



# Theodore Primary School Board Report 2014



Figure 1: The entrance to the Theodore School hall

This report supports the work being done in the ACT Education and Training Directorate, as outlined in the Strategic Plan 2014-2017 “Educational capital: Leading the Nation”. It complies with reporting requirements detailed within the Education ACT 2004 and the National Education Agreement.



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## About our school

### Introduction to School

Theodore Primary School is located in the Tuggeranong Valley in south Canberra. We have a diverse population of approximately 300 students, including Indigenous, EALD (English as an Additional Language or Dialect) and students with a range of special needs.

We pride ourselves on being a *Tribes Teaching and Learning Community (TLC)*. As a school we demonstrate *the Tribes TLC Agreements* of mutual respect, attentive listening, appreciations/no put downs, personal best and personal responsibility and the right to pass.

Students in preschool and Kindergarten are exposed to a developmentally appropriate curriculum developed by Kathy Walker and referred to as the Walker Learning approach. This approach provides a platform for personalised learning and students are engaged in investigating areas of their own interests. Students from year 1 to year 6 use an inquiry approach to investigate historical, social, geographical and scientific content and the impact it has upon society.

We have specialist teachers in science and health and physical education. Environmental education is also a focus through our kitchen and school vegetable garden.

The school prides itself on offering a range of opportunities for students to showcase their skills including band performances and sporting opportunities. Education continues outside the classroom including excursions, school camps and visiting performers. We work with community groups to offer social skills, family support and leadership opportunities. This has led to opportunities for our students to be involved in community events.

## Student Information

### Student enrolment

In 2014 there was a total of 292 students enrolled at this school.

*Table: 2014 Student Enrolment Breakdown*

Group	Number of Students
Male	161
Female	131
Indigenous	29
LBOTE	42

Source: Planning and Performance, August 2014

### Student attendance

The following table identifies the attendance rate of students by year level during 2014. Student attendance rate is the percentage of school days attended by students in each year level at the school. Student attendance is measured over two school terms; that is from the first day of the school year for students in term one to the last day of term two.

*Table: 2014 Semester 1 attendance rates*

Year Level	Attendance Rate %
K	90.7
1	92.1
2	91.7
3	94.6
4	93.4
5	91.4
6	88.7

Source: Planning and Performance, July 2014

All student absences are recorded in both the morning and the afternoon by teachers, are aggregated on our database and communicated to the Education and Training Directorate as required. The principal has a further responsibility to ensure that unexplained absences are investigated, and that high levels of absenteeism are adequately explained.

The principal will contact parents of students with high levels of unexplained or unapproved absences, with the view to developing and implementing strategies to minimise absences. Ongoing unexplained absences, or lack of cooperation regarding student attendance will result in a formal attendance conference being organised. Unresolved attendance issues may be reported by the principal to the Education and Training Directorate.

Student attendance and absence figures are recorded on student mid-year and end of year reports.

## Staff Information

### Teacher qualifications

All teachers meet the professional requirements for teaching in an ACT public school.

The proportion of teaching staff with certificates/degrees/diplomas and a postgraduate qualification is shown below.

*Table: 2014 Qualification of Teaching Staff*

Qualifications	Teaching staff (%)
Certificate/Diploma/Degree	100
Postgraduate	8

Source: School Data, December 2013

### Workforce Composition

In 2014 the workforce composition of the school is highlighted in the following table. The data is taken from the school's verified August pay report. For reporting purposes It includes

all school staff including preschools if applicable, staff absent for a period of less than four consecutive weeks, staff replacing staff absent for more than four consecutive weeks. It does not include all casuals and staff who were not paid in this period and staff absent for a period of four consecutive weeks or longer nor unfilled vacancies.

*Table: 2014 Workforce Composition Numbers*

<b>Role</b>	<b>Total</b>
Administrative Service Officers	8
General Service Officers & Equivalent	1
School Leader A	1
School Leader B	1
School Leader C	4
Teachers	19
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>35</b>

Source: Workforce Management, August census 2014

**Note:** This table includes pre-school staffing

There is one indigenous staff at this school.

## Volunteers

At Theodore Primary we have many parents and community members who willingly volunteer their time in a variety of ways to assist our students. In 2014 we acknowledge our volunteer mentors who provided one on one mentoring to selected students as well as the members of our parent and community association who supported the school to run a range of carnivals, a school walk-a-thon and our end of year community celebration. The canteen service was able to operate through volunteer community members. We also have a library assistant who attends three days a week. In total the community contributed approximately 1500 hours of volunteer time to support our students in their learning.

## School Review and Development

In 2014, the ACT Education and Training Directorates *Strategic Plan 2014-2017* provided the framework and strategic direction for the school's plan. This is supported by the *School Improvement in ACT Public Schools Directions 2010-2014* and the *School Improvement Framework* which are the overarching documents providing support to achieve high standards in student learning, innovation and best practice in ACT public schools.

All ACT public schools participate in a four year cycle of school review and development. Schools take part in a continuous cycle of review comprising annual self assessments against their school plans. In the fourth year schools undergo an external validation process. This

process provides an independent and unbiased assessment of the school's progress towards achieving system and school priorities.

Theodore Primary School was validated in 2014. A copy of the validation report can be found on the school website.

## School Satisfaction

Schools continually use a range of data collection tools to gain an understanding of the satisfaction levels of their parents and carers, staff and students. In August/September 2014 the school undertook a survey to gain an understanding of school satisfaction at that time. Staff, parents and students from year 5, and above, with the exception of students in special schools, who were invited to take part in an online survey.

### Overall Satisfaction

In 2014, 23 parents, 25 staff and 54 students responded to the survey. Where less than five responses were received the results were not reported due to concerns about participant privacy.

In 2014, 78% of parents and carers, 96% of staff, and 74% of students at this school indicated they were satisfied with the education provided by the school.

As well in 2014, 14 national parent survey items and 12 national student survey items were included in the surveys. These items were approved by the Standing Council on School Education and Early Childhood (SCSEEC) for use from 2014. The following tables show the percentage of parents and carers and students who agreed with each of the national items at this school.

