations, school assemblies and in a 200 strong combined choir as part of the SCLC launch.

- An art exhibition at the launch of the SCLC also saw over 50 student artworks from Merimbula Public School K-6 displayed at the venue.

- Amie Standen and Tyson Paton performed with other Gifted and Talented choir performers from the SCLC as part of a linkages program with the local high school. This performance, in leading up to the SCLC launch, was posted on YouTube.

- Teaching staff and executive became members of working groups within the SCLC to develop initiatives in performing arts. This will see a Performing Arts festival held in the region for the 14 primary and 2 high schools during 2009. The working group has also begun
research into developing gifted and talented programs for students in drama and dance that will lead into the festival.

**Sport**

Merimbula Public School promotes healthy lifestyles and good sportsmanship through a range of sporting initiatives and continues to enjoy high levels of success in both individual and team participation. Notable activities and achievements in 2008 include:

- The 39th Jackson Cup was held, offering an inter-house soccer and netball competition.
- Students participated in coaching development and gala days in soccer, AFL, rugby league, rugby union, cricket and netball.
- The school fielded knockout teams in softball, soccer, AFL and netball.
- The boys’ AFL team experienced outstanding success in the PSSA team knockout competition coming third overall in the State.
- The boys’ AFL team came second in the Archer Cup, a South Coast Region competition.
- The school ran successful carnivals in swimming, athletics and cross country and was responsible for the successful running of the Far South Coast Zone athletics carnival.
- Several students were named Zone Champions including Amie Standen for 11 years Girls Swimming, Nathan Blaxter for Senior Boys Swimming, Kasey Maher for 8/9 years Boys Cross Country, Justin Burch for 10 years Boys Cross Country and Junior Boys Athletics and Anna Fergusson for 11 years Girls Cross Country.
- Merimbula Public School was named Champion School of the Far South Coast Zone in swimming, athletics and cross country.
- Students represented the school at Zone and Regional levels in soccer, AFL, cricket, netball, rugby league, touch football, swimming, athletics and cross country.
- Students represented the School at State level in cross country and athletics with outstanding results. Noah Martin came 2nd in the State in the 800m and the Junior Girls’ Relay team came 6th overall in athletics.
- All students participated in Footsteps, a dance skills program run by professional dance teachers from outside the school.
- Stage 1, 2 and 3 students participated in a successful water safety and competence program with the assistance of many parents whom we thank for their time and effort.
- Every student in the school successfully completed 15 weeks of physical activity for the inaugural Premier’s Sporting Challenge with all infants students earning a Gold Award and all primary students earning a Diamond Award.

**Other**

**The Sapphire Coast Learning Community (SCLC)**

The SCLC was launched with a combined school’s performance, exhibits and art exhibition. The launch was a great success in promoting Public Education and the efforts, innovative programs and achievements of the SCLC’s schools.

Teaching and executive staff from Merimbula Public School have become active members of working groups within the SCLC, researching and coordinating training and development opportunities for staff and enrichment activities for students within the region. Representatives from MPS are part of the working groups for: Gifted and Talented Programs, Aboriginal Education, Performing Arts and Professional Learning.

**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 for Year 3)

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

**Literacy – NAPLAN Year 3**

In Year 3 there were 71 students who completed the reading, writing, spelling and grammar and punctuation assessments.
On average MPS achieved slightly below their 2005-2007 average and their like-school-group average. They also achieved below the state average in reading.

Year 3 students achieved average results that were higher than the like school (comparative) group in writing. These results were a big improvement on the school’s 2005-2007 average and were only slightly below that of the state.

Year 3 students received similar results to their like school group in spelling. These results were slightly below the average state results for Year 3. The spelling results cannot be compared to past school average results as this was a new testing component.

Merimbula Public School’s literacy results have consistently improved in all areas over the past three years, especially in writing.
Numeracy – NAPLAN Year 3
In Year 3 here were 69 students who completed the numeracy assessment. Their results were slightly lower than the like school group and state averages.

![Percentage of students in bands: Numeracy](chart.png)

Literacy – NAPLAN Year 5
Seventy-five Year 5 students completed the NAPLAN reading and writing assessments. Seventy-four students completed the spelling and punctuation and grammar assessments.

