School context

Blighty Public School is a small rural school situated between the towns of Finley (22km) and Deniliquin (35km). The school draws students from the communities and surrounding farms of Blighty and Deniliquin.

The school has 20 families and 32 students enrolled in 2013. 95% of the students travel to school via bus.

Blighty Public School has two classes, K-2 (Infants) and 3-6 (Primary), however, a third teacher is currently employed for nine days a fortnight to create an extra class for 3/4 students in the areas of English and Mathematics. This teacher also has library and learning support responsibilities and provides release for the teaching principal and K-2 class teacher.

Blighty Public School staff and students are active members of the Deniliquin Small Schools Network, which consists of Blighty, Bunnaloo, Conargo and Mayrung.

The school has experienced a 10% increase in enrolments over the past four years. This growth is a reflection of quality teaching and learning and the implementation of programs which address the learning needs of all students.

The school has an active P&C, experienced and dedicated staff, excellent facilities and strong links with its community.

Principal’s message

Blighty Public School is a vibrant, friendly and supportive small school which prides itself on the broad and quality range of educational opportunities it can offer all children.

The school’s motto, ‘Working Together for Success’, and the core values of Respect, Responsibility, Cooperation, Well-Being and Personal Best drive the programs at the school which aim to educate the whole child and prepare them for success in the 21st century.

In our efforts to nurture and educate the whole child, we offer innovative programs across a broad academic, creative and social spectrum. We endeavour to deliver a diverse study of curriculum with every opportunity for each child to find an area to excel in, thereby building self-esteem and instilling a love of learning. We aim to cater for the needs, interests and talents of all children and strive to have all students reach their full potential academically, physically and socially.

We have a strong emphasis on improving student literacy and numeracy. Students are encouraged to set and achieve high personal goals in all areas of school life. The school aims to develop successful learners; confident and creative individuals; and active and informed citizens.

Blighty Public School benefits from belonging to a supportive local community. In 2013, P&C members gave up many hours of their time to fundraise for our school at numerous functions and events. The school and community came together at various times throughout the year to welcome new families and socialise. In term 1, we had our ‘Welcome BBQ’, in term 2, the school presented a play/musical, term 3 saw the students present a Talent Quest and in term 4 we came together once again for our Presentation Night.

This year we continued our association with the Kiwani’s Club. Each term, representatives from the club visit our school to help us recognise and celebrate the achievements of a ‘Terrific Kid’. The recipients for 2013 were; Sarah Hanmer, Clay Webb, Bradley Chaplin and Ashleigh Simpson.

In 2013, teachers were focussed on improving the quality of teaching as a means of further improving learning outcomes for all students. This saw them participate in a wide and extensive range of professional learning experiences to improve the quality of their practices and ensure they were preparing the students for life in the 21st Century. The philosophy behind many of the changes made was introduced through participation in Australian Curriculum training and the Riverina learning strategy, Higher Order Ways to Learn (HOW2Learn).

As part of Education Week’s focus, ‘Celebrating Our Stories’, the school created a ‘Wall of Fame’
to recognise all of the great achievements that have been made by students at the school. Many other developments have also taken place at the school in 2013 with the help of a variety of grants. These have included the installation of solar panels as part of the Solar Schools Program and a new PA system being purchased with a community volunteers grant. The school and P&C put forward $20,000 and this was matched by the government in a joint funding agreement. A new covered outdoor learning area will be built with these funds in 2014. The P&C also provided funds for and built a new chicken enclosure at the school.

I would like to extend my gratitude to our entire school community for their efforts towards ensuring our school is a great one.

The purpose of this document is to highlight and celebrate significant achievements that we as a school community have made in 2013, as well as to make public what our future targets are and how we plan to get there.

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.

Nathan Fisher

P & C message

On behalf of the P&C, I would like to thank all families for their support of school activities and for their fundraising efforts this year.

Thank you to Vicki, Robyn and Isha for taking on roles on the executive this year and for Vicki who has been Canteen Coordinator for the past few years. I appreciate having Mick Hehir come onto the executive for 2014 as our new secretary.

Fundraising efforts this year have been extraordinary.

I would like to particularly mention Vicki for again coordinating the debutante balls with in excess of $6,000 raised this year. Her efforts to fundraise over the years for this school have been exceptional.