*Table: Proportion of parents and carers in agreement with each national opinion item*

Item	(%)
Teachers at this school expect my child to do his or her best.	96
Teachers at this school provide my child with useful feedback about his or her school work.	87
Teachers at this school treat students fairly.	87
This school is well maintained.	87
My child feels safe at this school.	87
I can talk to my child's teachers about my concerns.	91
Student behaviour is well managed at this school.	91
My child likes being at this school.	91
This school looks for ways to improve.	91
This school takes parents' opinions seriously.	83
Teachers at this school motivate my child to learn.	87

My child is making good progress at this school.	83
My child's learning needs are being met at this school.	83
This school works with me to support my child's learning.	100

Source: 2014 School Satisfaction Surveys, September 2014

*Table: Proportion of students in agreement with each national opinion item*

Item	(%)
My teachers expect me to do my best.	91
My teachers provide me with useful feedback about my school work.	80
Teachers at my school treat students fairly.	57
My school is well maintained.	87
I feel safe at my school.	56
I can talk to my teachers about my concerns.	65
Student behaviour is well managed at my school.	37
I like being at my school.	59
My school looks for ways to improve.	70
My school takes students' opinions seriously.	51
My teachers motivate me to learn.	74
My school gives me opportunities to do interesting things.	74

Source: 2014 School Satisfaction Surveys, September 2014

This information can be considered alongside information available on the *My School* website (<http://www.myschool.edu.au>).

These results as well as the continual review of school performance contributed to the evaluation of our school plan and the development of annual operating plans. The school plan is available on the school website.

## Professional Learning

Throughout 2014 professional learning at Theodore was aligned with system wide priorities around the teaching of literacy and numeracy. This included participating in the Principals as Literacy learners (PALLS) professional learning which provided staff access to world class presenters in literacy such as Christine Topner, Alison Davies, Debbie Miller, David Hornsby and Ann Bayetto. In addition to this, at a school level, professional learning teams engaged in action research based around the development of whole school teaching of grammar and the explicit teaching of oral language strategies. The Junior School Team (P-2) engaged in professional learning about the delivery of the Walker personalised learning approach.

Theodore Primary School staff engaged with the Tuggeranong support team and undertook professional learning around the effects of trauma on student learning and development.

The Principal, Deputy and Indigenous Education Officer also participated in the Stronger, Smarter program delivered by the Stronger, Smarter Institute. Participants explored the importance of engaging all community members in creating a shared culture.

## Learning and Assessment

### Performance in literacy and numeracy

#### Early Years Assessment

Students in kindergarten undertake an on-entry assessment of their early reading and numeracy skills using the Performance Indicators in Primary Schools (PIPS) program. Student results are reported against five performance bands at the end of semester one and two.

The following table shows the comparison of the school against the ACT on raw scores in reading and mathematics.

*Table: Theodore Primary School PIPS 2014 mean raw scores*

Test Domain	School Start	School End	ACT Start	ACT End
Reading	43	103	51	124
Mathematics	36	52	39	54

Source: Planning and Performance December 2014

PIPS data shows that in reading Theodore Kindergarten cohort started below the ACT mean raw score average. This gap widened by the end of year testing results. In mathematics Theodore Kindergarten cohort started below the ACT mean raw score average. The end of year result was slightly improved but not significantly.

A detailed analysis of our school's academic achievement are incorporated into the information related to reporting against our progress against our priorities. This is found later in the report.

#### NAPLAN Assessment

Students in years 3, 5, 7 and 9 in all ACT schools participated in the National Assessment Program-Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN). This program assesses skills in reading, writing, spelling and grammar and punctuation and numeracy.

In 2014, 3.20 % of year 3 students and 0.00 % of year 5 students were exempt from testing based on nationally agreed criteria.

Results are not reported when there are fewer than five students with NAPLAN results. This rule is applied to protect the privacy of students in small schools.

The following table shows the 2014 mean scores achieved by our students compared to the ACT.

*Table: Theodore Primary School 2014 NAPLAN Mean Scores*

Test Domain	Year 3 School	Year 3 ACT	Year 5 School	Year 5 ACT
Reading	382	440	480	523
Writing	342	405	415	474
Spelling	359	413	476	502
Grammar & Punctuation	352	441	470	520
Numeracy	350	415	442	499

Source: Performance and Planning December 2014

The data in the table above shows that Theodore Primary School NAPLAN results for Years 3 and 5 in all areas tested are below the ACT mean score average.

A detailed analysis of our school's academic achievement are incorporated into the information related to reporting against our progress against our priorities. This is found later in the report.

### **Performance in other areas of the curriculum**

Student learning in other curriculum areas is highlighted by the learning in the areas of science, health and physical education and music. Physical education learning has been enhanced through the work of a physical education and health curriculum development program run at our school by a specialist teacher.

In science, the students in K-6 are taught by a specialised science teacher. Science learning is enhanced by learning through a variety of science based programs; Primary Connections, Sustainable Schools program, Waste Wise and the school garden.

The music program encompasses playing, reading and appreciation of music and is offered to Year 5 and 6 through the ACT Instrumental Music Program.

## **Progress against School Priorities in 2014**

### **Priorities 1 and 2**

Achieve improved learning outcomes for students in English and Mathematics

#### **Targets**

- Achieve the NAPLAN expected targets for literacy as prescribed by ACTETD for years 3 and 5
- 80 % of year 3 – 6 students achieving stanine 5 or above in PAT Reading Comprehension
- Achieve the NAPLAN expected targets for numeracy as prescribed by ACTETD

- 80 % of year 3 – 6 students achieving stanine 5 or above in PAT Mathematics

### Links to Directorate Strategic Plan

Quality Learning, Inspirational teaching and leadership, High expectations and High performance

### Progress

In 2014 the school was in its final year of its School plan and completed its last year working on four key improvement strategies related to literacy and numeracy: Develop common understanding and approaches to teaching P-6

- Maintain relevance and implementation of the school's English and Mathematics curriculums P-6
- Develop the capacity of staff to deliver quality pedagogy through a differentiated coaching model
- Develop school wide assessment practices to support student learning

During 2014, teaching staff have continued to plan their English programs with a focus on the explicit teaching of reading and writing strategies. In Kindergarten to year 2 the purpose for writing is aligned with selection of rich text which in turn reflects the current direction of their inquiry focus. Through the adoption of an inquiry-based pedagogy in years 3 to 6, programming reflects the linking of English to other curriculum areas such as History, Geography, Science and the Arts. Writing for a purpose is clearly linked to the specific subject being taught. A high proportion of programming evidence indicates that staff are moving from the teaching of writing as a genre driven model to a purpose driven model. Students are engaged as they view writing as having connectivity to the topic they are researching as opposed to learning a genre in isolation.