Year 5 students achieved higher results in the top band than they have, on average, between 2005-2007. These results were almost the same as state average results and were slightly lower than results obtained by the like school group.

![Percentage of students in bands: Literacy](chart.png)

In the writing assessment, Year 5 students achieved exceptional results. Their results were well above the school’s 2005-2007 average, with almost double the amount of students achieving results in each of the two highest bands.

Results in the writing assessment were well above that achieved by the school’s like school group as well as being above the state average.

![Percentage of students in bands: Writing](chart.png)

In the spelling assessment, Year 5 students achieved results well above the average of their like school group peers. These results were slightly lower than the state average.

![Percentage of students in bands: Spelling](chart.png)
Grammar and punctuation results achieved by students in Year 5 were also well above the like school group average. These results were similar (0.9 difference) to the state average.

Overall, Year 5 students achieved higher results in all areas of literacy than they have, on average, in the past 3 years.

**Numeracy – NAPLAN Year 5**

In Year 5 there were 74 students who completed the numeracy assessment. Results, on average, were well above the average of the like school grouping as well as being above state average.

**Progress in literacy**

In literacy, overall, the school has been progressing in all areas. Student progress has been more evident than it has in like school groupings (LSG) and in state averages.

In writing, the average assessment results for students who have continued their education at Merimbula Public School has progressed at a consistently impressive rate over the last four years. Improvements have been more evident in the last three years due to the 2005 to 2008 School Plan, and related programs and strategies across the school, focusing on this area.
Reading improvements are evident in student progress results between 2005 and 2008. Reading programs still need to be refined so that greater improvements are made, in line with state and like school group achievements.

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

### Percentage of Year 3 students in our school achieving at or above the minimum standard in 2008

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Standard</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reading</td>
<td>97</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Writing</td>
<td>99</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spelling</td>
<td>97</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Punctuation and grammar</td>
<td>96</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Numeracy</td>
<td>97</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Standard</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reading</td>
<td>93</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Writing</td>
<td>95</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spelling</td>
<td>92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Punctuation and grammar</td>
<td>92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Numeracy</td>
<td>95</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Significant programs and initiatives

#### Aboriginal education

Merimbula Public School continues to educate all students about Aboriginal history, culture and contemporary Aboriginal Australia through its learning programs. All learning programs have a significant Aboriginal Perspectives focus.

The local Bournda Environmental Education centre provided a range of excursion programs and in-school programs for students at Merimbula Public School in 2008. A world-renowned Aboriginal storyteller, dancer and artist also worked with students across the school to complement teaching and learning programs.

Support is provided for Aboriginal students through Stage learning programs, targeted programs, Community Health Programs, excursions, the Aboriginal Education Committee and the Student Representative Council. By December the population of Aboriginal Students at Merimbula Public School grew from 3% to 4%.

### Progress in numeracy

In 2008 the average progress for students in the state was 80 points and for the LSG it was 79 points. MPS progress results were slightly lower in 2008 however improvement has been consistent for MPS since 2004. Since 2004 Merimbula students have progressed 266 point compared to 255 points for the LSG and 241 points for the state.

### Minimum standards

The Commonwealth Government sets minimum standards for reading, writing, grammar and punctuation, spelling and numeracy for years 3, 5, 7 and 9.
By successfully obtaining a $7500 IESIP grant and additional Targeted Funds of $3000, Merimbula Public School was able to continue to improve its Aboriginal Education Resource Collection and create a dedicated space to house Indigenous Education resources within the school library.

**Multicultural education**

Merimbula Public School continues to provide teaching and learning programs that develop knowledge, skills, values and attitudes required within a multicultural and culturally diverse society.

All curriculum units develop cultural awareness through multicultural perspectives. All Stage 2 and 3 students developed an even stronger awareness in 2008, educating their younger peers, through their participation in the Multicultural Perspectives Public Speaking Competition.

2008 saw Merimbula Public School introduce an English as a Second Language (ESL) program to cater for the needs of students from non-English speaking backgrounds. Students participating in this program were still enriched through extension programs in Mathematics whilst receiving support in literacy areas.