Thank you also to Bronnie for her efforts in organising the Blighty Art Auction. This was such a successful night and raised over $5,000.

I also want to thank Nina for arranging and coordinating the Ute Muster VIP tent decoration. This raised $2,000 and because of her fantastic work should be a regular contribution to the P&C funds.

I wish to acknowledge all of the helpers for each of these activities and for the efforts of everyone to fundraise through events such as clearing sales, canteens and even writing submissions for funding. Thank you to you all for your contributions, time and effort; it is critical to the running of this P&C. Without your support our children would not be afforded the same educational opportunities, such as the excellent excursions they attend, or you would be paying a significantly higher cost to allow them to attend. I would encourage you all to play a part in the running of P&C activities and we more than ever need you to help guide the direction of the P&C at future meetings.

I am pleased the P&C has been able to commit funds to a major project at school. Our commitment of $15,000 will make possible the building of a new covered outdoor learning area, which will be a great structure for future events at school.

It is with great appreciation that I farewell some families this year. Meg and Russell Chaplin have been extremely active and supportive over the past 10 years. Thank you for the many projects and positions you have committed to, amongst them executive roles and of course the fabulous ‘Cluckingham Palace’.
To Peter and Isha Knill as you move to Kiama with your family, thank you Isha for stepping into the secretary role for the last 2 years.

To Brett and Sonja Frost, thank you for your input into this school so far as I’m sure the time for your boys to be here will come around very quickly.

Thank you to the aides and cleaners, especially Sue Fenaughty as you move on from Blighty after supporting our school for so long.

Lastly, thank you to Nathan, Karen, Barb and Maree for your above and beyond, full-time commitment to making this school the best it can be. I wish you all a very safe, refreshing holiday.

Gary Webb
P&C President

Student representative’s message

Good evening teachers, parents, students and most importantly my fellow 2013 Year six members. Tonight is an unbelievable night, as each Year six member takes their turn to speak on their school years. I am only able to speak on this year, but what a year.

I started at Blighty at the beginning of the year along with my brother Angus. This year has not been easy and I have made it that way. I can now see what great friendships I could have lost. At my last school my whole year was bigger than all the students and staff at Blighty, and I had trouble adjusting.

This year has proven to be my best ever year at school. I’m so glad dad and mum moved. The day I walked in the gate the only person I knew other than Angus was Tyson, and we are still great friends. I’d like to thank everyone for welcoming me to the school.

My memories from Year six include, the Sydney excursion which was amazing. I got to see things that I didn’t think I would until I was an adult. Seeing the Opera House for the first time ever and walking over the Harbour Bridge was just awesome.

Not so awesome was abseiling and walking on the high ropes. In both of these activities I wasn’t such a happy camper.

I’d like to thank Mr Fish and Mrs Webb for pushing me out of my comfort zone and challenging me. The Minister speeches were a test for me some weeks, but I got through them. The biggest challenge issued to me was standing up in front of all the scary parents and friends and singing as part of our school performance. Usually I only sing in the tractor or in the shower and no one gets to hear that.

Even though I’m excited about moving forward and walking the grounds at high school, I’m sorry to be leaving this amazing little school. I’d like to take this opportunity to thank everyone who has supported me this year and helped me keep smiling.

Cameron Bain, Minister for Music

I have attended Blighty Public School for nearly three years now. I am very proud to be called a student of this truly awesome school.

At Blighty, I have grown from a small rose bud to a blossoming flower. I have learnt to do so many things and I have been blessed with the help and support I have received from my caring teachers. At Blighty, I have achieved my personal best time and time again. I have been part of the Creative Catchment Kids program and I have also been to the Moulamein art camp. These are just two of many achievements I have made with great help from my friends, teachers and family.

As you all probably know, I am going to high school next year and I have been lucky enough to secure a scholarship at a high school in Wollongong called the Illawarra Grammar School. I would never have had the confidence or the academic skill if it wasn’t for my years at Blighty. As I said before, I have had help and support from all possible directions and I will be forever grateful to my fabulous teachers and one of a kind friends at Blighty Public School.

I know that I am moving to the other side of the state but at heart I will always be a Blighty
Redeye! Because Blighty Redeyes are warriors and we keep fighting so bring it on, ‘cause I’m ready for whatever you throw at me high school!

