

Bell Primary School

School No: 4309

School Self-Evaluation

For the period 2009-2011



Prepared Term 1, 2012

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1. SUMMARY

In developing our school self-evaluation the school community has come together to celebrate our successes and achievements and carefully consider areas in need of further improvement.

Staffing

The school staffing model consists of 20 teaching staff and 7 support staff. The staffing model has a balance of teaching experience in its makeup. The small staff has a good balance of experience, youth and skill. The school has strong community support and all family members have the opportunity to be involved in school activities and programs.

Our Community

Enrolments have continued to rise from a low of 131 students in 2003 to 281 students for 2011. Prep enrolments have continued to rise with 56 new preps in 2011. The school provides a safe and friendly learning environment, where the strengths and weaknesses of individual students are known and taken into account in designing school programs and implementing pedagogical approaches. The Student Family Occupation (SFO) density for 2011 was 0.27. This places the school in the highest 10 percent of all government schools. The demographics of the school continue to change with many two professional working parent families. Bell Primary School currently has 6 students on the Program for Students with Disabilities.

Achievements

In 2011, we set out to improve performance levels and standards for all students with a particular emphasis on increasing number of students at and above expected levels, to improve student engagement with schooling and wellbeing and to improve student transition and pathways from preschool to school, one grade level to the next and from primary to post primary schooling.

All data indicates steady progress for literacy standards which have been above the statewide benchmark averages. Standards have consistently been within or below the predicted range for students in schools like Bell PS. The strategic plan objective to increase the proportion students achieving the expected standard or above to 90% or better in reading has been achieved (96% for 2011).

Numeracy standards have been high, above the statewide benchmark averages and, given the variation between cohorts, have shown these standards have been within and below the range predicted by the school's SFO index. The VELS and NAPLAN learning growth data indicate a possible improvement in standards over the review period. Some teacher judgement assessments indicate a need to review assessment procedures and processes. The strategic plan objective to increase the proportion of students achieving the expected standard or above to 90% or better in number and measurement has been achieved (94% for number and 97% for measurement chance & data for 2011).

Feedback

Parent, staff and student opinion surveys indicate an improvement in classroom behaviour. However there is room for improvement in general school behaviour. All surveys show a positive response around the area of student safety. Student attendance has been high and above the statewide primary schools benchmark average. The strategic plan attendance improvement target was achieved.

Our transition programs into, through and out of the school have been successful but we, and especially parents, still see a scope to improve to make these transitions more comfortable for students, their parents and staff alike.

2. METHODOLOGY

The school engaged in an open participative process to develop this School Self Evaluation leading to the recommendations for the future.

The developmental steps included:

- 1.** Establishing a School Self Evaluation/School Review Coordinating Committee. The committee membership included:
 - Principal
 - Leadership team – Marg Sneddon, Rod Bennett, Ruth Vonarx
 - Charles Morgan - School Council President
 - Susan Gilheany- Regional Network Leader
- 2.** Engaging a consultant to prepare a draft outline of the SSE “Executive Summary”, “Methodology” and “School Context”. The “Outcomes the school was trying to achieve” and “What the school did achieve” sections for Student Learning, Pathways and Transitions and Student Engagement and Wellbeing.
- 3.** A whole staff meeting with the consultant to go through the draft and planning the next steps.
- 4.** A series of consultation, discussion and decision making meetings were held involving all staff to add to the draft and to complete the last three questions in the Student Learning, Pathways and Transitions and Student Engagement and Wellbeing sections; “Why we did/not achieve the Outcomes”, “The effective use of resources” and “possible future improvements”. Staff met in various groups.
- 5.** Keeping parents informed of the process and the progress made through the school newsletter and through the Education Sub-Committee.
- 6.** The school council received progress reports at each meeting during Term 1 and early Term 2 to the meeting when the school council endorsed the final SSE.

