It is my pleasure to present the Annual School Report for 2013. Avalon Public School is a wonderful school with high expectations for our motivated students. All members of the school community work collaboratively and harmoniously ensuring excellent learning opportunities for our students. The strong partnership our school and staff has with the parent and wider community greatly supports all aspects of student learning.

Avalon School enjoys a well-deserved reputation for providing students with excellent opportunities to attain results in a variety of endeavours including academic achievement, the performing arts, leadership and sports. These broad ranging opportunities can be attributed to the school's dedicated and committed staff, who, in conjunction with a well-resourced learning environment, provide high quality teaching and learning for our students in a positive and enjoyable climate. Opportunities for all students to enjoy and experience success in academic, cultural, artistic, environmental and sporting areas are many, and this report highlights a number of these fine achievements.

Among many student achievements this year, I would particularly acknowledge the outstanding performance of the Senior Girls' Football (Soccer) team, coached by Miss Connolly, in winning the NSWPSA State Knockout Competition in an eight match campaign in Terms 3 and 4. Over 400 schools from across the state took part, with Avalon triumphant in the final!

Three members of the Avalon teaching staff retired at the end of 2013 or will do so in Term 1 of 2014. I wish Christine Holmes, Norma Campey and Lyn Ashton the very best for the future and thank them sincerely for their outstanding
The Parents and Citizens Association (P&C) continues to work extremely hard for the benefit of our students. This year through a great deal of energy and enthusiasm, the association has continued to enjoy some fantastic results. Undoubtedly, the highlight of the P & C year was the highly successful “Carnivale, Festival of Fun” conducted in September. This was a wonderful event that captured the real spirit of the entire Avalon community. A large team was led enthusiastically by parents Lucy Creegan and Danny Osomanski and I warmly congratulate them and thank every individual involved with the success of the ‘Carnivale’.

The school’s environment was significantly enhanced with the completion of external painting by the Department of Education and Communities (DEC) and the installation of primary play equipment, additional shade sails and playground seating, the latter three projects being generously funded by our school’s P & C. Each has added greatly to the school site.

We are looking forward with much excitement to 2014, a year that will see the exciting challenges of the introduction of the NSW Syllabus of the Australian Curriculum in English. I know that our school will continue to thrive and enjoy the ongoing widespread support from our wonderful community.

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.

Graham Phillips - Principal

P&C President’s Message

2013 was once again a fete year for Avalon Public School. It was also the first year of funding changes relating to the new Government initiative Local Schools Local Decisions (LSLD). Both of these events have commanded the attention of many of the P&C volunteers over the course of this year. The fete was successfully executed whereas there remains a long to go for a satisfactory understanding and explanation of the LSLD funding changes.

I am lucky in this my third year as P&C President to again be able to report that our Canteen and Uniform Store have been able to contribute significant funds to the P&C from their profits. OOSH has also continued to provide its invaluable services to the working families of Avalon and held its operation close to break even in the face of steep rises in staff costs and a real reduction in Government Grants in 2013. Perhaps fee increases will have to be considered should OOSH’s costs continue to rise in 2014. Carrying on from a successful launch in 2012 and thanks to the continuing volunteer time put in by Kendra Partington and team, the “Avalon Food” cookbook is now on its second print run and is continuing to provide a source of income for the P&C.

As previously mentioned, the 2013 Fete-“Carnivale”, was a spectacular success. Many months of effort were provided by a large number of volunteers lead by Lucy Creegan and Danny Osomanski. P&C funds and our capacity to address future needs of the school have been boosted by the nearly $40,000 profit. The Mother's Day and Father's Day stalls were again run with enthusiasm and provided children with exciting choices to surprise their Mums and Dads. Band and Dance Committees have remained focused and efficient, presented some amazing performances and managed their fundraising through donations and a range of events. In addition, the school grounds have been spruced up by the volunteers at the Gardening Working Bees.

The two large items of P&C expenditure for 2013 totalling over $70 000 were the replacement of the primary play equipment and the installation of the much needed shade structures outside the kindergarten area. Both of these additions to the school have been well received. The P&C also contributed $32 000 to the school to assist with classroom resources and visual arts teaching. These P&C budget items are identified towards the end of each school year at the annual P&C and School Executive Finance meeting.

This year, as a result of the successful P&C fundraising in 2013, we are able to agree to a request by the school for an expansion of its supplementary P&C funding in 2014 to $62 000. This is now planned to include targeted learning assistance as well as technology enhancements. Avalon Public School P&C was eventually successful in its pursuit of a 2011 consultant’s report describing the DEC financial systems and processes. Following a comprehensive rebuttal by the Information and Privacy Commission and with a pending appointment at the Administrative Decisions Tribunal, at the eleventh hour, the DEC released the report.

A short read of the report executive summary made it clear why there was so much resistance to its release. Major weaknesses in the DEC financial processes and systems explain why calculation and reconciliation of actual public school funding is all but impossible. Unless the report recommendations to radically improve DEC financial systems, transparency and accountability are implemented, confidence in any new funding system is reduced to almost zero.
Of course, apart from matters monetary, P&C social activities definitely took another bright turn this year with the Parent Party in May. A fantastic night was organised by Kylie and Kate and something that I hope our new APLS coordinator can build on for 2014. We welcome all new parents and staff for 2014.

I would like to acknowledge the energy, enthusiasm, and professionalism of the Avalon Public School teaching staff, executive staff and Principal, Mr Phillips, who has genuinely kept his door open to the P&C. Many unpaid and unrecognized hours are spent in preparations or supervision.

I would also like to acknowledge the energy and enthusiasm of the P&C Executive, Committee Presidents and Avalon Public School parents, who through their volunteer roles, big and small have improved the education and life experiences of our children.

In particular I would like to acknowledge our retiring P&C representative, Sasha Carrel, who stepped in as Secretary at very short notice at the beginning of the year and maintained her efforts despite taking on new employment.

Finally, I have much enjoyed my last three years as Avalon Public School President and wish Anton van der Vegt, the incoming P&C President and executive best wishes for a successful 2014.

Peter Birrell - P&C President

Student Leaders’ Report

Our journey through Year 6 as School Captains has been a rewarding experience.

The responsibilities have taught us many lessons and leadership skills throughout our year. We have had many opportunities to show our leadership skills which we have fulfilled, such as running Student Representative Council (SRC) meetings, running weekly assemblies and providing friendly support to our fellow students.

Our school is very generous as it raises money for charities every year. This year our charities have been WIRES, Super Hero Week – Bear Cottage, Canteen and Can Help (supporting Nepalese school students and their schools). To raise money, we organised many fun and exciting activities such as the a face painting stall, guessing competitions, biscuit decorating stall, sweets and treats stalls, “Come to school in your PJs” day and Disney Character dress up day.

Learning new skills has made us become more confident at our responsible jobs, such as writing speeches, learning scripts and being able to organise important events. We have all had a wonderfully exciting year that has taught us many valuable skills in preparation for high school.