Thank you for listening to my speech and may you all have a merry Christmas and a prosperous coming year. Have fun future year 6’s because I know that I’ve had a ball and you will too! Thank you Mr Fisher, Mrs Webb and Mrs Conallin for being great teachers! Thank you also to Maree for doing the behind the scenes work that keeps everything flowing.

Cailyn Knill, Minister for Environment

Student information

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

The school currently has an enrolment of 32 students with stable enrolments forecast for the foreseeable future.

Student enrolment profile

<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>17</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Management of non-attendance

Non-attendance is dealt with by insisting on the prompt return of absentee notes, following up on explanations of absence, frequent reminders of the importance of regular attendance in the school newsletter, DEC developed pamphlets, phone calls and interviews with parents when necessary, rewards for excellent attendance and ensuring that every child enjoys coming to school to learn. The services of the District Home School Liaison Officer are also available, if required.

The introduction of an attendance award for students achieving 100% attendance in a term has been a successful initiative.

Our ‘Sip It, Munch It, Move It, Learn It’ program also promotes high attendance along with the drinking of water, eating of fruit, daily exercise and participation in our Home Learning program.

Fun and games: Clean Up Schools Day
Workforce information

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

The permanent positions held by Nathan Fisher (Teaching Principal) and Karen Conallin (Classroom Teacher) have remained constant for 2013. The retirement of Belinda Whittakers as a permanent part-time employee in 2011 led to the employment of Barbara Webb in a temporary position. This position will remain temporary because part-time positions are required to target specific whole of school programs which are subject to annual review and change.

In 2013, the teachers were supported by two School Learning Support Officers, Sue Fenaughty and Tessa Mulham. Maree Hovenden was once again our School Administration Manager and General Assistant.

The School Counsellor, Mirelda Wales, attends the school once per term and additionally, if required.

Workforce composition

<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>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assistant Principal(s)</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Head Teachers</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Classroom Teacher(s)</td>
<td>1.252</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher of Reading Recovery</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learning and Support Teacher(s)</td>
<td>0.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher Librarian</td>
<td>0.084</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher of ESL</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School Counsellor</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School Administrative &amp; Support Staff</td>
<td>0.926</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>3.362</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The Australian Education Regulation, 2013 requires schools to report on Aboriginal composition of their workforce.

Currently there are no members of staff from an Indigenous background.

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>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NSW Institute of Teachers Accreditation</td>
<td>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><strong>Income</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Balance brought forward</td>
<td>$72602.53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Global funds</td>
<td>45273.21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tied funds</td>
<td>52024.94</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School &amp; community sources</td>
<td>31710.83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interest</td>
<td>2443.44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trust receipts</td>
<td>755.14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Canteen</td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total income</strong></td>
<td><strong>204810.09</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Expenditure</strong></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>
<tr>
<td>School-operated canteen</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Utilities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maintenance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trust accounts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Capital programs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total expenditure</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Balance carried forward</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Whilst this seems like a substantial balance, at the time of rollover there are still salaries and expenses requiring payment for the months of December and January. In addition, the school is currently holding a Community Volunteers grant as well as an Arts grant for projects to be undertaken early in the new year.

This year, the school contributed $5,000 and the P&C contributed $15,000 towards the joint funding of a covered outdoor learning area (see capital programs expenditure).

A full copy of the school’s 2013 financial statement is tabled at the P&C’s annual general meeting. Further details concerning the statement can be obtained by contacting the school.
School performance

In 2013, Blighty Public School provided a balanced and enriched curriculum for students. There was a strong and successful provision of additional artistic, sporting and community opportunities. With an embedded philosophy of continual improvement, a well-rounded and comprehensive education was available for all students.

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)

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.

NAPLAN Year 3 and 5 - Literacy (including Reading, Writing, Spelling and Grammar and Punctuation) and Numeracy

In 2013, four Year 3 and five Year 5 students sat the NAPLAN. With such a small sample of students (less than 10), detailed analysis of results and graphs, including percentage in band, three-year school average and average progress, cannot be provided.

Other school based assessments

K-6 teachers record, analyse and monitor student progress through the Literacy and Numeracy continuums. PLAN (Planning Literacy and Numeracy) software has further promoted quality teaching and practices across the school with all teachers tracking students on all aspects of the continuums. PLAN has supported teachers in developing a more systematic understanding of student development in both literacy and numeracy.