3. SCHOOL CONTEXT

THE PURPOSE OF OUR SCHOOL

The work as a community to foster a love of learning, to uphold our values and to challenge and support each other.

OUR SCHOOL VALUES:

RESPECT

We care for ourselves, others and our environment. We acknowledge people are different and treat others as we would like to be treated.

LEARNING

We explore, question and support each other in seeking knowledge and discovering new things. We work hard to learn new things, to be the best we can be.

TEAMWORK

We work together as a community to achieve our goals. We listen to each other and value all contributions.

HONESTY

We are truthful and accept responsibility for our actions. We are open and honest with one another.

CREATIVITY

We encourage each other to try new things, to use our imagination and express our ideas.

ENVIRONMENTAL CONTEXT:

Social – community and demographics

- The school has a long history of providing education in the Preston community.
- The changing demographics in the area have resulted in a significant movement in the Student Family Occupation (SFO) density which has steadily decreased and in 2011 was 0.27. The school population reflects the diverse cultural and socio economic nature of the Preston community.
- English is the predominant language spoken by 95% of students. The main English as a second language group is Arabic.
- 20% of families receive EMA
- The 2012 staffing model consists of 20 teaching staff and 7 support staff. The staffing model has a balance of teaching experience in its makeup.
- Enrolments have increased from 127 to a predicted enrolment of 281 in 2011. This reflects the focus on raising the school profile in the community in recent years and the changing demographic in the community.
- Groups like FUNdraising, Bell Talks, Bell Art group, Garden Group and Communication Working Party all reflect the active interest and support provided to the school by its parent community

Educational

- The school has had mixed success in reaching the school goals of improved learning outcomes and will remain focused on bringing sustainable improvements in the teaching practice in Literacy and Numeracy over the life of this Strategic Plan
- The school was in the first intake into the Achievement Improvement Zone Project in 2008 and remains fully committed to the vision and program of the initiative.

Technological

- Access to Information technology has been enhanced with a combination of desktop and laptop computers available to all levels.
- Wireless access is available across the school.
- Interactive Whiteboards are available in 6 separate learning areas across the school.
- There are digital cameras, flip cameras and software to support the classroom programs
- The website has been reviewed and upgraded.

Environmental

- The attractive heritage building sits in extensive attractive grounds with 2 sets of play equipment and a balance of asphalted, recreational grassed areas and gardens
- There is a strong community interest in environmental sustainability and the rainwater tanks, tree and orchard planting, and development of an edible garden reflect a community focus that will continue to increase over the next few years.
- Significant improvements have been made to facilities with the opening of the Building the Education Revolution Learning Centre and the provision of 2 Modular 5 buildings to accommodate the growing enrolment.

4. STUDENT LEARNING

What student outcomes were we trying to achieve?

- To improve performance levels and standards for all students with a particular emphasis on increasing number of students at and above expected levels.

Strategic Plan Targets were for:

- To increase achievement in Maths and English to 90% of students achieving above C in VELS teacher assessment.
- Increasing the number of students assessed in NAPLAN at A or B by 15% and decreasing those below C by 15%.

Key Improvement Strategies to Achieve the Targets Were:

- Develop teacher capacity to support student achievement in English and Mathematics through involvement in the Achievement Improvement Zone project.
- To develop a school wide understanding of the use and analysis of data to inform teaching practice.

What student outcomes did we achieve against our targets?

English

The learning goal was to improve the percentage of students achieving the expected standard in English.

Reading

The **English Online Interview (EOI)** data were only reported for beginning Prep for 2010 and 2011. Although these data are useful, one must wait for more years of data before drawing strong conclusions from two years of data. However:

- The beginning prep average was within the predicted range for schools like Bell for both 2010 and 2011 and above the statewide benchmark average.
- For 2011, 98% of beginning Preps were within level 1 or above of the VELS scale indicating most students were well prepared for schooling.

These data consistently indicated similar reading standards compared to the results from the VELS teacher judgement data.