**Respect and responsibility**

Merimbula Public School students continue to be encouraged and supported to undertake community service activities on a voluntary basis. Our major activities in this area have been participation in fundraisers, the Cancer Council ‘Relay For Life’, local Anzac Day and Remembrance Day Ceremonies and through our Student Representative Council and welfare programs.

In 2008 the Student Representative Council (SRC) evaluated and refined the election process for School Leaders, House Captains, Library Monitors and Bus Monitors as well as developing a process for electing Computer Monitors, a new position that they helped develop. They were also instrumental in allocating roles, responsibilities and selection criteria for these student-based positions. All decisions made were done collaboratively and in alignment with the School Values, also developed by the SRC in 2007.

**Other programs**

**Public speaking and debating**

Public Speaking and Debating programs were developed in 2008 to enhance the school’s ongoing efforts to increase students’ self-esteem, self-confidence and life long personal development skills. Stage 2 and 3 students participated in the Multicultural Perspectives Public Speaking Competition with impressive results. Of the four students that represented the school at a regional level, one student continued on to compete in the district competition.

Students with talents in public speaking were encouraged and supported in participating in a district debating and public speaking camp. These students shared their achievements and newly learnt skills with their peers when the school introduced an interclass-debating program in Term 4. This program was a non-competitive activity, aimed at building confidence and increasing student participation in debating.

**Challenges and competitions**

Students from Kindergarten to Year 6 were encouraged to participate in a range of challenges and competitions during 2008.

All students participated in the Premier’s Sporting Challenge to achieve commendable results. All Kindergarten to Year 2 students completed the Premier’s Reading Challenge with almost half of all Years 3 to 6 students completing it also. Four students completed the reading challenge for their fourth consecutive year.

Students also participated in the MPS read-a-thon, colouring in competitions, dingo pup naming competitions, poster and card design competitions and the Centre For Learning Innovations (CLI) competitions to design and make digital portraits and digital stories.

Student results in the University Of New South Wales external assessments improved in 2008. In the Spelling Assessment, 4 students achieved credits and one student a distinction. In the English Assessment, 6 students achieved a credit and 2 students a distinction. In the Mathematics Assessment 8 students achieved a credit and 3 students a distinction and in the Science Assessment 4 students achieved a credit, 2 students a distinction and 1 student achieved a high distinction.

**Best Start assessment program**

The Merimbula Public School Early Stage 1 teaching team trialled and implemented the Best Start assessment program in 2008. They
assessed over 60 Kindergarten students in order to develop individual and specialised learning programs. They also evaluated their participation and the assessment schedule to assist the NSW DET in refining the procedures before testing is compulsory across all NSW schools in 2009.

The Country Areas Program (CAP)
CAP continues to be a vital program at Merimbula. Currently CAP has three priority areas that target improving student outcomes in rural and isolated schools. These are:

- Quality Teaching and Learning
- Quality Technology in Teaching and Learning and
- Quality Improvement

During 2008, the school participated in many programs that were offered by CAP. The school spent $29,000 on these programs.

Merimbula Public School’s CAP focus for 2008 was technology, which saw students and teachers attending training and development in producing digital stories, Wiki spaces, podcasts, flip charts for Smartboards and other Web 2 tools to be integrated into teaching and learning programs.

The MPS School Administrative and Support Staff (SASS) were also actively involved in CAP during 2008, successfully applying for an $11,000 grant that will enable them to receive training and development in 2009 to produce their own vodcasts that will be shared on a Wikispace resource for SASS in other schools across Australia.

Progress on 2008 targets
All of the Targets relating to the Basic Skills Tests (BST) are three-year targets that were put in place in 2005. These targets are still being worked towards however they have also been refined due to the BST no longer taking place. All assessment results have varied slightly this year due to the implementation of the National Assessment Program in Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN).

Target 1
85% of students in Year 3 will reach Band 3 or above in BST in both literacy and numeracy.