Other achievements

Arts

Blighty Public School continues to place a strong emphasis on all areas of creative and practical arts.

One of the major highlights for the year was the school play, ‘A Convict Christmas’. It gave the students the opportunity to showcase their talents in the areas of dance, drama and music and it also demonstrated the high level of teamwork and leadership that exists in our school. During the year, students also attended a travelling theatre performance by Tony Bones as well as Mayrung Public Schools play, ‘Cinderella’.

Another high point in the year involved visits from Danielle O’Keefe from Outback Theatre. She is a specialist drama and singing coach and worked with both classes on theatre, creative storytelling and singing.

Once again, the school was able to offer a broad range of musical experiences in 2013. These included; K-6 choir and percussion programs, 3-6 recorder ensemble, school rock band – ‘The Redeye Rockers’ and South West Music and Outback Theatre tuition and performances. The students performed at the school play, Talent Quest, Presentation Night and Blighty Community Christmas Party.

Blighty Public School students were also very privileged to be involved in a variety of gifted and talented arts excursions in 2013. The students chosen were involved in a visual arts camp at Moulamein and the School Spectacular excursion to Sydney. All of these excursions involved the students working with specialist arts coaches.

Students participated in the annual Christmas Craft Bonanza and student artwork was also featured in Finley and Deniliquin Shows.

Students participated in a variety of Arts Unit initiatives including the Premier’s Spelling and Reading Challenges, with Zara Macdonald, Jasmine Ackers, Darcy Morris and Clay Webb participating in the Regional level of the spelling challenge.
Clay Webb (5/6) and Ruby Hehir (3/4), winners of the Finley Lion’s Club Junior Public Speaking Competition which involved Blighty Public, Finley Public and Finley St Joseph’s schools.

Sport

There is a strong commitment towards providing a wide range of sporting opportunities and experiences at Blighty Public School.

The school continues to promote a healthy and active lifestyle, the development of fundamental movement skills, game sense and good sportsmanship for all students.

Once again, many students were recognised for their sporting achievements throughout the year.

Swimming
• The Small Schools’ Champions were Clay Webb (11yr Boys), Bradley Chaplin (Snr Boys) and Mikaila Ackers (Snr Girls).
• The school also won the aggregate and handicap trophies for the day.
• Bradley Chaplin (backstroke) and the senior relay team qualified for the Riverina Carnival. The relay team (Georgia, Mikaila, Bradley and Ashleigh) also attended the state carnival at Homebush.

Cross Country
• The Small Schools’ Champions were Jack Charlton (8/9yr Boys) and Kane Morris (10yr Boys).

Athletics
• The age champions for the Small Schools Carnival were Emmaline Weir (11yr Girls) and Darcy Morris (Snr Boys).
• Emmaline Weir won the Outstanding Athlete award across the four small schools.
• Darcy Morris qualified for the Riverina Carnival.

Other
• Some of the senior students were also selected in PSSA representative teams. These included District Soccer (Emmaline and Darcy) and District AFL (Darcy and Bradley).
• Many of the students also participated in the Paul Kelly Cup AFL competition, Leo Barry Footy Fun day and the Super 8’s Cricket tournament.

The 5/6 team, The Blighty Bouncers, finished third in the Super 8’s cricket competition.

• The Deniliquin Small Schools Network fielded teams in the PSSA soccer and netball knockouts.
• All students were involved in the Swimming Scheme program, lunchtime competitions and specialist sports coaching experiences in athletics, swimming, dance, AFL, bowls and soccer.
• The school, in conjunction with the Conargo Shire Council, Blighty Football Club and Andrew Richardson (AFL Development Officer) organised and ran the Gilbert Bain Small Schools Development Day.
• All students K-6 participated in the Premier’s Sporting Challenge with both classes earning a gold award for their efforts.
• Bradley Chaplin was awarded the school’s outstanding athlete award at presentation night.

State Swimming Team: Georgia Webb, Mikaila Ackers, Bradley Chaplin and Ashleigh Simpson after qualifying for the state carnival.

Leadership

The Student Parliament continues to thrive. This program helps provide a proactive approach to student welfare where leadership and involvement are highly valued and help create a safe, caring and cooperative learning environment. It provides outstanding opportunities for students to develop leadership, teamwork and public speaking skills.

