

2008 Annual School Report Biddabah Public School

NSW Public Schools – Leading the way



Biddabah Public School is located in Warners Bay within the Lake Macquarie metropolitan area, formerly known as Speers Point East, 'Biddabah' revives the earlier Aboriginal name for the area. The school serves the Lakelands suburb and portions of Warners Bay and Speers Point. Biddabah has an extensive and well presented playground with air conditioned buildings that are a blend of permanent and demountable accommodation.

Biddabah School enjoys a supportive learning community where parents, students and teachers work together to make our good school better.

Our school at a glance

Students

Biddabah students are motivated learners who share their learning journey with good friends in a well resourced and happy school.

Staff

The teachers and administration officers at Biddabah are highly regarded professionals who work with parents and the community to offer the best education to our students. They have a range of talents and abilities that enable the students to have learning experiences that extend the standard curriculum.

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

Significant programs and initiatives

The Biddabah hardcourt was a mammoth undertaking. The funding achieved from the State and Federal Governments has been far outweighed by the technical, physical and financial contributions made by the parents of Biddabah School. We had the official opening of the hardcourt on Tuesday 4th November. Greg Piper, our state government member and Greg Combet, our federal government member attended to dedicate the hardcourt to the Biddabah School community.

Biddabah School won a significant Environmental Award from the Lake Macquarie City Council. Our school's team of recyclers with the support of teachers and parents entered the LMCC Environment Awards for 2008.

At the Awards Ceremony held in the Council the Biddabah team opened the proceedings with an environmental powerpoint about recycling 'The Y Project' Biddabah received a book and a certificate from Dr Quentin Espey (LMCC) and a cheque for \$100.

Our first smartboards were installed in the computer room and a kindergarten classroom. We are now on track to install four new smartboards purchased by the P&C and two more currently being purchased by the school. These will be installed by 2009. With the installation by the department of a Connected Classroom next year we will have at least one smartboard in each grade. Now that's a great start!

On World Red Cross Day, Junior Red Cross executive visited the Town Hall, Newcastle for a Red Cross International Day. "We learnt a lot about what the International Red Cross members do to help others in different countries. We had our photo taken with a man from Africa.

Something that we discovered was that between World War II and now, there has been 150 other wars and only 26 days of world peace, Woah!"

The new School Band performed a special Christmas Concert for the whole school at a special assembly in the COLA. A feature of their performance was 'Advance Australia Fair' and since they had only been learning together for six months, their accomplishment of this difficult piece left us all open-mouthed.

Student achievement in 2008

Literacy – NAPLAN Year 3

The average mark for literacy in Year 3 was 419.9 compared to the state 418.75 with 75.4% of students in the top three bands.

Numeracy – NAPLAN Year 3

The average mark for numeracy in Year 3 was 406.3 compared to the state 409.6 with 68.3% of students in the top three bands.

Literacy – NAPLAN Year 5

The average mark for literacy in Year 5 was 508.9 compared to the state 498.2 with 69% of students in the top three bands.

Numeracy – NAPLAN Year 5

The average mark for numeracy in Year 5 was 490.6 compared to the state 489.1 with 54.3% of students in the top three bands.

Messages

Principal's message

2008 was a year of accomplishment and the fruition of initiatives commenced in previous years. It was a year when parents, teachers and students worked together to make our good school better.

In 2008, the work of teachers in the classroom was supported by the School Council and the P&C. The meetings of both of these bodies were well attended and provided real support to the school.

In the 2007/8 Christmas Holidays the demountable canteen was due to be moved to allow the building of the four permanent MDR classrooms. Unfortunately because of the weather, things didn't go completely to plan and we were left for almost all of term one without a canteen. Nevertheless because of the hard work of the canteen team the School Canteen still made an excellent profit.

I am very proud of the way our school environment improves each year. Over the years, groups of parents, teachers and students have made valuable contributions to control water run-off and to establish gardens, trees and grass, all of which makes our good school look and work better. This year 'Trees in Newcastle' were invited to Biddabah to teach our students about planting and the builders left the environment around our new classrooms in a sustainable state. We then entered the Lake Macquarie City Council Environmental competition and won a substantial award.

In 2008 the school assessed the progress that had been made in our 2006-2008 school development plan that focused on literacy, numeracy, technology and improving the school's ability to provide for the needs of all its students.

Planning is now all but completed on the next 3 year plan for 2009-2011 where our priorities will continue to be literacy, numeracy and technology with a fourth plan to do some work developing the foundations of student's emotional well being through the 'You Can Do It' program. The keys to You Can Do It are: organisation, getting along, persistence, resilience and confidence.

Other keys we will be Using in 2009 and beyond include the integration of students with learning difficulties, the identification and support of gifted and talented students, a welfare database called RISC, smartboards and connected classrooms.

Through the work done over several years and completed in 2008 by the Hardcourt Committee, students now enjoy a hard playing surface netball/basketball court and shelter.

2008 also saw four MDR classrooms transported onto the site and installed. Thanks to the P&C they are now air conditioned.

Over the vacation six new smartboards were installed in classrooms (four of these were purchased by the P&C).

We have begun 2009 retaining our 16 classrooms and looking forward to finally achieving our assembly hall as well as additional promised federal government support for school improvements.

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.

Graeme Mason (Principal)

P&C and School Council Report

School Council Another productive year is drawing to an end and I'd like to thank the members of the School Council who meet for one hour each month (outside of school holidays), this year we chose to focus out time on reviewing the Student Leader Policy and update the school uniform policy. Whilst working on two big policies has proven a little ambitious, I am pleased to advise the Student Leader Policy is in draft form and we look forward to getting your feedback early next year, so that we can have it in place for elections held in 2009. The uniform policy has proven a big job but we are certainly making head way on this one too, and it will be our primary focus in 2009.

Another big year for the P&C Fundraising has been huge in 2008, with almost \$8,600 raised by Mandy and her dedicated support teams with events including Easter Raffles, Mother's and Father's Day stalls, Chocolates, BBQ's. However, it was our recent Fete that was the highlight of the P&C fundraising calendar, with some \$11,500 raised and a lot of happy children around, it was deemed a great success. Thanks again to everyone who helped out on the day and again to Mandy and her team of hard workers.

This year the canteen has given to P&C \$2,000 with more to come, which is a great effort, so congratulations to Leanne and Jayne and all those helpers throughout the year. The uniform shop continues to provide a great service to our families, while the increased opening hours has proven a real success, thankyou Wendy.

The hard court is finally finished, it was a long process but certainly worthwhile acknowledgment must be made to Lee and Jenny for all their hard work and to the wonderful support they have received from many members of the school community.

This year we have purchased for the school, new folding tables, a set of Lexile books, swimming caps and covered extra hard court expenses. We have supported nine children who represented the Region at PSSA activities and one child representing NSW. We look forward to a big spend up of the rest of our 2008 raised funds, so far suggested acquisitions are a new Smartboard or two and air conditioning for the new classrooms. Will keep you posted on what we decide.