Teacher judgement assessment against the VELS - P-6 Combined

For 2011, 96% of students achieved at or above the expected standard for Prep to Year 6. 34% received a C grade, 23% a B grade and 39% an A grade.

The 2011 percentage of students performing below the expected standard (i.e. D or E grade-students at risk) was 4% or 11 students.

This was a higher performance compared to 2009-2010, with a higher proportion of A grades awarded for 2011

- 2011 average performance was above the statewide benchmark average for every year level.
- Prep reading performances were generally within the range expected by the school's SFO density.

- Year 1 -6 average performances were below the SFO predictions which is in the highest 10 percentile band

The spread of teacher assessments was reasonable. The spread of the middle 80% of assessments varied between 2 and 2.5 years of learning (1 – 1.25 VELS level). The NAPLAN spread was about 4 years of learning.

National Assessment Program- Literacy (NAPLAN) Year 3 & 5

Participation rates in NAPLAN testing have been high.

The Bell PS NAPLAN, year 3 reading standards have consistently been above the statewide average and have been below the school's predicted SFO range.

NAPLAN has shown year 5 standards 2009-2011 have also been below the school's SFO expected range. The average performance for year 5 has been above the statewide average.

NAPLAN results 2011 indicated minor inconsistency with teacher judgements:

- Year 3
 - NAPLAN 85% achieved the expected standard
 - Teacher judgements 97%
- Year 5
 - NAPLAN 88% achieved the expected standard
 - Teacher judgements 97%

The NAPLAN data does not indicate any significant gender difference.

NAPLAN cohort growth has been above state in reading, writing and number

Matched Cohort - Reading

Mean Scaled Score Growth

	School	State
2008 - 2010	90.8	82.0
2009 - 2011	76.4	73.7

Writing

English Online Interview (EOI)

Student performances for writing were similar to those for reading

- The beginning Prep average was within the predicted range for schools like Bell PS for both 2010

For 2011, 58% of beginning preps recorded scores within level 1 or higher of the VELS scale.

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By the end of 2011 VELS data indicates all Prep students were at or above expected standards.

Teacher judgement assessment against the VELS writing - P-6 Combined

Writing standards for 2011 according to teacher judgements were close to those for reading. Average standards were either just within or below the predicted range.

National Assessment Program- Writing (NAPLAN)

Year 3 NAPLAN results indicate standards have been above the statewide average and within the expected SFO range for 2009-2010 and below for 2008 and 2011.

Year 5 NAPLAN results indicate standards have been above the statewide average and within the expected SFO range for 2009 and 2010 and below for 2008 and 2011.

NAPLAN testing indicates writing standards have been marginally lower compared to teacher assessments.

2011 NAPLAN writing data indicated girls significantly outperformed the boys

Matched Cohort - Writing

Mean Scaled Score Growth

	School	State
2008 - 2010	101.2	70.9

Spelling- NAPLAN

Associated with writing is spelling. 2011 year 3 average performances were below the statewide benchmark but year 5 average was above.

Grammar & Punctuation- NAPLAN

Year 3 performances 2011 were above the statewide benchmark and year 5 average standard was similar to the benchmark average.

Speaking & Listening

English Online Interview (EOI)

Student performances for speaking and listening were lower than predicted but above the statewide benchmark average.

96% of students recorded scores within level 1 or higher of the VELS scale.

Teacher judgement assessment against the VELS - P-6 Combined

- The school Prep to Year 6 average VELS scores were above the respective state averages
- Far fewer A grades have been awarded for speaking and listening compared to reading
- The prep to year 6 averages have virtually all been within the predicted range for schools like Bell.
- Overall spread of assessment is narrower compared to reading and writing.

Literacy Summary

All data indicates steady progress for literacy standards which have been above the statewide benchmark averages. Standards have consistently been within or below the predicted range for students in schools like Bell PS. The strategic plan objective to increase the proportion students achieving the expected standard or above to 90% or better in reading has been achieved (96% for 2011). Data indicates a need to review assessment practices and procedures.