We are all privileged to have been School Captains at Avalon Public School and would like to thank Mrs Gilbert and Mrs Weber for their support and guidance. We would also like to thank all the students and teachers for their cooperation and for helping us along the way. On behalf of all the students in Year Six, 2013 we would like to say, “Thank you”.

Arabella Archibald, Zoe Bryant, Lachlan Bates, Charlie Lewis - School Captains 2013

School Captains 2013 with Mrs Gilbert

School Context

Students

Student Enrolment Profile

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

Enrolment at the start of the year was 854 students and this figure remained reasonably constant throughout the year.

There were 4 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students enrolled and 76 students from families with a non-English speaking background.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2009</th>
<th>2010</th>
<th>2011</th>
<th>2012</th>
<th>2013</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>423</td>
<td>421</td>
<td>443</td>
<td>429</td>
<td>407</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>418</td>
<td>411</td>
<td>412</td>
<td>451</td>
<td>447</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>839</td>
<td>832</td>
<td>855</td>
<td>880</td>
<td>854</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Student Attendance Profile
Average daily attendance was 94.9% compared to the state average of 94.7%. The majority of students attend school regularly.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2009</th>
<th>2010</th>
<th>2011</th>
<th>2012</th>
<th>2013</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>School Region</td>
<td>94.7</td>
<td>94.5</td>
<td>94.2</td>
<td>94.7</td>
<td>94.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School State</td>
<td>92.1</td>
<td>94.4</td>
<td>94.3</td>
<td>97.2</td>
<td>94.7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Student attendance is carefully monitored. Where a student’s attendance causes concern, the matter is discussed with the parents. Where attendance remains unsatisfactory, the School Counsellor and Home-School Liaison Officer provide support to the family.

Structure of classes
The students were organised into 31 age appropriate, mixed ability (parallel) classes. There were 3 composite classes, a 1 / 2, a 4 / 5 and a 5 / 6 giving the school 34 classes in all.

Throughout the year, students participated in lessons taken by specialist teachers in library & information skills, visual arts and physical education.

Workforce information
It is a requirement that the reporting of information for all staff must be consistent with privacy and personal information policies. The staff are highly committed and professional and are dedicated to preparing students for life in the twenty-first century.

Workforce composition
The allocation of staff to the school by the Department of Education and Communities (DEC) is based on the number of students enrolled. The total teacher staffing allocation was equivalent to 40.92 full-time positions. The total administration staff allocation was equal to 5.1 full-time positions.

<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>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assistant Principal(s)</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Classroom Teacher(s)</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Part-time / RFF teacher</td>
<td>2.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher of Reading Recovery</td>
<td>0.52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learning and Support Teacher(s)</td>
<td>0.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher Librarian</td>
<td>1.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School Counsellor</td>
<td>0.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School Administrative &amp; Support Staff</td>
<td>5.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>46.02</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In addition to the Principal and two Deputy Principals, the school had thirty four classroom teachers, including four Assistant Principals. As well, there were two release from face to face (RFF) teachers providing instruction in the specialist areas of physical education and visual arts. The library was staffed by a full time Teacher / Librarian (T/L) as well as a part time T/L working two days per week.

A Learning and Support Teacher provided support in literacy and numeracy learning and the Reading Recovery (RR) program was delivered to a number of Year 1 students. The P&C provided funding to supplement the DEC staffing.

Teachers were supported by a number of School Learning Support Officers who provide support for specific students with disabilities or learning needs as part of the State Funding Support Program.

Administrative support was provided by a school administrative manager and three school administration officers. There was also a full-time general assistant.

The Australian Education Regulation, 2013, requires schools to report on Aboriginal composition of their workforce. There were no
teachers on the Avalon 2013 staff with an Aboriginal background.

**Teacher qualifications**

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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Qualifications</th>
<th>% of staff</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Degree or Diploma</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Postgraduate</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NSW Institute of Teachers Accreditation</td>
<td>24%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Financial Summary**

Date of financial summary: 30/11/2013

**Income**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Amount</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Balance brought forward</td>
<td>288,498.18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Global funds</td>
<td>402,953.72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tied funds</td>
<td>171,659.05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School &amp; community sources</td>
<td>578,746.45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interest</td>
<td>10,723.93</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trust receipts</td>
<td>118,731.99</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Canteen</td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total Income: 1,282,815.14

**Expenditure**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Amount</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Teaching &amp; Learning</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Key learning areas</td>
<td>156,391.76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Excursions</td>
<td>190,048.14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Extracurricular dissections</td>
<td>115,243.23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Library</td>
<td>32,543.94</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Training &amp; Development</td>
<td>5,746.03</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tied funds</td>
<td>146,188.83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Casual relief teachers</td>
<td>108,058.44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Administration &amp; office</td>
<td>143,267.20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School-operated canteen</td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Utilities</td>
<td>74,862.84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maintenance</td>
<td>93,281.87</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trust accounts</td>
<td>119,595.52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Capital programs</td>
<td>51,464.76</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total expenditure: 1,236,692.56

Balance carried forward: 334,620.76

This summary covers funds for operating costs and does not involve expenditure areas such as permanent salaries, buildings and major maintenance.

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

**School Performance 2013**

**Academic**

**National Assessment Program**

105 Year 3 students and 101 Year 5 students participated in the National Assessment Program Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN).

The results are recorded in bands. The achievement scale represents increasing levels of skill and understanding demonstrated in these assessments. For Year 3, Band 6 is the highest band and Band 1 is the lowest. For Year 5, Band 8 is the highest and Band 3 is the lowest. In the following graphs, results are shown for our school.

The My School website provides detailed information and data for 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.
Literacy – Year 3

The strands of literacy are reading, spelling, writing and grammar and punctuation. In reading 92.3% of Year 3 students achieved results in the top three bands compared with 84% for the Statistically Similar Group (SSG) and 68% for the State. 4.8% scored in Band 3, 1.9% scored in Band 2 and 1% in Band 1, for a total of 7.7% in the lower three bands. This compares with 15.8% of the SSG and 32.8% of the state.

In writing, 89.4% of Year 3 students were in the top three bands for writing, 86.7% of Year 3 students were in the top three bands for spelling and 88.6% of Year 3 students were in the top three bands for grammar and punctuation.
Literacy - Year 5

In reading, 88.9% of Year 5 students achieved results in the top three bands of reading compared with 82.2% for the SSG and 62.3% for the state.

In writing, 59% of Year 5 Avalon students scored in the top three bands compared to 69.8% for the SSG and 48.3% for the state. In spelling 73.3% of Year 5 students achieved results in the top three bands compared with 81.3% for the SSG and 62.2% for the state.

In both Years 3 and 5, significantly less Avalon students were placed in the lower bands in overall literacy compared to students across the state.

Year 6 students during their visit to the Australian War Memorial
Progress in Literacy

Reading has been a focus area and of the matched students from Years 3 to 5, the average growth was 84.5, an increase of 22 marks over the 2010-2012 data. Writing and Spelling progress were below the school’s expectation and these, especially writing, will be particular focus areas in 2014.

Numeracy - Year 5

In numeracy, 71.4% of Year 5 Avalon students achieved results in the top three bands compared with 75.3% for our SGG and 50.8% for the state.

Numeracy - Year 3

In overall numeracy results, 87.6% of Year 3 Avalon students achieved results in the top three bands compared with 80.8% of the SGG and 64.1% for the state. Thus 12.4% scored in the lower 3 bands compared with 19.2% for our SGG and 35.9% for the state.

Progress in numeracy

Of the students matched from Years 3 to 5, the average growth in numeracy for our students was 84.9 points compared to 89.7 points for the state.
The Commonwealth Government sets minimum desirable standards for reading, writing and numeracy at particular ages. These are referred to as national benchmarks. The performance of the students in our school in the Year 3 and the Year 5 NAPLAN Test is compared to these benchmarks. The percentages of our students achieving at or above these benchmarks are reported below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Percentage of Year 3 students achieving at or above minimum standard (exempt students excluded)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reading</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Writing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spelling</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grammar &amp; Punctuation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Numeracy</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Percentage of Year 5 students achieving at or above minimum standard (exempt students excluded)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reading</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Writing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spelling</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grammar &amp; Punctuation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Numeracy</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Future development / Implications for the school
The NAPLAN results achieved by Year 3 students in all disciplines were particularly pleasing. It is interesting to note that the Year 3 cohort was the first set of students to undertake the DECs’ ‘Best Start’ program when they commenced Kindergarten. As with all our programs, we will reflect on areas for consolidation, particularly around the introduction of the English Syllabus of Australian Curriculum in 2014, along with the trial of the Mathematics Syllabus.

The Arts

Dance

Three elite dance groups were formed at the beginning of the 2013 school year and students from these groups represented the school with distinction at Sydney North Dance Festival and our Senior Friends’ / Open Day Concert. These groups involved 72 students, boys and girls from Years 2 to 6. For many students, it was their first opportunity to be part of an Avalon PS Dance Group.

A group of 10 students were selected to be part of the 30th Schools Spectacular in November.

Josephine Curtin, Pia Lenarduzzi, Sophie Rutzou (Year 5) attended the Sydney North Talented Dance Camp. Joe Boaler, Poppy Jones and Indiana Rowell (Year 3) and Brooke Edwards and Dion Carrothers (Year 4) attended a Year 2 - 4 Dance Day organised by The Arts Unit (DEC). Both events were held at the studios of the Sydney Dance Company.

In 2013, Avalon PS participated with energy and enthusiasm in the Pittwater Community of Schools Music Festival titled,“Animal Crackers.” One new dance group comprising students from Years 3 and 4 was formed for this event.

Choir

The Avalon Public School choir is made up of 96 male and female students from Year 2 to Year 6. The choir has completed a program of choral repertoire arranged by the Department of Education’s Performing Arts Units.

Apart from the Avalon School Choir, we also had three other choirs comprising of the following.
Avalon Senior Choral Group. This choir was made up of 20 students in Years 5 and 6.

Peninsula Community of Schools Choir. This choir comprised of 20 students in Years 3 and 4 and performed in August at the Peninsula Community of Schools Music Festival.

The Avalon School Choir has also performed at:
- Avalon School’s ANZAC Day Ceremony
- Senior Friends’ Day
- Welfare Assemblies
- Preschool Concert
- School Christmas Carols Morning
- Year 6 Graduation

Achievements include:
- Successfully auditioning for inclusion in the Peninsula Community of Schools Music Festival.
- One student from the Senior Choral Group was selected to perform a solo at the Arts North Choral Festival at the Sydney Opera House.
- Two Avalon Choir students were successful in auditioning for the 2013 Sydney North Regional Choir who performed at the Opera House, the Schools Spectacular and as part of the Primary Proms Concert.

Band Program
The Avalon School Band Program in 2013 was comprised of the Training Band, Combined Band, Senior Band, a Year 6 Stage Band, as well as the Drum Corps. The bands have regularly performed at School Banner Assemblies and major school and community events. 2013 has again seen significant numbers of students enrolled in our band program that continues to enjoy the excellent leadership of Music Director, Mrs Sarah Shaw, alongside band conductor, Mr Jono Willis.

Highlights of the year have included:
- The ANZAC Day Service at Palm Beach, with the Last Post played by Ella Brady and Reveille played by Brianna Coles. The Drum Corps was superb in leading the march from Palm Beach Wharf to the local cenotaph.
- The Northern Beaches Celebration of Music Festival where our bands played at Pittwater High School.
- The Drum Corps performed superbly at the Peninsula Community of Schools Music Festival.
- Our school Band Camp held at the Sydney Academy of Sport, Narrabeen.
- The school’s “Carnivale” with performances from our bands.
- Avalon Market Day where our three bands, Stage Band and Drum Corps performed. All were well received by the Avalon community.
- Our annual “Big Band Breakfast” was again a great success.
- The school’s Christmas Carols morning where each of our bands accompanied the school singing a mix of traditional and more contemporary carols.

Visual Arts
The teaching of Visual Arts is highly valued at Avalon Public School, in every year level. Students work alongside a Visual Arts specialist to develop their ability to see, understand, analyze, create, and communicate.

The students have access to a kiln, which is used continuously and from which such creations as fantastic ceramic planets, dogs, masks, and Mexican sugar skulls have been produced. The opportunity to have such a facility is greatly appreciated and provides students in all years skills in working with ceramics.

This year, a substantial amount of artworks by our students were included in the Peninsula Community of Schools Art Exhibition for the ‘Guringai Festival’ - a celebration of NAIDOC Week. Students work was also displayed at Avalon School’s Biennale Fete, where the “Carnivale” theme was expressed through bunting flags, hung throughout the school hall.

As part of Book Week, a class of Year 3 students painted large-scale posters of the winning book covers, which were presented to the school’s library.
Chess

Another exciting year ‘at the boards’ has come to an end. For over 18 years students from Years 3 - 6 (with Year 2 usually joining in Terms 3 and 4) have met on Wednesday lunchtimes to enjoy social games of chess and to practise their skills.

Three teams again participated in the inter-school competition, which is played on Fridays after school. This year we fielded one Intermediate team and two teams of Rookies. For the first time one of our Rookie teams was made up of Year 2 students. All players showed a high degree of commitment and enthusiasm. The Intermediate team came second in our division and was the only team in that division to defeat ‘Mighty Mona Vale’ Our Rookie teams finished in the middle of the competition which was a pleasing result.

Five teams participated at the two tournaments held at Mona Vale Public School during the year. More than 50 teams from across our region competed at these tournaments and our teams were again well placed. The children were also excellent ambassadors for our school and enjoyed two fabulous days of chess.

This year for the first time we sent players to an individual event, with the heat held at Bilgola School. Harrison Peters, our number 1 player, came fourth overall in this heat. Our players were then thrilled to win a place in the semi-finals of this tournament, at the Northern Beaches Christian School.

We were delighted to receive a beautiful, giant chess set and to have a new Chess Board painted on the playground and to have had the old one re-painted. We now have one giant and one medium outdoor chess boards, with appropriate pieces, that the students have enjoyed using during Chess Club on Wednesdays.

