School Context Statement

Cowan Public School is a P5 school situated 15 kilometres north of Hornsby set on the outskirts of Muogamarra Nature Reserve and Ku-Ring-Gai Chase National Park. It is a small school with quality programs and the school community has high expectations. There are thirty six families with a total of 57 students enrolled for 2014. One student is of Aboriginal descent.

The school operates with three permanent classes including a teaching principal and has a full-time SAM (School Administration Manager). The school is a focal point in the local community and is well supported by its parent body. The school caters for students from kindergarten to Year 6. We proudly acknowledge our high standard of student behaviour and achievements. Our students perform exceptionally well in many endeavours and their excellent citizenship is regularly acknowledged by the wider community. The provision of a great variety of learning experiences encourages participation, thinking, creativity and fun. Our students are taught to do their best, to be considerate and tolerant of others, to have personal pride and to be responsible citizens.

It is the belief of the entire school community that by valuing and respecting others, the school engenders a love of community with a vision that the students will become responsible, caring and successful members of the community.

Principal’s Message

Children, parents and staff at Cowan together form a wonderful school community that works together for the benefits of students’ education.

2014 was another incredibly busy year at Cowan Public School; another year full of activities and events. This year was dominated by the celebration of the school’s 75th anniversary. Many months of planning went in to making Saturday, 25th October a truly memorable occasion for all who attended. Market stalls, Food stalls, activities and games for children, musical performances, an old school house museum, raffles and silent auctions kept everyone busy for the afternoon. An official ceremony attended by Mr Ruddock, Mr Kean and other special guests was followed by the Annual Bush Dance. Well over one thousand people attended and every person left with the feeling of what a wonderful school community Cowan is.

Cowan Public School is very lucky indeed to have such a supportive Parents and Citizens Association. In every facet of school life in 2014 there were parents ready and willing to assist whenever needed. It is a very special achievement for which I am truly thankful.

Schools are for and about children, and the Cowan children have had an excellent year.

We had excursions to the Powerhouse Museum, the Australian Museum, State Parliament House and Dangar Island, a school camp at Canberra, visits from authors and performers. We had many special days including the Hat Parade, Book Week and Year Six Mini Fete.

The creative arts and sports again played a big part in the lives of Cowan students throughout the year. The Sydney North Area Dance Festival was a highlight for our Dance Group who also performed at the Hornsby District Music festival and at many school functions. A school guitar group and K – 2 percussion group was created. The students were given many opportunities to participate and enjoy many sports. Cowan competed in the local interschool (PSSA) competitions including League Tag, Football and Netball competitions. All students participated in the Special Swimming Scheme which ran for two weeks.
There were School and Zone Carnivals in Swimming, Cross Country and Athletics. Cowan children achieved well in all of these carnivals.

National testing in Literacy and Numeracy was held for students in Year three and Year five with Cowan achieving results of a high standard. Kindergarten children participated in the Best Start program to find significant starting points for their learning. Across all grades many of our academic targets were achieved.

This Annual School Report details the full range of the school’s activities and achievements in 2014. At Cowan, high expectations are the foundations on which we build learning, personal development and satisfaction.

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.

Paul McSweeney - Principal

P&C Message

Community: a social group of persons that shares common values. Cowan has a strong community, which has assisted the P&C achieve great outcomes over many years, and this year was no different.

After the hectic pace of fundraising over the previous few years to achieve our goal of a new playground for our children, the committee took a lighter approach to activities for this year, with the School’s 75th celebrations taking a major focus.

What a magical and marvelous day this was, with all our community, near and far, old and new, coming together to celebrate all things great about our special place in the world. We held a working bee on the proceeding weekend to make sure the school was at its sparkling best, cooked up a storm on the BBQ throughout the afternoon, manned the stalls, and finished the day off with our annual bush dance.

To celebrate the occasion, Cowan Cuisine – the Cowan Cookbook was produced full of family favourites, and families were invited to make their enduring mark on the school by purchasing an engraved paver which will be used to pave the area near the vegie patch.

The P&C also supported the School’s inaugural rush hour in March, which was another successful event due to the vision and hard work of Mrs Scanes and her organizing committee and, of course, all our wonderful volunteers on the night. The evening raised funds to subsidise the Writers’ Festival, a day which engaged the hearts and minds of all the children.

The P&C also assisted the school’s ongoing commitment to supporting all students with providing partial funding for a Teacher’s Aide.