The Year 6 students acted as Ministers for the Student Parliament this year. All of these students were involved in coordinating activities in their relevant areas of responsibility. The Year 6 students participated in the Rising Generations Leadership program which involved learning about the skills of leadership and coordinating a school based program.
Fortnightly meetings between the Principal and the Ministers were held to discuss initiatives to improve the school and our Year 5 students were also given special responsibilities including; ringing the bell, organising bus variations, acting as Speaker/Treasurer for our School Parliament and raising the flag. The Year 5 students also acted as buddies during our transition to kindergarten program.

Year 6 students at the Rising Generations Leadership Day.

Technology
Technology is a priority at Blighty Public School and is embedded in the teaching of all key learning areas. In 2013, students and staff accessed expert tuition on I-pod touch, I-pad technology, Adobe Premier Elements and movie making. A video architect also visited the school to demonstrate artistic techniques using photographs and technology as part of the Reverberate Festival.

Community
Having a strong connection to the local community is of great importance to Blighty Public School. Maintaining strong links allows for the community to feel welcome and encourages local families to take ownership for the school’s continued success.

In 2013, the school strengthened its links with the community by:

- Hosting a variety of community events, including: an ANZAC ceremony, a book fair and parade which involved new kindergarten students transitioning into the school, a Welcome Barbeque, school performance, talent quest and presentation night.
- Participating in the Conargo Shire’s Village Masterplan project for Blighty.
- Hosting a visit and fundraising for a local community member participating in the Camp Quality Escarpade.
- Interviewing a local environmentalist and writing and publishing a book about her.
- Participating in the Finley and Deniliquin Shows.
- Inviting parents to support our Fall and Spring into Reading programs as well as also having community coaches for sporting teams.
- Selling garden produce at local football games.
- Inviting parents to join us for our ‘Walking School Bus’.
- Performing at the Blighty Community Christmas Party.
- Hosting South West Music tuition sessions for community members after school.
- Having past students visit the school to talk to students about the school and life in Blighty in days gone by.
- Encouraging strong links with our surrounding schools, including Bunnaloo, Mayrung, Conargo, Finley and Deniliquin.

Georgia Webb, Ashleigh Simpson, Gwynne Hanmer, Cailyn Knill and Bradley Chaplin with their book ‘A Walk with Gwynne Hanmer, Our Local and Passionate Environmentalist’ which was created as part of the Envirostories and Creative Catchment Kids Programs.

Deniliquin Small Schools Network

The three small schools; Blighty, together with Conargo and Mayrung plan and organise many learning experiences and share human and physical resources to provide the best educational opportunities to the students of each school. The schools participated in a number of activities together in 2013 which included excursions to Sydney, Sovereign Hill and Hay, swimming scheme and practice sessions, a small
schools’ sports development day, school plays, athletics, cross country and swimming carnivals, Life Education and travelling theatre performances.

Staff from our Small Schools’ Network also came together each term to collaborate, plan and reflect on teaching and learning practices. Video conferences also took place between the schools.

**Significant programs and initiatives**

**Higher Order Ways to Learn (HOW2Learn)**

HOW2Learn is a strategy focused on building students’ capacity to learn.

It complements the *Melbourne Declaration of Educational Goals for Young Australians, Australian Curriculum, NSW Quality Teaching Model and the National Teaching Standards*. It draws upon a respected body of research, including much of Guy Claxton’s work on *Building Learning Power*, Carol Dweck’s research about Mindsets, Dylan Wiliam’s research into formative assessment and John Hattie’s meta-analysis of teaching practices.

The aim of building students’ capacity to learn is achieved by explicitly teaching dispositions and habits within our existing programs and practices to develop a learning culture that enables everyone to:

1. Be self-aware in their learning.
2. Use the language and dispositions of successful learners.
3. Share a belief that intelligence is learnable and expandable.

In 2013, the Teaching Principal completed HOW2Learn training and guided the learning of the remaining staff. As this was the initial year of training and implementation, the strategy will continue to develop in 2014 and beyond. Even in its early stages, a positive effect on how the students are engaging in their learning can be seen.

Some of the achievements this year included, each class choosing a learning motto, developing school and classroom posters, exploring ‘what we give worth to’ which resulted in a review and update of the school’s reward system and a philosophical induction to the school for parents, teachers and students.

