South Grafton Public School
Annual School Report 2013
School context
South Grafton Public School (SGPS) delivers an exciting, comprehensive range of programs. Our two separate campuses, while both maintaining the positive features of a small school environment, access all the resources and expertise that a large school can facilitate.
Our school boasts proactive teaching personnel who have been recognised at state and regional levels for their professionalism and dedication to the development of successful teaching programs.
Some of our unique programs include:
- A district gifted and talented class, (known as an OC class) which boasts the largest number of state identified gifted and talented students in the Clarence Valley.
- Enrichment classes that focus on individuality, responsibility and independent work habits.
- An outstanding student concert band and four quality choirs.
- A specialised Kindergarten gymnastic program.
- A unique Pre School Playgroup Program that prepares children for their first year in Kindergarten on a weekly basis.

We prioritise literacy, technology and creativity across the curriculum. This is evidenced through our well-equipped library, our two technology centres and in our classrooms where interactive SMARTBoards and iPads are an integral component of the teaching/learning cycle.
We pride ourselves on a high level of public presentation in the creative and performing arts, clear direction in student management and high expectations in student achievement.

Principal’s message
SGPS has a rich history of outstanding academic, sporting and creative arts success. I will ensure the effective provision of quality educational experiences for all students based on the principles of equity and diversity. I will continue to foster and further develop a school culture which is fostering high expectations of its staff and students with the school continually reflecting and re-evaluating its programs, where staff and students are actively encouraged to be innovative, where successes are celebrated and effective strategies are put into place to maximise student outcomes.

SGPS has the capacity to be a leader in the use of technology in our classrooms. I have a vision of SGPS encompassing technology as a main focus of its teaching practice and school management plan. This would include additional purchasing of banks of computers for all classrooms, further implementation of iPads, digital cameras, a school blog, projection screens in halls and additional laptops. This will enable staff to deliver technology into their daily practice to engage students and deliver 21st century learning outcomes. Our school has the capacity to introduce innovative classrooms which are paper free. SGPS will ultimately be recognised as a centre of excellence in the use of technology.

I will continue to build and maintain effective home partnerships by encouraging parents to be active members of our P & C and to assist with school programs including sport, tuition and class activities and provide opportunities for active parental and community involvement in the school during Education Week.

Mr Peter Hickey, Principal SGPS

P & C message
We have a very proud, enthusiastic environment within our school community. This was evident this year with a wonderful supportive committee and we appreciate the overwhelming support from parents, carers and friends.
South Grafton Public School encourages our community and parent body to be actively involved in our school, so together we can build a strong supportive school community.
Fantastic attendance this year was shown at our special events which included: Mathematic/ Literacy workshop, Public Education Open Day, Seniors Citizens Open Day, Easter Hat Parade, Sports Carnivals, Band Performances, Mother’s Day Stall, Market Day, Pink Stumps Day, Jacaranda Activities and the March of Youth Parade. Support is also shown in attendance and involvement in P & C and canteen committee meetings, craft group activities and book covering volunteers in the SGPS Library. Our school community volunteered in canteens, classrooms with reading, computer skills, library, kindy gym, student banking and fundraising.

Through fundraising this year, the P & C were able to assist the school by providing: A uniform shop, $13000 for new seating for the Primary Campus, $7000 for new school banners, sporting house flags, carpet runners and blazers for our student leaders to wear at school and public events.

The P & C is only able to assist the school and provide these valuable resources because of the fantastic support and contributions from our parents, grandparents, carers and the community of South Grafton.

We thank you all immensely.
Together we can make a difference!
Kelly Vickers
President
South Grafton P & C Assoc.

Student information

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

Student enrolment profile

Student enrolments have consistently remained over the 550 mark for the last 7 years.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>2007</th>
<th>2008</th>
<th>2009</th>
<th>2010</th>
<th>2011</th>
<th>2012</th>
<th>2013</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>299</td>
<td>310</td>
<td>334</td>
<td>295</td>
<td>310</td>
<td>310</td>
<td>288</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>277</td>
<td>287</td>
<td>295</td>
<td>279</td>
<td>266</td>
<td>267</td>
<td>272</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Student attendance profile

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>2008</th>
<th>2009</th>
<th>2010</th>
<th>2011</th>
<th>2012</th>
<th>2013</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>K</td>
<td>92.0</td>
<td>90.4</td>
<td>94.3</td>
<td>92.8</td>
<td>93.7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>90.2</td>
<td>90.8</td>
<td>93.6</td>
<td>92.8</td>
<td>92.1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>91.7</td>
<td>91.8</td>
<td>93.4</td>
<td>93.6</td>
<td>93.5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>91.3</td>
<td>93.8</td>
<td>93.7</td>
<td>93.7</td>
<td>93.0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>90.6</td>
<td>90.8</td>
<td>92.9</td>
<td>90.9</td>
<td>92.3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>90.3</td>
<td>92.0</td>
<td>92.1</td>
<td>92.9</td>
<td>91.0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>90.6</td>
<td>91.1</td>
<td>91.9</td>
<td>90.9</td>
<td>91.6</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Total  | 92.5 | 90.9 | 91.4 | 93.2 | 92.5 | 92.5 |

Management of non-attendance

This year our new Deputy Principal, Mr Kevin Jones, together with our Senior Executive continued to develop and revise our monitoring system for student absenteeism. Parents were required to inform staff within two days of the reason for absence and staff were expected to phone parents if they had not been informed promptly. Our flow chart was revised for staff to understand and implement the attendance policy uniformly. Our Deputy Principal checked absences weekly, the Principal was responsible for fortnightly monitoring.

Workforce information

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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Position</th>
<th>Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Principal</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deputy Principal(s)</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The Australian Education Regulation, 2013 requires schools to report on Aboriginal composition of their workforce.