A subcommittee was formed to look at options in forming a school band. Although we were not successful in our grant applications, a Junior Bells and Singing group and a Guitar group were formed. I am sure that over time these will develop further.

Our annual Bunnings BBQ, at Thornleigh, was held in December, with our final event of the year, Carols on the Oval, being held on the last night of school. All of these activities would not be possible without the fabulous support of all of our families who gladly volunteer their time to assist our school community, and provide valuable resources to our children.

I would like to thank the members of the committee for all of their invaluable ideas, creativity and assistance. Special mention to Mr McSweeney for his support in our activities, and special thanks to the P&C executive for their ongoing support.

It has been a pleasure and a privilege to be a member of the P&C executive over the past 4 years and, I know, with the continued support of the community, the committee in 2015 and beyond will continue to achieve great things. We welcome and value all ideas so I encourage everyone to consider becoming an active member of the committee.

Amanda Janssens - P&C President
Student Representative’s Message

I have been at Cowan Public School since Kindergarten and since that time I have enjoyed all of my time at the school. I would like to say a special thank you to Mrs Ruzek, Mrs Scanes, Mrs Hope and Mrs Hodder as all of these teachers have been with me from Kindergarten through to Year 6. Also, thank you to Mr McSweeney for bringing back PSSA Soccer, and introducing PSSA League Tag.

In reflection of 2014, my fondest memories of the school were: League Tag in summer, PSSA Netball and Soccer in the winter.

The Cowan Rush Hour in Term 1, where it was great to have all the stalls and this was a great success in raising money for the Writers’ Festival. The Writer’s Festival was held in Term 3 where we went to Brooklyn and had authors and illustrators come to the school and teach us about their books.

The Easter Hat Parade was always fun with all of the awesome creations and eating chocolate at recess. Harmony Day was fun running activities and trying foods from all different countries. At Mother’s Day and Father’s Day stalls I was always able to pick up a great gift, thanks to all of those parents who helped out.

I loved the Cross Country and Athletics Carnivals. I was lucky enough to go to Zone in both Cross Country and Athletics from Year 2 through to Year 6, but I never made Zone for Swimming. School camps have always been great fun at Cowan and we have been to Canberra twice, The Great Aussie Bush Camp and Point Wolstoncroft.

To top it all off, the 75th Anniversary and the Bush Dance was a great day. The work that went into it was huge but it was a great success and we will all be back for the 100th Anniversary.

People have asked me what I will miss most about primary school. My answer is my friends, teachers, the school community of Cowan and Cake Day and Red Day as they don’t have that in High School.

In conclusion, my time at Cowan Public School has been fun and I won’t forget all of the opportunities that have been offered to me.

Jack Magson – School Captain

Hello, I am Jessica Carroll and I have had the privilege of being the girl School Captain in 2014. As my time at Cowan Public School has come to an end, it is time to reflect back on my time here at Cowan. What comes to mind immediately are the sports days, the library tree, mini fetes, dance group performances, bush dance and camps. This year I remember fondly the 75th Celebration and the Year 6 Farewell.

But more than all these things I will carry into my life the principles, lessons and skills that I have been taught.

The Cowan motto: **Courtesy Pride Success.**

I will carry this motto not just through high school but through my life. Thank you to all that have helped to shape my life and for the many opportunities to progress.

I would like to conclude with a quote from the musical Wicked

“Because I knew you, I have changed for the better.”

Jessica Carroll – School Captain
Student information

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

Student enrolment profile

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>2009</th>
<th>2010</th>
<th>2011</th>
<th>2012</th>
<th>2013</th>
<th>2014</th>
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<tr>
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<td>2</td>
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<td>6</td>
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<td></td>
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</table>

Student attendance profile - Absences

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>2010</th>
<th>2011</th>
<th>2012</th>
<th>2013</th>
<th>2014</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>K</td>
<td>98.2</td>
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<td>94.7</td>
<td>95.4</td>
<td>96.7</td>
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<tr>
<td>1</td>
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<td>93.1</td>
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<td>6</td>
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<td>95.8</td>
<td>93.8</td>
<td>93.2</td>
<td>97.4</td>
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<td>Total</td>
<td>97.3</td>
<td>95.5</td>
<td>94.7</td>
<td>94.7</td>
<td>96.4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Management of non-attendance

Student attendance and student learning outcomes are connected. The improvement of student whole day and partial day attendance is a major focus for the school.

Excellent attendance is encouraged and rewarded. Rolls and attendance reports are produced electronically. Where there is no attendance over a period without explanation parents are contacted. Ongoing concerns are monitored and referred to the Home School Liaison Officer.