Biddabah Public School is so very lucky to have a small yet dedicated band of parents who are willing to give up their time to help support the projects and children at our school, and to each and every one of them I am grateful for your support.

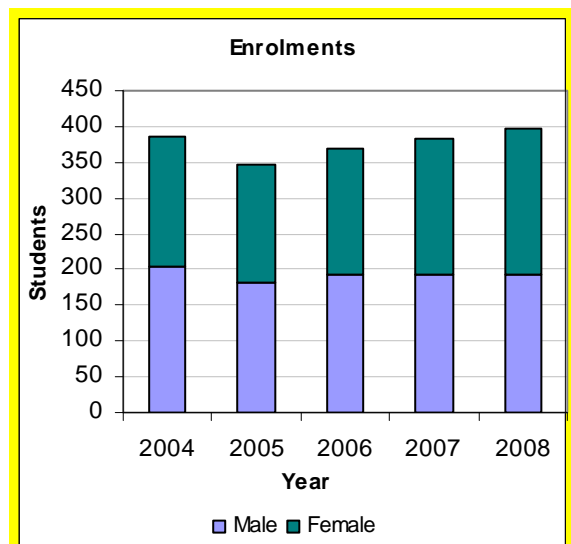
Lindy Dunlop (President)

School context

Student information

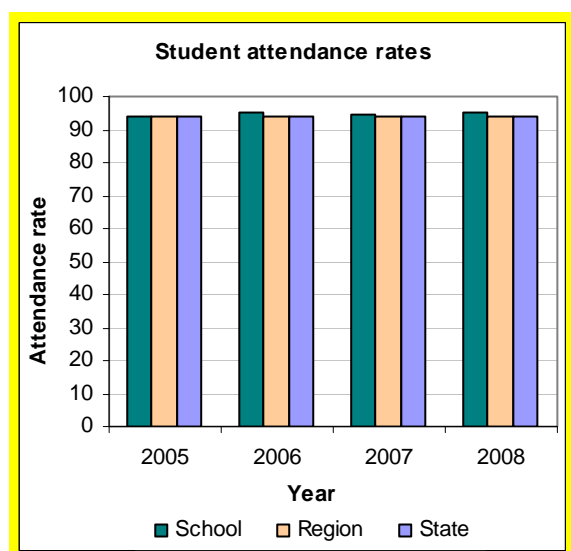
It is a requirement that the reporting of information for all students must be consistent with privacy and personal information policies.

Student enrolment profile



Student enrolments continue to show a steady increase. The school added a class in 2008 which will be maintained for 2009.

Student attendance profile



Biddabah's school attendance rates continue to be above region and state average.

Class sizes

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

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

| Roll Class | Year | Total per Year | Total in Class |
|------------|------|----------------|----------------|
| 1B | 1 | 23 | 23 |
| 1H | 1 | 22 | 22 |
| 2-3Z | 3 | 14 | 25 |
| 2-3Z | 2 | 11 | 25 |
| 2B | 2 | 22 | 22 |
| 2W | 2 | 24 | 24 |
| 3B | 3 | 30 | 30 |
| 4M | 4 | 24 | 24 |
| 4W | 4 | 24 | 24 |
| 5F | 5 | 28 | 28 |
| 5M | 5 | 29 | 29 |
| 6C | 6 | 27 | 27 |
| 6D | 6 | 28 | 28 |
| JOEYS | K | 22 | 22 |
| K-1M | K | 8 | 22 |
| K-1M | 1 | 14 | 22 |
| KB | K | 21 | 21 |
| KR | K | 20 | 20 |

Structure of classes

Classes are formed in accordance with the DET and school placement policy.

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

| Position | Number |
|-------------------------------------|--------|
| Principal | 1 |
| Assistant Principal(s) | 3 |
| Classroom Teachers | 13 |
| Support Teacher Learning Assistance | 2 |
| Teacher Librarian | 1 |
| Teacher of ESL | 1 |
| Counsellor | 1 |
| Total | 22 |

Staff retention

There were no staff transfers in 2008 due to a stable student population and a high level of staff satisfaction in a harmonious school environment.

One additional teacher was permanently appointed to Biddabah School increasing our classes to 16.

Staff attendance

Staff have access to leave entitlements such as sick leave. In 2008 the average daily attendance

rate for staff, as determined by the Department, was 96.5%.

Teacher qualifications

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

| Qualifications | % of staff |
|-------------------|------------|
| Degree or Diploma | 100 |
| Postgraduate | 10 |

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: | 30/11/2008 |
| Income | \$ |
| Balance brought forward | 126 666.76 |
| Global funds | 155 426.10 |
| Tied funds | 112 543.20 |
| School & community sources | 119 612.36 |
| Interest | 11 029.03 |
| Trust receipts | 30 652.75 |
| Canteen | 0.00 |
| Total income | 555 930.20 |
| Expenditure | |
| Teaching & learning | |
| Key learning areas | 5 236.92 |
| Excursions | 57 357.30 |
| Extracurricular dissections | 60 590.10 |
| Library | 3 927.17 |
| Training & development | 0.00 |
| Tied funds | 109 359.37 |
| Casual relief teachers | 49 429.74 |
| Administration & office | 44 310.90 |
| School-operated canteen | 0.00 |
| Utilities | 32 664.61 |
| Maintenance | 23 576.80 |
| Trust accounts | 30 996.33 |
| Capital programs | 0.00 |
| Total expenditure | 417 449.24 |
| Balance carried forward | 138 480.96 |

A full copy of the school's 2008 financial statement is tabled at the annual general meetings of the School Council and/or the parent body. Further details concerning the statement can be obtained by contacting the school.

School performance 2008

Achievements

Arts

In 2008 **The School Band** was taken over by Allan Ward Music. New members were recruited and with the help of a new band instructor Mr Darren Ward, the band is sounding fantastic! The school band is always looking for new members but you must be in years 3 to 6 to join!

The School Disco In May and again in October J-6 students were invited by our captains and prefects to a school disco. There was lots of sparkling costumes and lots of enthusiastic dancing.

The School Choir This year the choir became even bigger and better than before. In term 1 we sang "Food Glorious Food". In term 2 we got creative and sang "The Biddabah Rap", "Eldewiess" and "Do re me". In term 3 we took inspiration from ABBA and sang "Dancing Queen", and "Mama Mia". We were sad to see our teacher Lisa Jensen regretfully leave us at the end of term 3. However things are still looking bright as we practise with our new teacher, Vicki Lewis for our grand performance at Presentation Day!

Small Poppies Students and teachers from Warners Bay High visited Biddabah to perform 'Small Poppies' a play adapted by students at Warners Bay High about children's first days at school. The cast were all ex-students of Biddabah School. The audience consisting stage 2 & 3 students certainly enjoyed their performance.

