



Palmerston Primary School

Board Report

2013

This report supports the work being done in the ACT Education and Training Directorate, as outlined in the Strategic Plan 2010-2013 “Everyone Matters”. 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

Palmerston District Primary School is situated at the entrance of the Gungahlin District and was opened in 1995. The school is a harmonious mixture of families from different backgrounds and cultures. In 2013 the school has approximately 440 students in classes from preschool to year 6. Classes consist of four preschool, 18 mainstream and one learning support unit. Two of the classes are dedicated to students who are identified as Intellectually Gifted, these are known as Challenging Academic Performance (CAP) classes.

The leadership team strategically leads and manages the school. In 2013 the school was reclassified in category from a 4 plus to a 4. This dropped the school budget allocation impacting on staffing and resources. The workforce composition of the school is:

- The leadership team consists of Principal, Deputy Principal and two School Leader Cs.
- The teaching staff consists of twenty-eight teachers
- The administrative team consists of five staff.

The school has high expectations for all and upholds positive values that are reflected in the community. Palmerston PRIDE (Participation, Respect, Integrity, Determination, Empathy), a values based program permeates every aspect of school life. Palmerston School strives to promote a quality learning environment, which recognises the uniqueness of each child. The school supports and challenges the students to achieve to the best of their ability and foster a passion for lifelong learning. Palmerston School values and contributes to the whole school community.

Increasing high expectations of student engagement was clearly identified as a priority in 2013. The other major priority was to develop strong community partnerships and involvement. The preschool is developing an Early Years Learning Framework and shared teaching and learning vision as a priority. As a result the school is working towards creating an ethos where shared responsibility for all students.

Student Information

Student enrolment

In 2013 there were a total of 436 students enrolled at this school.

Table: 2013 Student Enrolment Breakdown

Group	Number of Students
Male	230
Female	206
Indigenous	12
LBOTE	202

Source: Planning and Performance

Palmerston's LBOTE population has increased in 2013. This enabled the staffing allocation to also increase. To address the needs of our changing demographics, every teacher undertook professional learning in *Teaching English in the Mainstream* – an EALD course. Our Boomerang Club for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children was maintained with one teacher winning an AEU Education Award in recognition of her work at Palmerston and in forming community partnerships.

Student attendance

The following table identifies the attendance rate of students by year level during 2013. 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: 2013 Attendance rates in Percentages

Year Level	Attendance Rate %
K	93.1
1	92.7
2	94.1
3	95.1
4	92.6
5	92.8
6	93.5

Source: Planning and Performance

Palmerston has an induction process for all new staff on managing student attendance. This enables a consistent approach that supports families and the whole school community.

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: 2013 Qualification of Teaching Staff in Percentages

Qualifications	% Teaching Staff
Certificate/Diploma/Degree	100%
Postgraduate	30%

Source: School Data

Workforce Composition

In 2013 the workforce composition of the school is highlighted in the following table.

Table: 2013 Workforce Composition Numbers

Role	Total
Administrative Service Officers	9
General Service Officers & Equivalent	1
School Leader A	1
School Leader B	1
School Leader C	2
Teachers	28
TOTAL	42

Source: Workforce Management

Note: This table includes pre-school staffing

There was one indigenous staff at this school in 2013.

Volunteers

One of Palmerston District Primary School's priorities is to increase the number of volunteers in our school. We would also like to monitor community and parent volunteering better. We have initiated parents working with children in the classrooms on reading and writing tables and with our Quality Literature program. Our volunteer hours are approximately 1500.

School Board

The School Board comprises parents, the schools executive, teachers and members of the broader community. Its role is to set the broad strategic direction of the school consistent with Guidelines set down by the ACT Education and Training Directorate. We also have a role to play in ensuring that the school maintains its buildings and funds, its various programs to provide our teachers with the necessary resources to deliver the best possible education to our children.

This year the school has been fortunate to receive a Healthy Food Grant. The grant will enable the school to continue its focus on teaching the children how to grow and use healthy, fresh fruit and vegetables. The canteen has been updated to improve safety and health conditions. Together, these provide the foundations for providing improved and healthier options for our children in 2014. The school also received a grant for the Swim School, helping to cover the costs of teaching our junior school students to swim.

Over the past few years, Palmerston teachers have focused on increasing literacy through adopting new techniques and undertaking professional development to maintain their currency. Our students are reaping the benefits and demonstrating improved reading skills

and literacy outcomes. This is a skill for life and the tailored approach to address the students' needs is critical to the success in our school.