Workforce information

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

Our school consists of highly professional, enthusiastic, caring and committed staff. Our aim is to provide programs that cater for the needs of the students at Cowan.

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>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher of Reading Recovery</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learning and Support Teacher(s)</td>
<td>0.2</td>
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<tr>
<td>Teacher Librarian</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher of ESL</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School Counsellor</td>
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<tr>
<td>School Administrative &amp; Support Staff</td>
<td>1.2</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>5.45</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

The Australian Education Regulation, 2014 requires schools to report on Aboriginal composition of their workforce.

Cowan Public School does not have any indigenous staff members but upholds a strong tradition of ensuring that the curriculum encompasses a strong Aboriginal perspective in all areas.

Teacher qualifications

All teaching staff meets 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></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Professional learning and teacher accreditation

All staff participated in professional activities, whether it was to further individual learning or to meet class or whole school needs. One staff member is a new scheme teacher working towards NSW Institute of Teachers Accreditation.

Focus areas were:

Health—Anaphylaxis, asthma, CPR and emergency care.

Curriculum – Facilitating and completing modules for the new Mathematics Australian Curriculum as well as continual professional development for all staff in understanding the English curriculum. Completing the Disabilities Standard of Education course. Two staff members completing a course on language development, behaviour, social skills and Aspergers/Autism. Planning other programs and assessing student work.

Local Schools – Participating in programs with the Asquith Learning Community of Schools such as Staff Development days. Participating with Brooklyn and Mt Kuring-gai Public Schools in Stage programming and reporting across all three schools. Berowra and Wideview Public Schools also joining in for Staff Development Days.

Best Start – One teacher completed Best Start training for the delivery of early assessment by Kindergarten teachers.

Beginning Teachers

In 2014, Cowan Public School did not have any permanent, beginning teachers.

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>30/11/2014</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Income</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Balance brought forward</td>
<td>59634.08</td>
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<tr>
<td>Global funds</td>
<td>84001.42</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tied funds</td>
<td>51028.03</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School &amp; community sources</td>
<td>33870.32</td>
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<tr>
<td>Interest</td>
<td>1993.83</td>
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<tr>
<td>Trust receipts</td>
<td>1794.35</td>
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<tr>
<td>Canteen</td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total income</strong></td>
<td>232322.03</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| **Expenditure**            |            |
| Teaching & learning        |            |
| Key learning areas         | 4043.65    |
| Excursions                 | 2412.49    |
| Extracurricular dissections| 8566.36    |
| Library                    | 26586.34   |
| Training & development     | 1415.74    |
| Tied funds                 | 38206.81   |
| Casual relief teachers     | 8713.12    |
| Administration & office    | 42414.34   |
| School-operated canteen    | 0.00       |
| Utilities                  | 9091.75    |
| Maintenance                | 3796.15    |
| Trust accounts             | 1968.31    |
| Capital programs           | 0.00       |
| **Total expenditure**      | 147215.06  |

| Balance carried forward    | 85106.97   |

A full copy of the school’s 2014 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 2014

Cowan Public School prides itself on giving students opportunities to excel in many fields of endeavour. In 2014, Cowan students were kept very busy and performed with distinction both academically and in extra curricula activities.
**Academic achievements**

**NAPLAN**

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

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

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

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

Year 7: from Band 4 (lowest) to Band 9 (highest for Year 7)

Year 9: from Band 5 (lowest) to Band 10 (highest for Year 9)

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

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

**Other achievements**

**Arts**

The Cowan school community is dedicated to encouraging participation and nurturing talent in the field of the Arts.

The students are offered a range of opportunities to develop their talents in creative arts programs both within and outside the school. These programs continue to result in the development and extension of skills and greater self-confidence.

The following are highlights from 2014:

**Cowan/Brooklyn Children’s Writers’ Festival 2014**

On Friday, 25th July 2014, Cowan and Brooklyn Public Schools came together to celebrate the fourth Children’s Writers’ Festival. The event was officially opened by Hornsby, State Liberal MP, Mr Matt Kean, supported by Director, Public Schools Hornsby Network, Mrs Janet Wasson, and school principals, Mr McSweeney and Mrs Brown.
National Simultaneous Story time 2014

The Librarian at Cowan again registered the students in the National Simultaneous Story time, which is an annual literary campaign that aims to encourage more young Australians to read and enjoy books. It is a fun event that aims to promote the value of reading and literacy using an Australian Children’s book and addresses key learning areas of the National Curriculum.