Sport

The Biddabah Athletics Carnival was held on the 20th March in Term 1. On a lovely sunny day Saturn reigned supreme with a convincing victory in the Primary carnival. All children participated well and behaviour was a highlight of the day. There were many fabulous individual efforts that saw a healthy representation at the Westlakes Zone carnival.

The Infants carnival was a fun filled keenly, fought athletic event with all children trying their best for their house. It ran like a dream and there were many parents ready to help wherever possible.

The Biddabah Rugby League team took part in two gala days during 2008. The first day was played at Valentine. In a tough day Biddabah tried hard but found the opposition a difficult challenge. In our second gala day the boys played out at Windale. The boys, stung by the previous day out, rose to the challenge. The team won 3 out of 5 games losing to the same team

twice. Sporting their new jerseys, they looked graceful and professional.

Australian Rules Football had events for the senior and middle school this year. The senior team competed in the Paul Kelly Cup in Term 2. The boys had a successful day winning 3 out of 5 games. Two boys were selected to represent our area. The middle school (Year 3 and 4 boys) attended an AFL skill development day at Seaman Oval. The team won a game and fought hard in the second but were defeated. The future looks bright in Australia Rules Football for Biddabah.

Boys' Football Another successful year with the boys winning the West Lakes PSSA Gala (again!) and making it through to the final 32 in the State Knock Out (out of 700 teams!). The boys were a credit to themselves and the school in trying their hardest at all times.

Girls' Football Twenty two stage 3 girls represented the school in a Gala Day at Rathmines and in the Westlakes P.S.S.A Knock Out. Girls with previous experience and novice players were all a credit to the school. The girls made it to round 4. A great effort girls!

Boys' Cricket The lads excelled themselves this year to make the final of our Hunter section. They all have the "never say die" attitude which I know will stand them in good stead in all future endeavours!

Softball at Biddabah is looking very healthy for the future, with a very enthusiastic Year 4-6 squad. Our senior girls this year were runners up in the Hunter competition and 2 girls represented the Hunter at the Sate Carnival. Two teams played in a gala day which was a great experience for all concerned. A great year all round!

Netball Biddabah Netball Squad participated in the Westlakes Zone Gala Day and the PSSA Netball Knockout this year. The girls represented our school with determination and good sportsmanship. The squad consisted of Year 5 and 6 girls.

Other Sport

In 2008 our students participated in many fitness and sporting activities including:

- Participation in J-6 sporting and fitness activities.
- Participation in 6 week SMASH program developing the skills of mobility, flexibility, coordination, anticipation and sportsmanship.
- Participation in Learn to Swim; and
- Class programs highlight fitness and sporting skills.

Other Things We Did 1n 2008

Other significant events in 2007 include:

ANZAC Day In April, captains and prefects from Biddabah School represented the school at the ANZAC Day dawn service at Speers Point. Even though it was an overcast and wet morning, our students accompanied by Mr Cox joined the march to the cenotaph and laid a wreath from Biddabah School during the service.

Junior Red Cross Ms Roper leads the Junior Red Cross in the school. In May they visited the Warners Bay Private Hospital.

Farm Visit Actually Kindergarten didn't visit the farm last week, the farm visited Kindergarten. We had pigs, sheep, cattle, goats and chooks in the compound while children sat in a circle and watched the pig being fed. Unfortunately the pig got away and ran round and round the pen until it was finally caught by the farmer. During the show 'Bill' made his presence felt by standing up and bleating through the cage.

The School Environment The school received a visit from the volunteers of 'Trees in Newcastle'. The volunteers went to work on four gardens in the school planting mainly tube stock seedlings. Students were instructed in the plantings and in the watering and maintenance of our new natives. The gardens should be ready when the Lake Macquarie City Council Environmental Team inspect the school later in the year for an environmental award.

The Hardcourt The most popular playground is the hardcourt. On the October long weekend several parents donated their time to erect two reversible netball/basketball posts. These are brilliant! Parent, Mr. Jason Garside spent many hours designing, building, certifying and now erecting the poles that are the final stage of the construction of the hardcourt. On behalf of the whole school community I would like to thank everyone who has been involved in giving us the Biddabah hardcourt.

In term four we opened the hardcourt. The day was grey, but that did not worry the smiles on parents, children, teachers and politicians as our opening ceremonies went without a snag. All students participated in the opening with grade items that demonstrated to our parents and visitors just how the school will use the hardcourt.

The opening was performed by Mr Greg Combet MP (Charlton) and Mr Greg Piper MP (Lake Macquarie) Mr Combet and Mr Piper represented the Australian and State Governments that provided the majority of dollars for the hardcourt. Respectively, two permanent plaques were unveiled at the conclusion of the ceremony.

Academic

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

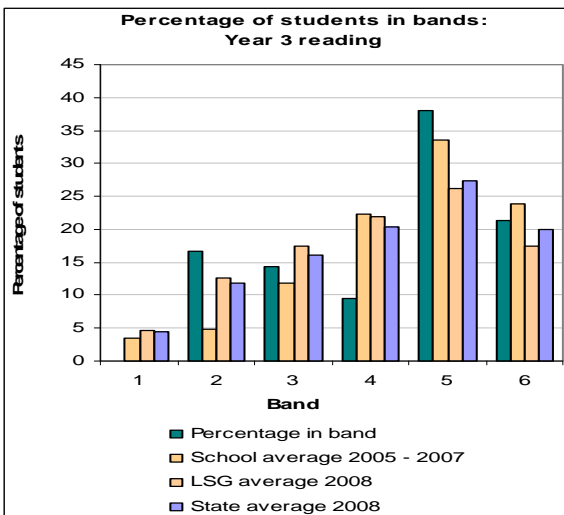
The achievement scale represents increasing levels of skills and understandings demonstrated in the assessments.