During 2014, the Literacy and Numeracy Field Officer has been responsible for the delivery of targeted professional development to provide common understandings to the teaching of spelling and mathematics. In relation to spelling, David Hornsby was employed as a resident expert in 2013 to work with teaching teams to collaboratively plan a spelling program based on a differentiated, purposeful and integrated model. The professional learning days in January of 2014 provided opportunity for a whole school spelling program to be introduced to staff. The understanding was that it would be implemented consistently across the year levels. The spelling program is underpinned by the use of Christine Topfers' research around the explicit teaching of spelling strategies. The program links with the research conducted by David Hornsby around the use of rich text as a platform for the programming of reading and writing including spelling. It also aligns with the scope and sequence document from the Australian Curriculum.

The English programs indicate that a high proportion of teachers are focused on embedding a whole school approach to the teaching of spelling. Further implementation of the approach will continue in 2015 with a focus on the integration of spelling with reading, writing and the Inquiry unit being studied.

In 2015, action research at Theodore Primary School will focus on writing. To that end, staff have begun the process of reviewing writing rubrics and aligning them with the Australian

Curriculum. Exemplars from the Australian Curriculum have been examined during professional learning meetings. Further alignment of Australian Curriculum writing exemplars, Theodore writing exemplars and rubrics will be trialed in 2015.

Throughout 2014, the CARS (Comprehensive Assessment of Reading Strategies) and STARS (Strategies to Achieve Reading Success) resources were used to identify the entry levels of students in years 3-6. From term 1 of 2014 students were engaged in the learning process outlined in the STARS documentation. The 2014 PM Benchmark data (informed by the ACT Education and Training Directorate Reading Benchmark Guidelines) demonstrates that in all year levels the number of children reading at or above the identified benchmarks was increased from term 2 to term 4. Due to students being ability grouped across 6 different CARS levels there were problematic issues with timetabling and staff resourcing of the program. In addition, there were issues with staff accessing the appropriate technology for the recording of data.

At the conclusion of 2013 an audit of the teaching practices at Theodore Primary School was conducted by the Literacy and Numeracy Field Officer. A key message from this audit was the ongoing implementation of a school wide approach to the teaching of Mathematics. To support this and to maintain consistency with delivery and metalanguage across the school in 2014, Nelson Maths continued to be introduced. By the end of 2014 all teachers have new Nelson Maths manuals developed to align with the Australian Curriculum.

Evidence from planning documents and from observations conducted by the field officer, showed that all teachers were using this program as their core planning tool. For 2015 the goal is to further embed the use of Nelson Maths as a school wide tool and to support staff in ways to differentiate the program to meet the needs of all students in the class.

In addition to this the mental strategies students need in order to calculate efficiently in their heads (Middle Years Mental Computations (MYMC)) were taught through games and short warm up activities. The Literacy and Numeracy Field officer continued to work with teachers in a coaching role focusing on how to differentiate the Maths program and how to use formative assessment tasks for future planning.

Evidence gained from NAPLAN data, PAT testing and from a summative audit conducted at the end of 2014 has shown there is a need to further upskill teachers on how to differentiate their planning and how to use appropriate assessment tools either to plan effectively or to assess their teaching and learning after presentation of a mathematical concept or strand.

In 2014 teaching staff formed two action research groups which have been focusing on:

1. The teaching of comprehension across the school *"Building Comprehension Strategies" Alison Davis 2011*
2. Oral language strategies *"First Steps Oral Language"*

The comprehension strategies action research group was formed to assess the teaching of comprehension strategies including the validity of isolated lessons being taught through use of the CARS and STARS program. The research indicated that the upskilling of teachers in how to teach specific comprehension strategies would be more productive than the isolated lessons. To this end the action research group utilised the work done by Alison Davis, Anne

Bayetto and the CARS/STARS authors to develop a toolkit for staff enabling them to explicitly teach the strategies and embed the teaching of comprehension. Through the upskilling of staff via this process it is envisaged that during 2015 all comprehension strategies will be taught using a common language (metalanguage) approach. The team has developed classroom posters for every class so that the strategies will be easily accessible to staff and students in 2015.

The oral language team was formed to examine the way in which oral language skills impact on acquisition of literacy skills of reading and writing and how the development of oral language can be facilitated in the classroom. A kit of specific oral language activities has been provided for each teaching team to implement through their teaching programs in 2015. In addition, book bags have been developed for Kindergarten students to borrow once a week. The book bags include a rich text book with an associated craft activity, sight words, a cut up sentence activity and some discussion ideas. The book borrowing program will commence in term 1 2015.

In support of our 2014 Professional Learning teams, the executive and the teaching staff have been involved in the Principals as Literacy Leaders (PALLS) professional development during 2013 and 2014. This has provided focused, quality professional development opportunities in reading and writing to further our priority of achieving improved learning outcomes in literacy for our students. The school participated in the PALLS showcase in November by exhibiting information on the pre-preschool playgroup and the rich text book bags.

Those Theodore teachers who had not recently been trained, attended the First Steps Reading course that was made available through the Tuggeranong Network. The executive teachers completed the Oral Language and the Dyslexia on-line training courses to expand their knowledge in these areas for mentoring and coaching of classroom teachers. A number of staff members attended the Middle Years Mental Computation professional learning that was offered by the Tuggeranong Network.

A Gantt chart was established at the beginning of 2014 to assist staff in their planning processes as clear expectations for assessment were identified. This process will continue in 2015.

The Theodore preschool program continues to provide high quality experiences in English and Mathematics activities. Weekly planning by the teacher demonstrates that specific activities designed to promote and target children's pre-literacy and pre-numeracy skills at an age appropriate developmental level are included. The Early Years Learning Framework is used as the foundation for all programming to ensure that learning outcomes are focused and engaging.

During 2015, Preschool teaching staff undertook professional learning in Walker Learning, Early Years Learning Framework and the National Quality Standards as part of an ongoing commitment to providing quality programs. The preschool teacher attended a 2 day study tour in Melbourne as a comprehensive overview of a play based pedagogy. In addition, they undertake the whole school professional development to ensure that they have the same understandings and commonality of language for the curriculum areas of English and Mathematics as all other teaching staff.

During 2014 Theodore Primary School underwent the process of validating the 2010 to 2014 school plan. The validation panel made the following recommendations:

- **Extend and embed the process of aligning teaching practices across the school in literacy and numeracy.** Further consistency in pedagogical approaches will facilitate strong shared understandings across the school.
- **Sharpen the focus of professional learning in the areas of writing and mathematics teaching.** These priorities have already been identified by the school and are driven by performance data. The panel recommends a plan be developed to increase teacher capacity in these areas in order to improve student achievement.
- **Continue developments around a whole school, systematic approach to the collection analysis and use of data to inform decisions about teaching and learning in the classroom.** The panel recommends beginning with greater use of the SMART data program by classroom teachers to target strengths and weaknesses of classes and to assist with sourcing resources in support of student growth.

In addition, Theodore Primary School was a trial school for the National School Improvement Tool review team during 2014 and following the process the following commendations and affirmations were made:

- Some key beliefs about preferred teaching practices in English and Mathematics have been established, which provide clear expectations about curriculum delivery in these areas.
- The Field Officer has provided some excellent coaching and/or mentoring to teachers and has assisted greatly with continuity of school practices during recent staff changes.
- A strong collegial culture has been established which provides a sound platform for ongoing school improvement reform of teaching practices. Collaborative planning and sharing of teaching ideas at a year level, are a key feature of the school.
- Teachers provide curriculum overviews for parents at the beginning of each term.
- A range of research based strategies such as the *Minilit* program, the *CARS* and *STARS* reading strategies and the new Theodore Primary School spelling program have been introduced to support school improvement in terms of Literacy standards.

The National School Improvement Tool review team made the following recommendations:

- Review your whole school curriculum planning process to ensure the vertical alignment of curriculum planning and delivery from K to 6. Include the documentation of school wide approaches to the teaching of Literacy, Numeracy and Higher Order Thinking skills that you wish to see as signature programs at Theodore Primary School.
- Review supervision of the enacted curriculum to ensure the integrity of the delivery of learning intentions and assessment related to all curriculum areas. Consider the use of more regular moderation processes as part of this process.
- Continue the clarification, documentation and delivery of your preferred whole school pedagogical approach, teaching practices and routines. Continue to support this by professional development, coaching and mentoring, to drive consistency of practice across the school and meet student learning targets more successfully.
- Review the roles and responsibilities of the members of your instructional leadership

team, to maintain the balance between the strategic planning, action research, supervision of curriculum delivery, staff development, coaching, mentoring and behavioural support. Be clear about who is driving the delivery of key programs at the classroom level.

- Further develop teacher understanding and skills in relation to analysing student data and differentiating teaching and learning for the full range of learners. In particular give special consideration to potentially high achieving students.
- Continue to provide verbal and written feedback to teachers on the delivery of whole school expectations, highlighted in curriculum and pedagogical framework documents.
- Consider the concept of teachers accessing peer coaching and mentoring through the formalisation of a Watching Others Work (WOW) strategy.
- Further develop teacher strategies for giving feedback to students on their learning.

The school will take into consideration the recommendations of the panels in the formulation of the 2015-2018 School Plan and the 2015 Annual Operating Plan.

The following data also shows our progress towards our identified targets for these two priorities:

1. Theodore Primary School NAPLAN results demonstrate that we were successful in meeting the Directorate prescribed reading targets when taking in to account the confidence intervals for year 3 and year 5 in 2014. However, we were not successful in meeting our 2014 year 3 and year 5 Directorate prescribed numeracy targets when taking into account the confidence intervals. The year 5 matched student results for reading are higher than the target and the year 5 matched student results for numeracy meet the target taking in to account the confidence levels.

*Table: NAPLAN mean scores against ACT targets for Theodore Primary School*

Year Level	Theodore PS Targets	Theodore PS mean	Theodore Matched students K-5 mean
Year 3 Reading	383±26	382.0	n/a
Year 5 Reading	481±22	480.0	504.5
Year 3 Maths	373±22	349.9	n/a
Year 5 Maths	462±18	442.0	456.8

Source: SMART data December 2014

2. In 2014, 12 year 3 to year 6 students out of a total of 124 students achieved stanine 5 or higher in PAT Maths. This is only 10% which is considerably lower than the set target of 80% as shown in the table below.
3. In 2014, 56 year 3 to year 6 students, out of a total of 126 students, achieved stanine 5 or higher in PAT Reading. This is 44% which is well below the set target of 80% as shown in the table below.

*Table: Percentage of students achieving PAT stanines in Reading and Maths relative to their year level*

Year Group	Percentage of students achieving PAT stanines in Maths	Percentage of students achieving PAT stanines in Reading
Year 1	93%	31%
Year 2	63%	45%
Year 3	16%	52%
Year 4	5%	40%
Year 5	3%	50%
Year 6	15%	37%

Source: School data 2014

- With the exception of Kindergarten, there has been an increase in the percentage of students who have reached the Directorate prescribed PM benchmark reading level from term 2 to term 4 in all year levels.

*Table: Students achieving Term 2 and 4 2014 Benchmarks K -Year 6*

Year Level	Percentage of students at or above prescribed benchmark term 2 2014	Percentage of students at or above prescribed benchmark Term 4 2014
K	90%	60%
1	45%	53%
2	78%	79%
3	57%	60%
4	57%	73%
5	55%	65%
6	52%	73%

Source: School Reading Benchmark Data

### Strategic Priority 3

Create an environment that will support student and community engagement and learning

#### Targets:

- Increase percentage of students reporting they feel safe at school from 86% in 2012 and 72% in 2013 to 90% on system surveys
- Reduce number of out-of-class and playground referrals by 10% from data collected in 2013 to data collected in 2014

#### Links to Directorate Strategic Plan:

Quality Learning, Inspirational teaching and leadership, High expectations, High performance and Connecting with Families and the Community

#### Progress

In actioning our strategy to **Implement processes and practices to enable students to be engaged in and take responsibility for learning** during 2014, staff at Theodore Primary

School have maintained a strong focus on TRIBES processes. This began with five weeks of explicit teaching of expectations and TRIBES agreements from Preschool to Year 6 in Term 1. In the latter part of Term 4, students revisited the TRIBES agreements through engaging activities and class discussion. Across the school there is consistent language and expectations of behaviour that relate to the five components of the TRIBES agreements: Mutual Respect; Personal Best/Personal Responsibility; Attentive Listening; No Put Downs and The Right to Pass. In the morning every class starts the day with a community circle, an opportunity for each student to have the opportunity to speak on a topic normally chosen by the teacher. The TRIBES concept centres on community and the notion that we are all one community and reliant on each other to succeed and improve. It is becoming problematic to maintain the TRIBES focus as accessing the training course is difficult and the school's in-house expert and trainer moved on promotion.

Teaching staff have implemented the cooperative learning strategies and the graphic organizers that were formulated through the 2013 action research teams, through their planning and programming, and ensured that there has been consistent delivery across year levels.

At the beginning of new units of work and at relevant times during the school day, students are explicitly told the learning intentions and success criteria so that positive expectations for student learning outcomes are maintained. The learning intentions are also highly visible to students in each classroom.

The indicators of success for the key improvement strategy of 'engaging students in learning' are tabled below. The number of students who agree or strongly agree that the school takes students' opinions seriously and that teachers provide them with useful feedback about their school work has remained relatively consistent from 2013 to 2014.

*Table: Student Satisfaction Results*

Item	2013	2014
Students who agree or strongly agree that the school takes students' opinions seriously	65%	51%
Students who agree or strongly agree that teachers provide them with useful feedback about their school work	79%	80%

Source: Planning and Performance, September 2014

In respect of **strategy 2: Implement structures and processes to address the individual needs of students (physical, social and academic) P-6** in 2013 a case conference model was introduced to Theodore Primary School and this model has continued and has been improved during 2014. Currently, two case conference meetings are held a week. Class teachers are rotated through on a weekly basis. The Literacy and Numeracy (L&N) officer, the Deputy Principal, the Learning Assistance (LA) teacher and a School Leader C (SLC), brainstormed with the teacher ideas and strategies to address the learning needs of a particular student in their class. After 4-5 weeks a review meeting is held. In addition, every teacher attends the weekly special needs meeting with the school counsellor, Principal and Deputy Principal on a rotational basis, to discuss any concerns for students in their class and to receive updated information about any students the counsellor is currently involved with.

Over the last two years Theodore Primary School has developed a structure to support the learning needs of targeted students. A Response to Intervention team (RTI) has been formed which includes the English as an Additional Language or Dialect (EALD) teacher, the LA teacher, the L&N Officer and executive staff. These staff have been targeting students in small groups, within the classroom program, to provide extra assistance and tutoring on a regular basis.

At Theodore Primary a 'Response to Intervention'(RTI) model has been implemented since the beginning of 2014. From data gathered through the use of various testing processes and through looking at our student behaviour management data, a need for change was identified. Evidence says that children who cannot access the curriculum due to deficits with reading and writing become disengaged in their schooling and very often (especially boys) will become difficult students. From the beginning of 2014 small groups of students were identified as 'at risk' with regards to their literacy and numeracy capabilities and an intervention plan was put in place. This program was based on support within the classroom in addition to support given through the student being withdrawn from their home room. Two part time teachers and the literacy and numeracy Field Officer made up this support team.

In May 2014 the ETD Learning Difficulties taskforce requested expressions of interest for schools to participate in a Response to Intervention model trial. The Field Officer and the school psychologist applied to participate in this pilot and were successful in their application. The trial involved the RTI team working with specialists from the Directorate over term 3 and 4 to streamline a model that will be implemented in other schools. To commence the trial, an assessment of all students within the school from Kindergarten to Year 6 was undertaken using an assessment tool known as The Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills (DIBELS) This assessment tool was identified as being most pertinent to identifying student needs as the standardised tests focus on decoding, fluency and comprehension.

After analysing this data we elected to use Minilit, designed by Macquarie University, as our intervention program. Minilit aims to address student's deficits in reading through small group tutoring providing additional assistance in reading strategies. This program was used most consistently with the 45 Year 1-3 identified students. Over the course of the 10 week trial those students received intensive intervention on average three times per week.

This intervention is known as Tier 2 intervention in the RTI model. Students who are assessed as not making expected progress following this program will then be referred to the school psychologist for additional assessment (Tier 3 intervention). In addition coaching and mentoring to improve and consolidate classroom teaching practice is provided and applying this universal practice is known as Tier 1 intervention.

The table below shows the comparative levels of improvement over the ten weeks of the trial.

#### **DIBELS DATA OBTAINED OVER 10 WEEK RTI TRIAL PERIOD**

Tier 1 = At benchmark for this year level. No intervention required.

Tier 2 = Below benchmark. Intervention required in a small group situation.

Tier 3 = Well below benchmark. Intense intervention in small group/individually required.

*Table: Percentage of students achieving Dibels Benchmark levels in 2014*

<b>Year level</b>	<b>Tier 1</b>	<b>Tier 2</b>	<b>Tier 3</b>
Kindergarten pre trial	27%	17%	56%
Kindergarten post trial	38%	28%	34%
Year 1 pre trial	44%	9%	47%
Year 1 post trial	55%	15%	30%
Year 2 pre trial	54%	13%	33%
Year 2 post trial	53%	18%	29%
Year 3 pre trial	61%	3%	36%
Year 3 post trial	23%	--	9%
Year 4 pre trial	45%	15%	40%
Year 4 post trial	17%	23%	60%
Year 5 pre trial	35%	27%	38%
Year 5 post trial	23%	34%	43%
Year 6 pre trial	39%	32%	29%
Year 6 post trial	25%	29%	46%

Source: School Data, December 2014

The data shows clearly that those year levels that were targeted with the Minilit program displayed a marked decrease in the number of students needing to access Tier 2 or Tier 3 intervention even after that relatively short ten week trial period.

In addition to the RTI trial project, the school applied for, and was selected, for considerable funding from the Directorate to undertake a long term action research project in to the effects of low literacy levels of boys in years 1 and 2 and their subsequent disengagement from learning in later years of primary school. In 2012 a student profile sheet was created for every student which provides a snapshot of the student's academic, social and emotional development each year. This has begun to build a history of student's progression each year at Theodore Primary School whilst also giving teachers easy access to that information, particularly at the start of the year.

Staff at the preschool have all undertaken the appropriate training in anaphylaxis, diabetes and asthma management to meet the requirements of the National Quality Standards (NQS).

The indicators of success for the improvement strategy of 'implementing structures and processes to address the individual needs of students', showed a slight decrease from 2013 to 2014. This was determined by the percentage of parents who agree or strongly agree that the teachers at this school motivate their child to learn and the percentage of parents who agree or strongly agree that their child's learning needs are being met at the school. It is believed that if the survey had been undertaken later in the year that this response may have altered as parental response to the intervention model has been extremely positive.

However, the percentage of parents who agree or strongly agree that the school works with them to support their child's learning has increased to 100% of survey participants.

*Table: Percentage of Parent Satisfaction*

Item	2013	2014
Parents who agree or strongly agree that the teachers at this school motivate their child to learn	93%	87%
Parents who agree or strongly agree that their child's learning needs are being met at the school	89%	83%
Parents who agree or strongly agree that the school works with them to support their child's learning	90%	100%

Source: Planning and Performance, September 2014

The KidsMatter initiative continues to be an important structure to **develop community partnerships that strengthen community involvement in students' learning**. This complements the programs and procedures already in place, however the community recognises the importance of specifically improving and sustaining the mental health wellbeing of all students and supporting families. The KidsMatter committee comprises teaching staff, community members and family representatives and meets fortnightly. Professional development has been delivered to staff as the school progresses through the four components, including component three which was delivered this year. The school counsellor and a classroom teacher have undertaken the professional learning for component four in readiness for delivery to staff in 2015. The committee has been responsible for driving the implementation of a social and emotional development program (TRIBES) across the school. KidsMatter is advertised regularly in the school newsletter and on the school website. In 2014 a parent hub has been developed as a meeting place for families to access information on a range of pertinent issues and as a place to socialise and network.

In 2014, all staff attended professional learning in understanding the effects on development and learning of traumatized children. There were also several programs run at the school to assist in the well-being of students. These included:

- Red Cap – a program initiated by the Salvation Army which assists children in understanding emotions and dealing with anger management.
- Seasons for Growth – a program that helps children who are dealing with trauma and/or loss in their lives
- Police and Citizens Youth Club (PCYC) – a program designed to assist students in danger of disengaging with school.

In term 1 several senior students represented the school at the 'Bullying No Way' forum.

Theodore Primary School continues to utilise the kitchen/garden area to engage students and to teach essential life skills through hands-on, practical activities of cooking, gardening and animal husbandry.

In 2014 the school acquired the services of an Indigenous Education Officer for 2 days per week. The officer has been working on individual student and community engagement, in

conjunction with the feeder high school, Calwell High. There has been a very positive response from the members of our community to the officer, culminating in a gathering at the end of term 1 when the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students from Calwell High prepared and hosted afternoon tea for the families at the primary school. The Indigenous Education Officer also attended the Individual Learning Plan meetings for the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students at the school.

The Theodore Playgroup has continued throughout 2014 with 30 families attending over the year. The Playgroup continues to have an oral language focus as well as giving children and their carers the opportunity to talk and share. This year we put together a display for the Principals as Literacy Leaders (PALLS) Expo which was viewed by educators across the ACT. An article about the playgroup has also been accepted by the Australian Literacy Educators Association (ALEA) for publication in *Practically Primary* in February 2015. Staff from Therapy ACT, as well as Tuggeranong Child and Family Services, continue to support the playgroup by providing information as well as visiting specialists such as a speech pathologist.

The indicators of success for the improvement strategy of 'developing community partnerships' demonstrate a consistency in community perception about the value the school places on community partnerships. The attendance at playgroup is also consistent (taking in to account that the families from 2014 would differ slightly to those who attended in 2013 due to changes in circumstances).

*Table: Percentage of Parent Satisfaction*

Item	2013	2014
Parents who agree or strongly agree that community partnerships are valued and maintained	86%	87%
Parent and community attendance at pre preschool playgroup increases	31%	30%

Source: Planning and Performance, September 2014

To achieve the desired outcomes for **strategy 4: promote and celebrate the achievements of the school**, the entire community of students, staff and families at Theodore Primary School gather for a shared meal at least once per term. In 2014 the school held a term 1 BBQ in the first weeks to welcome new community members and to provide opportunities for informal conversations with existing staff and families. In term 2 a pancake breakfast was held during Public Education Week as a precursor to an open morning where families could visit classrooms. Also in term 2 a Pizza and Problems night was held to introduce families to the hands-on activities being used to teach numeracy in the school. During Book Week in term 3 the community came together for a pyjama and book reading night with hot chocolate drinks. An end of year concert and fete in term 4 was a fitting end to the year for the whole community and a chance to celebrate the year's achievements together.

The achievements and celebrations of the school are communicated to the school community via a weekly newsletter and through the social media facility of Facebook.

Parent satisfaction survey data indicates that parents are consistently satisfied that their child's achievements are celebrated at the school. Satisfaction with their child's education fell slightly in 2014, though executives believe that had the survey been conducted in the latter part of the year there would have been a notable improvement due to the overwhelming positive response to the intervention program introduced in term 3.

*Table: Percentage of Parent Satisfaction*

Item	2013	2014
Parents who agree or strongly agree that the achievements of students are celebrated by the school	96%	91%
Parents who agree or strongly agree that they are satisfied with their child's education at this school	93%	78%

Source: Planning and Performance, September 2014

During 2014 Theodore Primary School underwent the process of validating the 2010 to 2014 school plan. The validation panel made the following commendations:

- The school has established the Pre-Preschool playgroup. This displays foresight in three areas: it facilitates community engagement, links families to community services and assists in development of early literacy skills for children in the Theodore area.
- The leadership of the school has put a great deal of effort and resourcing into creating a supportive learning culture in the school. For example, staff point to the introduction of the Tribes Learning Community initiative as a turning point in the life of the school.
- The enthusiasm, passion and camaraderie exhibited by the staff of Theodore Primary School have greatly impressed the panel. The overwhelming impression garnered from staff, students and parents was of a strong, bonded, caring community.
- The Principal and members of the executive team are personally leading and driving focused school improvement. The commitment of staff to the improvement agenda was clearly evident.

They also recommended that Theodore Primary School:

- Continue to develop a culture that promotes learning and high expectations through the development of strong partnerships with all parents. Capitalising on the already strong level of community engagement will further support teachers in realising their programs.

In addition, Theodore Primary School was a trial school for the National School Improvement Tool review team during 2014 and following the process the following commendations and affirmations were made:

- The Principal has demonstrated strong leadership evidenced by the renewed sense of trust and belonging in the school community expressed by students, staff and parents.

- Increased community confidence in the school and high staff morale has been established and provides a sound platform for future school improvement.
- The Principal and staff members have developed a strong values base for student interaction and behaviour through the *TRIBES* program, which has helped with student learning engagement in the school in recent years.
- Staff members at the school are committed, caring professionals who demonstrate a high level of care for each other and their students.
- The school playgroup has assisted in supporting student and family transition to Preschool and assisting parents with any early intervention referrals.
- The new RTI (Response to Intervention) team have reviewed approaches to intervention support and are refining the use of data to track student learning needs and allocate support.

The National School Improvement Tool review team made the following recommendation:

- Review your School Behaviour Management Plan and associated processes to include a stronger focus on rewards and encouragement for positive behaviour, effort and attendance. Address the number of student referrals to the office and consider how teachers' skills could be further developed to have more success with the first wave of support for learning engagement and behaviour management at the classroom level.

The school will take in to consideration the recommendations of the panels in the formulation of the 2015-2018 School Plan and the 2015 Annual Operating Plan.

In respect of **target 1: Increase percentage of students reporting they feel safe at school from 86% in 2012 and 72% in 2013 to 90% on system surveys**, the student satisfaction data in 2014 demonstrated a decrease in the levels of perceived safety at school by students at Theodore Primary School. This was despite the two years prior indicating a higher degree of safety levels than the overall satisfaction rate of students in the ACT. There was also a decrease this year in the number of students who feel that they can readily talk to their teachers about concerns when compared to 2012 and 2013 data. Student perceptions about the management of student behaviour has been inconsistent over the last three years falling to 37% of students believing that behaviour was managed well at Theodore Primary School in 2014 as detailed in the table below.

*Table: Student satisfaction data*

Item	2012 School	2012 ACT	2013 School	2013 ACT	2014 School	2014 ACT
I feel safe at my school.	86%	84%	72%	79%	56%	78%
I can talk to my teachers about my concerns.	78%	79%	71%	72%	65%	65%
Student behaviour is well managed at my school.	75%	73%	48%	57%	37%	54%

Source: Planning and Performance, September 2014

These results may be influenced by the current cohort of year 5 and year 6 students. In this cohort there are some students with high needs who may be skewing the survey results for the group.

As shown below the parent and staff perceptions are markedly different, indicating an improvement in their satisfaction levels. Parents and staff have indicated in recent satisfaction surveys that they are highly satisfied with the behavior management at Theodore Primary School and the school data is consistently equal to or higher than the ACT in these areas.

*Table: Parent satisfaction survey*

Item	2012 School	2012 ACT	2013 School	2013 ACT	2014 School	2014 ACT
My child feels safe at this school	94%	92%	93%	92%	87%	92%
Student behaviour is well managed	94%	86%	86%	79%	91%	79%

Source: Planning and Performance September 2014

*Table: Staff satisfaction survey*

Item	2012 School	2012 ACT	2013 School	2013 ACT	2014 School	2014 ACT
I am supported by the school in the management of student behaviour	88%	88%	94%	87%	94%	88%

Source: Planning and Performance September 2014

In respect of **target 2: Reduce number of out-of-class and playground referrals by 10% from data collected in 2013 to data collected in 2014**, the data on in-class referrals for inappropriate behaviour reflects an overall reduced amount of incidents, due to the embedding of the TRIBES program and the support provided for classroom behavioural management.

*Table: In Class referrals related to behaviour*

No. of in class behavior issues	2013	2014	% increase/reduction from 2013 to 2014
Term 1	45	19	58% reduction
Term 2	62	36	42% reduction
Term 3	55	51	10% reduction
Term 4	56	55	1% reduction

Source: School data, December 2014

The student behaviour referral data for playground issues shows a substantial decrease in referrals during 2014. Teaching staff attribute the reduction in behavioural issues largely to the implementation of the Tribes Learning Community program.

*Table: Playground referrals related to behaviour*

<b>No. of playground issues</b>	<b>2013</b>	<b>2014</b>	<b>% increase/reduction from 2013 to 2014</b>
<b>Term 1</b>	N/A	38	N/A
<b>Term 2</b>	84	21	75% reduction
<b>Term 3</b>	40	81	100% increase
<b>Term 4</b>	41	62	66% increase

Source: School data, December 2014

Whilst the suspension data has increased, it is believed that this is because a small number of students are being managed with behaviour management plans that are being strictly implemented.

*Table: Student suspension data*

<b>2012</b>	<b>2013</b>	<b>2014</b>
9	13	30

Source: School data, December 2014

The data on in-class referrals for inappropriate behaviour reflects an overall reduced amount of incidents, due to the embedding of the TRIBES program and the support provided for classroom behavioural management. Whilst the suspension data has increased, it is believed that this is because a small number of students are being managed with behaviour management plans and their inappropriate behaviour is attracting more severe consequences as those plans are strictly implemented.

The student behaviour referral data shows a substantial decrease in referrals during 2014. Teaching staff attribute the reduction in behavioural issues largely to the implementation of the Tribes Learning Community program.

### **Preschool Unit- Quality Improvement**

The National Quality Framework, which has been agreed by the Council of Australian Governments (COAG), has put in place a new National Quality Standard to ensure high quality and consistent early childhood education and care across Australia. The National Quality Standard assists the school in identifying preschool unit strengths, and areas that require improvement. The school has identified the following preschool unit strengths using the National Quality Standard. Areas for improvement will be identified in the School's Operating Plan.

### Education program and practice

- Educators encourage students to work collaboratively in groups.
- Children's interests, ideas and abilities are used as a basis for programming of activities and referred to in documentation e.g. learning stories.
- Families have access to the programs displayed and are able to add ideas and feedback.
- Educators and families work closely together in planning and implementing children's individual learning plans where required.
- Educators support children to make decisions about their own behaviour.
- Children are supported by a comprehensive transition program to Kindergarten during term 4.
- Educators maintain detailed records of children's developmental progress. These are used to comprehensively report to families on two occasions during the preschool year.
- Excursions and incursions are planned which relate to, and support, the educational program.

### Children's health and safety

- The preschool maintains a risk minimising plan for each child's medical conditions.
- Educators and children remind each other to use effective hygiene practices.
- The preschool uses a response flow chart to assist educators in assessing children who have been involved in an accident, illness, injury or trauma.
- The preschool has rest and relaxation procedures.
- Fruit is made available at a table during the morning activities to enable children to eat if they are hungry prior to morning tea.
- All children participate in a daily gross motor program and a weekly fundamental skills program.
- Parents are provided with a phone call (for any concerning illness or injury) or a note at the end of the day (for less severe matters).