In 2013 South Grafton Public School employed three Aboriginal Education Workers for learning support and Wambinya and Norta Norta programs. We have a permanent Aboriginal Education Officer.

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>79.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Postgraduate</td>
<td>20.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NSW Institute of Teachers Accreditation</td>
<td>9.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Financial summary

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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date of financial summary</th>
<th>30/11/2013</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Income</td>
<td>$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Balance brought forward</td>
<td>257,578.05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Global funds</td>
<td>395,180.40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tied funds</td>
<td>690,764.80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School &amp; community sources</td>
<td>108,325.76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interest</td>
<td>10,008.71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trust receipts</td>
<td>9,506.20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Canteen</td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total income</td>
<td>1471363.92</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Expenditure</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Teaching &amp; learning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Key learning areas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Excursions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Extracurricular dissections</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Library</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Training &amp; development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tied funds</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Casual relief teachers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Administration &amp; office</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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

School performance 2013

Academic achievements

NAPLAN

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

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

Year 3: from Band 1 (lowest) to Band 6 (highest for Year 3)
Year 5: from Band 3 (lowest) to Band 8 (highest for Year 5)
Year 7: from Band 4 (lowest) to Band 9 (highest for Year 7)
Year 9: from Band 5 (lowest) to Band 10 (highest for Year 9)

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

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

Overall Student Achievement in 2013

NAPLAN data in 2013 shows the following:

In broad based terms our Year 3 results were collectively the most positive over the last few years.

In Reading, Spelling, Grammar and Punctuation and Writing, Year 3 scored above the SSG and Region.
In Reading, Spelling, Grammar and Punctuation, and Writing, Year 5 scored below the SSG the Region and State average.

In Numeracy, Year 3 scored below the State average while being above in both the SSG and the Region while Year 5 was above the SSG but below the Regional and State averages. Both Year 3 and Year 5 did better in Number, Patterns and Algebra than in Data, Measurement and Space.

**Literacy – NAPLAN Year 3**

In the Reading section, fourteen (14) items in the test were above state average where students answered questions involving locating information and narrative texts. However, the student’s comparatively least successful question involved connecting information related to a synonym.

In Spelling, three items were answered better than the state average with our students not showing a clear pattern as to which area they performed best in. Results showed that our students have yet to master spelling two syllable words.

In Grammar and Punctuation, eleven items were at or above state average with our students performing best in questions referring to simple sentences. NAPLAN results show that our students performed comparatively worse on the easier questions.

In Writing, students demonstrated greatest proficiency in vocabulary but there is a need to focus on punctuation.
Numeracy – NAPLAN Year 3

In Numeracy, sixteen items were answered at or above state average. Students did not show any specific talent in the Number, Patterns and Algebra Strand while Time in the Measurement strand was an area of strength. Focus is needed in aspects of 2D shapes and Multiplication and Division.

Literacy – NAPLAN Year 5

In Reading, two items were above state average with SGPS students demonstrating proficiency in questions relating to text about a movie.

Special focus is needed to build students skills in connecting more than one piece of information within a text.

In Spelling, no items were above or equal to the state average with students slightly better at spelling words rather than identifying spelling errors in a text. Special focus needs to be made in the areas of identifying an error within a text.

In Grammar and Punctuation, no items were at or equal to state average with students not demonstrating greater proficiency in any specific area. Students need to consolidate concepts of pronouns and apostrophes.

In Writing, our Year 5 students demonstrated greater proficiency in Text Structure. Further work is needed in the persuasive writing
Numeracy – NAPLAN Year 5

In Numeracy, one item was equal with the state average. Students demonstrated greater competency with questions relating to Chance, 2D shapes and 3D shapes. Sustained practice is required to build student proficiency in the areas of recognising and manipulating patterns and interpreting data.
Progress in reading

The growth for individual SGPS students in Reading and Spelling between 2010 and 2012 was most impressive. SGPS had greater growth than both the SSG and the State in these areas.

Other school based assessments

Mathematics – Quicksmart program

Term 1 2013 South Grafton Public School enrolled 12 students in the Quicksmart program. After 3 sessions of 30 mins per week, 6 students had graduated. They attended an average of 54 sessions. 21 year 4 students had some level of Quicksmart intervention. Although this data only represents a quarter of the students on Quicksmart. This data is representative of all results.

Number Facts Speed.

This graph shows students automatic recall of number facts before (orange) and after Quicksmart. They are considerably quicker (2 seconds) with subtraction and multiplication after intervention. The overall automatic recall of number facts improved by more than one second per answer.

Quicksmart has been a valuable tool in improving student outcomes, confidence and in developing recall of number facts.

Other achievements

Leadership

Our 2013 PRIDE leaders were involved in a number of exciting and rewarding events and programs this year. They enjoyed the responsibility that comes along with being a leader. Our leadership training began in Term 1 when all of our Year 6 students participated in a training day. The students participated in a variety of activities that focused on skills and values based on our PRIDE acronym.
including Positivity, Participation, Respect, Responsibility, Integrity, Discipline, Determination and Excellence. Sixty four Year 6 students volunteered to be a part of this program in 2013.

Our prefects had the opportunity to travel to Coffs Harbour to take part in the GRIP Leadership Conference. We then followed up the skills learnt with an online course.

In 2013 our PRIDE Leaders continued our great peer reading program with Jacaranda Preschool. All PRIDE leaders had the opportunity to walk to the preschool and read a variety of text to the students

PRIDE leaders were also been responsible for running numerous activities in the playground. They particularly enjoyed going to the infants to assist with skipping and organised games, colouring and running our primary music station!