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

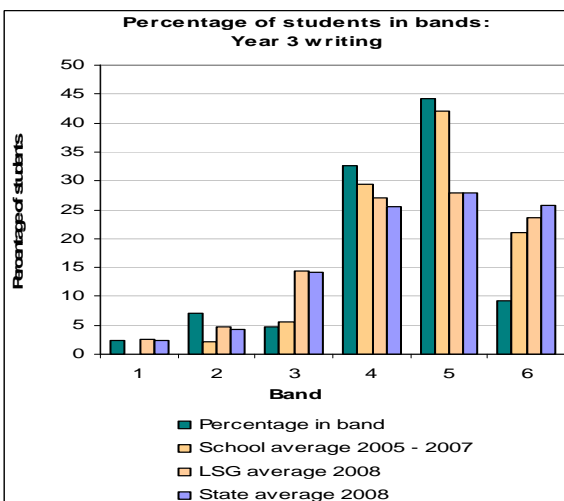
Yr 5: from Band 3 (lowest) to Band 8 (highest for Year 5)

Literacy – NAPLAN Year 3

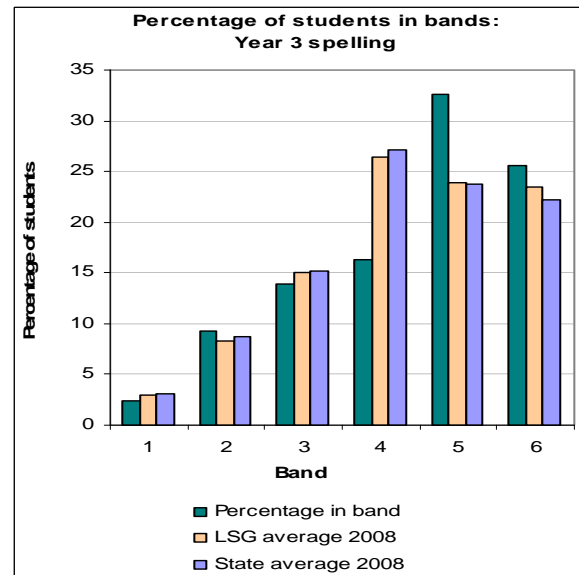
The average mark for reading in Year 3 was 424.0 compared to the state 412.2 with 69% of students in the top three bands.



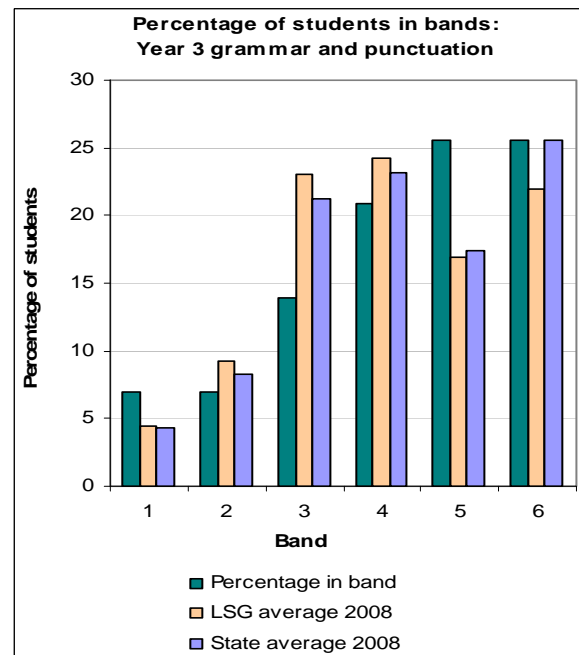
The average mark for writing in Year 3 was 415.1 compared to the state 427.8. with 86.1% of students in the top three bands.



The average mark for spelling in Year 3 was 420.9 compared to the state 418.6 with 74.5% of students in the top three bands.

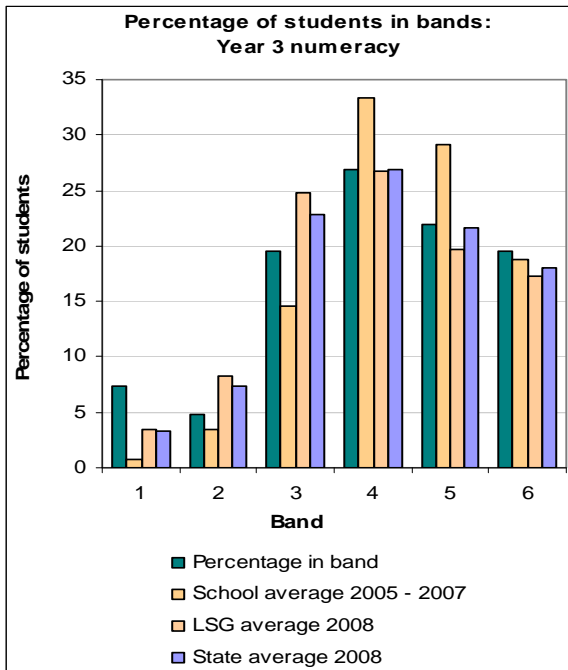


The average mark for grammar and punctuation in Year 3 was 419.6 compared to the state 416.4 with 72.1% of students in the top three bands.

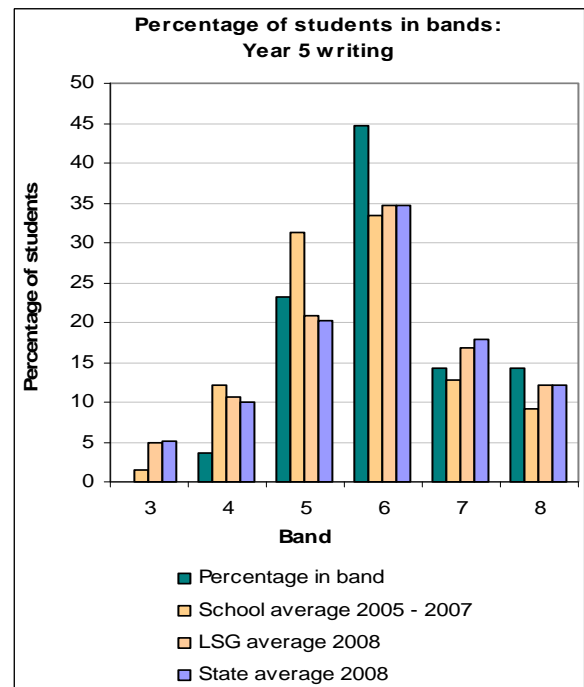


Numeracy – NAPLAN Year 3

The average mark for numeracy in Year 3 was 406.3 compared to the state 409.6 with 68.3% of students in the top three bands.

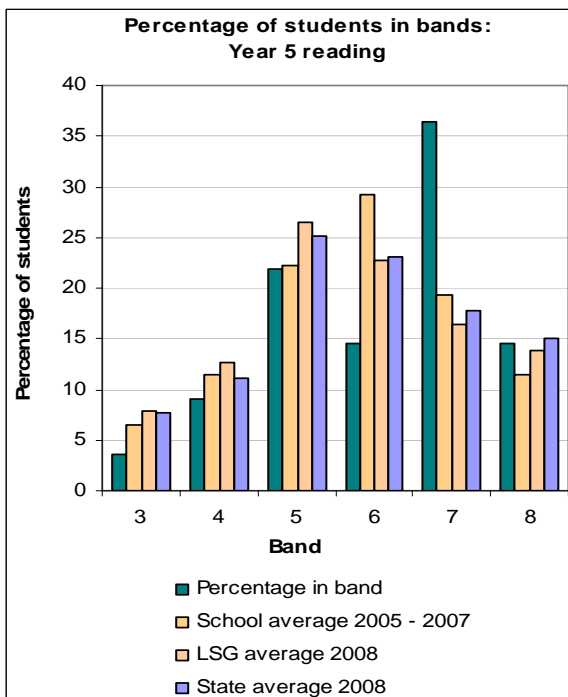


The average mark for writing in Year 5 was 508.3 compared to the state 495.5 with 73.2% of students in the top three bands.