As the societal focus on childhood obesity increases, the activity programs in Palmerston continue to ensure our students remain active. Each day schedules time for physical activity and the school continues to undertake the whole school activities such as the cross country carnival, the ride to school day, and the Walkathon.

Broader focus activities have included participation in Limelight, NAIDOC week, National Science Week and the vast variety of lunch time clubs that allow the students to try different things and learn different skills. Our teachers work tirelessly to have these programs and activities up and running, thank you!

Finally the Board would like to acknowledge all of the parents and members of our community who have volunteered their time and energy and/or participated in our children's learning over the course of the year. Our Learning Journey and Science Fair was extremely well attended this year, which is testament to the way the school is able to successfully engage parents and carers in their children's learning.

Traci-Ann Byrnes

Board Chair 2013

School Review and Development

In 2013, the ACT Education and Training Directorates *Strategic Plan 2010-2013* provided the framework and strategic direction for the school's plan. This is supported by the *School Improvement in ACT Public Schools Directions 2010-2013* 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 schools progress towards achieving system and school priorities.

Palmerston District Primary School will be validated in 2016. A copy of the last 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 2013 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, took part in an online survey.

Overall Satisfaction

In 2013, 82% of parents and carers, 84% of staff, and 68% of students at this school indicated they were satisfied or highly satisfied with the education provided by the school. In 2013, 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 2013. The following tables show the percentage of parents and carers and students who agreed with each of the national items.

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.	91
Teachers at this school provide my child with useful feedback about his or her school work.	78
Teachers at this school treat students fairly.	82
This school is well maintained.	84
My child feels safe at this school.	98
I can talk to my child's teachers about my concerns.	93
Student behaviour is well managed at this school.	71
My child likes being at this school.	93
This school looks for ways to improve.	93
This school takes parents' opinions seriously.	73
Teachers at this school motivate my child to learn.	87
My child is making good progress at this school.	84
My child's learning needs are being met at this school.	82
This school works with me to support my child's learning.	78

Source: 2013 School Satisfaction Surveys, August/September 2013

Table: Proportion of students in years 5 to 12 in agreement with each national opinion item

Item	(%)
My teachers expect me to do my best.	94
My teachers provide me with useful feedback about my school work.	81
Teachers at my school treat students fairly.	66
My school is well maintained.	55
I feel safe at my school.	78
I can talk to my teachers about my concerns.	71
Student behaviour is well managed at my school.	41
I like being at my school.	63

Item (continued)	(%)
My school looks for ways to improve.	79
My school takes students' opinions seriously.	58
My teachers motivate me to learn.	84
My school gives me opportunities to do interesting things.	70

Source: 2013 School Satisfaction Surveys, August/September 2013

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 at palmdps.act.edu.au

Professional Learning

Teaching staff at Palmerston focused on the following professional learning:

- EALD – Teaching English in the mainstream
- Literacy Planning – Daily 5 and CAFÉ
- Gifted and Talented program planning with University of NSW
- CMIT- Count Me in Too math junior school professional learning
- MYMC – Middle Years Mental computation – senior school professional learning

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: Palmerston Primary School PIPS 2013 mean raw scores

Test Domain	School Start	School End	ACT Start	ACT End
Reading	53	150	51	126
Mathematics	39	57	39	54

Source: CEM Centre

From our 2013 PIPS data our kindergarten students achieved great results. Our students were above the ACT mean raw score in reading by 24 and mathematics by 3. Our school

mean raw score in term 1 for reading was 53 and our end mean raw score in term 4 was 150. Our school mean raw score in term 1 for mathematics was 39 and our end mean raw score in term 4 end was 57.

Detailed analysis of our school's academic achievement resulted in targeted professional learning for teaching staff and collected data on student achievements. Our in school data collecting included:

- PM benchmarking and tracking of students through a traffic light system
- SENA tracking and the use of a traffic light system
- Spelling results recorded

Teachers worked in teaching team to target their programming to best meet student needs in teaching and learning.

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 2013, 1.7% of year 3 students and 0% of year 5 students were exempt from testing based on nationally agreed criteria.

The following table shows the 2013 mean scores achieved by our students compared to the ACT.

Table: Palmerston Primary School 2013 NAPLAN Mean Scores

Test Domain	Year 3 School	Year 3 ACT	Year 5 School	Year 5 ACT
Reading	446	444	500	520
Writing	436	423	458	487
Spelling	440	417	488	497
Grammar & Punctuation	465	445	495	516
Numeracy	425	415	483	500

Source: Planning and Performance

Year 3 students performed exceptionally well with the mean above the ACT across all test domains (Reading, Writing, Spelling, Grammar and Punctuation, and Numeracy). We have met our targets this year in NAPLAN in reading and achieved higher than the ACT and Gungahlin average. The programs that have been implemented at Palmerston over the last three years have had an impact on the year 3 and year 5 NAPLAN results. We have implemented:

- Team planning and programming
- Data recorded in the traffic light system

- Targeted intervention through
 - Multi Lit program
 - Learning Assistance
 - EALD intervention
 - Special needs meetings with the school counsellor
- Professional learning targeted through a teacher skill audit
- Changes to extending the teaching time in English and maths including analysis of student engagement in these activities

Performance in other areas of the curriculum

Our actions in other curriculum areas include:

- Maintaining an across school Environmental Science program
- EALD (English as an Additional Language or Dialect) training for all staff which involved 50 hours of professional learning
- Maintaining our library lessons for each child as a focus across the school
- Identifying social skills and wellbeing programs – we established committees to target students engagement in
 - Healthy Canteen
 - Walk and Ride program
 - Kids Matter – values lessons and resiliency lessons
- Singing across the school - we have well established junior and senior singing and entered a choir into Limelight and established a year 3 /4 Fife Band to ur Year 5 /6 band program

Progress against School Priorities in 2013

Priority 1

Improve English outcomes for all students.

Target/s

- 90% of students achieving the school's reading benchmarks
- 80% of students at or above level based on the Australian Curriculum English achievement standards

School improvement domains covered with this priority

Leading and Managing, Learning and Teaching

Progress

90% of students achieving the school's reading benchmarks

80% of students at or above level based on the Australian Curriculum English achievement standards

Raising our literacy results across the school was the main priority identified in our 2013 school Operational Plan. To achieve this outcome the school focused on strengthening curriculum practice through continuing to embed a whole school approach to the teaching

of English, building teacher capacity and developing partnerships with parents in the education of their children.

Strengthening Curriculum Practice

Palmerston District Primary School teachers plan their lessons using the Australian Curriculum. We have implemented 'The Daily Five' in classrooms K-6 to further enhance student's learning in literacy. This approach involves students reading to self, reading to someone, working on writing, word work (including spelling and grammar) and listening to reading on a daily basis.

Our English program involves modelled, guided and independent learning experiences to develop our student's skills in literacy, including speaking and listening, writing, spelling and reading. In 2013 we have implemented this across the school. Teachers collect data on students reading through running records and this whole school data is used in teacher's planning and programming.

Develop capacity of teaching staff

Professional learning had been a major focus for developing teacher's professional knowledge and skills across the school. Each year the staff undertake a self-audit of their teaching skills and this snapshot provides the avenue of where as a staff we target our professional learning.

Staff Skill audit indicates that staff capacity building was in the areas identified in the school plan.

A large number of our staff attended the National ALEA Conference (Australian Literacy Educators Association) to learn effective approaches to quality teaching of literacy in our schools across Australia. This learning was shared with the whole staff, resulting in new ideas and enhanced learning for our students.

All staff attended ALEA professional learning called *Classroom Chats* in schools across the ACT to expose ourselves to new ideas and ways to teach English. Executive staff visited a Sydney school who presented at the ALEA Conference to observe their Professional Learning Community, speaking with staff and visiting classrooms. This experience has provided executive staff with a continued vision on how we will work together in building a Professional Learning Community here at Palmerston District Primary School.

Attending the Leading Reading Assessment for Instruction course, involved executive learning effective implementation of reading assessment and how to use this to inform planning and learning for our students. The principal is a member of the professional learning group called PALLs (Principals as Literacy Leaders) and all staff will be attending quality professional learning in January 2014.

In 2013 all staff undertook professional learning (PL) in Teaching English Language in the Mainstream which was equivalent to 50 hours of PL. The TESMEC and TESL courses targeted learning for teachers to assist students who have English as a Second Language. Three staff have also undertaken study at the University of NSW in Gifted and Talented Education, called GERRIC. The Deputy, Mrs. Tania Collis won a grant to undertake Action Research in the use of *Mini Lit* and *Multi Lit* in the school; with five staff training with Macquarie University in the teaching of Multi Lit.

2013 saw the school commence on a journey to introduce coaching and mentoring for teaching staff. We had two teachers train in mentoring and establish a mentoring program for all beginning teachers. Coaching in classroom in teaching literacy was maintained in 2013.

The 2013 Satisfaction Survey results showed that 75% of teaching staff at this school indicated they were satisfied or highly satisfied that they were getting constructive feedback about their practice.

Develop partnerships with parents in the education of their child/ren

K-2 staff held two parent information sessions in Term 2 on 'Supporting your child with reading'. At this workshop staff provided parents with strategies and ideas on how to support their children with learning to read at home. We had over 60 parents from our community attend this learning workshop.

The school, along with the P & C, has purchased home readers for our students to enhance reading at home. The program is called Quality Literature and the school has spent over \$3000 on providing quality picture books to complement our existing home reading program. The program includes providing 20 MP3 players with stories recorded on them by senior students.

The school, with P&C assistance, also purchased 'Reading Eggs' and 'Reading Eggspress', a web based literacy program for all students to use at home and in the classroom to assist in the teaching and learning of literacy.

Providing a varied and across school consistent program, which includes expanding on teacher professional learning, and parent involvement, has assisted in the school raising student achievement in reading and meeting Australian Curriculum English and Mathematics Achievement Standards.

The impact of these strategies in 2013 resulted in our identified targets for this priority being met. The table below shows the progress related to the 90% target for students achieving year level benchmark. It was achieved across the whole school and at years 1,3,4, and 6.

Table: Percentage of students by year group achieving at or above reading benchmark

Kinder	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Year 6	Whole School Average
87	90	83	93	100	85	100	91

Source: School data, December 2013

In English across years 1-6 greater than 85% of students achieved C standard or above at the end of semester 2, with years 3, 4 and 6 having 91% of students achieving at this level. In Mathematics all but year 5 achieved above 85% of students achieving at this level. Year 5 had 68% of students achieve the C standard and above at the end of semester 2. In year 6 100% of students achieved to this level.

Table: Percentage of students achieving Achievement Standard (C grade or above) or above by year group

Subject	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Year 6	Whole School Average
English	86	85	91	91	85	91	88
Mathematics	92	89	88	84	68	100	87

Source: School data, semester 2, 2013

As well as these results the schools' NAPLAN reading mean in 2013 for year 3 (446.03) was significantly above the ETD set target of 422 ± 24 . The year 5 mean of 499.51 was within the range expected at year 5 (506 ± 20) when considering the confidence intervals.

Priority 2

Improve mathematics outcomes for all students

Target/s

85% of students at or above level based on in – school SENA data

85% of students at or above level based on the Australian Curriculum Mathematics achievement standards

School improvement domain/s covered with this priority

Leading and Managing, Learning and Teaching

Progress

This year we have maintained our whole school approach to the teaching of mathematics by implementing and teaching the Australian Mathematics Curriculum throughout the school. This included our increased team planning and trialling of PLC's (professional Learning Communities). The success of team planning in this manner has been successful and we will ensure the whole staff have professional learning in PLCs in 2014. GO Maths has been the main teaching resource, along with other Australian Curriculum linked documents, to assist in the teaching of numeracy. The school, with the help of the P & C, has again purchased Mathletics, a web based numeracy program. Mathletics is for use by all students, at home and school, to assist in the teaching and learning of mathematics. If you do not have your logon for Mathletics, please contact your child's teacher.

In relation to developing the capacity of staff to deliver high quality Mathematics teaching in semester 2, teachers attended further professional development on best practice in developing skills and knowledge in number based programs. Through our teacher skill audit we identified we needed to as a staff revisit training in maths teaching. 100% of staff undertook training in either Middle Years Mental computation or Count Me in Too training. Both courses were based at the school and teams took on this training to skill them up in explicit number teaching and recording of student ability in number. We have now begun to

track students results in MYMC and SENA. We have not yet achieved data collection that truly reflects our students ability in MYMC and CMIT. This is an area of development for 2014.

In Mathematics all but year 5 achieved above 85% of students achieving at the C standard or above at the end of semester 2. Year 5 had 68% of students achieve the C standard and above at the end of semester 2. In year 6 100% of students achieved to this level.

Priority 3

Improve student engagement

Target/s

To system level or above in the School Satisfaction survey data

- Other students at this school are friendly towards me
- The things I am learning at school are important to me

School improvement domain covered with this priority

Student engagement

Progress

In 2013 within the strategy of developing a whole school vision for student engagement, we continued to use the KidsMatter program as an umbrella to support student engagement. KidsMatter Primary is a mental health and wellbeing framework for primary schools and is proven to make a positive difference to the lives of Australian children. KidsMatter Primary provides the proven methods, tools and support to help schools work with parents and carers, health services and the wider community, to nurture happy, balanced kids. At Palmerston the KidsMatter committee have continued to work together to promote a positive school community, deliver social and emotional learning for students, provide parent support and education and make available early intervention for students experiencing mental health difficulties.

As part of Kids Matter in 2013, our team surveyed our parents. From this data and 2013 school satisfaction data from our year 5/6 students we looked at social and emotional learning under the Kids Matter components. From this data we worked closely with the behavioural support section of the ACT department of Education to look at a program to address the social and emotional learning of our students.

An implementation team within the Kids Matter team was formed and took part in training for implementing a social and emotional learning program, Friendly Schools Plus.

Whole school change is sustained when evidence of good practice aligns with real-world school vision and practice. The Friendly Schools Plus program is based on 11 major research projects conducted since 1999 involving more than 27,000 Australian school-age students from pre-primary to year 10. This research focused critically on understanding student

bullying behaviour and seeking locally relevant and practical outcomes, while informing national and international policy and practices. It is recognised nationally and internationally as a successful whole-school evidence based bullying prevention program.

In 2013, the Friendly Schools Plus team developed a scope and sequence for K-6, ordering and organising resources. In 2014, K-6 will be implementing Friendly Schools Plus. This falls under the social and emotional learning of the Kids Matter umbrella.

For student engagement we recognised we needed to build a positive school environment. Our vision is to provide quality learning programs which recognise the uniqueness of each child and to have develop a passion for learning within a secure environment.

The following was put in place:

- Focus on explicit teaching of PRIDE values in Term 1 as a whole school
- PRIDE awards and Writing awards
- Peer support program in Term 2
- Buddies program
- Consistent behaviour management procedures
- Restorative Practices
- Parent information session (Reading)
- Learning journeys
- Clubs at lunch time for students
- Discos, car boot sale and spring fair
- Father's Day breakfast and Mother's Day morning tea Social club for staff
- Team planning with staff
- New educator Professional Learning and Professional Conversations

Parents can access information on KidsMatter, and our programs, through the school. We have strong connections with the Gungahlin Family and Community Centre and the school has a Defence STA to assist families in the defence forces. We regularly hold parent information sessions and welcome parents into the school to work with us on providing the best possible education for their child. Our school counsellor is available to parents and is in attendance every Monday and Tuesday.

In moving forward our committee is surveying parents. We will gather these results and use this data for our future planning. In 2014, staff will also participate in 'Friendly Schools Plus' training and how to implement this program at our school with our students and community. This program will work in tandem with our PRIDE Values and KidsMatter to provide a safe, fun and enriching learning environment for all our students.

Palmerston introduced the Peer Support Program in 2013 as a response to increasing student engagement across the school. Peer support is a program which aims to unify and teach students about relationships, well-being and successful communication. Our goal is to

support students' social and emotional well-being through mixed aged groupings which are led by 5/6 students. Encompassed in this approach, is improving students' self-image, interactions with others and the school environment and increasing positive communication and connectedness between students of all ages. Students in the senior school gain leadership skills and develop strategies to solve problems when taking part in this program.

Lessons conducted this year were developed based on the 'Circle time' structure with the focus on developing friendships. Each lesson always started with a check in which would allow each student to introduce themselves and share something about themselves or about friendships. After the check in, the peer leaders led the group in a mixer where students played cooperative games that allowed them to get to know each other. The main concept centred on "building friendships" through a range of activities. Every circle time then proceeded to an energizer which allowed the group to interact with each other. The sessions concluded with a check out, where the students share something they have learned.

The Student Representative Council (SRC) has been maintained at Palmerston in 2013 and included School Captains as a means to increasing student engagement.

The SRC is made up of a group of students from kindergarten to year 6 and allows all students to have a voice through their class meetings and talking with their class member. They help to make decisions about things that are important to the students at Palmerston. SRC members are expected to attend meetings and to report back to their PoD/class during meeting times. School Captains chair the meetings with support. Each year the SRC chooses a cause on which to focus their fundraising.

Multi Lit program

To enhance student engagement, we recognised that we needed to address student engagement. A DECO grant was won in 2013 which enabled the staff to investigate and train in the Multilit program. The Multilit program became a valued part of our English programming and planning. The program ran across the school and by term 4 five teachers and one assistant were running the programs from years 1-6. The school linked their Multilit data with Jervis Bay school, but were unable to visit the school in 2013. The grant for Multilit was used for the training of six teachers at Macquarie University in Sydney and the purchasing of resources and the kits used to teach the program. The Deputy Principal presented our data at the DECO conference in early term 4.

Background

In 2011 two Palmerston District Primary School teachers trained in the MultiLit Reading Tutor Program. Designed by Macquarie University, it is a one-on-one reading intervention program designed for students aged approximately 8 years or older. The two teachers went on to train a Learning Support teacher who continued to use the program in 2012 with a small number of students. Results from 2012 showed that the students participating in the Reading Tutor program were improving and moving closer to reaching the expected reading benchmarks. The results at Palmerston were similar to those found in Jervis Bay who were also using the MultiLit Reading Tutor Program. At this time, Palmerston also learnt of a new program from the MultiLit company which Jervis Bay was also using and finding successful. The new program was MiniLit which is for students

in year 1 to year 2 and is able to provide intervention at an earlier stage and in a small group of up to 5 students.

In 2013, Palmerston received a DECO (Disability) grant which allowed the school to have more teachers trained by MultiLit, in Sydney, to use both the Reading Tutor Program and the MiniLit program. One staff member went to Reading Tutor Professional Development and one teacher received training in the MiniLit Program. They returned to Palmerston and trained other teachers. The grant also allowed the school to purchase the kits used by both programs.

Reading Tutor Program

Students in years 3 to 6 who were in the Learning Support Centre or on Integration Support received one-on-one intervention with an LSA during the year. The Learning Support Teacher ran groups of 5-6 students in years 3/4 over terms two to four.

MiniLit Program

The trial began with two groups in year 1 in week 5 of term 2. An additional year 1 group was added in term 3 and two groups of year 2 students trialled the program in term four. In term 4, two students from year 1 were exited as they had reached expected benchmarks and two additional students were added.

Table: Profile of students in the program

Program and Year level	Total	NESB (non-English speaking background)	ATSI (Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander students)
Reading Tutor Program (Years 3/4)	16	7	0
MiniLit Program (Year 2)	9	4	1
MiniLit Program (Year 1)	17	7	0

Source: School Data, December 2013

Results

The results table below shows the number of students below, at and above expected benchmarks when they entered the Reading Tutor or MiniLit Programs. You can see the most significant improvements have been shown in year 1 which is in line with research on best practice which indicates early intervention is the key to successful intervention. The results for year 2 are not as significant which could be attributed to the students only beginning to participate in the small group, targeted intervention in term 4. It should also be noted that four of the seven students in the program from year 2 were new to the school in 2013 so had not had the school's literacy program from preschool to year 1. Students in years 3 and 4 also made some excellent progress through the Reading Tutor program. These results also indicated that the program should be started early in the year with students identified from reading data from the end of the previous year along with start of year reading assessments.

Table: Percentage of students achieving Reading Benchmark s

Time of assessment	Reading Tutor Program Years 3/4 - Terms 2 to 4	MiniLit Program Year 2 - Term 4	MiniLit Program Year 1 Terms 2 to 4
Below benchmark start of year	12	9	14
Below benchmark end of year	4	7	5
At benchmark start of year	3	0	0
At benchmark end of year	4	2	1
Above benchmark start of year	1	0	3
Above benchmark end of year	5	0	11

Source: School data, December 2013

The results from the Action Research conducted with the MultiLit programs in 2013 indicate the program has increased the number of students reaching benchmark when it is brought in early to targeted students.

The Healthy Food Grant was applied for and won in late 2012. This enabled the school to commence on implementing the food grant. The first steps in 2013 were to:

- Engage parent assistance
- Open a canteen co run by parents and the food grant committee
- Target our school gardens to cater for the canteen needs
- Establish a chook shed with chooks
- Teach healthy eating by accessing the Red Cross healthy eating and cooking program across the school
- Committee meets each fortnight
- Canteen named
- School to become a Fresh Taste school

The grant has been extended into 2014.

Due to a change to a national student survey we are unable to report against the specific question previously identified for our target. However, in 2013 satisfaction related to items, which may indicate there is an improvement in student engagement, are below. The 2012 results, with similar questions are also shown. The school will continue to monitor progress against these items

Table Percentage of students who rated average or above on the following items

Item	2012	2013
My teachers expect me to do my best (2012- Teachers want me to do the best I can)	94%	98%
I feel safe at this school	82%	96%
My school takes students' opinions seriously (2012- At this school teachers take my concerns seriously)	81%	80%
My school gives me opportunities to do interesting things (2012-I am doing works that interests me.	79%	87%
Student behaviour is well managed at my school (2012-Management of student behaviour is effective at the school)	73%	68%

Source: Performance and Planning

Student engagement is also evident by the school having no suspensions across the first three terms of the school year for two successive years.

Priority 4

To provide Preschool education to the National Quality Standard

Target

To obtain a preschool rating of meeting national quality Standard or exceeding National quality Standard by 2014

School improvement domain/s covered with this priority

Student Engagement, Leading and Managing

Progress

Progress

Our Key Improvement Strategy 1 was to embed a culture of reflective practice in relation to program delivery. The plan commenced with the teachers attending a range of professional development opportunities including the preschool cluster conversations, network meetings and visits to other schools to observe experienced early childhood educators. A preschool Professional Learning Team (PLT) was formed which included executive staff, teachers and assistants. The PLT meeting included time to write the new statement of intent to align with the Early Years Learning Framework (EYLF). Planning days are held each term utilising the PLT to reflect on programs and observations of children. These observations are then used in weekly PLT meetings where reflection on programs is a key component. New techniques for observing and recording student achievements were instituted after a visit to another preschool setting. Teacher observations and reflections on individual students are shared across staff in the preschool to ensure programs meet the needs and interests of students. An informed and appropriate Statement of Intent has been created. This document links closely with the outcomes of the EYLF. Staff members continue to reflect on the Statement of Intent each week in an ongoing effort to maintain high standards in education program

and practice. Staff were able to visit a number of other preschool settings as their professional learning and while there they observed experienced early childhood educators. This assisted the preschool teachers in making positive changes to their practice.

Executive liaised closely with the community and staff during term 4, 2012 to set directions and create appropriate goals relating to the National Quality Standard (NQS) for 2013. Our key improvement strategy 2, was to provide the necessary processes that will allow for the building of relationships with other children and adults. Our achievements against this strategy are:

- Educators sit with children when eating lunch and engage them in conversations
- Positive relations between educators and children is evident
- Classroom codes of conduct have been established with child input
- Children are supported in social skills through teachers attending professional learning and reflection on their programs

The school has not yet been awarded a standard rating.

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

The educational leaders of Preschool set a high standard of educational programming and practice in line with the EYLF. They set up weekly meetings and included the educators in the meetings. Each week they reflected on their practice and reviewed their programs. Their commitment to best practice included incorporating parent reflection into their planning and programming. This change in practice was recognised by parents and carers in our parent feedback sessions. This will become everyday practice in 2014.

Staff undertook professional learning in programming in the EYLF through visits to other schools, inviting the preschool section of our department in to give feedback and through organised professional learning. This initiative saw an increase in teacher confidence in programming and all programs are now on display each week for families. Staff brought back from their visits ways to showcase children's learning and children's learning stories are now visible throughout the preschool.

Children's health and safety

The preschool educational leaders and educators were outstanding in undertaking a new look and review of their child health and safety practices. They undertook intensive training in Asthma and Anaphylaxis first aid in 2013. This led to a review of first aid procedures in the preschool and we

invited the preschool section of the Directorate to assist in our change process. The Sun Smart procedures were also reviewed in 2013 along with building maintenance to provide an outstanding environment. 2013 saw the promotion of healthy eating with all families in the preschool through brochures, parent handbooks, daily message board and a presentation on healthy eating from The Red Cross. The Red Cross came to the school and ran healthy food awareness classes for parents and for students.

Physical environment

Resources were targeted in the outside play environment. This led to positive changes in the physical environment and a more natural approach to working with the environment. A shade cover for the preschool play equipment was identified as a priority and action to put this in place was taken. Palmerston Preschool continued excellence in the maintenance of their furniture and equipment which is cleaned daily and follows all appropriate health and safety guidelines. We ensured all facilities were maintained and repaired the automatic windows to ensure warmth in winter and is more energy efficiency.

Staffing arrangements

Staffing arrangements remained constant in 2013. The preschool was staffed by qualified professionals in Early Childhood Education. Staff professional learning was a priority in 2013. We audited staff skills to ensure that professional learning was targeted and enabled teachers to cater for student's individual needs and the use of the EYLF. The ratio of one to eleven was maintained throughout the year. The release team consisting of a teacher and assistant were consistent throughout the year.

Relationships with children

The preschool educational leaders initiated the use of iPads to record student interests, achievements and areas of development. This initiative was a strength of their programming and planning. This targeted approach was then expanded to reporting to parents on individual student achievements. Children's agency is visible through the ongoing changes made to the 'Imagination Rooms' which reflect their current interests. Teachers actively change and adapt these rooms based on their observations and conversations with the children and parents. Changes to the way in which parents and carers could comment on programs and the preschool environment resulted in more regular feedback from the community. This too was then incorporated into the preschool programs. Digital photo frames displaying activities carried out through the day are set up in the classrooms and parents and children are invited to comment on the pictures they observe.

Leadership and management

Shared leadership in the preschool was a highlight of 2013. A collaborative team planning model was established and a PLT was formed. This PLT met on a weekly basis to review the National Quality Standards and ensure that they were met. An initiative to assist communication for parents and staff was to address all communication between the preschool and the community so that it aligned with communication procedures of the school.

The executive teacher responsible for Early Childhood education coached the staff of the preschool to strengthen the links between school and preschool to normalise practice throughout the school. This led to increased respectful relationships in preschool and all established protocols being followed to ensure the best outcomes in student learning. We also set up mentors for the new Educators working in preschool to assist in their teaching and learning

The executive led staff members in PLTs to actively work on building relationships with the children in 2013. Teachers and assistants were regularly observed sitting with students during group times, table activities and during eating times. This has now become practice. Educational leaders and educators used planning times to identify areas of need, and social stories and other activities to explicitly teach social skills to students. Inclusion is a school value promoted and modelled through educator practice. Preschool rules were created with the students in 2013 and reflect inclusion and safety. The social skills modelled and taught in the preschool promote cultural and social inclusion. Educators actively support the home environment and always greet children and families on arrival to preschool.

Collaborative partnerships with families and communities

The PLTs identified that community involvement was an area to address in 2013. A survey was undertaken to identify the needs of community in the preschool program and this resulted in reflections from parents taking a significant place in educator programming and planning. Parents were welcomed into the Palmerston Community through newsletters, the P&C, and they were invited to parent forums and whole school events such as the Easter Hat parade, the walkathon and Cross country. More effective getting to know you procedures were established which included a form filled out upon enrolment and 'Getting to know your child' interviews before the end of the year for the next year's students. Parents were surveyed and were happy with the increased home school partnerships.

Achievements in the preschool have been significant as evidenced by a positive visit from the Palmerston contact at the Office of Regulatory Service. The visit provided essential feedback regarding strengths and areas to consider when writing our 2014 Quality Improvement Plan.

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 \$ 2,400.

Voluntary contributions

This school received \$0 in voluntary contributions in 2013. 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 2013.

Financial Summary	
	31-Dec-13
INCOME	
Self management funds	329587
Voluntary contributions	0
Contributions & donations	3665
Subject contributions	0
External income (including community use)	46126
Proceeds from sale of assets	0
Bank Interest	6543
TOTAL INCOME	385921
EXPENDITURE	
Utilities and general overheads	104154
Cleaning	97493
Security	-1
Maintenance	27442
Mandatory Maintenance	0
Administration	55596
Staffing	0
Communication	11798
Assets	-16481
Leases	0
General office expenditure	16088
Educational	27262
Subject consumables	0
TOTAL EXPENDITURE	323351
OPERATING RESULT	62570
Actual Accumulated Funds	68287
Outstanding commitments (mit	-37374
BALANCE	93483

Reserves

Name and purpose	Amount	Expected Completion
Furniture and Equipment 2014 Furniture to initiate our Quality Reading Environment in PoDs and our Flexible Learning environment	\$2,000	March 2014
Staffing 2014 To cover an additional staffing due to school category drop	\$17,000	Dec 2014
Operational Plan Implementation of the priorities in the operational plans. E.g. purchasing of resources to assist in raising student outcomes in Maths and English/ providing professional learning for teaching staff to ensure best practice in our priority areas in our operational plan	\$2,000	July 2014
Curriculum To meet the needs of the school in resourcing with the change to the Australian curriculum	\$10,000	Dec 2014
ICT To provide IT resources across the school and in the flexible learning area.	\$15,000 Now \$0 as funds spent	Feb 2014

Endorsement Page

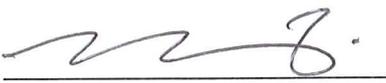
I declare that the Palmerston Primary School Board has operated in accordance with the provisions of the Education Act 2004 including the following sections.

- 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: Traci-Ann Byrnes, Greg Wells, John Haly
Community Representative Asifa Ahmad
Teacher Representative Tania Collis Helen Thorley
Student Representative:
Board Chair: Traci-Ann Byrnes
Principal: Melissa Travers

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 this year.

Principal Signature:  **Date:** 20/3/14

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

Board Chair Signature:  **Date:** 25/3/14