Report written by Mrs Rouse

Sport

Development of a strong school culture comes about through a combination of emphasis on good learning in class, enjoyment of the variety of cultural activities and great support from staff and the community in our pursuit of excellence in all sporting endeavours. Over the years all threads of what we do at SGPS come together to give our students the opportunity to achieve success in all these areas.

Successses –

Girls Cricket – North Coast finalists

Saturday Hockey Juniors – Local Premiers

South Grafton Rebels won the Under 10 and 11 divisions of NRRA premierships in rugby league. A large number of boys from SGPS will ensure another strong school team in 2014.

South Grafton PS competed strongly in NSW PSSA knockouts in these sports, plus AFL and touch football, performing very creditably in gala days at Coffs Harbour.

All children at the school have improved fitness and skill levels by embracing skipping as another playground activity. In Term 4 seniors enjoyed ten pin bowling, futsal, basketball, aerobics, squash and cricket at venues across Grafton.

The school boasted individual state representatives at cricket, netball, athletics, rugby league and rugby union.

Report written by Mr Skinner

Music - BAND

South Grafton Public School’s Concert Band has the well earned reputation as a band of excellence not only in the Clarence Valley, but throughout the entire northern region. It is one of the things that makes our school great and I am extremely pleased with the school and parental support that the band has had. Even with the difficult economic times many are facing, families are committed to providing their children with the marvellous opportunity of learning to play a musical instrument and, as such, we have managed to maintain stability both in the number of students joining band and in musical achievement. This is also the result of each student, music tutor and director’s diligence, perseverance and obvious love of music.

Both of our bands have been busy this year with involvement in various performances beginning with Hawks successfully competing in the Grafton Eisteddfod, performing on Market Day and the very successful school concert. Both Eagles and Hawks were involved in performing with other Clarence Valley schools in the March of Youth and gave their annual concert for infants students as well as an evening for parents.
Our band has rightly earned a reputation throughout the Clarence Valley of a high musical standard and professionalism. We look forward to continuing this reputation and providing the best in musical education and opportunities for all students of South Grafton Public School.

Report written by Mrs Joanne Tranter

Choirs

There was great success with our choir program in 2013. The school boasts four choirs with over 130 students involved. Our Infants, Senior Girls and Academy Choir achieved first place in the Grafton Eisteddfod and our Senior Boys Choir achieved a creditable third place. Senior students participated in the Community of Schools Choir with a number of successful performances culminating with two performances at the Saraton Theatre with the Northern Beaches Regional Band and Choir.

Choir members from Years 3 to 6 joined with choir members from the Clarence Valley Conservatorium to perform at the Jacaranda Queen Crowning Ceremony and at the Venetian Carnival. We also performed to help community groups such as the SES and aged-care facilities.

Report written by Mr Andrew Tapp

Significant programs and initiatives

Aboriginal Education
South Grafton Public School
Literacy and Numeracy Case Study

This case study has been prepared for the department’s reporting against the National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Action Plan 2010-2014 by members of the Low Socio-economic Status National Partnership team and the Aboriginal Education and Community Engagement.

The context in which the initiatives were undertaken:

South Grafton Public School is a split site school situated on the north coast of NSW. The school has an enrolment of 580 students of whom 20% are Aboriginal. It has a staff of 43 including one Aboriginal classroom teacher, one Aboriginal Education Officer and four Aboriginal Education Workers. The school prides itself on maintaining high expectations for students in all pursuits including academic, sporting, creative arts and leadership. The school is supported by the Low Socio-economic Status School Communities National Partnership (Low SES NP), Improving Literacy and Numeracy National Partnership, Equity and Norta Norta funding.

Why the initiatives were undertaken:

A situational analysis was conducted in 2010 which provided important information about student needs and recommended a number of strategies within a whole school approach to improving the literacy and numeracy outcomes of all students. The 2010 NAPLAN results revealed that students scored well below state level in most areas in literacy and numeracy with an over representation in the bottom two bands. The results of Year 3 Aboriginal students were lower in all literacy strands with representation in the two lowest bands being 50% or more. Year 5 Aboriginal students showed a decrease of 63 scale scores from the 2009 data in the test aspect of Grammar and Punctuation. More than 50% of Year 5 Aboriginal students were represented in the bottom two bands in all strands. NAPLAN results indicated students needed to be targeted more strategically to move to the higher bands.

Approximately 80% of students attended preschool prior to commencing Kindergarten at South Grafton Public School. In the 2011
Best Start Assessment, 98% of Kindergarten students achieved at Level 0 or 1 in the critical aspects of Reading Texts and 94% achieved at Level 0 or 1 in Comprehension. In numeracy, 64% of students could not identify the numbers to 10. The implication for planning literacy and numeracy, in the early years, was that significant intervention was required both before students entered Kindergarten and during their first years at school.

Aboriginal students recorded a lower attendance rate than any other group. The attendance rate for Aboriginal students was 92% compared to 96% for all students.

**What was required to implement the initiatives:**

Significant funding from the Low SES NP, Improving Literacy and Numeracy National Partnership, Equity and Norta Norta programs has enabled the school to implement high leverage strategies targeted at improving the literacy and numeracy outcomes of all students.

The school has planned strategies that address the research based reforms of the Low SES NP and also align with each of the six priority domains of the National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education Action Plan 2010-2014 as outlined below. Research shows that schools planning strategies in the domains of the National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education Action Plan contribute to improved outcomes in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander education.

**How the initiatives were undertaken:**

1. **Readiness for school**

South Grafton Public School works with families and preschool children in culturally inclusive, high quality early childhood education programs to prepare them for school. The strategies include the Preschool Playgroup Plus (PPP), a program that engages pre-schoolers once a week in Terms 2 - 4 in the learning environment of the school. A range of experiences are available to the pre-schoolers including early reading and writing activities, art, craft and sport. Teachers are released to take this additional class on a rotational basis. The PPP program facilitates the early identification of and planning for children with special needs. The school employs a Community Liaison Officer (CLO) to liaise with Aboriginal parents of preschool students, encourage regular attendance at the PPP and support students in preparation for school.

In 2013, the Preschool Playgroup Plus program involved eighty families, pre-schoolers and their parents, attending South Grafton PS to engage and learn about school on a positive interactive level. This compares to between 50 and 70 families in previous years. Each week 75% of children attended pre-school full time. The positive nature of this initiative has been reflected in both survey and interview data. Community satisfaction in the PPP program is high and pre-schoolers are well prepared for Kindergarten both socially and academically as indicated in the quotes below.

“**My daughter has developed friendships with other children attending the PPP which will make starting school so much easier.” Parent**

“**The PPP is a great place for the children to learn about school life, routines and expectations. It fosters positive communication between the home and school.**” Teacher

“It was amazing how settled our Kindergarten classes were and ready to start formal education.” Deputy Principal (newly appointed to the school in 2013)

“I learnt a lot, gave us insight into what my child will be learning in the classroom” Parent
The Aboriginal Education Officer also liaises with the Aboriginal parents at the Gummyaney preschool. Kindergarten teachers visit the preschool with the parents for an informal sharing session. Additional parent information sessions are conducted for parents of students entering Kindergarten the following year.

2. Engagement and connections

South Grafton Public School works in partnership with families and communities to better support the education of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students to foster learning environments that are significant and supportive.

The school has prioritised the Aboriginal Education Strategy and will continue to strengthen its Aboriginal Education Committee. Teachers attend professional learning on the importance of recognising the Aboriginal dialect and also facilitating competence in Standard Australian English.

The Aboriginal Education Officer (AEO) facilitates communication with parents and the community including encouraging parents to attend personalised learning plan (PLP) meetings with their child’s teacher. During a PLP meeting the parents and teacher discuss the learning goals that are aligned with stage requirements, strategies to support the learning, responsibilities (student, teacher and parent) in an identified timeframe. On average, 85% of parents attend PLP meetings.

A comprehensive range of learning opportunities are made available to all students including academic, cultural and sporting experiences to promote self-esteem and confidence. The school boasts band, choir and dance programs. The Bangarra Dance Theatre, a leading Indigenous performing arts organisation, has supported students in their performance at the Schools Spectacular, a world-class arena production highlighting the talents of the students of NSW public schools. Aboriginal cultural programs reflect strong support from the community. The school has organised positive role models to speak to the senior students. They have included Troy Cassar-Daley, an award-winning country musician and Preston Campbell, an Indigenous Australian professional rugby league footballer.

An After School Academy has been established in which specialised teachers are engaged to offer after school hours courses of five weeks duration in a range of areas including preparing for NAPLAN, technology, art, music and dance. Teachers customise learning outcomes to maximise learning opportunities. Students have access to two well-equipped technology centres at the school. The involvement of school staff (teachers and SASS), parents and community members as tutors in the After School Academy has resulted in a variety of cultural, sporting and educational programs being offered to students after school hours, strengthening curriculum knowledge. In a survey, 85% of students responded that they always or mostly learnt new skills in the Academy courses. This initiative adds five hours to the teaching timetable each week of the four terms with 75% of students accessing the Academy and receiving additional support and extension through a range of workshops. This has been evidenced by extensive positive comments about the program in parent, staff and student surveys and interviews.

“(The After School Academy) gave them a chance to do something they normally would not have the opportunity to do because of circumstance, cost, time with work etc.” Parent

The school’s Library Café operates one afternoon per week from 3:15pm to 5:15pm where parents and caregivers are
encouraged to make use of the library’s staff, the wide range of reading material and interactive technology. Students (pre-school, primary or secondary), who are accompanied by a parent, are welcome to research, borrow, use computers and the internet, print or simply browse. Aboriginal parents are encouraged to attend with their children to utilise the updated Aboriginal resources in the library.

The Library Café has enabled students to use the computers and complete research assignments, access the Mathletics and Reading Eggs programs, read and borrow books and spend quality time with their family out of regular school hours in an educational setting. It has also provided parents with an opportunity to access many popular books, receive assistance with assignments, use the internet, read and enjoy discussions with other parents over light refreshments. Parent workshop sessions have been conducted including using World Book online, Photoshop, iPad and eReaders.

The Positive Behaviour for Learning (PBL) program is consistently applied across the school. PBL has a broad range of systemic and individualised strategies for achieving social and learning outcomes while preventing problem behaviour. PBL encourages positive behaviour from students and improves their self-concept and motivation to learn. It is conducted in a consistent manner, achieved through the use of common terminology and signage. Student PRIDE leaders support the staff to ensure all the elements of positive behaviour, respect and responsibility, integrity, discipline, determination and excellence are maintained. The success of the student leadership program is evidenced in the following quote from one of the Aboriginal PRIDE leaders.

“Teachers trust me and students look up to me.” Aboriginal Student

In consultation with the Aboriginal Education Officer, teachers have developed quality units of work for each stage K - 6. The units include interactive aspects of multimedia and have been approved by the school community and Aboriginal Education Consultative Group (AECG).

Other strategies to increase engagement and connections include the extensive student leadership programs including school captains and prefects, Student Representative Council, House Captains and PRIDE leaders. Aboriginal students are always well represented in the leadership programs. The student leaders are highly regarded by the staff and students who value their input into school activities.

3. Literacy and numeracy

South Grafton Public School provides effective professional learning in evidence-based literacy and numeracy programs to ensure that Aboriginal students master the foundation skills of literacy and numeracy.