### Relationships with children

- Staff warmly greet children on arrival and support child to settle into the environment.
- Educators support children in documenting other children's learning.
- Educators support individual students needs in group time experiences.
- Children have an opportunity to be a focus child during preschool sessions several times during the school term.
- The educators and children discuss what each Tribes agreement means in the classroom.

### Staffing arrangements

- The leadership team has insured that staff qualifications are current and accredited.
- Educators use practices in the program that support children to express themselves and their opinions and to form positive relationships with their peers.
- Professional readings are shared with educators at weekly meetings.
- Educators use respectful language when communicating with each other.
- Educators acknowledge each other's contributions and knowledge.

- The school ensures that the release and lunch break staff are consistent to enable meaningful relationships to form.

### **Leadership and management**

- Families are provided with information about the governance of the school.
- The leadership team often visit and take part in the preschool program.
- The preschool displays its philosophy and displays this to the community.
- Professional Pathways are used to develop team and personal focus for ongoing improvement.
- Electronic and paper copies of policies and procedures are available to staff, parents and community members.
- The Preschool staff are active members of the school's action research groups.

### **Physical environment**

- The preschool program provides a range of resources for children both in the classroom and playground.
- Educators use a daily checklist to ensure the premises, furniture and equipment are safe and clean for use.
- The indoor classroom design supports children to independently access their own belongings and toileting facilities.
- The outdoor playground is designed to make connections with nature.
- The students plan and prepare vegetable and flower gardens.
- The school community follows a waste minimisation policy.
- An Indigenous mural was completed at the preschool with the assistance of a community member.

### **Collaborative partnerships with families and communities**

- The school has an active parents and friends association which allows for preschool parents to take part in decision making processes.
- The preschool parents and friends association works in collaboration with the Primary School P&C to organise fundraising events and family gatherings.
- Preschool parents are invited to attend all school events.
- The school website is available to all families and includes information on the preschool program, philosophy, policies and procedures and the wider school community.
- Educators from both the school and preschool site meet with parents to complete an interview process.
- A playgroup program is offered at the school site to encourage parents to network and engage in child centred activities.
- The preschool works closely with the Turner Early Intervention Centre and often children move from this centre to enrol in the preschool program.
- Preschool children join in with school events e.g. cross country, walkathon, end of year concert and fete, discos.
- The Indigenous Education officer has been involved in delivery of the education program and in the development of Individual Learning Plans.
- There are strong links to the Indigenous community, e.g. Indigenous mural, visits to the grinding stones.

## Financial Summary

The school has provided the Directorate with an end of year financial statement that was approved by the school board. Further details concerning the statement can be obtained by contacting the school.

The following summary covers use of funds for operating costs and does not include expenditure in areas such as permanent salaries, buildings and major maintenance.

### Professional learning

The average expenditure at the school level per fulltime equivalent teacher on professional learning was \$527.

### Voluntary contributions

This school received \$2573 in voluntary contributions in 2014. These funds were used to support the general operations of the school. The spending of voluntary contributions is in line with the approved budget for 2014.

### Reserves

Name and purpose	Amount	Expected Completion
Grounds/Playground Upgrade. The Department agreed to co-fund the upgrade of turf and playground equipment as part of the "Joint Infrastructure Program"	\$1,100	Phase 1 completed January. Phase 2 expected completion May 2015

Financial Summary	
31-Dec-14	
<b>INCOME</b>	
Self management funds	262854
Voluntary contributions	2573
Contributions & donations	3846
Subject contributions	1552
External income (including community use)	6631
Proceeds from sale of assets	
Bank Interest	8730
<b>TOTAL INCOME</b>	<b>286186</b>
<b>EXPENDITURE</b>	
Utilities and general overheads	66410
Cleaning	62556
Security	
Maintenance	35941
Mandatory Maintenance	
Administration	15336
Staffing	
Communication	13834
Assets	61082
Leases	
General office expenditure	19536
Educational	30081
Subject consumables	3357
<b>TOTAL EXPENDITURE</b>	<b>308133</b>
<b>OPERATING RESULT</b>	<b>-21947</b>
<b>Actual Accumulated Funds</b>	<b>177129</b>
Outstanding commitments (mirrored)	22972
<b>BALANCE</b>	<b>132210</b>

## Endorsement Page

I declare that the Theodore Primary School Board has operated in accordance with the provisions of the Education Act 2004 including the following sections.

- 39 (4) The school board must give effect to the chief executive's directions.
- 44 (2) The chief executive must end the appointment of a member of the school board of a public school, other than the principal of the school if-
- The member is absent from 3 consecutive meetings of the board without reasonable excuse or leave given by the board or
  - Contravenes section 49 (disclosure of interests by members of school boards) without reasonable excuse.
- 46 The members of the school board of a public school must, whenever is necessary, nominate a member of the board as a member of any selection panel established by the chief executive to make recommendations to the chief executive about the appointment of the principal to the school.
- 47 (2) However, the school board must meet at least four times a year.
- 48 (10) The school board must keep minutes of its meeting.
- 49 Disclosure of interests by members of school boards.
- 49 (3) The disclosure must be reported in the school board's minutes and, unless the board otherwise decides, the member (The first member) must not-
- be present when the board considers the issue or
  - take part in any decision of the board on the issue.
- 49 (5) Within 14 days after the end of each financial year, the chairperson of the school board must give the chief executive a statement of any disclosure of interest under this section in relation to the school board during the financial year.

### MEMBERS OF THE SCHOOL BOARD

**Parent Representative:** Kristin Baker, Grant Stevens, Alison Hosking  
**Community Representative** Beverley Blatch  
**Teacher Representative** Sharon Swift, Alex Speirs  
**Student Representative:** nil  
**Board Chair:** Alison Hosking  
**Principal:** Matt Holdway

I certify that to the best of my knowledge and belief the data and information reported in this Annual School Board Report represents an accurate record of the school's operations in 2014.

**Principal Signature:** 

**Date:** 16/3/15

I approve the report, prepared in accordance with the provision of the ACT *Education Act*, section 52.

**Board Chair Signature:** 

**Date:** 16/3/2015