The selected book for 2014 was “Too Many Elephants In This House” By Ursula Dubosarsky and Andrew Joyner.

To celebrate this humorous story the entire school dressed up as their favourite animal. The children shared in the reading of the story, constructed elephants and participated in a mini safari on the school grounds involving researching facts about elephants.

Dance Group

A dance group represented Cowan Public School again in 2014 at the Sydney North Dance Festival at Glenn Street Theatre. A Year 2–6 dance group performed ‘Rio Lights’ with Mrs Jan Carroll directing them. This same group kept rehearsing throughout the year and performed at the Hornsby District Music Festival as well as at many different school events such as the 75th Anniversary celebrations and Presentation night.

Guitar and Percussion Groups

A major focus in 2014 was to enhance the delivery of music programs at the school. A Guitar Group was set up by a local community member, Mrs Alison Skarrett, where children learnt to play the guitar during Terms 3 and 4 and performed at Presentation Night. An Infants Percussion Group was also started by enthusiastic parents who also performed on Presentation Night. Both groups will again be available for students in 2015 with the ultimate goal of a School Band being formed in the not too distant future.

Sport

Cowan Public School prides itself on its inclusive approach to sport and all forms of physical activity. While we recognise and applaud the achievements of our top athletes we consistently focus on and recognise the student participation. Our school is firmly committed to ensuring our students develop a range of sporting skills, attitudes and confidence that will ensure they maintain an active lifestyle throughout their school and adult lives.

We endorse the philosophy of 100% participation with the attitude of ‘trying your best’ to improve your own skills. Our school is committed to developing a culture that builds students’ skills, confidence and fitness levels in a non-threatening environment. Daily fitness lessons began every day before the children went into class.

Our Swimming Carnival started the year which combined good swimming with a very high level of participation, with Chandler becoming the Champion House. Eight children went on to represent the school at the Zone Swimming Carnival.

At the Cross Country Carnival, Alberta was the Champion House. Almost every child completed the course. Twenty One children then went on to represent the school at the Zone Cross Country Carnival. The school Athletics Carnival was held in August at Foxglove Oval with outstanding participation from all children. Alberta won their second carnival of the year by becoming the Athletics House Champion. 18 children represented Cowan at the Zone Athletics Carnival.

Cowan again participated in Primary Schools Sports Association (PSSA) sport. 34 children were given the opportunity to represent the school in three different sports during the year. The school participated in Junior and Senior Netball and Junior Soccer competitions in Winter and Junior and Senior League Tag competitions in Summer.
Many children also had the opportunity to represent the school at Zone team selection trials. Senior Girls and Senior Boys teams were also entered into a League Tag Gala Day.

The whole school also participated in the two week long Special Swimming Scheme at Abbotsleigh Pool where intensive Swimming lessons were conducted.

Other

75th Anniversary Celebrations

A major focus of Cowan Public School in 2014 was the 75th Anniversary Celebrations. Saturday, 25th October was the day of celebration where this wonderful community event was very well attended by members of the school and wider Cowan community, both past and present.

The playground was the focus for numerous community stalls selling everything from candles to clothing and food. The children were able to purchase a ride band which allowed them access to many rides located on the grass oval. Throughout the day the community was entertained by an array of performances by a number of excellent local artists.

A classroom display of school history, consisting of photographs, records and memorabilia was very popular and ex-pupils and staff enjoyed this immensely. This display was complemented by a beautifully presented book which illustrated the school’s history.

An official ceremony was held which was attended by our local Federal and State MPs, Mr Ruddock and Mr Kean. During the ceremony, a number of previous principals of Cowan spoke about fond memories of their time as principal.

The day concluded with the Annual Bush Dance which was enthusiastically attended by past and present families, students, staff and members of the Cowan community.

It was a day that will not be easily forgotten in the history of Cowan Public School. Many months of preparation by the whole school community led to the amazing success of these celebrations.

Cowan Book Week 2014

The Book Week theme for 2014 was “Connect to Reading”. The annual celebrations were a fantastic success. The children and staff were dressed to perfection in character costumes and all participated in the parade.

There was endless enthusiasm and active participation in all Book Week activities and competitions including “Character Cupcake” and “Design a Crown”.

Cowan families joined the students and staff for morning tea in the Library and viewed the extensive art exhibition and photographic exhibition from the Writers’ Festival. Following morning tea, the students were engrossed in Book Week Literature Trivia, in which the children competed in teams to answer questions about stories that they have experienced during Library lessons.