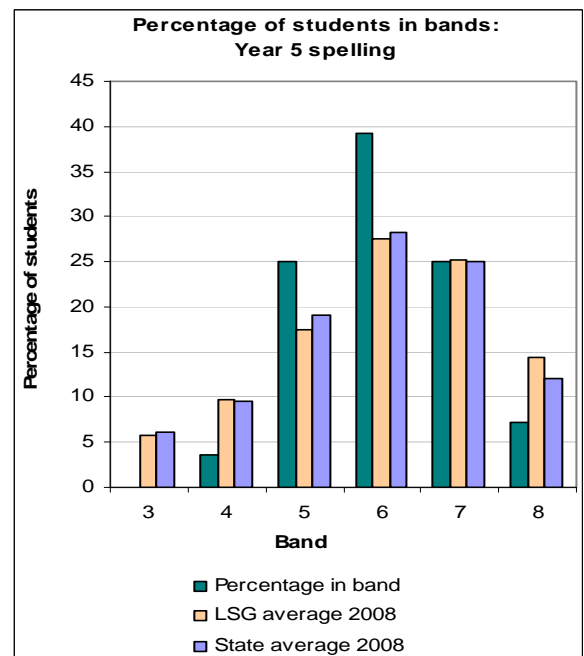


Literacy – NAPLAN Year 5

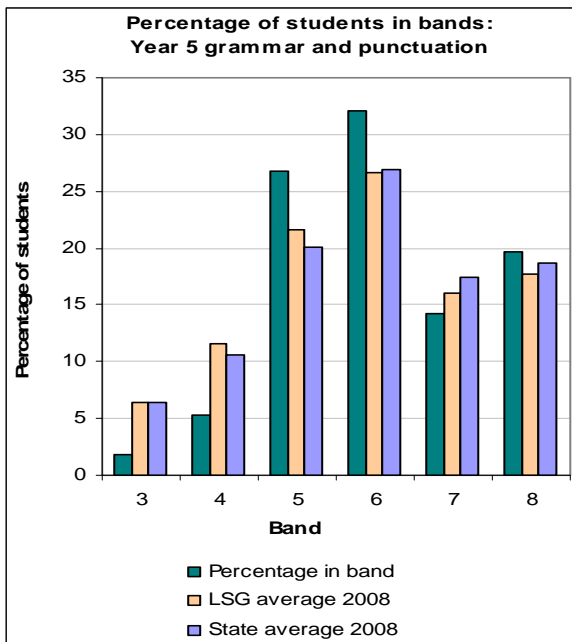
The average mark for reading in Year 5 was 513.5 compared to the state 494.4 with 65.6% of students in the top three bands.



The average mark for spelling in Year 5 was 502.6 compared to the state 498.5 with 71.4% of students in the top three bands.

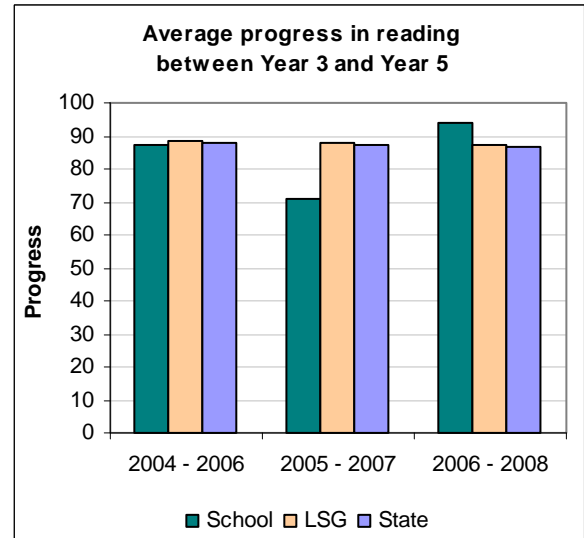


The average mark for grammar and punctuation in Year 5 was 511.2 compared to the state 504.5 with 65.9% of students in the top three bands.



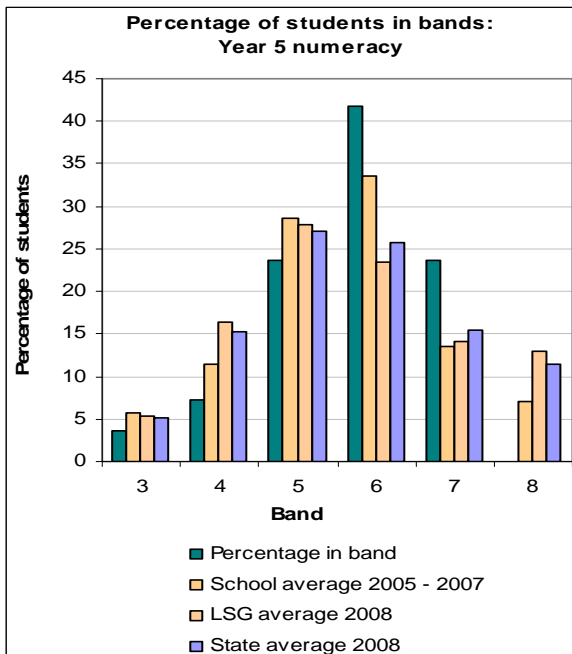
Progress in literacy

The average progress in reading for matched students between Year 3 and Year 5 was 93.7 compared to the state 86.8.

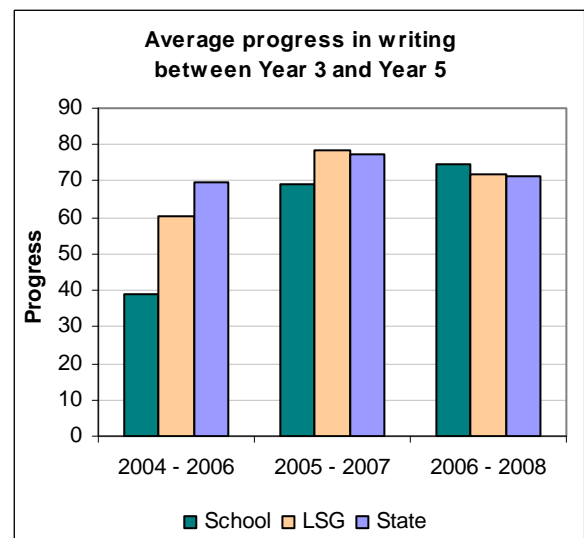


Numeracy – NAPLAN Year 5

The average mark for numeracy in Year 5 was 490.6 compared to the state 489.1 with 54.3% of students in the top three bands.

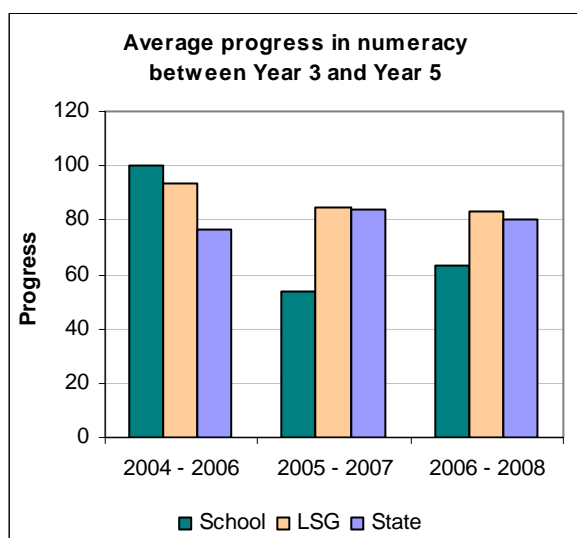


The average progress in writing for matched students between Year 3 and Year 5 was 74.5 compared to the state 71.2.



Progress in numeracy

The average progress in numeracy for matched students between Year 3 and Year 5 was 63.2 compared to the state 80.4.



Minimum standards

The Commonwealth Government sets minimum standards for reading, writing, grammar and punctuation, spelling and numeracy for years 3, 5, 7 and 9.

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

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

| Percentage of Year 3 students achieving at and above minimum standard | |
|---|-----|
| Reading | 100 |
| Writing | 98 |
| Spelling | 98 |
| Punctuation and grammar | 93 |
| Numeracy | 93 |

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

| Percentage of Year 5 students achieving at and above minimum standard | |
|---|-----|
| Reading | 96 |
| Writing | 100 |
| Spelling | 100 |
| Punctuation and grammar | 98 |
| Numeracy | 96 |

Significant programs and initiatives

Aboriginal education

Aboriginal education is part of the school's curriculum. We have eight students who identify as Aboriginal enrolled at our school. Teachers understand the importance of every student learning about the culture, traditions and history about our indigenous people.

Aboriginal education is a school priority program aimed at:

- Developing an awareness and understanding of Aboriginal culture from a historical and contemporary perspective; and
- Ensuring that indigenous students' educational outcomes meet recognised literacy and numeracy benchmarks.

Strategies include:

- Identifying Aboriginal perspectives and opportunities in existing school and community resources.
- Exposing students to indigenous culture and issues through whole school celebration days, visits by indigenous speakers, and displays of artefacts.
- Enriching teaching and non-teaching staff's knowledge about Aboriginal issues by their participation in special training days;
- Providing teachers with support to complete ongoing PLPs to meet indigenous students' health and learning needs and progress.

Multicultural education

The school places high significance on the delivery of programs which promote racial harmony and tolerance. A small percentage of our students are from non-English speaking backgrounds, several requiring English as a Second Language programs.

Multicultural strategies include:

- Promoting the positive values of multiculturalism across the curriculum.
- Students study current affairs which stimulate discussion, especially considering the global conflicts of this year, which develops an understanding of the multicultural nature of Australian society.
- Students address multicultural issues and values across the curriculum and through the HSIE and English curricula.
- Biddabah students have been providing financial support through World Vision for Devayani Pazhani a little girl in India. On the Indian National Day children chose to wear orange, green and white and make an out of uniform donation to World Vision.

Letter from Devayani

"I am a friendly person.

When I grow up I want to be a teacher. My height is 144cm and my weight is 39kg.

Right now I am feeling in good health. My hobbies are singing and dancing. My favourite games are Kho Kho. The good habit I learnt last year was obedience, and the most valuable thing I learnt last year was caring for others.

I live with my father and mother and I like to read story books. My family benefited from a water pump near my home. The most exciting day in my family last year was the marriage of a relative.

I am in High School and have been promoted from class 9 to 10. 48 Children study in my class. My best friend is Ambika. I study Tamil, English, Maths, Science, History. My favourite subject is Tamil and I go to school five days a week. My vacation starts in May. School is special to me because I can play with my friends.

Important activities that happened in my community last year was clean water. One activity that made a big difference to us is Check Dam.

dear Sponsor, Thank you for your kind of help.

Yours lovingly,

P Devayani.

Respect and responsibility

Values are the internal signposts that affect the way people feel, think and act. Teaching values to children requires Teachers and parents to be good role models and to take advantage of those incidental, teachable moments that often we cannot plan for but nevertheless affect what our children learn. What kind of a person we want our children to become very much depends on the

values we demonstrate to them. Lecturing and preaching will not do the job.

Students are provided with many opportunities to demonstrate respect and responsibility:

- Students have raised funds for several charities including Stewart House, Red Cross, Harmony Day and Devayani, a World Vision student living in India.
- Year 6 students are trained each year to conduct J-6 Peer Support groups.
- Several students from Biddabah School including the captains and prefects participated in the ANZAC Day dawn service at the Speers Point cenotaph.
- Students are selected each week to run stage and whole school assemblies. Similarly captains and prefects run school ANZAC and Remembrance Day services and are supported by teachers to run the two school discos.
- Each year, Year 4 students adopt a new Kindergarten student as a 'buddy', and Year 6 students adopt a Joeys buddy. Their goal is to assist their buddy to settle in to school. Often the relationship continues all year.
- Each year K-5 students vote for their new school captains and prefects using fair democratic processes. Similarly in the new year house captains and class captains are chosen.
- Each year the whole school participate in Clean-Up Australia Day by cleaning up the school grounds.

Other programs

Biddabah School employs two part-time teachers to work in K-6 classrooms and to withdraw students with identified learning difficulties

ESL (English as a Second Language) students in need of help learning English are provided with support at school. We have one part-time ESL teacher.

Students with specific disabilities are currently being provided with support from one of several Teachers Aide (Special) employed by the school. The TAS works in the classroom with the classroom teacher.

Progress on 2008 targets

In the third year, 2008 of our three year cyclic improvement plan we will again be focussing our attention on literacy, numeracy, technology, quality teaching and gifted and talented students.

Target 1

To improve writing outcomes for all students

Our achievements include:

- Stage and grade implementation of the text type based K-6 writing program monitored.
- Effective use external and internal assessment of writing to identify and program for student and school weaknesses in writing performance.
- A quality teaching writing program integrates programming with the learning needs of students.
- Highly engaged and motivated students demonstrating improvement and facility with text types and the specific strategies involved in writing.
- Improved student outcomes are reflected in both school and national testing results.