This year has been an especially exciting and successful one for Avalon Chess.

Thank you to the families who have provided transport (and delicious afternoon teas) for our teams this year. We look forward to another exciting year of chess in 2014 and meeting some new players.

Drama

In 2013, Avalon Public School continued the Drama Club Program. The Junior Drama Club met once a week and was comprised of 40 students from Year 3 and Year 4. The Senior Drama Club also met weekly and was comprised of 18 students from Year 5 and Year 6.

It has provided an opportunity for students to develop new friendships, self-confidence and performance ability. The students have completed a program based on the Department of Education Drama Syllabus. The core elements of the program include building students’ ability in vocal technique, mime, improvisation and play building.

Performances:

Both drama groups had the opportunity to perform at Senior Friends’ / Open Day and the Junior Drama Club attend a performance of the play, “The Frog and Toad” at the Ensemble Theatre.

Sport

There is a strong emphasis on physical activity and a healthy lifestyle in the school. All primary grades were involved in home sport activities and minor games. Year 2 students participated in DEC’s School Swimming Scheme. All classes had regular physical education lessons with a specialist teacher.

Primary Schools Sports Association (PSSA)

Avalon Public School retains a strong reputation across the Pittwater Zone for our successful participation in PSSA, zone carnivals and sporting competitions. 2013 was a great year for regional and state representation for students from Avalon PS. Ellie Kerr qualified for the 100m at the State Athletics Carnival.

The following teams were premiers in their inter-school zone competitions:
- Senior A Boys Softball
- Senior B Boys Softball
- Senior B Girls Eagle Tag
- Junior B Boys Softball
- Senior Boys Cricket
- Senior Girls Football – Gala Day Premiers

Carnivals

In 2013, the school held swimming, cross country and athletics carnivals. Once again, Avalon under the guidance of Kym Charles, co-ordinated and ran the Pittwater Zone Swimming Carnival. An individual highlight was that of Pia Lenarduzzi, Year 5, who was named co-winner of “Swimmer of the Meet” with two other competitors.

Avalon students competed with pride at each of these zone events and numerous students qualified to represent the Pittwater Zone at the respective Sydney North Area Carnivals.
Representatives

A number of students were selected on their performances to represent the school and the Sydney North Area at State level in a variety of sports.

- Softball: Liam Spinks
- Athletics: Ellie Kerr
- Hockey: Macy Carrothers
- Golf: Jackson Upton
- Cricket: Harrison Kantor-Smith
- Soccer: Ruby Simonetti, Jessi Foster, Ellie Kerr.

State Champions

Congratulations to the Girls’ Football Team which won the NSWPSSA State Knockout Competition under the guidance of coach, Jo Connolly. The team won eight matches throughout the campaign, including a tremendous 3 – 0 final victory over Gymea Bay PS. This is a wonderful achievement by the girls.
students from K-12 have been provided with new and dynamic learning opportunities. The 2013 strategic plan included the following targets:

1. To provide relevant and appropriate professional learning opportunities to support quality teaching and learning and improved practice.
2. To enhance the opportunities and delivery of technology enabled schooling.
3. To extend enrichment opportunities for students through links with our partner Macquarie University.
4. To increase opportunities to build social cohesion and participation in the wider community.

Findings

1. The comprehensive Professional Learning Program offered to the PCS staff addressed the areas identified in the 2012 surveys for the development and continuation of opportunities for schools and staff to share their expertise.

Professional Learning opportunities delivered for 2013:

FOCUS GROUPS:
- 43 Early Career teachers participated in a conference and workshops in Terms 1, 2 and 3.
- 37 teachers participated in the Executive Development conference and workshops in Terms 1, 2 and 3.
- 30 DPs and APs met each fortnight working on the implementation of the Australian Curriculum, literacy

TERM 2 TPL Workshops
- 338 staff attended various workshops held across the PCS allowing staff to share their expertise

Michael McQueen was the Term 2 guest speaker presenting on the 21st Century Learner. Michael returned in Term 3 providing staff with engagement strategies. Staffs have consistently provided high quality feedback on the delivery and scope of professional learning.

2. ADOBE partnered with PCS delivering professional learning opportunities to teaching staff, principals and SASS enhancing the delivery of technology.

3. The Senior Shared Curriculum, Enrichment Programs for students and the Young Leaders Program continued to maintain a strong focus with Year 6 students visiting Macquarie University Campus in Leadership, Sustainability and Indigenous Education Programs

4. The Peninsula Community of Schools believes in reducing the inequalities and closing the gap between Indigenous and non-Indigenous students. This year we have continued to celebrate the culture, history and achievements of our indigenous people. The first PCS art exhibition “Unity in the CommUNITY” was held at Wheeler Heights School. The artworks were student representations of the various themes for: Harmony Day “Many Stories - One Australia”; Reconciliation Challenge “Say Something”, NAIDOC “Yirkalla Bark petitions” and Guringai Festival “Live Life Loudly”

Wheeler Heights Public School hosted the “Melaleuca Moonlight” event where Indigenous and non-Indigenous students from the PCS pitched their tents on the school oval and then participated in various indigenous activities. The PCS continued fundraising for Ian Thorpe’s “Fountain for Youth” Literacy Backpack program and the 13 schools in the Katherine Group Schools, Northern Territory.

Other Achievements

- PCS Music Festival launched Education Week with students singing and dancing across the stage from Kindergarten to Year 12 to the theme of “Animal Crackers”
- The inaugural PCS Science Fair held in Science Week celebrated “A Century of Australian Scientists” A wonderful showcase of the science and technology learning programs within the 13 PCS schools was displayed.
- Students from the PCS attended the Youth Eco Summit for the first time bringing back to schools messages about sustainability
Future Directions

The Peninsula Community of Schools is constantly evolving as a learning community. The introduction of the Science Committee and participation in the Youth Eco Summit in 2013 has seen a stronger focus on our STEM programs. A project based student leadership program will be developed for 2014. Professional learning for staff and enrichment programs for students will continue to be at the core of our operation.

Aboriginal Education

Awareness, appreciation and a better understanding of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Island cultures, past and present, is an integral part of the Australian Curriculum.

At Avalon PS, the students have participated in a number of individual, small group, class, grade and whole school activities and learning experiences, focusing on not only Indigenous and Torres Strait cultures but, also Australia’s rich cultural diversity.

Along with excursions, an Aboriginal performer (‘Dijeribones’), units of work in HSIE, artwork, music and writing including an art and writing competition; throughout the year we also, as a school, celebrated Harmony Day (‘Many Stories, One Australia’), Reconciliation Week (‘Say Something’), the Guringai Festival (‘Live Life Loudly’) and NAIDOC Week.

In addition to the above celebrations, we also remembered the ‘Yirrkala Bark Petitions’ of 1963 with students completing art works based on this year’s theme, “Say Something” as part of the Reconciliation Art Project. A number of these pieces were then later chosen and displayed as part of Avalon’s entries in the Peninsula Community of Schools Art Exhibition held at Wheeler Heights PS at the end of Term 2 called, ‘Unity in the Community’.