**Language, Learning and Literacy (L3 Kindergarten)**

In 2013, the school’s K-2 teacher was trained in L3 which enabled her to implement the language, learning and literacy program in her classroom. L3 is a classroom-based, early intervention for students in their first year of school. This program provides early and meticulous instructional opportunities that have positive influences on literacy growth for students. The K-2 teacher will complete her training in 2014.

**Aboriginal education**

Aboriginal perspectives are integrated across all curriculum areas. This helps develop positive attitudes and understandings about Aboriginal history, culture and contemporary Aboriginal Australia.

As part of the Creative Catchment Kids program, the Year 6 students travelled to Deniliquin for an Aboriginal Cultural excursion. This opportunity involved visiting the Yarkuwa centre, going on a guided bush walk, weaving and eating some traditional Aboriginal bush tucker. This experience increased the students’ understanding of Aboriginal history, culture, language, lifestyle, food, medicine and legend.

**Multicultural education**

Multicultural issues and perspectives are taught in all curriculum areas. The emphasis is on developing an understanding of culture and the appreciation of difference.

Each week, students in years 3-6 watch ‘Behind the News’ as part of their learning in HSIE. Many cultures and global issues are explored in this program and the content is regularly used for discussion, debate and extension activities.

Harmony Day was also celebrated and both classes completed activities relating to multiculturalism. Two teachers from the school spent time in the USA during 2013 and a variety of cultural experiences were shared with students as a result.

Our Anti-Racism Contact Officer was available to investigate and solve any reported incidents of a racist nature.

*Scarlett, Seth, Marina and Marisa in their Leis after a Hawaiian song, dance and cultural experience.*
Transitional Equity Funding

Blighty Public School received Transitional Equity Funding in 2013.

This program is funded by the Commonwealth Government and is designed to improve the equity of opportunity for students who live in country areas. These funds are used to support specific programs related to the School Management Plan, including:

• Subsidised travel on all excursions to allow students to participate in cultural experiences outside their local area.
• The employment of a teacher to team teach within each class, providing assistance to students and feedback to teachers on quality teaching in literacy and numeracy, including the embedding of computer technology and higher order thinking skills in all lessons.
• Year 6 students attended the Rising Generations Leadership program.

Peer Support Program

Our Peer Support program involves all students learning together in multistage groups. Activities such as Circle Time, tabloids, cooking, gardening, Student Parliament and buddy reading provide students with opportunities to:

• Learn together in a cooperative environment.
• Improve fine motor and other skills through imitation and mentoring.
• Taste food and recipes with new ingredients.
• Develop social skills and the ability to get along with others.
• Express feelings and opinions on topics such as bullying, resilience and perseverance.

Kitchen/Garden Program

Utilising the ‘Live Life Well @ School’ initiative, students were able to participate in a fortnightly program that involved cooking and healthy lifestyle options. Students, working with their peers and teachers, followed recipes and tasted their creations. During the year, students were able to make zucchini muffins, cous cous salad, fruit icy poles, French toast and berry ice cream, using produce mainly cultivated from the school’s vegetable gardens. This program has had benefits, both inside and outside of the classroom. It has shown students have a growing knowledge of gardening, food preparation and the ability to work well together in groups.

K-2 students with our 41kg pumpkin which won 2nd place in the Deniliquin Show.

School planning and evaluation 2012—2014

School evaluation processes

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

• Regular reviews of the School Management Plan as part of staff meetings. This involves discussing implementation, analysing data (internal and external) and developing future strategies.
• Feedback from parents regarding strategies implemented to meet the outcomes of the School Management Plan at P&C meetings.
• Feedback from parents, staff and students through surveys and informal data collection strategies.

Educational and Management Practice

In 2013 our school carried out evaluations of both a management and curriculum area.

Management: Communication with Parents and Caregivers

Background

With the ever changing nature of communication, it was decided to survey families on the effectiveness of the current communication strategies, including the weekly newsletter, school website, letters home, P&C meetings and
newspaper promotions. A short survey was designed and distributed at a P&C meeting. Other parents visiting the school were also asked to take part in order to identify strengths and weaknesses of the current practices at the school. More than 50% of families returned the survey.