Mathematics

The learning goal was to improve the percentage of students achieving the expected standard in mathematics.

Number

Teacher judgement assessment against the VELS - P-6 Combined

For 2011, 94% of students achieved at or above the expected standard (A- 17%, B-27% & C-50% grades) for prep to years 6.

There was an increase in the proportion of students achieving A and B grades.
No A grades were awarded for prep

The overall spread of teacher assessments was narrower compared to reading - approximately 1.0 and at the most 2.0 years of learning (0.75-1.0 VELS level). For 2011, assessments against the VELS showed average performances were generally below the SFO density range. Average performances in number have been above the statewide benchmark averages.

National Assessment Program- Numeracy (NAPLAN) Year 3 & 5

Year 3 NAPLAN standards varied around the statewide benchmark average.
Year 5 averages were above the benchmark average.

The year 3 performances have been below the range predicted by the school's SFO and year 5 results were generally within the range.

The learning growth for the 2008 year 3/2010 year 5 cohort was below the statewide average learning growth but the 2009/2011 cohort average learning growth was significantly above the benchmark average.

There has been variation within cohorts but for 2011 there was an indication that boys have outperformed the girls on average.

Mean Scaled Score Growth - Numeracy

	School	State
2008 - 2010	77.1	85.8
2009 - 2011	109.7	87.9

Although there was some variation, NAPLAN results 2011 were closely consistent with teacher judgements:

- Year 3
 - NAPLAN 84% achieved the expected standard
 - Teacher judgements 91%
- Year 5
 - NAPLAN 91% achieved the expected standard
 - Teacher judgements 91%

Measurement, Chance and Data

Teacher judgement assessment against the VELS - P-6 - Combined

The assessment for measurement, chance and data were marginally below those for number.

Mathematics Summary

Numeracy standards have been high, above the statewide benchmark averages and, given the variation between cohorts, have shown these standards have been within and below the range predicted by the school's SFO index. The VELS and NAPLAN learning growth data indicate a possible improvement in standards over the review period. This indicates a need to review assessment practices and procedures.

The strategic plan objective to increase the proportion of students achieving the expected standard to 90% or better in number and measurement has been achieved (94% for number and 97% for measurement chance & data for 2011).

Assessments for students in the Program for Students with Disabilities (PSD)

In 2009 there were 9 students on PSD, in 2010 we had 9 students on PSD, in 2011 we had 10 students on PSD and currently we have 6 students on the Program for Students with a Disability. Every year all students had Student Support Groups who developed each student's Individual Learning Plans. All students were assessed against VELS or against their own ILIP goals depending on the most appropriate measurement tools. A number of our students have had dual placements with other educational settings in order to provide the best possible educational support for their specific needs. Students moving on to the secondary college or to other educational settings or transitioning into our school setting have had transition programs to ensure a successful start in each setting. Outside consultants have been sought where indicated to support the development of specialised programs to meet the needs of each individual child.

Why did we achieve / not achieve improved student outcomes?

In 2008 the school was in the first intake into the NMR Achievement Improvement Zone Project. The Program outline as described in the publication 'Powerful Learning' provided the framework that has guided school planning since that time.

The Implementation of the AIZ initiatives has included

- A focus on the use of evidence and data to guide teaching and learning practice. In 2011 a data management team was established to support planning across the school
- Increased consistency in the use of a range of data sets including On Demand testing, NAPLAN and VELS teacher judgements.
- Increased use of data has allowed for better identification of individual learning needs and supported the development of ILIPS for those students at risk of underachievement and also in behaviour management. Differentiation of curriculum to match learning need is now evidenced in some aspects of Literacy and Numeracy
- Extensive targeted professional development has been delivered to support the school improvement areas. Involvement in the AIZ has developed some understanding of the research base in school improvement strategies. Staff engage in professional conversations at a variety of levels.
- Introduction of AIZ strategies including High Reliability Teaching Techniques as the agreed approach across the school supported by the development of a common language and some consistency in the use of planning documents such as the Maths Continuum.
- There has been an increased focus on teaching and learning as our core business. There have been clearer roles and responsibilities defined for all staff and engagement in

Professional Learning Teams and Curriculum groups in the key school improvement areas Maths, English, Wellbeing and ICT

- The Annual Implementation Plans have had targets in the key areas of literacy and numeracy.
- Communication strategy developed in 2011 to inform parents and the community about teaching and learning
- A greater emphasis on a team based approach as a basis in all school planning

The school has responded to the change in demographic and the shift from LSG 9 to what is the highest SFO range in 2011. The expectation has shifted to all students experiencing one year of VELS growth every year and achievement goals of 6 – 12 months above expected standards.

Due to recent building and upgrade programs the school is a safe, attractive and orderly environment with a greater sense of pride felt across the school community. The staffing emphasis has been on providing teaching and learning support across the school. In 2011 an Assistant Principal was appointed with the key role of guiding teaching and learning across the school closely aligned to the AIZ program vision and goals. This role is supported by a .4 numeracy coach and also a .4 wellbeing coordinator. The leadership team is well established with a focus on the schools Strategic Plan and school improvement agenda. The staff engage in professional development on a weekly basis with professional learning teams and curriculum groups in Literacy, Mathematics, Wellbeing, Data management and ICT meeting on a regular basis.

The challenges

- Embedding common teacher practice across all levels
- Mentoring and induction for new and returning staff
- Consistency in implementing AIZ strategies especially in the mathematics program
- Implementing the Curiosity and powerful learning strategy aspect of the AIZ initiative developing higher order thinking and a more engaging and challenging curriculum.
- Develop a rigorous and professional peer observation process
- Strengthen the focus on improving teacher practice.
- Building precision and rigour around teacher practice
- Empowering and supporting middle level management in developing leadership roles
- Matching teacher practice to the data and evidence collected
- Expanding the range of outcomes data collected by our school to ensure that student learning outcomes can be monitored in all dimensions.
- Adapting teacher practice in response to gender difference in level of achievement

How effectively did we manage resources to support the achievement of improved student outcomes?

Resource allocation to teaching and learning is closely linked to the Annual Implementation Plan goals and targets. A consultation process occurs with all staff drawing up the Program Budget. This budget is then reviewed and funds confirmed by School Council. As the school has been in significant expansion phase over the last 3 years, the provision of resources in teaching and Learning specifically literacy and numeracy has been challenging in both resource management and in replacement of outdated materials as well as the purchase of resources to meet the enrolment growth.

The expansion of Information Technology hardware has been significant with a current computer ratio of 1:3. The program is also supported with the installation of 6 interactive whiteboards, digital cameras, and a second Workcentre. A significant shift is occurring to the purchase of software such as Sunshine books and Mathletics to support teaching and learning program.

With the completion of the BER building and refurbishment of the main building in 2010 and 2011 the facilities at the school have been significantly improved. The provision of funds for ICT and furniture has further improved the teaching and learning spaces at the school. Grades are kept small with a composite structure across the school except at Prep level. Further space has also been provided with the installation of 2 Modular 5 buildings housing 2 grades each. The vast attractive grounds continue to be a real attraction at the school and further play space has been provided with the installation of new sandpit and play equipment.

What can we do in the future to continue to improve?

- Develop an implementation plan for the Curiosity and Powerful learning initiative
- Continue to develop a team based approach to school management through professional learning teams and curriculum groups. A continued focus will be for teachers to plan in teams in order to develop and implement appropriate learning and teaching programs for all students across the curriculum.
- Support staff development through targeted Professional Development with a strong emphasis on collegiate visits both in-house and across the system to analyse and improve teacher practice. An identified focus area will be to develop a deeper understanding of the developmental stages of reading and writing.
- Further develop skills and knowledge in the analysis of data and evidence to guide teaching and learning supported by the data management team. The agreed Assessment matrix will be reviewed and implemented across the school to assist in developing this approach.
- Developing whole school planning tools including the Maths and English Continuum to support greater consistency in classroom practice.
- Develop guidelines around a continuum of learning in key specific areas.

Through our commitment to the AIZ initiative, the Curiosity Book will provide a further framework as we develop curriculum in the interdisciplinary area.

5. STUDENT ENGAGEMENT AND WELLBEING

The Strategic Plan student engagement and wellbeing goals were to:

1. To improve student engagement with schooling and wellbeing.

Strategic Plan Targets were for:

- To improve parents perception of school climate by 15% by 2012.
- To improve engagement domain in Student Attitude to School survey into the Effective range.
- To improve student motivation in the staff opinion survey to the 3rd quartile by 2012
- Attendance rates for all students at or above 90% and attaining similar SFO data for attendance.

Key Improvement Strategies to Achieve the Targets Were:

- Development of teacher capacity to support student well being through the schools participation in the Achievement Improvement Zones Project.
- Provide new and valuable learning experiences using a broad range of information and communication technologies.

What student outcomes did we achieve?

Student Engagement & Wellbeing

As a school we set out to improve student engagement with schooling and wellbeing.

Student motivation/student safety/student connectedness/student behaviour

- **Student motivation**

Staff, especially, and parents have seen students as responsible young learners who put in a lot of effort to achieve their best.

Year 5 and 6 students reported a similar view for 2009 and 2010 but have not seen themselves as highly motivated for 2011. Girls, especially year 6 girls 2011, have perceived themselves more highly motivated than boys.

- **Student safety**

Both parents and students feel there has been a high level of student safety at the school.

- **Student connectedness**

Parent perception of student connectedness to their fellow students has been very high. Student perception has also been high but lower for 2011.

- **Student behaviour**

Staff believe there has been an agreed philosophy on school discipline, that the school rules have been commonly understood by staff and students and that the responsibilities relating to discipline have been well understood by staff, parents and students.

Staff have a positive perception of student classroom behaviour but they see a need for improvement in student behaviour outside the classroom.

Parents perceive their child is safe at school but have concerns about classroom behaviour that disrupts learning.

Students have been well satisfied with behaviour in the classroom.

The Year 5 and 6 students participate in the Attitudes to School Survey each year. The school has generally performed similar to the Victorian primary schools' average for 2009-2011. The attitudes of boys have been less positive compared to the girls especially for the learning responses.

Achievement of Strategic Plan Targets

- The Strategic Plan target to improve parents' perception of school climate by 15% by 2012 has not been achieved. Improvement has been shown for the teacher morale, parent input, stimulating learning environment, behaviour management and learning focus. However, other variable scores either changed little or declined. These included school improvement, teacher approachability, reporting to parents, transitions, extra-curricular activities, homework and general satisfaction with the school.
- The strategic plan target to improve student motivation in the staff opinion survey to the 3rd quartile by 2012 was achieved.

Staff, parents and students perceive discipline standards have improved. However, parent perception suggests a possible decline in classroom behaviour. Although staff have been satisfied with classroom behaviour they believe general school behaviour could be improved. Boys have been far less positive than girls.

Student Attendance

For 2008-2011 the average student absence has improved progressively from 11.9 days per student for 2008 to 11.4 days for 2011 (14.6 for 2009).

The target to improve attendance rates for all students at or above 90% and attaining similar SFO data for attendance was basically achieved. The prep to year 6 attendance rate for 2011 was 94%. This was just below the school's expected range.

Prep attendance, which has been consistently high, has virtually achieved the 90th percentile target. Establishing high attendance behaviours for students at the beginning of their schooling is very important.