On the final night of Term 2, several Avalon students, indigenous and non-indigenous, participated in ‘Melaleuca Moonlight’ where they enjoyed a number of indigenous workshops and activities throughout the afternoon and into the evening. Following this, some of the older students had the opportunity to camp out on the school grounds overnight.

Nura Djaroba, the school’s Aboriginal eco-garden is a special learning space here at Avalon PS reminding us daily of the Garigal people who once lived here.

The continued acknowledgement of the original custodians of the land is a feature of all school assemblies.

Student Leadership

Student leadership continues to be a focus at Avalon Public School. All Year 5 students participated in class-based leadership activities before embarking on the Student Leader nomination, election and mentoring process in Term 4.

At the start of the year, our newly elected Student Leaders attended the 2013 National Young Leaders’ Conference at the Sydney Entertainment Centre. This is one of the largest and most significant youth leadership events in Australia. This provides a wonderful opportunity for our student leaders to hear high profile speakers impart advice, knowledge and skills that will enable them to be more effective leaders in their school community.

Other highlights of 2013 include:

- Acknowledgement and presentation of school badges to the following groups; School Captains, Student Leaders, Class Patrons, Cage Monitors, Sports Captains, Band- Choir Captains, Choir and Library Monitors and Sports Monitors.
- fortnightly school assemblies run entirely by Student Leaders;
- special assemblies led by Student Leaders including Banner Assemblies, ANZAC Day and Presentation Day;
- the variety and scope of lunchtime fundraising activities run by the SRC to support our school charities;
- a large number of Year 6 Class Patrons assisting K-2 teachers at lunchtime in a variety of ways;
- our Peer Support program, which involves all students from K-5 capably led in small groups by Year 6 students over an eight week period;
- the attendance of four School Captains at the Peninsula and Middle Harbour Schools Leadership Camp;
- the involvement of all Avalon’s Student Leaders in PCS Leadership activities with their peers from neighbouring schools;
• our Year 6 “Buddy School” program with Cabramatta Public School; and
• the attendance of our School Captains at a morning tea at Parliament House hosted by our local member, Mr Rob Stokes.

SRC Disney Dress Up Fundraising Day

Student Welfare

A strong student welfare program underpins our school organisation. The school implements a variety of strategies to promote good discipline and effective learning based on our School Code. We believe that students require clear limits and guidelines in order to function effectively in a community and to learn to their full potential. This year, a total of 387 students were recognised for upholding our school code at Banner Assemblies held each term.

All students participated in the following:
• Child Protection, Life Education and Drug Education and Road Safety programs;
• K-6 Peer Support Program which had an emphasis on relationships: Keeping Friends;
• Personal Development and Anti-bullying lessons;
• Walk Safely to School Day; and
• Bike Safety Education (Year 5).

The staff has;
• held regular meetings to discuss and review our behavioural expectations and finalise a simple set of 3 school code points; Respect, Responsibility and Personal Best;
• continued to explicitly teach behaviour expectations throughout Positive Behaviour Engaging Learning (PBEL) program and strive to implement a consistent approach to reinforcing our behavioural expectations;
• celebrated individual group and school achievements at weekly assemblies;
• organised Banner Assemblies each term to recognise individual and school achievements aligned to our School Code;
• provided an appropriate levelled system with suitable consequences for continued inappropriate behaviour;
• continued to reinforce the safe use of playground equipment and the Stop, Kiss and Leave Zones; and
• continued to reinforce the safety of all students travelling to and from school (walking, travelling by buses, riding bicycles / scooters / skateboards etc).

Banner Assembly

Respect and Responsibility

Avalon Public School’s Code of Conduct supports respect and responsibility for oneself, for others, for property and the environment underpins our student welfare program.

In addition to the empathetic and supportive culture created in each classroom, students are given many opportunities for developing their leadership skills and behaving respectfully and responsibly. Programs and activities include Keeping the Code units of work, student led assemblies, Child Protection, special days eg Harmony Day, ANZAC Day, Peer Support, the highly effective Year 6 Student Leadership program and the Student Representative Council, Year 5 leadership preparation, the Class Patron program, the environment group and membership in various teams and groups.

Students are taught respect and responsibility through our school code;
• Learn all you can
• Respect rights, feelings & property
• Be truthful, caring & kind
• Be proud of your school
• Be in the right place at the right time

Note that the Code will be revised for 2014 to,
Respect, Responsibility and Personal Best.
Peer Support

Following the success of the 2012 trial of the Peer Support Australia module, “Keeping Friends”, the decision was made to continue with this format.

In 2013, the school implemented a module called, “Moving Forward”, which focuses on resilience. This module supports students with the capacity to adapt and develop protective factors necessary to help them approach situations with confidence and enthusiasm.

What is Peer Support at Avalon Public School?

Peer led sessions are conducted for 40 minutes once a week for 8 weeks. Peer leaders facilitate the sessions with the support of a supervising teacher. The program provides students with the opportunity to interact with the same small group on a regular basis. Peer leaders provide support and guidance for younger students, allowing them to share their ideas and have fun.

Aim.

A school’s long term plan for positive cultural change can only be effective when it is developed collaboratively by the whole school community. It must incorporate a range of strategies designed to meet the needs of the school.

Objectives.

1. To present a series of structured activities within the framework of resilience thus encouraging the development of resilience across the school community.

2. For students to think about their strengths and personal qualities, and discuss how being courageous can help them when learning something new.

3. To help students identify the difference between resilient and non-resilient responses.

4. For students to discuss and choose strategies to help them manage their feelings and use critical thinking to determine a range of resilient responses in situations they may face.

5. Through experimental learning, develop students’ understanding of the workings of a small group.

6. To present students with strategies that will enable them to enhance and improve their own self-esteem, self-awareness and communication skills.

7. To provide senior students with the opportunity of learning and practising effective leadership skills.

8. To increase students’ awareness of individual responsibility.

9. To have a long term, whole school plan for Peer Support.

Premier’s Spelling Bee

In 2013, Avalon Public School children participated in the annual Premier’s Spelling Bee Competition. Students in Years 3-6 participated in class and grade competitions. Students in Years 1 and 2 held a school based spelling bee to coincide with the primary competition.

Four school finalists were selected with Alexandra Polis and Laetitia van der Veg (junior division) and Sophie Rutzou and Belle Turner (senior division) representing Avalon Public School at the regional finals. The junior representatives successfully reached the third round.

Our senior representatives progressed through to round six which was the second last round of the competition. The staff and students of Avalon are very proud of each of our finalists and their level of achievement.
Harmony Day

This year a small group of Year 5 students, Forrest Finlay, Caleb Le May, Tash Richardson, Sophie Rutzou, Hayden Nielsen, Henri Hole, Ben Johns, Gus Gerry and Finn Winney were selected to participate in a challenge and enrichment program run by the Northern Beaches Secondary College. They joined other nominated students from neighbouring primary schools. The program caters for gifted and talented students by providing enrichment and challenge activities and problem-solving based learning.