Target 2

To improve numeracy outcomes for all students

Our achievements include:

- Strategies to improve K-6 working mathematically outcomes in all numeracy strands.
- Focus on the problem solving pedagogies and the automatic recall of table and number facts.
- Deeper student understandings and facility with mental computation through a hands-on approach to teaching mathematics.
- Evidence of students using quality strategies to demonstrate their understanding of mathematics.
- The consistent use of resources and teaching strategies for mathematics within and between stages.

Target 3

To strengthen the integration of technology in learning.

Our achievements include:

- Training and support for staff and students to improve their technology skills including the phasing out of old macintosh computers.

- Training and support for staff in the use of smartboards and the acquisition of additional smartboards.
- Access to DET training opportunities and mentoring the latest technology into school programs.
- Staff and student use of the DET portal, school networking and student and staff email.
- Students using technology for research and presentation.

Target 4

To implement quality teaching strategies in classroom programs

Our achievements include:

- Teacher's application of quality teaching pedagogy into programming for literacy, numeracy and for all KLAS.
- Differentiation strategies integrated into programming.
- All students including the gifted and talented, those with learning difficulties as well as ESL and those of Aboriginal descent benefit from improved quality teaching and learning strategies.

Key evaluations

It is a requirement for all NSW public schools to conduct at least two annual evaluations – one related to educational and management practice and the other related to curriculum. In 2008 our school carried out evaluations of Student Welfare (YCDI) and the Computer Program.

Student Welfare (You Can Do It)

Biddabah is not the first school to decide to implement the You Can Do It! program and it will not significantly change what we do now. As a school we have always thrown our effort behind providing the best possible welfare program for our students. We have already promoted to students the You Can Do It! (YCDI) attitudes and values of confidence, persistence, organisation, getting along and resilience. What we are going to change is basically promoting these attitudes and values more consistently across the school and with your (parent) support in the home and community as well.

The You Can Do It! Program is a school-home-community approach to helping young people achieve to the best of their ability and experience positive social-emotional well-being. Resiliency is the key. Resiliency refers to the capacity of people to survive and thrive in the face of adversity. It is a

term that can be applied to people of any age but for children it refers to the capacity to overcome difficult circumstances and go on to lead healthy, successful lives.

The You Can Do It! program teaches positive habits of the mind and ways of thinking

Confidence: Accepting Myself, Taking Risks, Being Independent, I Can Do It

Persistence: I Can Do It!, Giving Effort, Working Tough

Organisation: Setting Goals, Planning My Time

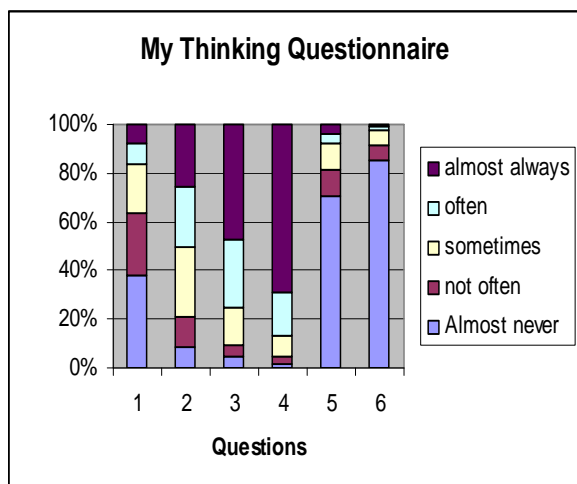
Getting Along: Tolerance of Others, Thinking First, Playing By the Rules, Social Responsibility

Resilience: Resilient ways to think; practical things to do

Prior to the implementation of YCDI, students in stages 2&3 were asked to complete a comprehensive 38 item 'My Thinking Questionnaire'. The purpose was to provide a baseline from which any changes in thinking that result from the YCDI program can be measured. The following data was extracted from the survey because the questions relate to the 5 YCDI habits.

1. I think that either you are good at something or you are not. If you are not, what is the point of really trying?
2. When I have a large assignment. I think it is helpful to break it into smaller steps.
3. When I am doing something hard, I know that the more I try, the better I get.
4. I believe it is important to treat others who come from different backgrounds with respect and fairness.
5. I think that nothing I do at school will help me in the future.
6. I think it is stupid to be honest.

Stage 2&3 results are summarised as follows:



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While the values reported by students are in the main as we would hope there is still some work to do for teachers and parents. Less than 40% of respondents chose almost never to "I think that either you are good at something or you are not. If you are not, what is the point of really trying?" and only a little over 40% say almost always to "When I am doing something hard, I know that the more I try, the better I get".

During 2009 Biddabah School will begin to implement the values based program, 'You Can Do It'. YCDI will involve training and support for all teachers, students and parents. It will build on what we have already achieved with our students and will embrace the elements of evolution rather than revolution. Any improvement however, I believe will result from teachers, students and parents all working through YCDI and being on exactly the same page when it comes to dealing with children.

The Computer Program

Children born between 1995 and 2009 will be the most highly educated generation of all time. They will be experts in their field (many of which have not been invented yet) and they will focus their skills through the mediation of Information Technology.

This is the challenge for today's schools when according to the Australian Bureau of Statistics around 95 percent of children use a computer regularly and at least 64 percent have access to the internet and 65 percent of what we now know as generation Z participate in online gaming at least once a week.

At work, 99 percent of large businesses (100 employees) conduct much of their business online hence the strong push to get educational technology into the hands of teachers and students.

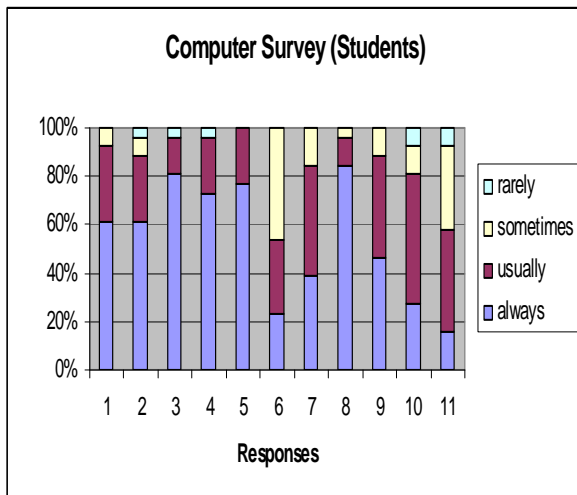
Most schools, like Biddabah have computer labs and computers connected to the internet in every classroom. According to a recent *Education Week* survey however, nearly 30 percent of teachers said their students use computers only one hour a week and 40 percent said their students do not use computers in the classroom at all.

Biddabah's combined library/computer lab provides students with access to 30 networked computers and in addition each classroom networks another 4. Seven of our 16 classrooms have smartboards with one additional smartboard located in the computer lab. In order to review student and staff's engagement with technology separate surveys were undertaken.

Both surveys addressed the following:

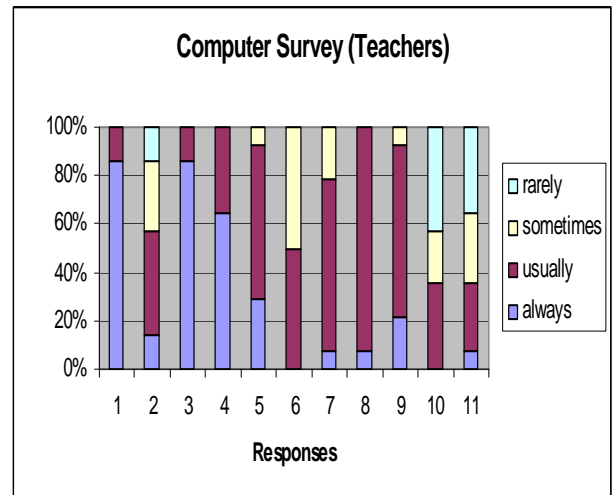
1. Students get pleasure from using computers.
2. Classes use many different programs.
3. Students enjoy lessons in the computer lab.
4. Computer related to learning.
5. Computer skill development.
6. Working with others on computers.
7. Using computers to teach different KLA's.
8. Teacher explanations.
9. Teacher lessons.
10. Student self assessment skills.
11. Adequacy of teacher feedback.

All students in stages 2&3 were surveyed and their combined responses are presented graphically in the following table.



Most students responded favourably to their computer lessons however a little over half prefer to work alone rather than in groups (item 6). Further, while most are comfortable to self assess their work, teacher feedback is an area for improvement.

Similarly, teachers were surveyed using a similar instrument and their combined responses are presented in the following table.



The results are similar to those of the students which indicates that teachers have generally recognized many of the issues identified in the students' results. Student self assessment and teacher feedback are identified as areas for future development and the availability of classroom teaching and learning programs warrants further investigation.

In addition, teacher surveys revealed that while all of Biddabah's 16 classes share a computer lab roster, on the average stage 2&3 classes spend 49 minutes a week with their teacher in the computer lab. In addition, teachers report each student spends a weekly average of 30 minutes on a classroom computer.

We have sampled of our progress in helping students achieve their learning goals through the use of technology. Our challenge now is to:

- Go beyond drill and practice and continue promoting, through technology a variety of higher order thinking skills on authentic tasks;
- Ensure our technology is in good condition and being used effectively;
- Ensure all students and teachers have equity of access to the available technology; and
- Provide appropriate professional development for teachers.

Professional learning

The focus for the use of teacher professional learning funds in 2008 was literacy, numeracy and making our good school better.

2008 Teachers Professional Learning

| School Priority Area | Amount \$ |
|-------------------------|-----------|
| Beginning Teachers | 0 |
| Technology | 827 |
| Quality Teaching | 2714 |
| Literacy & Numeracy | 4156 |
| Syllabus implementation | 713 |
| Leadership & Career | 2240 |
| Welfare & Equity | 2580 |
| TOTAL | 13230 |

School development 2009 – 2011

Following an assessment of overall school development and progress on our first three year plan and after consideration of DET priorities and in consultation with parents and staff the following targets have been identified that build on previous priorities. These targets have been tentatively assigned to be implemented in a particular year.

Targets for 2009

Target 1

All students possess effective literacy skills that allow them to be life long learners

Strategies included in the school plan that are designed to achieve this target are:

- Assess all ES1 and S1 students using a range of programs including Best Start and Reading Recovery using results to target follow-up.
- Tracking of specific weaknesses identified in students performance in NAP and school based assessment and provide programs to rectify them.
- Provide appropriate resources to maintain and improve sequential reading programs in all stages.
- Analyse data to identify specific common student weaknesses and develop whole school initiatives and resources that target the skills and functions of Writing.
- Provide a focus for the development of Talking and Listening that includes speech therapy, public speaking, drama and debating.

Our success will be measured by:

- All ES1 and S1 students are assessed and individual student progress is monitored.
- A 15% reduction of Year 3 and Year 5 students in the lower 2 bands from the 2008 NAP literacy results and a 15% increase of Year 3 and Year 5 students in the upper 2 bands.
- Improvement in student achievement in Writing.
- Improvement in student achievement in Talking and Listening skills.

Target 2

All students possess effective numeracy skills that allow them to be life long learners

Strategies included in the school plan that are designed to achieve this target are:

- Progressively provide a whole school teaching and learning resource based on achieving student's ability to 'work mathematically'.
- Tracking of specific weaknesses identified in students performance in NAP and other school and external based assessment and provide programs to rectify them.
- Analyse data to identify specific common student weaknesses and develop whole school initiatives and resources that target them.

Our success will be measured by:

- Progress in the consistent assessment of student's ability to work mathematically
- A 15% reduction of Year 3 and Year 5 students in the lower 2 bands from the 2008 NAP numeracy results and a 15% increase of Year 3 and Year 5 students in the upper 2 bands.
- All students demonstrate progress as measured by benchmarking in numeracy

Target 3

To improve student's skills in the use of technology

Strategies included in the school plan that are designed to achieve this target are:

- Provide staff and students with access to reliable computer hardware.
- All staff and students are provided with access to smartboard technology and training.
- The NSW Government Connected Classroom program is integrated into the school's technology program.

- Students are confident to explore, adapt and share technological understandings and skills.

Our Success will be measured by:

- The school's computer technology is distributed and maintained according to need.
- All available smartboards are distributed so that they can be shared by teachers and students.
- Teachers and students are able to effectively use smartboards and associated technology.
- Through interactive video conferencing teachers and students enhance training, teaching and learning.
- All students can demonstrate word processing skills and the ability to log on to the school server and the DET portal.

Target 4

To provide a responsive and supportive learning environment for all students

Strategies included in the school plan that are designed to achieve this target are:

- Implement the "You Can Do It" program with teachers and students.
- Students are surveyed on aspects of bullying and values and the results are integrated into our YCDI program.
- The Learning Support Team liaise with parents, staff and students to provide welfare support.
- Gifted and Talented students have their learning needs met through in-class and extra curricular activities.
- All students are provided with an understanding and appreciation of our Aboriginal culture and traditions.

Our Success will be measured by:

- The YCDI program is implemented and celebrated throughout the school.
- Students are engaged in YCDI values and welfare program.
- The LST assists the school to provide a caring, safe and supportive environment to all students.
- Classroom and school programs are differentiated to provide opportunities for GAT students.
- The Aboriginal culture is promoted to all students.

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.

Ms Lindy Dunlop (Biddabah School Council)

Mrs Jocelyn Jones (SASS Representative)

Ms Rachel Minor (Teacher)

Mrs Sandra Hunkin (Assistant Principal)

Ms Josie Minett (Assistant Principal)

Mrs Margaret Ferguson (Assistant Principal)

2008 Captains & Prefects

Mr Graeme Mason (Principal)

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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>