Our achievements include:

- 97% of Year 3 students reached Band 3 or above in NAPLAN in reading, 94% reached Band 3 or above in writing, 87% in spelling and 86% in grammar and punctuation. Therefore the average percentage of students who reached Band 3 or above in the literacy component of NAPLAN was 91%. This was higher than the school target. The National Assessment Program in Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN) has replaced the Basic Skills Test (BST).
- 90% of Year 3 students reached Band 3 or above in the numeracy component of NAPLAN. Numeracy results in Year 3 also exceeded the school target.
- Continued development of explicit teaching practices were evident across all areas of literacy, particularly in writing. As a result students, on average, achieved writing results in NAPLAN that were higher than both the regional, state and national averages.
- Minimum time allocations for numeracy and literacy, particularly for language skills and writing sessions were introduced, resulting in higher achievement in language, grammar and spelling areas of the NAPLAN assessment results and external testing.
- Mathletics and PegSpell resources were purchased and all teaching staff were inserviced on these programs prior to them being utilised across the school. Training and development to support the increased implementation of TaLE resources and Learning Objects also took place which resulted in strengthened assessment processes and teachers’ consistency across the school. Increased integration of ICT in literacy and numeracy was evident. Teaching staff also made increased and continual reference to school publications of explicit teaching practices.
- Improved learning outcomes, as measured by NAPLAN, were evident in all areas, particularly in spelling, grammar, punctuation and writing. Reading continues to be an area of focus that will be addressed thoroughly in 2009.

Target 2
95% of students in Year 5 will reach band 4 or above in BST literacy and numeracy.

Our achievements include:

- Merimbula Public School’s NAPLAN results show that 95% of Year 5 students reached Band 4 or above in the reading component of NAPLAN, 96% in writing, 93% in spelling and 93% reached Band 4 or higher in grammar and punctuation. Therefore the average percentage of students who reached Band 4 or above in the literacy component of NAPLAN was 94%. Whilst slightly below target this was still an improvement on last year’s results.
• 96% of Year 5 students reached Band 4 or above in the numeracy component of the NAPLAN. This exceeded the school target.

• Teachers used a wider and more diverse range of teaching and learning strategies whilst strengthening assessment processes and teacher consistency, particularly in writing which saw improved results in all areas of writing. Spelling, punctuation and grammar results improved, as measured by NAPLAN. Consistent programming, assessment practices and forms are now evident and continue to be developed across Stages.

• The school’s Enrichment Writing Program was further developed in 2008. Team-teaching strategies were enhanced through STLA support to increase teacher to student ratios and enable ability based writing group programs to take place within classrooms.

• By purchasing resources, such as Mathletics and PegSpell, Enrichment Programs for Gifted and Talented students were developed in mathematics and spelling.

• Training and development supporting the increased implementation of TaLE resources and Learning Objects saw support and enrichment programs within classrooms to incorporate more ICT and motivate students in literacy and numeracy.

Target 3

Students in Year 3 will achieve: 20% in Band 5 in Literacy and 25% in Band 5 Numeracy as measured by the BST.

Our achievements include:

• Merimbula Public School’s NAPLAN results show that 30% of Year 3 students reached Band 5 or above in the reading component of NAPLAN, 52% in writing, 37% in spelling and 31% reached Band 5 or higher in grammar and punctuation. Therefore the average percentage of students who reached Band 5 or above in the literacy component of NAPLAN was 38%. Well above the school target.

• NAPLAN results in numeracy were also well above the school target with 35% of students achieving Band 5 or higher.

• Professional Learning Plans and funds enabled teachers to develop skills and further use a wide and diverse range of teaching and learning strategies to identify and cater for more able students.

• Resources suited to individual learning and enrichment programs, such as Mathletics and PegSpell, were purchased and utilised across the school. Student achievement in such programs were reported on in weekly newsletters, increasing student motivation and participation in related on-line programs at home.

• Increased participation and achievement was evident in a range of additional curriculum activities, including student competitions and challenges.

• Improved learning outcomes, as measured by NAPLAN, were evident in areas where programming and Teacher Professional Learning (TPL) were given increased focus in 2008. In particular in spelling, punctuation, grammar, writing and mathematics. As a result these programs will continue to be refined in 2009 whilst programs in reading will have an increased focus.

• By increasing team-teaching and STLA support across the school, early identification of more capable students took place and was supported through differentiated programming. This was successful as student achievement was greater in other external examinations, such as the University of New South Wales testing.

Target 4

Students in Year 5 will achieve: 25% in Band 5 in Literacy and 30% in Band 5 Numeracy as measured by the BST.

NOTE: Bands 7 and 8 will now be compared to as these are now the highest Bands in the Year 5 NAPLAN.

Our achievements include:

• Merimbula Public School’s NAPLAN results show that 32% of Year 5 students reached Band 7 or above in the reading component of NAPLAN, 31% in writing, 31% in spelling and 35% reached Band 7 or higher in grammar and punctuation. Therefore the average percentage of students who reached Band 7 or 8 in the literacy component of NAPLAN was 32%. This result was higher than the school target.

• In numeracy, 33% of students achieved Band 7 or 8 in the NAPLAN.

• It was evident to all staff that teachers were using a wide and diverse range of teaching and learning strategies that identified and catered for more able students as more team teaching was taking place. The Principal was also trailling a program where he spent time team-
teaching in classrooms to not only support teaching and learning programs but also to ensure targets were being worked towards consistently across the school.

- As in Target 3’s achievements: Professional Learning Plans and funds enabled teachers to develop skills and further use a wide and diverse range of teaching and learning strategies to identify and cater for more able students; resources were purchased to develop enrichment programs; and increased participation and achievement was evident in additional curriculum activities.
- Improved learning outcomes, as measured by NAPLAN, were evident for Year 5 students in areas where programming and Teacher Professional Learning (TPL) was given increased focus in 2008. In particular in spelling, punctuation, grammar, writing and mathematics. As a result these programs will continue to be refined for all students whilst programs in reading will have an increased focus.
- Team-teaching and STLA support was particularly increased within the classroom for Stage 3 students.

**Target 5**

*Increase student attendance to above the State average.*

Our achievements include:

- The importance of attendance was regularly reinforced at assemblies, in newsletters, at P&C Meetings and in the classroom. Student Attendance Certificates were awarded each semester, to align with attendance records on student reports.
- As a result student attendance rates increased slightly and were higher than that for the regional average for the first time since 2004.
- A key evaluation took place in Term 4 to determine whether students believed teaching caters for all learning styles and ability levels whilst providing opportunities for all students to succeed. Results from this study were positive yet dissipated in Stage 3, where student attendance rates began to lessen. Stage 3 support and programs will be evaluated and refined in 2009 in an aim to further improve attendance.
- The FISH Philosophy was embraced as part of the school’s culture, as strategically planned, with Quality Start resources being developed and used across the school. All Stage 2 students also took part in an Elective Education Program where they chose and attended specialised classes to collaboratively develop a Fish Philosophy musical and successfully perform it to parents, the community and other schools.

**Key evaluations**

It is a requirement for all NSW public schools to conduct at least two annual evaluations – one related to educational and management practice and the other related to curriculum. In 2008 our school carried out evaluations of: occupational health and safety practices and management; quality of school life (and how it affects student achievement and well being); and school leadership – roles and responsibilities.

**Educational and management practice**

**Occupational health and safety practices and management**

All staff were surveyed on Occupational Health and Safety (OHS) management and practices during 2008. The surveys used were accessed from the DET portal’s OHS site.

**Background**

Twenty-one staff members (teaching and support staff) were asked 30 questions about: how high a priority safety is within the school; how effectively OHS issues are managed and timetabled; how well known, clear and effective OHS procedures are; and what they believed was being managed well or needs to be managed more efficiently in terms of OHS.

Five members of the executive team were also surveyed in regards to the previously mentioned OHS management issues. They were also questioned about the storage of materials, how they provide training and development and recording incident procedures.

**Findings and conclusions**

Teachers, support staff and members of the executive team all responded with very similar answers. The OHS survey results showed that the majority of staff believed:

- They know their obligations under the OHS Act and they have read the OHS policy.
- They are encouraged to, and do, give safety a high priority.
• They know where to access OHS information, have been adequately informed of OHS practices and are aware of how to complete a risk assessment prior to conducting an excursion.

• They are aware of the process of reporting hazards and that there is a process in place for reporting hazards.

• That their workplace is safe and resources and equipment are maintained in good order.

Concerns of teachers, in regards to areas they wish to revisit so that OHS management is improved, include:

• Completing more OHS induction training.

• Completing more specified training on specific hazards.

• Training staff on how to store and dispose of chemicals.

• Removing clover from the oval to reduce the risk of students being stung by bees.

• That televisions should be placed more appropriately to avoid head injuries, by bumping into them.

• That the car park gates could be closed from 9am until 3.15pm to eliminate parents dropping off and picking up children in a busy traffic area.

• Training staff on how to deal effectively with student aggression management.

• Creating and following a timetable for implementing specific OHS training procedures as well as keeping a more effective register of when training has taken place and who has completed it.

Future actions that will take place to improve the OHS within the school include:

• A register of OHS training and participants has been created and will be completed accordingly as training takes place in the coming year.

• The executive and staff will discuss procedures in regards to closing the staff car park gate prior to deciding on making any changes.

Curriculum

Quality of school life (and how it affects student achievement and well being)

The Quality Of School Life (QSL) survey was implemented to ascertain student beliefs in relation to their learning curriculum and related educational experiences. In addition to test results, the School Improvement Committee wanted to ascertain whether students believed that both academic and non-academic achievements were focused on when implementing teaching and learning programs and measuring school achievement. Whether students had a generally positive or negative outlook towards their schooling was also of interest.

The QSL survey is conducted from Years 2 to 6 to provide the school community with “insight into student attitudes towards school, learning, teachers and other students” (School Assessment and Accountability Directorate).

Background

Students responded to 40 statements by indicating their agreement based on a four-point scale. The results from their responses are said to provide “an overall view of the quality of school life for each student” (Mok, 1999).

Different aspects of school life are addressed within the survey, to ascertain student beliefs about:
1. General satisfaction – reflecting favourable feelings about the school.
2. Negative affect – referring to negative feelings and alienation.
3. Sense of achievement – determining student confidence in their abilities.
4. Opportunity – determining student beliefs about the relevance of the learning curriculum.
5. Teacher-student relations - referring to feelings of inadequacy between students and teachers.
6. Social integration – how students believed they are perceived by others and how they interact with others.
7. Adventure – how motivated the students are by the curriculum.

Findings and conclusions

When surveyed about their general satisfaction, students responded favourably towards the school. They generally felt happy, proud, and enjoyed attending each day (See Figure 1).

![Figure 1: General satisfaction](image1)

When questioned in terms of negative affect, students disagreed, or mostly disagreed, generally indicating that they do not feel: unhappy, lonely, worried, upset or restless at school.

Students also responded positively towards their sense of achievement. Over 95% of students indicated that their teacher: is fair, listens to them, takes an interest in helping them to do their best as well as treating them fairly in class (see Figure 2).

![Figure 2: Relationships with teachers](image2)

When responding to social interaction questions, students were positive. They generally indicated that they get along with others, are accepted, trusted, popular, can be depended on and that they believe other students are friendly.

In responding to questions about adventure and motivation, student answers across age groups were more skewed. Students were asked if they: like to do additional work, whether they believe learning is fun, if they enjoy the work presented or get excited about it and if the curriculum is interesting. Students from Years 2 to 4 generally had positive responses, either mostly agreeing or agreeing that they were motivated and were presented with challenging and fun curriculum programs. Years 5 and 6 students, both girls and especially boys, provided responses that showed that more students were disinterested in the work that they were doing. (see Figures 3 and 5).

![Figure 3: Adventure](image3)

Despite Stage 3 (Years 5 and 6) students not being as interested in the curriculum they are presented with, they still believe that the work they complete is relevant, necessary for the future and will be useful for when they attend secondary school and leave school (see Figure 4).
Future directions

In order to develop the self esteem and sense of well being of all students, particularly those in Stage 3, a strategic Peer Support Program is being developed to be implemented in 2009. Additional and varied leadership opportunities and challenges will also be offered to Stage 3 students.

Curriculum delivery will be refined, especially in the middle years, to offer more challenging and motivating learning opportunities. A wider range of academic challenges will also be offered, integrating ICT into all key learning areas (KLAs).

Whole Stage 3 programs will also be developed to enrich and challenge gifted and talented students, in all KLAs. The school will also trial new ways of delivering its Great Activities To Enhance Strengths (GATES) program, as has been done effectively by the early stages at different times during the year.

Other evaluations - School leadership roles and responsibilities:

Merimbula Public School offers a range of leadership roles and opportunities to develop student responsibility. In 2008 these included being a School SRC Leader, a Class SRC Representative, a House Captain, Library Monitor, Bus Monitor or ‘buddy’. A simplified buddy program was successfully trialled, initiating many positive responses among students, parents and staff.

As a result a strategic, structured Peer Support and ‘Buddy’ Program will be implemented across the school in 2009. An additional leadership role of Computer Monitor will also exist.

The SRC discussed the roles and responsibilities of leaders within the school. Using the school Values, the SRC developed criteria for selecting each type of leader as well as defined the roles and attributes that such leaders should maintain when in their position.

Parent, student, and teacher satisfaction

In 2008 the school sought the opinions of parents, students and teachers about the school. Their responses are presented below.

Parents, students and teachers were asked about what they see the schools strengths as being. Generally all who were surveyed agreed that they were happy with the school and that it offered a wide range of innovative programs and extracurricular activities, especially sport.

Most staff and some parents expressed that too many sports were being offered to all students and that they should be programmed to target particular stages of students. Without eliminating sports from the physical education curriculum, they suggested that different sports should be addressed within different stages so that students would still be exposed to the full range of activities throughout their learning journey whilst disruptions to classroom learning are minimised.

Minimising disruptions to learning was the main focus of parents, students and teachers alike. Such findings have resulted in the School Improvement Committee and executive looking at the ways in which programs are delivered and the times in which different learning activities take place. In 2009 all Stages will endeavour to teach a morning literacy session for 2 hours, followed by mathematics groups after recess. The GATES program and music program will still take place however they will be delivered by the classroom teacher in order to minimise disruptions to learning, and furthermore enhance teacher professional learning.

Professional learning

All teachers, support staff and teacher’s aides participated in professional learning in 2008. Professional learning was varied but generally maintained a technology, learning support and mathematics focus.
Professional learning activities included: district professional learning, regional working group participation in specialised areas, staff and stage meetings, school development days, visits from consultants, off site training, conferences and workshops. Professional learning was funded by the Department of Education, and Commonwealth government (as part of the Country Areas Program).

School development 2009 – 2011
The 2009 to 2011 MPS School Plan has been collaboratively developed by the school community to strategically focus on and improve priorities within the school. Directions within the next three years include, but are not restricted to:

- Improving English and mathematics outcomes for all students, including enhanced assessment procedures to more accurately direct programming and learning opportunities for students.
- Focusing on the continuation of quality teaching and learning practices.
- Providing a safe and secure environment to nurture student learning.

Targets for 2009

Target 1
Student engagement and retention.

Strategies to achieve this target include:

- Build teacher capacity to provide high quality learning opportunities for all students across all curriculum areas by strengthening implementation of the Quality Teaching model.
- Further investigate ways to ensure stimulating learning opportunities are provided for students and staff members that improve student outcomes.
- Ensure students, staff and the learning community are supported in planning and implementing purposeful and innovative programs which engage students.
- Implement strategies to address diversity in the classroom, extending gifted and talented students.
- Enhance learning opportunities for all students through the connected classroom strategy and through the Sapphire Coast Learning Community (SCLC).
- Maximise the use of principal support in the classroom.

Our success will be measured by:

- School culture and practice respects and responds to every student’s aspirations, culture, gender and potential.
- Quality teaching practices used for every student with attention to personalised learning.
- Implementation of strengthened K-12 learning continuums with an emphasis on transition points.
- Improved social and emotional well being and skills for life for every student.
- Strengthened teacher capacity to improve student learning outcomes.
- Principal has detailed knowledge of current teaching & learning in both literacy and numeracy.
- Improved student performance in internal and external assessments. Increase the average in Year 3 literacy from 401 to 420, Year 3 numeracy from 400 to 410, Year 5 literacy from 488 to 500 and Year 5 numeracy from 493 to 500.

Target 2
Increased levels of literacy achievement for every student in line with State Plan Targets.

Strategies to achieve this target include:

- Analysis of NAPLAN data to guide development of strategies that will address identified needs.
- Whole school planning processes developed to identify aspects of literacy underperformance for particular student cohorts and individual students.
- Whole school planning and assessment processes developed to strengthen quality teaching practices when implementing literacy programs K-6.
- Strengthen the whole school literacy program and support the implementation of new strategies.
- Support the implementation of the Accelerated Literacy program, including purchasing reading resources.

Our Success will be measured by:

- 20% of Year 3 students will achieve Band 6 (2008 baseline 8%) and 25% of Year 5 students will achieve Band 8 (2008 baseline 7%), as measured by NAPLAN.
- Strengthened teacher capacity to improve student learning outcomes.
- Enhanced school leadership capacity for school improvement.
- Diminished gap in literacy achievement between Aboriginal students and all students.
Target 3

_Increased levels of numeracy achievement for every student in line with State Plan targets._

**Strategies to achieve this target include:**

- Analysis of NAPLAN data to guide development of strategies that will address identified needs.
- Whole school planning processes developed to identify aspects of numeracy underperformance for particular student cohorts and individual students.
- Implement the Curriculum Support K-6 Scope and Sequence and programming resources to guide teaching and improve student numeracy achievement.
- Whole school assessment processes developed to strengthen quality teaching practices when implementing numeracy programs K-6.
- Implement and apply *Count Me In Too* and *Counting On* initiatives as well as all syllabus support documents throughout K-6; including the *Count Me In Too Indigenous (Education Resource).*

**Our success will be measured by:**

- 25% of Year 3 students will achieve Band 6 (2008 baseline 14%) and 30% of all Year 5 students will achieve Band 8 (2008 baseline 7%), as measured by NAPLAN.
- Strengthened teacher capacity to improve student learning outcomes.
- Enhanced school leadership capacity for school improvement.
- Diminished gap in numeracy achievement between Aboriginal students and all students.

Target 4

_Demonstrated quality teaching in S&T lessons whereby S&T processes are focused on, with technology integral to all teaching activities (as made evident in Stage programs). This will also involve staff effectively implementing ICT, including connected classrooms._

**Strategies to achieve this target include:**

- Whole school planning and assessment processes developed to support teachers in implementing the BOS’ new *Science and Technology* syllabus, to strengthen quality teaching practices and students’ scientific thinking.
- Provide teachers with professional learning programs to support technology access and implementation.
- Enhance learning opportunities for all students through the connected classroom strategy and through the Sapphire Coast Learning Community (SCLC).
- Interactive classrooms implemented.
- Improve student access and capacity to use information and communication technologies to enhance their learning.

**Our success will be measured by:**

- Improved levels of achievement for every student.
- Strengthened teacher capacity to improve student learning outcomes.
- Enhanced school leadership capacity for school improvement.
- Innovation in the use of interactive technologies for learning, teaching and for teacher professional learning.
- Broader curriculum options for every student through information and communication options and communities of schools.

Target 5

_Improved students’ sense of well-being and perception about quality of school life, especially as a result of improved student behaviour and quality leadership opportunities._

**Strategies to achieve this target include:**

- Introduction of strategic peer support program K-6, with anti-bullying focus.
- Ensure students, staff and the learning community are supported in planning and implementing purposeful and innovative programs which engage students.
- Further investigate ways to ensure stimulating learning opportunities are provided for students and staff members that improve student outcomes.
- Implement strategies to address diversity in the classroom, extending gifted and talented students.
- Increase quality student leadership opportunities.

**Our success will be measured by:**

- Improved student perceptions of school life.
- Improved behaviour in the classroom and on the playground.
- Implementation of strengthened K-12 learning continuums with an emphasis on transition points.
- Improved social and emotional well being and skills for life for every student.
School culture and practice respects and responds to every student’s aspirations, culture, gender and potential.

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.

Michelle Hulme (Relieving Principal)
Vanessa Nawiesniak (Assistant Principal)
Leah Martin (Relieving Assistant Principal)
Peter Murphy (Teacher)
Jenny Smith (School Administration Manager)
Angi High (P&C President)

School contact information

John Scott / Michelle Hulme
Main Street Merimbula
Ph: (02) 6495 1266
Fax: (02) 6495 3239
Email: Merimbula-p.school@det.nsw.edu.au
Web: http://www.merimbula-p.schools.nsw.edu.au
School Code: 2526

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: