2010 Annual School Report
Wallacia Public School

NSW Public Schools – Leading the way
Our school at a glance

Wallacia Public School is located on Mulgoa Road, in the heart of Wallacia village, and serves the areas of Wallacia and Greendale. With over 100 years of history, our school of approximately 85 students has an inclusive approach, with students in all grades involved in whole school activities. Older students are encouraged to assist younger students, and the school maintains a friendly, family-like atmosphere. The people of Wallacia actively support the school, and parents are encouraged to be involved in class and school activities.

Wallacia Public School offers students a caring, nurturing learning environment. The school has a strong focus on Literacy, Numeracy and Technology, as well as providing a range of opportunities and experiences in Creative and Performing Arts. The school is part of the Glenmore Park / Mulgoa Valley Community of Schools, and the Penrith Valley Small Schools Network. These links with nearby schools enable access to broader professional learning opportunities, as well as shared activities for staff and students.

Messages

Principal’s message

There were many new and exciting challenges and events that made 2010 a memorable year for all of us at Wallacia Public School.

The appointment of two new permanent teachers at the beginning of the year brought stability as well as enthusiasm and innovation to the teaching staff. As the year progressed, the staff developed into a capable and cohesive unit, working closely and productively for the benefit of all our students.

For the first half of the year, a significant proportion of the school grounds was a construction site as our new library was built. The library was funded as part of the federal government’s Building the Education Revolution (BER) program. Just as our new BER library was nearing completion, we unfortunately had a fire in our existing demountable library. While damage to the building itself was not extensive, the smoke damage to books certainly was. In the ensuing months, a small group of staff and volunteers (especially Mrs Karen Gilham) spent countless hours removing plastic covers from books, cleaning the books and then re-covering them. I would like to extend a special thank you to Mrs Gilham and all those who assisted in this mammoth task.

During 2010, Wallacia PS received two significant regional awards. First, we received a Western Sydney Regional Literacy Award during National Literacy and Numeracy Week. This award was in recognition of the outstanding growth in Literacy achievement of our 2009 Year 5 students from Year 3 to Year 5. The award was testament to the hard work of the students and teachers, and reinforced our commitment to promoting high academic standards.

Our second award was a Western Sydney Regional Excellence in Education Award. This was awarded to the Glenmore Park / Mulgoa Valley Community of Schools (of which we are a part) in recognition of the work the schools have done together to promote smooth transitions for students. The annual Writers’ Festival organized each year by staff of Wallacia PS on behalf of the Community of Schools, was an important component of this award.

Highlights of the year included combined camps at Yarramundi and Toukley for Stage 2 and Stage 3 students respectively. All students participated in our end-of-year concert which combined Christmas items from our Kinder to Year 3 students with a full-length production of the play “Alice in Wonderland” by our Year 4 to 6 students. More details about these events are included elsewhere in this report.

Throughout the year, students and staff participated in a broad range of exciting activities, such as the annual Easter Hat Parade, Book Character Parade, Education Week assembly and classroom visits, Life Education Centre visit, Swim School, Transition to School Program, sports carnivals, excursions, and combined Smalls Schools Disco.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank the dedicated staff of Wallacia Public School for their enthusiasm, hard work and support throughout 2010. I would also like to thank the students for their commitment to their learning throughout the year, and commend them on their efforts. I extend my sincere appreciation to the parents,
our many volunteers, and the broader community for their ongoing support.

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.

Ms Jenny Ruge
Principal

P & C Association

Wallacia PS has the support of a small but committed P&C Association. The P&C meet on the first Monday of each month at 6:30pm in the school Library.

During 2010, the P&C Association held a number of fund-raising activities, including Mothers’ Day and Fathers’ Day stalls, election day barbecue and cake stall, barbecue at Bunnings Penrith, chocolate drive and various raffles. In addition to fund-raising, members of the P&C supported the school by running the school canteen one day per week, and by providing morning tea or lunches for special events. A highlight of the year for students is the P&C Disco run by the parents.

The Wallacia P&C Association is always seeking new members, and particularly encourages families new to the school to consider joining.

Mrs Jenny McBride
P&C President

Student representative’s message

At Wallacia Public School, students are given a range of opportunities to develop leadership skills. Each year, two Captains and two Vice Captains are elected by students and staff. These students lead fortnightly assemblies, help and support staff in a number of ways, and represent the school on official occasions. We also have Sports Captains who organise the sports equipment and lead sports groups for the Kinder-Year 2 students.

In 2010, a Student Representative Council was established. Assisted by Mrs Tritton, this group of students met regularly to discuss ways to improve our school. We also have a Class Captain program which gives all students a chance to be student leaders. Teachers choose a Class Captain for each class each week.

Teachers and parents are proud of the way in which our student leaders carry out their duties. They are always excellent role models for their peers. Wallacia Public School captains and vice-captains for 2010 were Shae Maxwell, Shane Post, Lauren Bruni and Cole Berwick.

Student 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

Student enrolment numbers at Wallacia Public School have remained stable over recent years. While there has been some mobility, with a small number of families moving into or out of the area, the total number of students has not changed significantly. Across the 2010 school year, enrolments ranged from a low of 84 to a high of 89, with an average of 86 students enrolled at any one time.

Student enrolment numbers over the past five years are presented in the table below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2006</th>
<th>2007</th>
<th>2008</th>
<th>2009</th>
<th>2010</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Student attendance profile

The large majority of students at Wallacia Public School maintain satisfactory attendance. In previous years, the average attendance rate of our students has exceeded the regional and state averages. In 2010, despite an increase in the school’s average attendance rate, this figure was
below the regional and state averages for the first time.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2007</th>
<th>2008</th>
<th>2009</th>
<th>2010</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>School</td>
<td>95.0</td>
<td>95.0</td>
<td>93.1</td>
<td>93.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Region</td>
<td>93.9</td>
<td>94.1</td>
<td>92.1</td>
<td>94.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>State</td>
<td>94.0</td>
<td>94.1</td>
<td>92.1</td>
<td>94.4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

However, when analysed by year level, it is clear that a small number of students account for a significant proportion of student absences.

**Management of non-attendance**

In 2009, Kindergarten students at Wallacia Public School had a lower average attendance rate than other grades (as reported in the 2009 Annual School Report). As a result of this, a session for parents focused on awareness of the importance of school attendance was added to the Transition to School program for students entering Kindergarten in 2010. In 2010, the benefits of this session were realised, with the average attendance rate of Kindergarten students exceeding the average attendance of all other grades at Wallacia Public School.

A small number of students continued to have difficulties with school attendance, and these issues were addressed through support to parents, as well as incentive and reward programs for students.

**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 2010 class size audit conducted on Wednesday 17 March 2010.

<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>KINDERGARTEN</td>
<td>K</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>YEAR 1/2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>YEAR 1/2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>YEAR 2/3/4</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>YEAR 2/3/4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>YEAR 2/3/4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>YRS 4/5/6</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>YRS 4/5/6</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>YRS 4/5/6</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Structure of classes**

There were four classes at Wallacia Public School in 2010. An enrolment of 17 Kindergarten students enabled the creation of a single-grade class for Kindergarten, with all other classes being multi-grade classes. This is in line with other schools of similar size.

When students in any particular grade cohort are split across two classes (as in the case of Grade 2 and Grade 4 in 2010), teachers create opportunities to ensure that these students maintain strong relationships with each other. Students are not ‘graded’ into particular classes, with decisions about placement of individual students made on the basis of social development, friendship needs and sibling placement, rather than academic considerations.

**Staff information**

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

**Staff establishment**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Position</th>
<th>Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Principal</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Classroom Teachers</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Support Teacher Learning Assistance</td>
<td>0.75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher Librarian</td>
<td>0.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RFF / Part time</td>
<td>0.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Counsellor</td>
<td>0.05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School Administrative &amp; Support Staff</td>
<td>1.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>6.8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The National Education Agreement requires schools to report on Indigenous composition of their workforce. There were no indigenous staff members employed at Wallacia Public School in 2010.

**Staff retention**

In 2010, there were two new permanent teachers appointed to Wallacia Public School. These staff members replaced a teacher who retired after more than twenty years at Wallacia PS, and a teacher who resigned her teaching position to take up full-time child care.
**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>50</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.

**Date of financial summary:** 30/11/2010

**Income**

- Balance brought forward: $93,611.24
- Global funds: $81,794.89
- Tied funds: $38,554.44
- School & community sources: $34,117.28
- Interest: $4,223.81
- Trust receipts: $11,534.00
- Canteen: $0.00

**Total income:** $263,835.66

**Expenditure**

- Teaching & learning
  - Key learning areas: $15,612.22
  - Excursions: $23,463.07
  - Extracurricular dissections: $9,107.47
- Library: $0.00
- Training & development: $0.00
- Tied funds: $62,373.99
- Casual relief teachers: $14,621.28
- Administration & office: $24,437.73
- School-operated canteen: $0.00
- Utilities: $13,889.51
- Maintenance: $14,712.18
- Trust accounts: $4,739.33
- Capital programs: $4,544.55

**Total expenditure:** $187,501.33

**Balance carried forward:** $76,334.33

A portion of the funds carried forward each year is held in the school account for essential long-term maintenance and replacement of capital equipment. In particular, funds are being held in reserve for a major refurbishment of the school playing field / playground.

A full copy of the school’s 2010 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.

**School performance 2010**

There were a number of special events and significant achievements for Wallacia Public School in 2010. Students excelled in a number of areas, in the Arts, in Sport, and in academic pursuits.

**Achievements**

**Arts**

During 2010, Wallacia PS had an active an enthusiastic choir. The choir performed at a number of events including school assemblies and the annual Presentation Day ceremony. A total of 18 members of the choir performed creditably at the Penrith Valley Performing Arts Festival. Mrs Denise Brell and Mrs Jemima Cook worked tirelessly to prepare the choir for their various performances.

Six students represented Wallacia PS at the annual Glenmore Park / Mulgoa Valley Writers’ Festival. This year’s theme was poetry, and the visiting author for the evening was popular children’s poet Steven Herrick. Students’ work was elected for publication in a book, along with the work of students from seven other local schools.

*Nathan Vella receiving his Writers’ Festival certificate from children’s author Steven Herrick.*
In November, Wallacia PS proudly presented a combined Christmas Concert and production of the play “Alice in Wonderland”. The event was held at the Hubertus Club at Luddenham, and performed in front of an audience of over 200 family members and friends.

All students in grades K-3 were involved in the concert, while students in grades 4-6 performed the play. Students had rehearsed for several months leading up to the event, which featured great sets and lavish costumes. The help of a large number of parents and staff members was much appreciated. The students agreed that they all thoroughly enjoyed the experience.

**Sport**

Each year, Wallacia PS students participate in combined sports carnivals with other schools in the Penrith Valley Small Schools network. Combined swimming, cross country and athletics carnivals provide students with opportunities to compete against a larger cohort of students. These carnivals are a highlight of our sporting year, and are always enjoyed by students and enthusiastically supported by parents.

As a result of their performances at the Small Schools Swimming Carnival, seven students went on to represent Wallacia PS at the Penrith District Swimming Carnival. While all our swimmers performed well, the most outstanding result was **Shae Maxwell**, who finished 4th overall in the Senior Girls 50m Backstroke.

Thirteen students represented Wallacia PS at the Penrith District Cross Country Carnival. All of the students ran well and represented our school with pride. Later in the year, 17 of our students competed in the Penrith District Athletics Carnival.

In 2010, the Small Schools network was given responsibility for organising the Penrith District Athletics Carnival. This was a daunting task, but was carried out efficiently and professionally by the organising committee. Mrs Amanda Stubbs was our representative on this committee. We also provided six Student Officials for this carnival. The students worked very hard over the two days of the carnival, and carried out all tasks diligently and willingly. The students were: **Blake Berwick, Cole Berwick, Shane Post, Chantel Bugeja, Curtis Schuldt and Nathan Vella**.

Throughout 2010, Wallacia PS was part of the Active After School Communities Program. This program provided a variety of after school sporting activities free of charge for any enrolled students who wished to participate. The program operated two afternoons per week, with activities changing each term.

**Other**

Throughout 2010, we continued our involvement in the Glenmore Park / Mulgoa Valley Learning Community, developing partnerships with other local schools. In addition to the joint professional learning opportunities, and the Writers’ Festival discussed above, Year 5 students participated in a Science and Technology Day at Glenmore Park High School.

Students from our school also participated in combined camps with other schools in the Small Schools Network. Stage 2 students enjoyed an overnight Sport and Recreation Camp at Yarramundi, while Stage 3 students attended the Lutanda Recreation Centre at Toukley for four days. Both of these camps provided students with opportunities to build resilience and independence, and to participate in a range of challenging physical activities.

**Academic**

In the National Assessment Program, the results across the Years 3 and 5 literacy and numeracy assessments are reported on a scale from Band 1 to Band 18.

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

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

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

**Literacy – NAPLAN Year 3**

According to NSW Department of Education and Training guidelines, NAPLAN results should not be reported in a manner which enables the individual results of students to be identified. Accordingly, percentage in band and three-year school averages should not be reported if results are available for less than 10 students.
In 2010, only eight Year 3 students participated in the NAPLAN tests at Wallacia Public School, therefore the reporting of results is not presented in graphic form.

Overall, Year 3 results in all aspects of Literacy were below state average results. While no students scored in Band 1, the results indicate that literacy development needs to continue to be a priority in the early grades.

The average scores of our Year 3 students, and state average scores, for each aspect of Literacy are shown below.

Reading

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>School</th>
<th>State</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Average mark, 2010</td>
<td>354.0</td>
<td>414.3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Writing

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>School</th>
<th>State</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Average mark, 2010</td>
<td>384.7</td>
<td>422.6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Spelling

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>School</th>
<th>State</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Average mark, 2010</td>
<td>361.4</td>
<td>408.3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Grammar & Punctuation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>School</th>
<th>State</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Average mark, 2010</td>
<td>394.2</td>
<td>416.3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Numeracy – NAPLAN Year 3

The average score of our Year 3 students and the state average score for Numeracy is shown below. While this achievement level is below state average performance, it represents an increase over the school’s 2009 results.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>School</th>
<th>State</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Average mark, 2010</td>
<td>375.0</td>
<td>396.1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Literacy – NAPLAN Year 5

In 2010, a total of 10 Year 5 students participated in the NAPLAN literacy tests at Wallacia Public School. The following graphs illustrate the achievement levels of these students.
The average achievement level of Wallacia PS students in Spelling was similar to the school’s results in 2009, and still below state average achievement levels. In contrast, our students performed extremely well in Grammar and Punctuation, achieving an average score significantly above the average score across all NSW DET schools.

**Numeracy – NAPLAN Year 5**

As reported previously, NAPLAN results must not be reported in such a way that individual students’ results can be identified if less than 10 students participated in the tests. At Wallacia Public School in 2010, only nine students participated in the Numeracy tests, and the reporting of results in graphic form is therefore restricted.

Despite these restrictions, it can be reported that the overall performance of WPS Year 5 students in Numeracy improved significantly in 2010. Two-thirds of students scored in the top three bands (Bands 6-8), compared to only one-third of students scoring in the top three bands in 2009. No student scored in the lowest band in 2010.

While the school average result was still slightly below the state average result, in 2010 the Wallacia Public School Year 5 numeracy average was only 8.3 points below the average of all NSW DET schools. In 2009, this gap was 37.9 points. This indicates significant improvement in numeracy performance of our Year 5 students, when compared to the average performance of all NSW DET Year 5 students.

**Progress in literacy**

Data was matched for ten students who completed the NAPLAN literacy tests at Wallacia PS in 2008 and again in 2010. The following graphs show the growth in scaled scores of these students, compared to the growth of all students in NSW DET schools.
Our students’ growth in performance in Reading was in line with state average growth, but our growth in Writing was well in excess of state average growth. On average, our students achieved 79.5 points growth, compared to an average of 67.3 points across all state schools.

The following graphs illustrate the outstanding growth in Spelling achievement, and Grammar and Punctuation achievement, of our Year 5 students in 2010. In both aspects of literacy, Wallacia PS students achieved significantly higher average growth.

**Progress in numeracy**

Data was matched for nine Year 5 students who also completed the Year 3 NAPLAN tests at Wallacia PS in 2008. These students achieved outstanding progress in Numeracy.

The average scaled score growth for Wallacia PS students was 117.5 points, compared to an average of 89.6 points for Year 5 students across all NSW DET schools. This exceptional growth was achieved by students right across the range of achievement levels, from lower achieving students to the highest achieving students.
Minimum standards

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

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 2010**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Percentage of Year 3 students achieving at or above minimum standard</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Reading</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Writing</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Spelling</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Punctuation and grammar</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Numeracy</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Compared to the percentages of Year 3 students achieving minimum standards in 2009, these figures represent significant improvement in Reading and Numeracy. The percentage for Spelling was similar to 2009 (85%).

**Percentage of Year 5 students in our school achieving at or above the minimum standard in 2010**

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

Compared to the percentages of Year 5 students achieving minimum standards in 2009, these figures represent an increase in Writing and a decrease in Reading. All other percentages are similar to 2009.

Significant programs and initiatives

Aboriginal education

Our school is committed to ensuring that all staff and students have opportunities to increase their knowledge and understanding of Aboriginal history and culture. Aboriginal perspectives are included in all curriculum areas, with a particular emphasis on HSIE and literature. It is school policy that a major component of Aboriginal education is included in at least one unit of work in each grade each year.

Multicultural education

Multicultural perspectives are integrated across Key Learning Areas, and particularly through the teaching of integrated units of work. Wallacia PS promotes inclusive teaching practices that recognise and value the cultural backgrounds of all students.

Respect and responsibility

Values Education is incorporated as an important part of all learning at Wallacia Public School. Teachers are strongly committed to the teaching of values, both explicitly and incidentally across all areas of the curriculum.

Each year, students organise and conduct a formal Anzac Service at the school, and 2010 was no exception. Students were very respectful of this solemn occasion, and even our Kindergarten students developed some understanding of what Anzac Day is all about.

Connected learning

Wallacia Public School is fortunate to have received two complete Connected Classroom suites in 2010. One of these was obtained as part of the new library (funded through the federal government BER program). The other one, which was funded by the Department of Education and Training as part of its roll-out to schools, is located in one of the classrooms.

During 2010, staff were trained in the use of the Connected Classroom equipment. We were able to connect with other schools in the Penrith Valley Small Schools Network, and will continue to develop the use of this innovative resource.
Progress on 2010 targets

Target 1

To improve Literacy achievement levels of all students across the school.

As part of our school’s regular professional development program, a thorough review of teaching programs was conducted. Teachers worked collaboratively to develop a comprehensive Guided Reading program that met the needs of all students. Additional resources for literacy development were purchased, with particular emphasis on increased use of technology in literacy teaching and learning.

Our achievements include:

- All students were regularly assessed and grouped across classes for Guided Reading instruction. This enabled the needs of all students to be met more efficiently, and ensured that students with additional learning needs were grouped appropriately.
- An increased proportion of students in Kindergarten to Year 2 attained the target reading level for their grade.
- The percentage of Year 3 students achieving the minimum national standard in Reading increased to 100%.
- Year 5 students’ Writing results improved significantly, from 5.1 points below the average of all NSW DET schools in 2009, to only 0.3 points below this average in 2010.
- A significant increase in the number of students completing the Premier’s Reading Challenge. In 2010, 67 students completed the Challenge, compared to only 14 students in 2009.

Target 2

To improve the Numeracy achievement levels of all students across the school.

Our achievements include:

- The NAPLAN numeracy results for Year 3 improved significantly, with a 60% reduction in the gap between state average performance and our school’s average achievement in 2010.
- The NAPLAN results of our Year 5 students showed a significant improvement over previous years. The gap between our school’s achievement and the average achievement of all NSW DET schools decreased from 37.9 points in 2009, to only 8.3 points below this average in 2010.

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 2010 our school carried out evaluations of our Transition to School program, and Writing.

Educational and management practice

Wallacia Public School offers a comprehensive Transition to School program for students in the year prior to school. The program operates for 2 hours, one morning per week during Terms 3 and 4. Staff and parent perceptions of this program were sought to inform this evaluation.

Background

In both 2009 and 2010, a large proportion of the students enrolling in Kindergarten at Wallacia Public School for the following year were able to attend at least some of the sessions of the Transition program. In 2009, 14 of the 17 students enrolled for Kindergarten in 2010 attended sessions. In 2010, 10 of the 16 students enrolled for 2011 attended at least one session.

Findings and conclusions

All of the families who participated in the Transition to School program found it a valuable experience, and felt that it helped their child adjust to school. The strengths of the program were identified as: the expertise and friendliness of the Pre-school teacher who conducted the sessions; the opportunity to become familiar with the school in a supportive context; the opportunity to meet and get to know the teacher.
who would be the Kindergarten teacher the following year; the information about school policies and procedures provided as part of the program; and the opportunity for the children to socialize with other children who would be their classmates in the following year.

Staff also agreed that the Transition to School program is highly successful. Key benefits identified by staff included: the opportunity to meet children and families in a supportive and relaxed context prior to school entry; the opportunity to identify students who may need additional support in the transition to school process; the opportunity to convey information to parents about ways they can support their child’s learning at home; and the opportunity to plan effective classroom programs and practices even before the children started school.

**Future directions**

Given the highly successful nature of the Transition to School Program, the program will continue in its present format provided funding is available. In future, however, we will explore ways to encourage and support the participation of families for whom work commitments and / or pre-school attendance have resulted in them not accessing the school’s Transition to School Program.

**Curriculum**

Staff conducted an evaluation of the teaching and learning of Writing at Wallacia Public School. This included analysis of students’ skills and understandings, as well as identification of staff needs in relation to teaching Writing.

**Background**

While there have been some significant improvements in the Writing achievement levels of our Year 5 students in NAPLAN tests over recent years, overall Writing is an area of curriculum requiring improvement at Wallacia Public School. Some students, particularly in the early grades, are reluctant to write extended texts, and require considerable support to do so. Staff decided to evaluate the teaching and learning of Writing with a view to increasing performance in this area.

**Findings and conclusions**

Analysis of student work samples showed that, while most students have developed a basic understanding of the main text types taught, they have difficulty remembering the differences between different text types. Most students have a sound understanding of grammar and punctuation, but don’t always remember to use these skills correctly in their writing. Many students need additional support to develop their understanding of sentence structure and, while students tend to score well in weekly spelling tests, they do not easily transfer these skills to their written texts.

All teachers indicated that they would like more professional development in the area of teaching writing. In particular, they believed that opportunities to collaboratively analyse writing samples with teachers in our Small Schools network would facilitate greater understanding of current standards and areas of need.

**Future directions**

The teaching and learning of Writing skills will become a key focus for professional development at Wallacia Public School in 2011. Student writing samples will be regularly collected and analysed, and collaborative programs will guide classroom practices.

**Parent, student, and teacher satisfaction**

In 2010 the school sought the opinions of parents, students and teachers about the school. While most parents and students express satisfaction with the overall functioning of the school, some parents still feel that communication between home and school needs to be improved. Parent satisfaction with the performance of teachers is high, although a few parents expressed the view that the Principal needs to be ‘more approachable’.

Teachers express overall satisfaction with the school, although they feel that parents are not always respectful of teachers, and do not necessarily understand the complexity of the work teachers do. A common view among teachers was that a very small number of vocal parents criticise the school frequently and unjustly. Teachers would appreciate hearing positive comments from parents more often.
Professional learning

All staff members, including teaching, administrative and support staff, have access to professional learning opportunities. During 2010, staff at Wallacia PS engaged in professional development in the following areas:

- Best Start assessment training
- Literacy and Numeracy Leaders program
- ICT training
- Connected Classroom training
- OH&S training
- Positive Partnerships – meeting the needs of students with autism
- CPR and Emergency Care

- Regular collaborative analysis of student writing samples to identify general areas of need and specific students requiring further assistance.
- Development of comprehensive support programs for students experiencing difficulty in developing early writing skills.

Our success will be measured by:

- An increased proportion of Kinder to Year 2 students achieving stage outcomes in Writing.
- An improvement in NAPLAN Writing results for Year 3 and Year 5 students.
- Increased participation in writing opportunities such as writing competitions, Writers’ Festival, and poetry competitions.

School development 2009 – 2011

The targets listed below are part of a three year plan for continuous school development. Literacy and Numeracy will continue to be key areas for development. Increased use of technology will also be a key target.

Targets for 2011

Evaluation of students’ writing skills, as well as analysis of recent NAPLAN results, indicate that there is a need to focus more on the early development of writing skills. In addition, staff have identified a need to make more strategic use of the school’s extensive technology resources. Therefore, the effective use of technology in teaching and learning will be a specific target for 2011.

Target 1

To improve the writing skills of all students, with particular emphasis on students in Kindergarten to Year 3.

Strategies to achieve this target include:

- Purchase of additional resources to support the explicit teaching of writing.
- Staff to participate in professional development programs to enhance the teaching of writing.

Our success will be measured by:

- An increased proportion of Kinder to Year 2 students achieving stage outcomes in Writing.
- An improvement in NAPLAN Writing results for Year 3 and Year 5 students.
- Increased participation in writing opportunities such as writing competitions, Writers’ Festival, and poetry competitions.

Target 2

To increase the use of technology in teaching and learning across the school.

Strategies to achieve this target include:

- Purchase of additional resources to support the use of computers in both literacy and numeracy instruction.
- Staff to participate in professional development programs to increase their expertise in using technology.
- Ensure all students in Years 3 – 6 regularly use email, maintain their own Premier’s Reading Challenge records, and use technology effectively in literacy learning.
- Continued use of the Mathletics computer-based mathematics program.

Our success will be measured by:

- All students accessing technology as a regular part of their literacy and numeracy sessions.
- All students in Years 3 – 6 regularly using email, BlogEd, and other forms of technology.
- Regular and frequent use of the two Connected Classroom suites in the school.
About this report

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

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Parents can find out more information about Annual School Reports, how to interpret information in the reports and have the opportunity to provide feedback about these reports at: http://www.schools.nsw.edu.au/asr