Findings and conclusions

100% of parents surveyed find the weekly newsletter to be a helpful and interesting way to keep up to date with what’s happening at school, including the achievements of the students.

A high majority of parents and carers find the inclusion of the ‘Parenting Ideas’ articles helpful. Parents like the newsletter to be student focussed and appreciate seeing the student profile, student work, photos, rewards and achievements.

All respondents like the student generated photo page and find the term calendar useful.

A large majority of parents have never used the school website or read the Annual School Report. All parents believe the Principal keeps the community informed and updated through his P&C Principal Reports and general communications.

A narrow majority of parents think that there is enough advertising and promotion through local newspapers.

The vast majority of parents are not interested in the school having a Facebook or Twitter account, preferring a group text system as a means of instant communication.

Future directions

Due to a significant amount of support for the communication practices that currently exist in the school, the weekly newsletter will continue to be distributed in its current form. The school will endeavor to enhance and promote the school website, increase exposure in local newspapers and begin a group text system for quick communication with parents and carers.

School planning 2012—2014: progress in 2013

School priority 1:

Literacy

Outcomes from 2012–2014

Improve student achievement in all aspects of literacy as evident in school based testing.

Evidence of progress towards outcomes in 2013:

- 80% of students achieved stage outcomes in literacy with 27% of those students working beyond stage outcomes.
- 77% of students achieved stage outcomes in writing with 30% of those students working beyond stage outcomes.
- 73% of students achieved stage based outcomes in spelling with 30% of those students working beyond stage outcomes.
- 87% of students achieved stage outcomes in reading with 30% of those students working beyond stage outcomes.
- Blighty students won the stage 2 and stage 3 sections of the Finley Lion’s Club Public Speaking Competition.
- All teachers completed the online course ‘Dyslexia and Significant Difficulties in Reading’.
- The K-2 class teacher completed her first year of training in L3.
- More students participated regularly in the Home Reading program.

Strategies to achieve these outcomes in 2014

- Plot and regularly track all students on the Literacy continuum, including PLAN software, to inform teaching and learning.
- Careful analysis and monitoring of the progress of every student against expected achievement in literacy using NAPLAN, L3, continuums, PLAN and school based assessments.
- Improved data driven programming through assessment practices in line with the implementation of the Australian Curriculum.
- Employment of a teacher to team teach within each class throughout 2014 and provide close assistance to students and
feedback to teachers during literacy sessions.

- Continue embedding literacy strategies learnt as part of the ‘Achieving Major Shift’ initiative with Sue Najor.
- Sharing of good practice at staff meetings and Deniliquin Small Schools Network meetings.
- K-2 teacher to complete ongoing professional learning for L3.
- Encourage student participation in competitions, for example, writing (Write On), public speaking (Lion’s Club), reading, spelling and debating (Arts Unit – Premier’s Challenges).

School priority 2:

**Numeracy**

**Outcomes from 2012–2014**

*Improve student achievement in all aspects of numeracy as evident in school based testing.*

**Evidence of progress towards outcomes in 2013:**

- 83% of students achieving stage based outcomes with 37% of those students working beyond stage outcomes.
- 83% of students achieving stage based outcomes in the number strand with 40% of those students working beyond stage outcomes.
- 77% of students achieving stage based outcomes in the working mathematical strand with 37% of those students working beyond stage outcomes.
- Embedding of North Coast scope and sequence.

**Strategies to achieve these outcomes in 2014:**

- Plot and regularly track all students on the Numeracy continuum, including PLAN software, to inform teaching and learning.
- Careful analysis and monitoring of the progress of every student against expected achievement in numeracy using NAPLAN, continuums, PLAN and school based assessments.
- Improved data driven programming through assessment practices in line with the implementation of the Australian Curriculum.
- Employment of a teacher to team teach within each class throughout 2014 and provide close assistance to students and feedback to teachers during numeracy sessions.
- Teachers to complete training in and purchase resources relating to the Measurement and Geometry strands.
- Sharing of good practice at staff meetings and Deniliquin Small Schools Network meetings.
- All teachers and SLSOs using the school’s place value program.