Volunteer Tutor Program

The Volunteer Tutor Program (VTP) provides learning support for students by way of the implementation of various strategies including Multilit and Multilit Extension, Comprehension and Year 1 and 2 Reinforced Reading Sessions. We rely on a team of volunteers with different degrees of training and experience to implement these programs, trained, supervised and organised by Cathy Carlsson.

The VTP for reading is now in its eighteenth year of operation. We offer sessions every school morning throughout the year. Students usually access three or four sessions weekly. The program utilizes Multilit style sessions, individually tailored to a student’s needs. A student progresses through a sequential program, targeting phonetic word attack skills, sight words and reinforced text reading.

We have also introduced the Multilit Extension Program, for older students, who have completed the Reading Tutor Program but are still experiencing some difficulties with reading. This program focuses on contractions, prefixes, suffixes and more complex phonics patterns. Four students in Year 5, and four students in Year 4 were able to take part in this extension program this year. A further eleven students from Years 2 - 5 have participated in the Reading Tutor program. Several students improved their reading by more than 10 PM Benchmark levels, which is a fantastic result and shows what an explicit, individualised phonics program coupled with diligent, appropriate, supported practise can achieve.

This year we have also, implemented a new “mini” Multilit style program for twelve lowest readers in Year 1 who were either waiting for a place on Reading Recovery or have completed Reading Recovery. Mrs Lauren McGee was also able to see 2 children in Year 1 each day, thanks to the generosity of the P&C. These children revised the Kindergarten Meow words and simple phonics.

We continue to offer other programs including; individual reinforced reading programs for students in Years 1 and 2 who are reading below grade level, individualised spelling programs as well as individual comprehension support for students who have good phonics skills but do not fully understand what they read. We also offer the “Home Reading” Program, where children who are not quite independent readers (Years 2 to 6) are able to borrow books, at their reading level, without embarrassment. 47 children have taken advantage of this program with many of them becoming dedicated weekly borrowers. This enables them to practise more efficiently at home. We will continue this program in 2014 for needy students.

More than 90 children have been able to participate in the various support programs we offer and we are very proud of the effort shown by these students and progress they have made. Most have been able to demonstrate significant improvements in their literacy skills and their confidence has increased accordingly.

We sincerely thank all our wonderful volunteers who make this possible.
Technology

The school is committed to the integration of technology across all aspects of education. There are two fully equipped computer labs, along with a minimum of four computers and an Interactive Whiteboard in all classrooms. The school employs an additional specialist Computer Mentor Teacher, who provides both the students and their teachers with technology mentoring lessons once a fortnight, as well as on-site, on hand technological expertise.

The focus in the sessions is to increase teacher and student expertise in the use of technology to support and enhance teaching and learning outcomes. These lessons continue to be a very popular part of the teachers’ and students’ program and include learning about software such as Kahootz, Reading Eggs, Photostory, Moviemaker, Audacity, Monkeyjam, Mathletics, TuxPaint, Office 2007, Email, Adobe Photoshop, Google Sketchup, Celestia and Web 2.0 tools, such as Glogster, Wordle, Tagxedo, Create your own Superhero, Voki, SMART Notebook and Storybird, StoryJumper, Prezi, and Stay Smart Online. Students have also been introduced to digital filming using Flipcams.

In addition, the school, in conjunction with the PCS, has developed a whole school Robotics program whereby students from K-6 have the opportunity to interact with Bee Bots, ProBots and NXT Lego Mindstorms Robots.

During the year we have added an additional 13 desktops and 10 laptops to bring us to a total of 260 computers in the school. A major focus area this year has been the extension of our network. This has involved the gradual installation of wireless access points throughout the school.

This technology will allow for the development of mobile technology programs Robotics utilising iPads for students and laptops for teachers. Teacher Professional Learning (TPL) opportunities have been made available through the PCS and offsite professional development courses. Teachers and students have benefited greatly from this instruction, leading to more creative, dynamic and interactive learning experiences. Work has continued on improving school communication through using technology to manage data, to share teaching resources in an agreed format and to provide TPL opportunities for staff. As a result, technology is integrated in the day to day aspects of the school.

The technology program at Avalon Public School ensures that students and teachers are provided with innovative and engaging learning experiences.

Library

Students at Avalon Public School benefit from an extensive library collection containing resources selected to support teaching and learning programs and student recreational reading. Our library currently holds over 36,000 items.

In 2013 the focus of our collection development was on quality texts to support the implementation of the English Syllabus with particular emphasis on the Asian and Sustainability focus areas. The Teacher-Librarian prepared three presentations for teaching staff which allowed them to view these items and explore their use in teaching and learning programs. In addition the Teacher-Librarian prepared Pinterest lists to promote these resources.

Each week the library shares poems, songs and other celebration ideas with staff using email. This has proved a great way to promote our resources.

In Term One the library hosted our annual Boys’ Literacy evening for Year 6 boys and their dads. This evening was well supported and led to an increased enthusiasm for reading a wide variety of texts. As a result of this program, which has been in operation since 2001, we have a very large number of books selected especially for our stage three boys.

Our Donate-a-library book was once again a huge success. Over the preceding 8 months the teacher-librarian selected books for inclusion in our donate-a-book display. This year we had over 700 new books donated. We process all the new books so that our students can take their new book home on their next library day. Our
students enjoy seeing the little book plates acknowledging their generous donation. The Book Week slogan for 2013 was “Read across the Universe”. In partnership with our school art teacher, our large display panels were filled with aliens and space craft. We also made a photo booth where the students could sit and ‘read across the universe’ This was very popular with all students. During Book Week we set four days of thinking challenges which incorporated art, design and make and writing activities. Over 150 entries were submitted each day and prize packs were awarded each day. Every year students in Mrs Anne Henderson’s class paint large posters to promote the Children’s Book Council short listed titles. These make a colourful display in our library all year.

In Term Four our library hosted a special literacy evening for pre-school children and their parents. We set out a huge display of books suitable for this age group and parents were encouraged to find a comfortable corner and read to their child. Each family was presented with a pack of reading inspiration ideas and a brand new library bag made by our Primary students in their art classes.

Our library is a very busy space at Avalon Public School. A big thank you is extended to the special volunteers who support us with book covering, shelving and Scholastic Book Club.

Margot Lindgren - Teacher-Librarian

Encouraging a love of literature with Ms Lindgren

Tournament of Minds

The Tournament of Minds (TOM) is a program designed to provide primary and secondary students with the opportunity to participate in the process of creative problem solving. In this inter-school forum, students engage with open-ended challenges and dramatically present their ideas.

An enthusiastic team of students from Year 4 to 6 participated in the Social Sciences division of the Sydney North Regional Competition of Tournament of Minds. Over a 6 week period, the TOM team worked collaboratively after school and on weekends to develop a creative solution to their Long Term Challenge. The 2013 challenge focussed on an exploration of the ethical dilemmas surrounding ‘secrets’.

The team’s dedication was displayed in their dramatic performance at the regional competition on Sunday, 25th August. The judges were amused by the team’s clever solution to the problem – featuring a miner, scuba diver and a pilot – and noted the cohesion of the team. The group also engaged in a spontaneous problem solving challenge during tournament day. They had only 15 minutes to independently consider and present a solution to a new scenario.