Although there has been a steady improvement in attendance rates with the aberration of the 2009 'Flu' year the school continues to have a number of families who take extended family holidays outside the school holiday periods. These extended holidays have a significant impact on the overall attendance data. The school will continue to promote taking holidays during the designated holiday periods. In 2011 there were three families whose significant poor attendance was not related to holidays and illness. The school will continue to work with these families to improve attendance. Late arrivals is still an area that requires attention and the school will continue work address this promptly and employ a variety of strategies to support the families to be on time.

Although average attendance rates have traditionally been high the school will continue to focus on strategies to reduce targeted student absence including prompt and consistent follow up to all unexplained absences.

Why did we achieve improved student outcomes?

Strategies that have contributed to improved outcomes have included

- An agreed and consistent procedure to manage absences
- A whole school commitment to the AIZ behaviour management strategies based on the Ramon Lewis model. An agreed approach to discipline and behaviour management has been implemented p-6 starting with the Start Up program in the first week of the school year
- Review and application of DEECD student well being guidelines by the wellbeing Committee

- Development of the Positive Play program operating at lunchtimes along with a staffed Time Out process for play and lunchtimes
- A consistent whole school implementation to the You can Do It program
- Implementation of the Wannick Policy
- Management and monitoring of students with significant health issues
- Personal Worktime program in the prep – 2 area and the Student Action learning teams in the grade 5/6 has represented a move into student guided learning processes based on the Curiosity characteristics as outlined in the AIZ program.
- Whilst recognition has been given to the aspects of higher order thinking, questioning and significantly student voice, understanding and application has been limited.
- The Wellbeing Committee conducted a review of the Student Wellbeing and Engagement policy and program over 2011 and aligned school with DEECD Guidelines.

Discussions with staff have concluded that over the life of the Strategic Plan, the emphasis in student well being has been more upon welfare aspects and less on aspects of student motivation and delivery of a stimulating curriculum that is so significant in supporting student engagement in schooling.

How effectively did we manage resources to support the achievement of improved student outcomes?

The school has a very experienced Welfare Coordinator with a .4 time allocation. She is supported by the Student Engagement and Wellbeing committee consisting of 4 staff members from across the school.

The resource allocation supports the program in

- Commitment to the You Can Do It program
- Teacher resources in Student Leadership program and values education
- Support for the Start Up program at the commencement of each year.
- Support for student leadership programs through JSC
- Affiliations with Down's Syndrome Association, Autism Australia and Epilepsy Victoria, and Go for Your Life program
- Accessing NMR support to provide programs including "Boys to Men"
- Providing specialist and ongoing aide support for the students on the PSD program.
- Professional Development for all staff in targeted areas such as autism, anaphylaxis , and Downs' Syndrome
- Maintaining First Aid Skills and Supplies
- Attendance monitoring and management

What can we do in the future to continue to improve?

- Maintain and support the Wellbeing program
- Review and develop curriculum design to include the personal interdisciplinary domains
- Continue the Personal Work Time and Student Action Team Programs across all levels.
- Provide Staff professional development in Powerful Learning and Curiosity Theories of Action

6. STUDENT PATHWAYS AND TRANSITIONS

The Strategic Plan student pathways & transitions goals were to:

- To improve student transition and pathways from preschool to school, one year level to the next and from primary to post primary schooling.

Strategic Plan Target was for:

- The proportion of parents reporting satisfaction with the transition and orientation program to be 90% or above by 2012.

Key Improvement Strategies to Achieve the Targets were:

- Involvement of the school in the Darebin Network Best Start Initiative in order to develop stronger community links
- Continue to develop consistent, systematic processes for the exchange of student information from one year level to the next, including year 6 to Post Primary.

What student outcomes did we achieve?

In 2011 the parent survey score for "Transitions" was 5.31 on a scale from 1 to 7. The strategic plan target of 90% target was not achieved.

Parents felt students could be better supported in their transition from year to year.

Parents were surveyed and the feedback on the 2011 Transition Program provide some very positive comments about our Kinder to Prep transition programs and also offered some useful suggestions for further improvements.

Why did we achieve / not achieve improved student outcomes?

Primary/Secondary setting

The majority of our exit year 6 students have transferred to the following secondary colleges:

- Northcote Secondary school
- Thornbury High School

Feedback from past students in year 7 has indicated they have readily adapted to their new secondary colleges. Anecdotal feedback from exited students related mostly to the difficulties of time management relating to homework and the different time table structure at Secondary School level. We will use this information to improve our transition program.

- We also provide an effective transition program from year 6 to 7 based on the model used in the Darebin Network. The focus is on familiarisation of students with the differing organisational structures and learning environments of a secondary school. Extended programs are offered to students at risk of not engaging quickly.
- We maintain and build on our strong relationships with our local secondary colleges.
- Information is exchanged with Secondary Schools on students at risk and those on the PSD program.

Preschool /Prep

Anecdotal evidence from prep parents over several years has shown our welcoming program for new students and their parents has been highly appreciated

Our Prep intake in 2011 was 56 students. This number was significantly higher than the 20 for 2003.

- There has been a continued emphasis on supporting the transition of Prep students through the school based program with kindergartens. This program is undertaken to ensure that incoming students feel assured and secure.
- We promote our transition program outline through the Best Start information system.
- Parents and staff collaborate in the planning and implementation of the Transition program.
- Information sessions and tours are run for parents of prospective students
- Our prep transition program offers the opportunity for students visit the school to familiarise themselves with the learning environment,
- Parent information sessions occur during the prep transition program.

Primary/Primary

Our emphasis is on providing a smooth transition for all our students, not only as they enter and leave the school, but also as they move through the different levels of the school.

Students coming into the school at varying entry levels

The program for students entering the school at various levels across the school and from dual settings has been a highly individualised approach according to student and family need. For students with special needs we liaise with special settings and the Collingwood language school to support both the student and their family.

We will continue in working towards improving the transition between year to year.

- Grade 2/3 joint sessions are held in term 4 of the preceding year.
- In 2012 an information induction session for teachers was held across levels to assist the exchange of valuable information about individual students. Information sessions for parents need to provide information on the pedagogical changes of a move from Early to Improved communication and parent engagement in the transition will improve understandings of the processes and development of teaching and learning as students move through the school. Support for families could be in the form of parent forums on what information is required and information sessions on the changes in teaching and learning as children move from the Early Years program.

How effectively did we manage resources to support the achievement of improved student outcomes?

There is a budget allocated to the Kinder/Prep transition program and also the grade 6 graduation but no other transition area has a budget allocation. Students coming into the school at levels other than Prep are supported through the Engagement and Wellbeing budget.

Families provide the necessary support for students during the 6-7 transition program. The school does not make any other resource allocation to the program.

What can we do in the future to continue to improve?

- Continue to refine and develop our communication strategy to enhance our links with parents and families. The low parent response in the Parent Opinion Survey indicates the need to engage parents and families to a greater extent in the 6/7 transition and grades 2-3 transition process.
- Evidence indicates that the Prep Transition program is highly effective and a review and transfer of aspects from this model will improve transitions in other levels of the school.

Preschool/Prep transition

- Continue to conduct an annual survey by the end of term 1 to gather comments and ideas from incoming prep families on how to further improve the Prep transition program.
- Increase engagement with preschools and kindergartens to improve communication across settings

Primary/Secondary Setting

- Conduct an information session for grade 5/6 parents at the start of term 2 (one month before applications due). Also provide information on issues around the transition process for students and their families.
- Invite representatives from Secondary main feeder schools to provide information to families in areas of specific interest at subsequent information sessions.
- Continue to provide secondary school experiences for grade 5/6 students across the year.

Year to Year

- Continue to invite specific information forums for parents on the different experience and expectations for students as they move from the Early to Middle years settings at school
- Continue to provide topic specific information.
- Include opportunities for across level experiences to encourage friendships and understandings