School priority 3:

**Engagement and Quality Teaching**

**Outcomes from 2012–2014**

*Improve overall student engagement through the use of technology, creativity, higher order thinking and quality teaching.*

**Evidence of progress towards outcomes in 2013:**

- 100% of teachers having Quality Teaching and HOW2Learn dispositions and habits evident in their learning programs.
- 95% student attendance rate.
- Principal trained in HOW2Learn.
- 100% of teachers making use of the connected classroom facilities, with more than 10 video conferences being undertaken for the year.
- High levels of effort from students across all grades and KLAs.
- Increased emphasis on the creative and practical arts.
- All teachers using a variety of ICT resources including Mathletics, Study Ladder, Web 2.0 and DEC learning tools.
- The access of exemplary practitioners to embed quality teaching and technology in all classrooms.
All staff understand the philosophy of the Australian Curriculum.

Strategies to achieve these outcomes in 2014:

- Principal to continue leading and implementing HOW2Learn action plan.
- All teachers using effective 21st century teaching practices which accelerate learning.
- Maintain student attendance rate at or above 94%.
- Update school’s WIFI and purchase I-pads for each classroom.
- Share effective practice relating to the implementation of Australian Curriculum in staff meetings and at Deniliquin Small Schools Network meetings.

Professional learning

The school’s professional learning plan reflected the needs and directions outlined in the school’s 2013 School Improvement Plan. This included professional learning in literacy, numeracy, the Australian Curriculum and 21st century learning practices. A clear highlight for all staff during the year involved training in the Riverina’s learning strategy Higher Order Ways to Learn (HOW2Learn). All teaching staff also completed the online course ‘Understanding Dyslexia and Significant Difficulties in Reading’ which led to a better understanding of reading for all staff. The K-2 teacher completed the first year of the Language, Learning and Literacy (L3 Kindergarten) program. Teachers also completed professional development in the areas of music, technology (movie making), Planning Literacy and Numeracy (PLAN) and Australian Curriculum modules.

Staff continue to collaborate with colleagues from our small school network each term.

Parent/caregiver, student, and teacher satisfaction

In 2013, the school sought the opinions of parents, students and teachers about the school.

Their responses are presented below.

- Parent comments have been supportive of the teaching and learning that takes place at Blighty Public School. The staff have been praised for the additional programs and extra-curricular activities that have been offered throughout the year.
- Teacher comments have indicated that they see the quality teaching practices, collaboration and professional development experiences as the positive aspects of the school. All teachers agreed that they were proud of their school.
- Student comments have suggested that they are very happy with the programs and teaching that takes place in the school.
- The wider community has on many occasions suggested that Blighty Public School is held in high esteem. The students are often complimented for their behaviour, appearance and achievement across a broad range of activities.

Program evaluations

Curriculum: Mathematics

Background

In order to improve effectiveness, it is important to continually evaluate the success of programs within the school. This year, staff chose to evaluate the programs, opportunities and experiences provided in the key learning area, Mathematics.

Findings and conclusions

100% of students achieved at or above minimum standards in 2013 NAPLAN Numeracy, years 3 and 5.

The average progress between years 3 and 5 from 2011-2013 was higher than both the State DEC and the Statistically Similar Group (SSG).

Year 3 NAPLAN Numeracy results were well above the State DEC average and comparable to the SSG.

100% of Year 3 students achieved proficiency (top two bands) in NAPLAN Numeracy.

The school’s average in the Year 3 NAPLAN Numeracy was well above the State DEC and SSG averages.

The school’s average in the year 5 NAPLAN Numeracy was above the State DEC average and comparable to the SSG.
Staff are happy with the school’s mathematics scope and sequence and the Fast Maths program.

Staff feel that more resources could be allocated to the measurement and data strand.

The vast majority of students enjoy mathematics and feel like they are improving.

Parents feel confident in the mathematics programs that are being run at the school.

**Future directions**

Staff feel that they offer quality programs in Mathematics, however, there is a willingness to improve further. Next year, a Principal’s Fast Maths competition will be run to encourage students to keep moving through the levels of the Fast Maths program. More resources will be purchased to ensure quality experiences in the measurement strand. All students will be placed on PLAN by the end of term 1, 2014.

**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 more information about Annual School Reports, how to interpret information in the report and have the opportunity to provide feedback about the report at: [https://detwww.det.nsw.edu.au/high-performance/annual-school-reports](https://detwww.det.nsw.edu.au/high-performance/annual-school-reports)