Cowan Rush Hour

During Term 1, the school staged an extraordinary fundraiser called ‘The Cowan Rush Hour at the Twilight Markets’.

This unique fundraiser was organised and coordinated by the Cowan staff and community to raise funds for the Cowan/Brooklyn Writers’ Festival.

The event commenced in the school playground where a half hour viewing period was allowed, when buyers could peruse the many stalls and enjoy refreshments at the Art Room Café.

Children’s original artwork was on display for purchase at the café. The school bell then rang, marking the commencement of frantic selling and buying for one hour.
Whilst purchasing, visitors were able to enjoy a BBQ dinner as well as a smorgasbord of vegetarian dishes.

The event was a resounding success, enabling the school to fund the important literary event, the Writers’ Festival, later in the year.

The Library Reading Garden

The beautiful and tranquil garden space outside the Library is transformed with comfortable, cushions and rugs under the Library tree each Wednesday. It has been the perfect setting for the children to spend some relaxing time reading, writing and drawing.

Learning and Support

In 2014 the Learning and Support team at Cowan continued to provide collaborative support to the students with additional needs and their teachers. At the start of the year, a comprehensive new Learning and Support Policy document was developed and implemented as an informational and practical document to streamline support processes and assessment within the school.

Throughout 2014, children with a range of additional needs were supported within their classrooms and through individualised programs. For example, individual literacy support programs were structured for students with reading difficulties, and students needing support with their social and emotional development, were able to take part in small group social skills lessons.

Another Learning and Support strategy was the continuation of the highly valued peer tutor / reading buddies program involving every student in the school. Twice a week, the trained peer tutors supported a younger reader in a relaxed yet mutually beneficial reading session.

To support Cowan’s focus on positive behaviour from the start of the year, a whole school Positive Behaviour Program was developed to review and reinforce the qualities of “Respect, Responsibility and Aspire”. These positive qualities are the core behaviours rewarded in the school’s Welfare and Discipline policy. Explicit teaching about positive expectations was a whole school support strategy to emphasise how to behave well in all situations, and is reflected in the school’s traditional emblem: “Courtesy, Pride, Success”.

Throughout the second half of the year, the Cowan PS School Counsellor conducted fortnightly lessons based on the “Check it Out Thinking” course for a group of stage 1 and 2 boys, to help develop positive attitudes and challenge unhelpful thoughts. The girls worked with the class teacher on positive social behaviours and resilience during these sessions.

Cowan continues to be an inclusive school community, embracing and celebrating the unique qualities of every child, and identifying and supporting those with additional needs to achieve success in their learning and engagement at school.

Significant programs and initiatives – Policy and equity funding

Aboriginal education

One student of Aboriginal heritage was enrolled at Cowan in 2014. The Aboriginal flag is raised alongside the Australian flag each morning. Within the HSIE (Human Society and Its Environment) key learning area, all students are developing a deeper understanding of Aboriginal culture and Aboriginal heritage including Australian Aboriginal history.

Students participated in a range of class based activities during NAIDOC week. The events culminated in a formal assembly where students shared their work and learning from the range of art, poetry, story writing and craft activities.

Multicultural education and anti-racism

Cowan had only seven students in 2014 from a Non-English speaking background. Harmony Day was a focus in 2014 with the whole school involved in celebrations to mark the day.

Lessons were also delivered by staff at the school to provide students with opportunities to identify and appreciate the cultural heritage of all students and to represent differing viewpoints.
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:

The Cowan Public School plan has been developed from planning processes based on analyses of student performance data, appropriate evaluation and consultation within the community.

School planning 2012-2014:

School priority 1

Literacy

Outcomes from 2012–2014

Improved growth in Literacy outcomes, with students in Year 5 achieving an increase of one band or more in National Literacy Assessments.

Evidence of achievement of outcomes in 2014:

- All students met or exceeded the expected levels of growth in reading as measured by NAPLAN and school based assessment.
- All students exceeded the expected levels of growth in spelling as measured by NAPLAN results.
- Most students met or exceeded the expected levels of growth in grammar and punctuation as measured by NAPLAN and school based assessment.
- Learning Support program running well. Consistent benchmarking of K-2 students continues to show an increased level of understanding and ability to apply specific comprehension strategies when reading.
- Students’ learning is now being tracked on the literacy continuum and monitored and updated each term.