The creative team representing Avalon Public School comprised of: Euan Bates, Dion Carrothers, Isabella Graham, Isaac Reeves, Blaze Roberts, Ned Teale and Claudia Van Brugge. The group proudly represented the school at this prestigious educational forum and we are incredibly proud of their performance.

Maths Olympiads

In 2013, 104 students from Years 4, 5 and 6 participated in the Australasian Problem Solving Mathematical Olympiad.

During Terms 2 and 3, these students competed in five separate mathematical challenges. These provided an opportunity to apply problem solving techniques to a range of challenging questions which had to be completed within a strict time limit.

All our participating students are to be commended for their commitment and achievement throughout this demanding challenge.

This year, 3 of our students attained scores placing them in the top 10% of the competition. A further 9 students were placed in the top 25% of the competition.

Public Speaking

Public Speaking skills are being developed as students are given numerous opportunities to apply their oral presentation skills in activities such as; assemblies, school ceremonies, class talks, sports reports, debating and public speaking competitions.

Each year Avalon Public School holds a K-6 Public Speaking Competition in Term 3. The theme for the 2013 Public Speaking Competition was “I Think Tomorrow Will” or “We All Need to Stop Rushing”. The quality of the speaking was exceptional from Kindergarten to Year 6.
Our grade finalists were: Emily Goudie (Kindergarten), Max Molloy (Year 1), Zavier Avery (Year 2), Jake Molloy (Year 3), Abbey Mitchell (Year 4), Tash Richardson (Year 5) and Briana Coles (Year 6).

This year at the district Multicultural Public Speaking Competition, Avalon was represented by Hunter Roberts (Year 4), Josie Curtin (Year 5) and Sienna Coate-Thompson (Year 5). The girls all spoke with great passion and we were proud to have them represent our school.

Environment

In 2013, Avalon continued with its environmental program. Composting from both K-2 and 3-6 playgrounds was maintained with the children from various classes undertaking the responsibility of taking the compost up to the bins, stirring and tending them.

Several classes maintained vegetable gardens throughout the year and the gardening club also continued with generous support from parents. Together, the children, teachers and interested parents met weekly to plant, weed and water the gardens. The orchard, established several years ago, began to bear fruit, mainly passionfruit and limes.

Avalon continued with its recycling program and our policy of encouraging the use of both sides of all paper in the school. Class 5NC was diligent in their weekly collection of all class recycling wheelie bins.

A grant was obtained from the NSW Teachers Federation to purchase many native plants and shrubs to re-plant gardens around Elouera. Classes 5/4LA and 3EP were heavily involved in this work, taking an active role in the planting and maintenance of the area. We thank Mrs Melanie Couston for sharing her expertise with this project. A beautiful sandstone sculpture of possums was installed in this area, as a gift to the school from the Year 6 students from 2012.

We also sincerely thank the school’s P & C for funding a number a lovely new tables, seats and seating platforms around our school.

Avalon students also participated in Clean Up Australia and celebrated National Tree Day with planting of more native trees around the school, particularly in Nura Djuroba.

Progress on 2013 Targets

Target 1 – Literacy

To improve student literacy outcomes in reading comprehension, spelling and writing for all students K – 6

Our achievements include:

- use of NAPLAN Smart data to identify strengths and areas for improvement;
- professional learning opportunities for all staff in ‘unpacking’ the content and focus of the new English curriculum, composing texts, using ‘Program Builder’ to develop systematic teaching programs in line with new English curriculum;
- development of systematic teaching and learning programs and student assessment in the area of Speaking and Listening and the development and trialling of literacy programs in Term 4 to reflecting a more multi modal writing approach, in line with the new English curriculum;
- an increase of 5% of students in the top 2 bands in NAPLAN reading comprehension;
- Year 1 – 6 students participating in a spelling competition and entering Years 3, 4, 5 and 6 students into the NSW Premier’s Spelling Bee Competition, two students from the senior (Years 5 and 6) and Junior (Years 3 and 4) Spelling Bee representing our school in the regional Premier’s Spelling Bee finals;
- Stage 2 and 3 students entering numerous writing competitions, including the ‘My Country’ poetry competition;
- resourcing of quality guided reading for Years 2 - 6 and home reading for all K – 2 classes; and
- the “Reading Eggs” program accessed for all students K – 2 and the “Reading Eggspress” program implemented for all students 3 – 6.
Target 2 – Numeracy

To continue to improve student learning outcomes in numeracy for all students.

Our achievements include:

- professional development provided by Peter Gould, for all staff K-6 on fractions and decimals;
- developing a consistently formatted, differentiated Mathematics Program K-6, based on the new Australian Curriculum;
- regularly updating the Share file with newly formulated grade programs;
- initial professional development to begin the implementation of the new NSW syllabus for the Australian Curriculum;
- the continued implementation of the Mathletics Program K-6 to provide consolidation and support for all students. Ongoing support and guidance provided by Mathletics personnel for teachers, parents and students;
- the continued delivery of the Maths Olympiad program to skilled Stage 2 and 3 students;
- the continued delivery of problem solving sessions to staff to provide consistency across grades on how to record the working out of problems;
- conducting a resource audit K-6 to establish needs; and
- providing new, appropriate resources for implementing the syllabus across all strands, with particular attention to measurement and fractions.

Curriculum

Teaching of Science

Background

As a part of our curriculum evaluation, the teaching and learning of science was reviewed.

Respondents were asked to consider various aspects related to the delivery of the mathematics syllabus.

Findings and conclusions

- 79% of parent respondents agreed or strongly agreed that their child has a variety of scientific learning opportunities at school, however, only 39% were aware of the science topics studied during the last year. Only 24% of parents indicated they had knowledge of how science was taught in the school
- 70% of parents agreed or strongly agreed that their child increasingly utilise science skills they learn in everyday life.
- Respondents were split 50 / 50 when asked that sufficient “hands-on science activities are taught at school.
- 91% of students indicated that they enjoyed learning about science concepts at school and there was overwhelming that more science should be taught.
- A high percentage of students, 91%, indicted that they enjoyed applying technology in science and they enjoyed the challenge of problem solving and research questioning.
- Interestingly, 82% of parents indicated that they feel confident about assisting their child with science concepts at home.
- 75% of parent respondents indicated that their child would be interested in joining a school science club if it is established.
- While the vast majority of teachers agreed or strongly agreed that they promote and teach science mathematics, most agreed that the science curriculum could be taught more effectively and better resourced.
- 85% of teachers agreed or strongly agreed that more hands-on teaching of science would be more beneficial in engaging the students in the learning of concepts.

Future directions

The surveys provided very interesting feedback from each area of respondents. The school will continue to ensure that teachers are increasingly focussing on the delivery of the science syllabus and the appropriate resources to support these teaching activities are purchased. Teachers will
be afforded opportunities for professional learning in the area of science. We will endeavour to provide parents with more information about the aspects of science their child is studying at school. We will also look to establish a science club that would most likely take place during lunch time.

Educational & Management Practice

School Management

Central to the effective operation of a school is the provision of clearly defined school management structures. These should facilitate open communication between all stakeholders in the school community.

Background

In order to validate key issues relevant to school management and to assist our desire to implement best practice, a decision was taken to survey a cross section of the school community. Seventy parent survey responses were received.

Findings and conclusions

The percentage of parents responding “Almost Always” and “Usually” to the School Map parent survey about learning is shown below.

- The school and staff cares about the students and discipline measures are fair. 92%
- The staff at the school are valued and supported. 92%
- The school is well organised. 93%
- The allocation of money and other resources is effectively managed. 90%
- Teachers at the school are continually upgrading their skills. 91%
- The school communicates effectively with parents and students. 89%

There was strong agreement from students that the school is well organised and meeting their learning needs. The student surveys indicated that more than 85% responded “Almost Always” or “Usually” to the following statements.

- The school often makes minor changes to improve what it does.
- Our school has good equipment that helps me learn and perform at my best.
- The school cares about all students and discipline is fair.
- Our school is very well organised.
- The school supports the learning needs of all the students.

Future directions

The school will continue to focus on maintaining highly effective school management strategies with a clear view to provide for a main purpose: ie: to quality learning opportunities and outcomes for all students within Avalon School. We will seek to increase our methods of communication between the school and parents and carers.

Parent Satisfaction

Parent and Caregiver Involvement and Participation

Avalon Public School’s parent body is extremely supportive of the school and many parents are actively engaged in supporting the school. Parents are involved directly with their children’s education by helping in the classrooms particularly with reading and maths activities. Outside the classroom they assist with band and dance programs, sport activities, excursions and running the uniform store and school canteen. The Parents & Citizens’ Association (P&C) provides much support through a wide range of fundraising activities and initiatives. The staff of Avalon Public School greatly appreciates the outstanding support and involvement provided to the school by parents and carers.

Professional Learning

Professional Learning is recognised as a major factor improving teacher competency and improving learning outcomes for students. In 2013, the staff of Avalon Public School was engaged in professional learning activities on site as well as attending various external professional learning programs including sessions run by the Peninsula Community of Schools. All teaching staff took part in extensive professional learning related to the implementation of the NSW Syllabus of the Australian Curriculum in English and Mathematics.

In addition, staff also completed the following compliance training programs in 2013;

- CPR Training
- First Aid Training
- WHS procedures

Each year a program of professional learning is developed in conjunction with school targets and provided for all staff. The program is developed
to address the needs of individuals, small groups and the whole staff.

The school is allocated funding from DEC to provide professional learning opportunities for staff. As well as paying fees for staff participation in training, a major component of the expense incurred is in providing relief for staff from their regular duties so that they can attend training. The total expenditure for the year in teacher professional learning was $36,455.00.

The six school development days, numerous before and after school staff meetings and PCS workshops, provided further inexpensive training opportunities.

The continued focus of staff professional learning has remained aligned to the main areas of the school being literacy, numeracy and the use of ICT in the school.

![Year 5 students dressed in costume for 'Gold Day'](image)

**School Development Plan 2012-2014**

**Targets for 2014**

**Target 1**

**Literacy**

To improve student literacy learning outcomes in writing and composing texts, inclusive of spelling and grammar for all students, in line with current English curriculum outcomes.

Strategies to achieve this target include;

- developing student assessment criteria in line with current literacy curriculum and NAPLAN writing assessment criteria and the explicit teaching of writing criteria to students, prior to and during the writing process;
- developing and implementing systematic, explicit teaching programs in literacy;
- maximising learning through resourcing of quality texts to each grade K – 6, to support the implementation of literacy and writing programs, in line with the current curriculum;
- ICT integration in order to engage students in composing and writing multi-modal texts; and
- ensuring our literacy programs, in line with the new curriculum, support the teaching and learning of quality and explicit writing skills.

Our success will be measured by;

- grade based assessment rubrics developed for composing texts;
- improved NAPLAN growth data by 5% in writing;
- areas for improvement based on NAPLAN data are analysed and discussed in grade meetings and explicit teaching strategies are included in teaching programs;
- computer mentoring program includes the incorporation of the current English curriculum in the aspect of writing and composing multi-modal texts;
- quality texts purchased to support current English curriculum grade programs in writing and composing texts, inclusive of spelling and grammar;
- explicit and differentiated teaching programs reflected in grade programming, including rich teaching and learning activities in text composition and a showcasing of student’s work in composing texts; and
- staff participation in Teacher Professional Learning in writing NAPLAN criteria.

**Target 2**

**Numeracy**

To improve student learning outcomes in numeracy for all students K-6
Strategies to achieve this target include:

- examining NAPLAN trend data across Year 3, 5 and 7 to provide a differentiated, systematic, explicit and sequential K-6 numeracy program that increases student performance in numeracy;
- providing opportunities for professional development for all teachers in the new NSW syllabus for the Australian Curriculum;
- providing opportunities for professional development for all teachers in the numeracy continuum
- reviewing and developing open-ended rich assessment tasks;
- updating the numeracy Share File regularly so that all teachers can access the material to either extend or support different ability groups within their classroom; and
- ensuring there is a common understanding of mathematical terminology and when key skills are introduced across all staff members K-6.

Organising:

- Mathletics personnel to update teachers on new features and functions of Mathletics.

Continuing to:

- implement the on-line learning program Mathletics;
- invite Mathletics personnel to lead parent, staff and student talks to keep all parties updated and informed of new software updates;
- program Mathematics through the use of resources from the new NSW syllabus for the Australian Curriculum, curriculum support and support materials released by the Board of Studies; and

Our success will be measured by:

- class programs reflecting a uniform grade format and the new NSW Syllabus for the Australian Curriculum within the K-6 scope and sequence;
- explicit teaching with differentiation of mathematics activities reflected in class programs;
- improved NAPLAN data, reflecting a 5% increase of Year 3 and 5 students achieving in the top two bands in number;
- a minimum of 85% of all K-6 students achieving at or above stage outcomes;
- continually investigating areas for improvement and growth based on NAPLAN and school based assessment data throughout the year;
- the majority of students being able to solve multi-step problems at grade level; and
- 90% of K-2 students will increase one band or more for each aspect of the numeracy continuum as in the PLAN data.

An additional 2014 focus

In addition to the above targets for Literacy and Numeracy, a major focus for Avalon staff in 2014 will be the on-going familiarisation, planning and implementation(*) in relation to the NSW Syllabus for the Australian Curriculum, particularly in English(*), Mathematics and Science & Technology.
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 has determined targets for the school’s future development.

Members of the school self-evaluation committee included:

- Graham Phillips – Principal
- Lisa Weber – Deputy Principal
- Trudy Alcorn – Deputy Principal
- Peter Birrell – P&C President

Parents can find more information about Annual School Reports at

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Our school’s magnificent cookbook, “Avalon Food” is available through the Avalon School Uniform Store.

Respect, Responsibility, Personal Best.