The school employed a Highly Accomplished Teacher (HAT) to coordinate professional learning on best practices in literacy and numeracy teaching. This supported teachers in using data to monitor individual student performance and drive whole school improvement. Casual teachers were employed to release teachers from class to attend professional learning on literacy and numeracy teaching with the HAT. Quality literacy and numeracy resources have been purchased to support professional learning and classroom practices. The focus on quality teaching has re-engaged teachers on classroom practices and their programming. The instruction has become more focussed and data driven. Teachers work with a variety of multi-modal texts at appropriate levels to ensure interest levels are maintained and student engagement is maximised. Student needs are clearly identified using NAPLAN and local measures followed by the
development of individual learning plans (ILPs). School Learning Support Officers assist the classroom teachers in the implementation of the ILPs and PLPs.

As part of the National Partnership Literacy and Numeracy funding, The Taking Off With Numeracy (TOWN) program was implemented at the school. The program is a whole-class intervention program which focuses on improving numeracy skills of students identified as not performing at expected level on the Numeracy Continuum. The program provides ongoing professional learning over the school year to assist teachers to assess each student’s current numeracy understanding and to monitor student progress against a research-based framework. The program also encompasses the Newman’s Error Analysis which provides students with a problem solving framework supported by signage in every classroom. Teachers have focused on implementing a balanced numeracy session in all classrooms which ensures aspects of the TOWN program continue to be implemented on a daily basis. Teachers have also been involved in an integration program where students in the lower part of the framework have been given additional assistance. The Norta Norta program funding is utilised to provide tutoring support for Aboriginal students.

Other targeted literacy and numeracy programs implemented at the school include Home Reading, Targeting Early Numeracy (TEN), and QuickSmart. Aboriginal students are prioritised for inclusion in the QuickSmart program. The QuickSmart mathematics intervention strategies include a variety of short, focused activities that aim to increase students' strategy use and improve their automatic recall of basic number facts across all four operations. Information technology hardware and numeracy software has been purchased to support the TOWN, TEN and QuickSmart programs.

The school conducts the Wambinya program that enables an Aboriginal Education Worker (AEW) to work with the Aboriginal Kindergarten students who scored 0 in the Best Start assessment at the beginning of the year. The AEW focuses on improving reading, comprehension and writing by working with small groups of two students. The school-based Jarjum program also assists Kindergarten to Year 2 students with literacy and numeracy skills. This includes a QuickSmart based approach with the TEN program, called KinderStart. These programs are organised by the Assistant Principal and teaching staff and implemented by AEW’s from the local community specifically employed for the role.

The Wambinya and Jarjum programs have been effective in improving the literacy and numeracy outcomes for Aboriginal students in the early years.

- In the initial Best Start assessment in Term 1 2013, 100% of Kindergarten students scored in Cluster 1 or 2 in Reading texts. By Term 3, 53% of the students had progressed to Clusters 3 or 4
- 100% of Kindergarten students scored in Cluster 1 or 2 in Comprehension in Term 1. By Term 3, 54% of the students had progressed to Clusters 3 or 4
- 69% of Kindergarten students scored at the Emergent level in Forward number word sequence in Term 1 compared to 13% in Term 3
- 85% of Kindergarten students scored at the Emergent level in Numerical identification in Term 1 compared to 27% in Term 3.

Strong gains have been made in closing the gap between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal students. The 2013 NAPLAN results showed that:

- Year 3 (15 Aboriginal students) improved by 101 scale scores from the 2012
data in the test aspect of Grammar & Punctuation
• Year 3 are 52 scale scores above the state average in the test aspect of Grammar & Punctuation
• 93% of Year 3 Aboriginal students achieved at or above minimum standards in Reading compared to 86% in 2011
• 93% of Year 3 Aboriginal students achieved at or above minimum standards in Numeracy compared to 84% in 2012
• 14% of Year 3 Aboriginal students performed in the proficient bands in Numeracy compared to 12% for all Aboriginal students in the NSW government schools. This was an increase from 5% in 2012.
• 53% of Year 3 Aboriginal students performed in the proficient bands in Writing compared to 24% for all Aboriginal students in the NSW government schools. This was an increase from 21% in 2012
• 100% of Year 5 Aboriginal students achieved at or above minimum standard in Reading compared to 67% in 2012 and to 93% for all Aboriginal students in the NSW government schools
• 85% of Year 5 Aboriginal students achieved at or above minimum standard in Writing compared to 83% in 2012 and to 77% for all Aboriginal students in the NSW government schools
• In Numeracy 92% of Year 5 Aboriginal students achieved at or above minimum standards in Numeracy compared to 77% in 2011 and to 84% for all Aboriginal students in the NSW government schools
• 16% of Year 5 Aboriginal students performed in the proficient band in Numeracy compared to 6% for all Aboriginal students in the NSW government schools.

Other school evaluation provides additional insights about the success of the school’s initiatives. Of all students participating in the QuickSmart intervention, 80% improved from being in either NAPLAN numeracy band 2 or 3 in Year 3 in 2010 to Band 5 or 6 in Year 5 in 2012. Anecdotal comments about the success of the QuickSmart program include the following quote from one of the students.

“I can now do my times tables.” Student

The implementation of TOWN has focussed on understanding and moving students along the framework and also on the development of a quality numeracy session. Through initial and ongoing assessments all students participating in the TOWN program have either moved at least one level along the framework or gained skills and understanding in the next level.

4. Attendance

South Grafton Public School recognises the complex factors influencing attendance. The school prioritises the importance of good attendance, especially in the early years, in all school communications including reporting to parents. The strategies addressing improved attendance rates in the school plan include the development of a clear monitoring system for student absenteeism, including partial attendance, by the executive and School Learning Support Team (SLST). A flow chart has been developed to address attendance issues to ensure that all staff understand and implement the attendance policy uniformly. The Deputy Principal is responsible for fortnightly monitoring of attendance in consultation with the SLST. Additional School Administrative Support Staff (SASS) have been employed to support the Deputy Principal in attendance monitoring.

The focus of quality teaching in all professional learning programs ensures a pedagogy that is seen by students to have significance and impacts on student attendance. The school includes attendance targets in the PLPs for Aboriginal students with poor attendance.
The attendance for Aboriginal students in 2012 was 8% below the attendance rate for all students. In Semester 1, 2013, this gap has been reduced significantly to 3%.

5. Leadership, quality teaching and workforce development

South Grafton Public School has created a culture of learning, inclusive of all students, that enables high levels of student achievement. Staff are encouraged to attend professional learning that support their teaching for Aboriginal students. The Aboriginal Education Officer and three classroom teachers are attending a national conference in Sydney that will provide opportunities to showcase what works on delivering quality educational and training experiences to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students.

Other professional learning programs include the Connecting to Country training, a five day program consisting of a three day localised cultural immersion facilitated by the Regional and Local Aboriginal Education Consultative Groups. This is followed by a two day professional learning workshop that concentrates on classroom practice, pedagogy and effective school leadership. Teachers have also participated in the Effective Pedagogies for Aboriginal Students course providing teachers with strategies and understandings to assist Aboriginal students to develop competencies in using Standard Australian English in academic and school contexts whilst also acknowledging and supporting local dialects. All staff have visited local Aboriginal sites as part of a combined Community of Schools (CoS) initiative to improve knowledge of the local Aboriginal community. The school has established a professional learning leadership team with the CoS focusing on data analysis, leadership, mentoring / coaching and the National Curriculum. South Grafton Public School has provided support to the broader community of schools enhancing capacity in quality teaching and learning. Teachers are provided with additional release time for sharing and interaction. A Business Manager has been employed to liaise and manage funds in joint CoS initiative.

The CoS leadership group has been effective in building the capacity of leaders as evidenced in the quote below:

The Community of Schools leadership group has a formalised structure which engenders collegiality, joint planning and mutual respect. Relieving Principal

An additional Deputy Principal (DP) has been employed in 2013, replacing the Highly Accomplished Teacher (HAT) position, to continue, extend and monitor a Lesson Study approach in professional learning with a focus on data analysis and quality teaching. The DP leads executives and aspiring leaders in aspects of the focus areas to develop their capacity to support teachers across a stage, school and community of schools. Teachers access the professional learning to reach teachers’ professional goals set out in the Teacher Assessment Review Schedule (TARS) process and aligned to the school’s targets. Teachers nominate for leadership positions. Ten teachers have been successful in acting in higher positions over the last three years.

The initiatives have seen a focus on quality teaching. This has resulted in increased staff understanding and evaluation of their teaching practice in relation to quality teaching elements and is supported by staff evaluation comments. A survey found that 100% of teachers agreed that the professional learning from the HAT was beneficial to their professional practices. The survey also found that 86% of staff changed their teaching practice because of the professional learning. Modelled writing lessons in Year 3 and 5, a major HAT focus, developed teacher capacity and contributed to improved NAPLAN results. Introducing regular independent writing K-6 has shown
improved student interest and engagement in writing which was strongly evidenced in student and staff evaluations.

All staff has participated in the lesson study approach with a focus on different elements of literacy. This has been implemented through a buddy lesson approach. Teachers plan a lesson together then observe each other teach the lesson and give each other feedback. This process has provided the opportunity for greater teacher professional learning and sharing and developed teacher capacity to provide quality lessons that engage students.

Interviews found that teachers were better able to develop units of work and special events that helped to connect students to Country and school as a result of the professional learning on Aboriginal pedagogies.

6. Pathways to real post-school options

South Grafton Public School has maximised learning opportunities for Aboriginal students to increase engagement, improve educational outcomes, and raise expectations and post-school options.

The school communicates high expectations of all students. In addition to the district’s Opportunity Class (OC) for gifted and talented students the school encourages students and parents to apply for placement in one of the three extension classes. Students work independently on higher order thinking tasks.

School-based professional learning focuses on the importance of the significance dimension of the Quality Teaching framework to further engage all students. The school incorporated the students’ cultural knowledge and prior school background knowledge into lessons. Teachers provide innovative and tailored learning opportunities to increase the engagement of Aboriginal students.

The school is planning to further support the aspirations and expectations of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander girls by implementing the SistaSpeak program. This program is specifically designed for and targets girls to gain valuable knowledge around their educational needs, career aspirations, personal needs and qualities. The program will be coordinated by the Aboriginal Education Officer and a classroom teacher who have both received training.

The PRIDE elements of positive behaviour, respect and responsibility, integrity, discipline and determination and excellence underpin the school’s plan. Anecdotal evidence supports the school’s approach in providing students with a wide range of opportunities and maintaining high expectations for all students as evidenced in the following quote.

“I’ve had the opportunity to do more creative activities like making movies. Most of the work is project-based learning. I have taken part in various activities outside of the school including the Community of Schools public speaking for Aboriginal students, Grafton Conservatorium activities and the Mid North Coast Cricket Team.” Year 6 Aboriginal student

Lessons learned in implementing the initiatives to improve literacy and numeracy outcomes for Aboriginal students:

South Grafton Public School has identified five key lessons for schools developing initiatives focusing on improving the educational outcomes for Aboriginal students.

1. High expectations

The school believes that high expectations of school leaders, teachers, students, parents and community members support the educational achievement of all students. It
recognises that what students come to believe about themselves is a result of the messages from significant others such as parents and teachers.

Effective school leadership has been a key element in raising expectations and improving the confidence of teachers in their ability to improve student outcomes. The school has developed a culture, over time that communicates high expectations of students, teachers and parents/caregivers. A focused professional learning program on quality teaching has challenged teachers’ beliefs and expectations in ways that produce high quality pedagogy and create learning conditions that allow students to experience encouragement, engagement, success and rewards.

2. Extended readiness for school initiative

The Pre-school Program Plus (PPP) program that prepares children for their first year in Kindergarten on a weekly basis over three terms has been very successful and widely applauded.

Additionally, the school has the opportunity to plan for students with special needs. The program recognises that preschool contact needs to be ongoing and extended beyond a one off orientation program. The PPP encourages positive links with the community, ensures excellent transition, and prepares pre-schoolers and parents well for their first year of school.

3. Extended engagement opportunities

The school recognises the unique abilities and aspirations of each student as an individual. It believes in providing a well-rounded education that involves providing students not only with academic knowledge but also the skills, attitudes and experiences necessary for a happy and successful life. The range of activities offered at the school ensures a full and varied program of learning experiences for all students.

4. Employment and utilisation of local Aboriginal community members

The school values the unique skills, experience and knowledge Aboriginal and Torres Straits Islander peoples have to offer, and encourages them to apply for positions at the school. A number of positions have been available utilising the Low SES NP, Wambinya and Norta Norta funding including 4 additional Aboriginal Education Workers. The school recognises the strong link between improved learning outcomes for Aboriginal students and the involvement of Aboriginal staff and community in the school.

5. Analysis of context-based student needs

The school conducted a situational analysis which gathered and analysed a range of data and information to inform the schools’ planning and reporting. It provided important information about the unique context in which the school works and to clearly identify student needs, the significant factors that influence its context and the development of the most appropriate strategies.

Multicultural Education

This year, we again employed a Community Liaison Officer to ensure positive home/school congruence. This in itself has ensured a more inclusive school community with improved awareness and communication. All staff are aware of the need for culturally inclusive teaching practices. We have a trained Anti Racism Contact Officer. Classroom programs maintain a multicultural perspective.

In 2013 one child participated in an ESL program for 6 hrs per week.

National partnerships and significant Commonwealth initiatives.
In 2013 South Grafton Primary school has been involved in the following initiatives:

1/ Low Socio Economic Communities National Partnerships (LOWS SES NP)
Main focus area- Quality teaching.
Specifically Change: Changes in teacher quality and/or teacher capacity, including the impact of additional executive or Highly Accomplished Teacher
To determine the effect of our ‘Quality Teaching’ emphasis teachers were required to complete the following surveys:

a) Teachers rated their own performance on a scale of 1 – 5 in these areas ( 5 being the highest).
- I communicate clear expectations for each lesson
- I have high expectations for learning
- I give student feedback regularly
- Reflection & evaluation of my performance through TARS & QT practice has made a difference to my teaching performance

b) A second survey of staff showed - 100% of staff found the QT support useful. Specifically they found the following most helpful:
Shared planning with buddy and HAT
Opportunity to watch a colleague teach a literacy lesson
Developing / sharing quality lessons using picture books as a focus
Developing /sharing quality lessons using factual texts as a focus
86% of staff have changed their teaching practice because of the QT intervention process. This has been done through:
Use of focus texts
More aware of / able to focus on QT elements to inform teaching
Provided opportunities for professional dialogue and sharing of ideas
More aware of the structure of a quality lesson
Improved classroom organisation organised.

Results in each quadrant showed 80% of responses were in the top two bands.

Data collected also showed -
Teachers are communicating expectations more consistently and clearly
Teachers are giving high levels of regular feedback
Teachers are reflecting more on their personal performance

2/ Improving Literacy & Numeracy national Partnerships (ILNNP)
Focus - Comprehension and Engagement
A new project based on ILNNP guidelines focusing on comprehension through use of contemporary digital literacies was implemented. This involved the employment of a specialist teacher, purchasing 40 iPads and significant professional learning.

Professional Development was a strong focus of the initiative, as was classroom support and lesson development. Students used the devices to improve their comprehension, engagement and digital literacy skills. Students worked in small groups as well as in whole class formats. Year 5 was the target group to gauge the success of the initiative and they completed pre-program and post-program assessments.
The subsequent results demonstrated to teachers the power of using technology to engage students in order to improve literacy outcomes and consequently move students along the Literacy Continuum. Teachers are now more regularly using digital texts and technology as part of their literacy program. Evidence of this is that iPads are now timetabled for use in all classrooms K-6. Anecdotal evidence from teachers further supports this.

Many innovative learning activities have been undertaken by various classes; including 5DZ’s mixed media digital PRIDE art, 4BT’s water safety documentaries and 5/6OCP QR Quest. These activities saw students redefining traditional learning using technology and allowed them to interact with the technology at a high level.

The iPads will continue to engage and challenge students’ in their learning in 2014 and beyond.

3/ Empowering Local Schools (ELSNP) School planning and evaluation 2012—2014

**Focus Area:** Workforce

**Empowering Local Schools National Partnerships Initiative:**

1. SGPS employed a SAO in a temporary capacity three days a week for 2013 to assist the permanent SAS staff and executive to manage additional external programs and to prepare for the smooth introduction of LMBR.
2. The second initiative that SGPS undertook was to employ a secondary teacher at our feeder high school to extend our OC students in a gifted and talented science program. This was conducted in the science labs and IT centre at the high school.

**Strengths of the initiative:**

1. As SGPS was participating in a range of externally funded programs the employment of an additional SAO (three days per week) allowed permanent SAS staff to focus on these external programs and the effective introduction of LMBR.
2. The employment of a specialist science teacher one day per week (for three terms) allowed our OC students to be engaged in activities and experiments in a dedicated science lab to enhance their skills and understanding of science. This also allowed additional time for a member of the SGPS teaching staff to contribute to the team working on the introduction of LMBR in the school.

**Expenditure:** The school was granted $50,000 through ELSNP. The employment of the SAO was approximately $34,268 and the high school science teacher (one day per week) was $15,732.

4/ Priority Schools Funding Program (PSFP)

**Focus – Community & Transition.**

While an active Community Liaison Officer (CLO), was engaged to support and network with families K – 6, focus was also placed on improving transition to Kindergarten from pre-school with a very successful Pre-School Playgroup (PPP) initiative.

‘Preschool Playgroup Plus’ (PPP) at South Grafton Public School in 2013 was a huge success, with 83 students registered and attending regularly. PPP has given the students the opportunity to confidently begin school life at SGPS, meet many of the teachers and become comfortable in the school environment. Parents have had the opportunity of meeting all the Infants staff and to observe teaching strategies and expectations.

Report written by Karen Cleaver (CLO)

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

- Written evaluations from staff
- Staff and parent surveys
- Assessment data from students

School planning 2012—2014: progress in 2013

Outcomes from 2012–2014

Quality in teaching and delivery - lesson study involving QT elements is embedded in T / L practices as evidenced in TARS practices

High levels of academic performance in literacy and numeracy evidenced in NAPLAN data

Creative planning and clear, well organised management systems.

Supportive community involvement

Attractive, enticing learning environments

School priority 1

Literacy

Evidence of progress towards outcomes in 2013:

All executives and additional aspiring leaders have engaged in additional Professional Learning.

Using NAPLAN data there has been an increase in students in the top two bands yr 3 from 43% to 46%.

Unfortunately there was a decrease of students in yr 5 in the top two bands.

- [Strategies to achieve these outcomes in 2014]

  Implement focused Professional Learning for NAPLAN, The new English curriculum, Quality Teaching and assessment.

Engage a second Deputy Principal (Curriculum Leader) to support and mentor staff in the above.

Continue to engage a CLO and additional AEWs to facilitate and network with community enhancing attendance and engagement.

Purchase a wide range of quality resources.

School priority 2

Numeracy

Evidence of progress towards outcomes in 2013:

All executives and additional aspiring leaders have engaged in additional PL.

Using NAPLAN data there has been an increase in students in the top two bands yr 3 from 33% to 45%.

Unfortunately there was a decrease of students in yr 5 in the top two bands

Strategies to achieve numeracy outcomes in 2014:

  Prioritise professional learning and support around a range of contemporary programs including new assessment strategies, Quality Teaching, technologies, Quicksmart, Mathletics, the Numeracy Continuum and specifically around Number, Patterns and Algebra.

  Purchase appropriate numeracy based resources: Library, IT hardware, i-pads & Smartboards.

  Engage an additional Aboriginal staff member using Norta Norta funds to target & support specific students in numeracy.
Professional learning

Average expenditure on teacher professional learning in 2013 was $890.

Total school expenditure on teacher professional learning out of TPL was $22,099 and from additional TPL funds which were provided to assist with the new curriculum was $9,053.

Quality teaching was the focus on professional learning in 2013. This permeated every Key Learning Area and incorporated planning time for teachers and executive, classroom observations and reflection/evaluation expectations. Strategies were embedded in our Teacher Assessment and review process and were regarded as highly effective by staff and executive. (Please note earlier documentation regarding QT).

As the school supports a significant gifted and talented focus, participation in state conferences was prioritized for G & T team members.

All staff attended Staff Development days where our agendas continued to focus on Quality Teaching. These included latest innovations in literacy technologies.

Numbers of new scheme teachers maintaining accreditation – 3

Numbers of teachers working towards accreditation are – 2

Numbers of teachers maintaining accreditation are - 0

Parent/caregiver, student, and teacher satisfaction

Over a four year period school culture and community satisfaction improved significantly. While focusing on quality teaching, particularly through literacy and numeracy, the school worked hard to ensure diversification and community connectivity. Success was directly due to two things.

1 / Consistency in administration, management and teaching practice,
2/ Low SES funding and initiatives

Staff and parents were asked to rank some of our major initiatives on a scale of one to five. See survey questions below-

**After school activities have helped engage my child in school in a positive way**

**The morning fruit basket has helped my child think positively about school and more positively about the importance of healthy eating.**

**I feel my child’s classroom teacher and the school executive have communicated appropriately regarding issues, concerns or needs**

**I am satisfied with the overall performance of SGPS**

Responses from the top two bands showed that-

- 70% of parents feel that after school activities have helped engage their child in school in a positive way
- 72% of teachers feel that after school activities helped engage students in a positive way
- 65% of parent respondents feel the morning fruit basket has helped their child think positively about school and more positively about the importance of healthy eating
- 100% of teacher respondents felt that the morning fruit basket added positively to student attitude and school culture
- 84% of parent respondents feel their child’s classroom teacher and the school executive have communicated appropriately regarding issues, concerns or needs
- 90% of parents surveyed feel satisfied with the overall performance of SGPS
- 100% of staff responding to the survey felt satisfied and happy as a teacher at SGPS
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.

This report was compiled by-

Susan Hillery Principal (Retired)
Kevin Jones Deputy Principal
Nigel Paull Assistant Principal (National Partnerships)
Tony Skinner Teacher
Joanne Tranter Teacher
Susan Jurd SAM
Karen Cleaver CLO

South Grafton Public School
Vere Street South Grafton
Ph: 66423388
Fax: 66432065
Email: sthgrafton-p.school@det.nsw.edu.au
Web: www.sthgrafton-p.schools.nsw.edu.au
School Code: 2061

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