Strategies to achieve these outcomes in 2014:

- Teachers continued to engage in professional learning sessions targeting the new National English Syllabus and documents.
- Maintained Learning Support Programs for less able students K-6. Identified all students requiring learning assistance. Support teacher assistance. Class ability groups. Funding support where applicable. Learning Support team monitoring/intervention.
- Continued to use the literacy continuum to track students’ progress.
- Focus on subject target areas as identified in NAPLAN analyses appropriate to grades for reading, writing, spelling, grammar and punctuation.
- Continued with the K-6 Spelling competition.
- Teachers conducted regular running records to move students along the reading levels.
- Conducted whole school Writing Days to help develop students’ skills, as writing growth has not met the required outcomes.
- Created more opportunities for students to develop writing skills by participating in Adventure Writing Days with other local schools, as well as being involved in external competitions.
School priority 2

Numeracy

Outcomes from 2012–2014

Improved growth in Numeracy outcomes, with students in Year 5 achieving an increase of one band or more in National Numeracy assessments.

Evidence of achievement of outcomes in 2014:

- Most students met or exceeded the expected levels of growth in number as measured by NAPLAN and school based assessment.
- Improved results in school based assessments and on numeracy continuum.
- More hands on activities occurred in class and less textbooks used throughout the school helped with the focus on key mathematical terms.
- Working mathematically was a whole school focus in teaching and learning programs.
- Professional learning completed by staff on the new National Numeracy Syllabus.

Strategies to achieve these outcomes in 2014:

- Professional learning sessions for teachers targeting the new National Numeracy Syllabus and support documents as it became available through DEC.
- Stocktake of current resources in classes and storeroom and purchased new resources to complete concrete material requirements for all staff.
- Maintained Learning Support Programs for less able students K-6.
- Focus on subject target areas as identified in NAPLAN analyses appropriate to grades for number, measurement, space and geometry.
- Increased student familiarity with NAPLAN tests.
- Increased focus on Problem Solving techniques.
- Implemented a whole school assessment and reporting scope and sequence.

School priority 3

School Networking

Outcomes from 2012–2014

Improved teaching and learning opportunities, through involvement in Community of Schools Network.

Evidence of achievement of outcomes in 2014:

- Staff completed Anaphylaxis, Asthma and CPR training with staff from the newly formed Keerawall Community of Schools.
- Staff Development Days and Regular Stage meetings with Brooklyn and Mt Kuring-gai PS developing the new National Mathematics Curriculum. All three schools programming and assessing together.
- Staff Development Day and follow up professional learning meetings with the Keerawall COS in developing a reporting format that is used across all schools.
- Swimming Carnival and Athletics Carnival being jointly run with Brooklyn PS.
- Parent workshops for Intere relate were held at Brooklyn which was attended by parents from both Cowan and Brooklyn PS.
- The bi-annual Cowan/Brooklyn Public Schools Writers’ Festival held at Brooklyn PS where students and staff from both schools worked together and were immersed in quality Literature all day.

Strategies to achieve these outcomes in 2014:

- Planned, ongoing Staff Development Days with the Keerawall COS in the continual implementation of the new Australian Mathematics Syllabus.
• Continued alliance with Brooklyn Public School in holding joint Swimming and Athletics Carnivals.
• The establishment of regular stage meetings within the COS where staff can share resources and ideas and program together.
• Same reporting formats to be used by schools and modified where needed.
• The successful Cowan/Brooklyn Writers’ Festival to again be planned for and held in 2016.

Parent/caregiver, student, and teacher satisfaction

In 2014, the school sought the opinions of parents, students and teachers about the school. The responses show that Cowan is an effective school. Student learning and happiness are the core business of the school. Responses show the school enjoys a very positive relationship with the parent community as well as the wider Cowan community. The many positive responses received about the school’s 75th Anniversary celebrations showed that the school continues to be a very important part of the Cowan community. This is also evident in the strong support demonstrated by parents in assisting with classroom programs and with fundraising activities.

Parents believe the school offers a caring and nurturing learning environment which meets the individual needs of students. Students agree that they have access to good resources and an interesting learning environment. They are motivated and keen to do their best. Teachers feel they have the support of the parents and students in the development and delivery of learning programs. The support of the parents, students and teachers in our community is excellent.

Future Directions
2015-2017 School Plan

NSW DEC is implementing a new school planning process for 2015-17. The new plan will be published on the school’s website from the beginning of Term 2 2015.

All planning for Cowan Public School’s 2015-2017 School Plan is based on the DEC 5P planning policy, taking into consideration the purpose, people, processes, product and practices when planning for the 3 strategic directions.

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: