

Rocky River Public School

Annual Report



2016



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Introduction

The Annual Report for 2016 is provided to the community of Rocky River Public School as an account of the school's operations and achievements throughout the year.

It provides a detailed account of the progress the school has made to provide high quality educational opportunities for all students, as set out in the school plan. It outlines the findings from self-assessment that reflect the impact of key school strategies for improved learning and the benefit to all students from the expenditure of resources, including equity funding.

Peta Deiderick

Relieving Principal

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Message from the Principal

Rocky River's success is underpinned by three key elements that promote the quality teaching and learning programs. I am proud of the academic, social and emotional achievement of our students and the ongoing success of the strategies being implemented by the school to create high quality learning experiences for our students.

We have a highly dedicated staff who work together to provide an inclusive environment where all students are nurtured and encouraged to achieve their personal best. Our students are motivated to learn and participate in the range of educational opportunities provided for them at the school.

In 2016, Rocky River continued to focus on our students becoming "Successful Participants of 21st Century Society". This involved high quality teaching and learning and programs using tiered intervention to differentiate and provide individualised learning. Through the Rocky River and Thunderbolt Alliance, schools developed a shared and collaborative professional learning environment. Teachers have high expectations of themselves and were accountable for being active learners. 100% of teachers are using the Australian Professional standards for teachers to develop their own professional learning goals as evidenced in their Personal Performance Development Plans.

Through this high quality collaboration there were improved student outcomes in Writing and EAS across the Alliance through TEN, moderation and benchmark testing. Staff embraced and improved their own professional practice to ensure students are lifelong learners. Teachers participated in professional learning in Accelerated Literacy and many new units were written and implemented during 2016. Students enjoyed learning about many different authors and their writing techniques and are confident in transferring these strategies and skills into their writing.

In 2016, Rocky River continued to strive to ensure students are Respectful and Responsible community members. Expectations of behaviour were explicitly taught and modelled to students and relate to all school and community settings. Rocky River has strong and regular communication between parents and school through the active P&C that help ensure our school is a positive learning environment for our students.

The You Can Do It program was embedded across the whole school in all programs and events so that student wellbeing and learning was at the centre of all approaches. The school has in place a comprehensive and inclusive framework to support the cognitive, emotional, social, physical and spiritual well-being of students that individually and collectively improves wellbeing.

The staff and I would like to thank all the parents and community members who have supported our school throughout the year. We would particularly like to thank SASS for the wonderful job they do and the P&C who support us in so many ways. Congratulations to all of our students for a wonderful year and for continuing to strive to achieve their best every day in every area whilst at school.

School background

School vision statement

Rocky River Public School is committed to providing inclusive education within an engaging and nurturing environment. We are committed to academic excellence as well as developing confident, creative and successful learners.

School context

Rocky River Public School is one of the oldest schools in the New England region and celebrated its sesquicentenary in 2010. It is a small rural school situated 5km north of Uralla on the Thunderbolt's Way. The students are from a wide socio economic range within the local area and Uralla. It is currently a two teacher school and works within a cluster of small schools in the area for sporting, cultural, social and professional development activities. The local community is very supportive and all major school activities are very well attended. The school provides comprehensive educational experiences to enhance the academic, cultural, physical and social development of students. A dedicated staff, excellent resources and a beautiful rural setting combines to develop in the students a love of learning which, together with strong basic academic skills, will carry them through their education and their lives. In this small school, students interact across age groups, playing with and caring for each other as a family. Small class sizes ensure individual attention – each child is treated as an individual and their own needs, interests and talents are understood and catered for. The school is an important part of the Rocky River community. Staff, parents and local residents actively work to provide a strong foundation for learning excellence. The school is a member of the Armidale Community of Schools (ACOS) which supports principals, staff and students across the New England. We have a holistic view of education encouraging our students to be involved in not only academic and sporting activities but also actively promoting student leadership, values and contributing to the wider community. In the small school environment, students are encouraged to work independently and cooperatively to become self-motivated learners.

Self-assessment and school achievement

Self-assessment using the School Excellence Framework

This section of the Annual Report outlines the findings from self-assessment using the School Excellence Framework, school achievements and the next steps to be pursued.

This year, our school undertook self-assessment using the School Excellence Framework. The framework supports public schools throughout NSW in the pursuit of excellence by providing a clear description of high quality practice across the three domains of Learning, Teaching and Leading.

In the domain of Learning, there is school-wide at Rocky River, collective responsibility for student learning and success, with high levels of student, staff and community engagement. this was embedded and expectations of behaviour were explicitly taught to students using the You Can Do It program and relate to the variety of school settings.

Through the training and implementation of Accelerated Literacy (AL) and TEN in 2016, teachers were more confident when differentiating the curriculum delivery to meet the needs of individual students.

The school analysed internal and external assessment data to monitor, track and report on student and school performance using the Literacy and Numeracy continuums alongside school based assessment and NAPLAN.

In the domain of Teaching, teaching and learning programs were regularly reviewed and revised using the National Teaching Standards and implemented Accelerated Literacy and TEN .

The school's professional learning plan built teacher skills in the analysis, interpretation and use of student performance data using syllabi content, continuums and observations grids. Teachers provided and received planned constructive feedback from peers, school leaders and students to improve teaching practice. Processes were put in place to provide formal mentoring or coaching support to improve teaching and leadership practice across the Thunderbolt Alliance.

The school identified expertise within its staff and drew on this to further develop our professional community with focus on improved teaching methods in literacy and numeracy, with professional learning activities in TEN and writing focused on building teachers' understandings of effective teaching strategies in these areas.

In the domain of Leading, Rocky River strengthened its alliance with neighbouring small communities of schools, other educational providers and other organisations to support the school's programs.

The Alliance leadership strategy promoted succession planning, distributed leadership and organisational best practice.

Monitoring, evaluation and review processes were embedded and undertaken routinely and clear processes, with accompanying timelines and milestones, direct school activity towards effective implementation of the school plan.

Our self-assessment process will assist the school to refine the strategic priorities in our School Plan, leading to further improvements in the delivery of education to our students. For more information about the School Excellence Framework:

<http://www.dec.nsw.gov.au/about-the-department/our-reforms/school-excellence-framework>

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Strategic Direction 1

Successful participants in 21st Century Society

Purpose

To develop in students a love of learning with the skills needed for them to be proactive and dynamic members of 21st Century society. To be technologically smart and resourceful and be able to work independently as well as to be able to work collaboratively in teams. As a result of classroom programs, students will have the literacy and numeracy skills to function and communicate in our rapidly changing world.

Overall summary of progress

Students demonstrated success in their learning through the completion of tasks specifically developed to create an inquiring mind with the capacity for self-direction and critical and creative thinking. Teaching and learning programs and assessment tasks demonstrated the explicit integration of ICT targeted general capabilities

Teaching programs, scope and sequences, assessment schedules and units of learning are interconnected and delivered using systematic and explicit teaching. All teaching staff understand that student learning and engagement are related, with the school communicating priorities for strengthening both. Students used assessment and feedback to reflect on their learning.

Progress towards achieving improvement measures

Improvement measures (to be achieved over 3 years)	Progress achieved this year	Funds Expended (Resources)
Teaching and learning programs and assessment tasks reflect 21st Century Learning as per The Melbourne Declaration	Implementation of the NSW curriculum Mathematics syllabus documents ensured systematic and explicit teaching. All teachers are implementing Accelerated Literacy to improve Literacy outcomes, particularly in writing, vocabulary and comprehension to improve student outcomes of all students to reach state wide benchmarks. All teachers are implementing lesson breakers in EAS and Place Value strategies in the Mathematics timed block to improve, Whole Number, of all students in conjunction with the Thunderbolt Alliance.	\$5356.00 Professional Learning
Australian Professional Standards to build the Performance and Development process in line with the framework.	Staff embrace and improve their own practice and the professional practice of each other to ensure students are lifelong learners. Staff embrace and improve their own practice and the professional practice of each other to ensure students are lifelong learners. Teachers take responsibility for changes in practice required to achieve school targets and are using data on a regular basis to monitor the effectiveness of their own efforts to meet those targets.	\$1121.00 Literacy / Numeracy

Next Steps

Analysis of the 2016 NAPLAN results indicate a general weakness in the area of spelling. In 2017 diagnostic testing will be used to determine individual learning plans for all students and inform teaching programs and provide individual feedback. Further improvement in Literacy and Numeracy results will be achieved by the continuation of TEN strategies and the implementation of the Super Six strategies to support the reading focus of improving comprehension. Student literacy skills will continue to improve through collaboration with the Thunderbolt Alliance writing Concept units of work and Process Descriptors.

Thunderbolt Alliance will continue collaborating on the development of syllabus delivery tools (Scope and Sequences, connected outcomes groups, creation of units of work and moderated assessment tasks.)

Shared and continued professional learning in evidenced based teaching pedagogy will increase teacher capacity to provide quality feedback. Classroom observations utilising Learning Walks established between Alliance schools will build on collaborative practices within and between schools. and support PDP goals common across schools.

Development of ICT plan with professional learning in STEM, robotics and Learning to Code.

Strategic Direction 2

High Quality Educational Experiences

Purpose

Staff has the capacity to provide equality teaching programs to meet the diverse range of student abilities and needs. Teachers are engaged in individual and team professional learning to cater for the 21st Century learner.

A sequenced plan for curriculum delivery ensuring consistent teaching and learning experiences with clear monitored learning across year levels is developed.

Assessment and reporting practices are aligned with teaching and learning practices.

Overall summary of progress

All student growth from Yr3 to Yr5 as evidenced by NAPLAN data improves by a minimum of 1 skill band. Programs reflect evidence based teaching and learning. Early and sustainable interventions are in place for students identified as needing additional support and a deeper, shared understanding of quality teaching for all staff including a framework for teacher self-evaluation, lesson observations, feedback and the Performance and Development process has been implemented.

Students now share responsibility in building a positive school culture through Assessment for Learning. The school leadership team is building the collective capacity of the staff to use data to inform professional strategic teaching and learning improvements where all students entered on the PLAN and Literacy and Numeracy continuums to assist with informed decision making. Programs, assessment tasks and rubrics reflect changes to pedagogy and curriculum and teaching staff have access to a broad range of student achievement and wellbeing data to use for analysis to diagnose students' needs and to ensure differentiated learning.

Progress towards achieving improvement measures

Improvement measures (to be achieved over 3 years)	Progress achieved this year	Funds Expended (Resources)
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Student growth from YR3 TO Yr5 as evidenced by NAPLAN and various standardised data100% K–6 students achieving benchmarks in English and Mathematics.	Teaching staff have access to a broad range of student achievement and wellbeing data to use for analysis to diagnose students' needs and to ensure differentiated learning. Learning and supports plans are strengthened and students gain access to necessary community partners and learning support staff.	\$10751 Location

Next Steps

Continue to build Professional Learning for teachers in high quality learning and support programs using the "Bump it up" units on Adobe Connect, ongoing Professional Learning in L3. The development of a whole school assessment timetable and guidelines will provide teachers with guidance in how, when and what to assess.

Teachers will be trained on the use of robotics and how to teach coding through the Alliance professional Learning sessions.

Students will be identified according to their abilities and needs across the curriculums to support or extend and differentiate programs accordingly.

Teachers will use rubrics, work samples and common language across the school to encourage quality student work and maximum effort from students.

Strategic Direction 3

Respectful and responsible community members

Purpose

The school has an embedded system of values and understanding of culture which includes students' social conscience and aspirations to be lifelong learners.

Students are given opportunities to develop into resilient, responsible members of society. Staff, students and school community members are respected and highly valued. Opportunities and support are provided for students and staff to develop leadership and be involved in decision making in the school. All students, staff and community have a sense of belonging and pride in the school.

Overall summary of progress

There is a high level of involvement and participation in community and global activities including ANZAC commemorations, community fundraising where students demonstrate a community conscience through empathy for others.

Quality teaching and professional practice are evident in every learning environment, providing students with opportunities to connect, succeed and thrive.

Students are taught to accept responsibility and consequences for their own behaviours. Positive, respectful relationships are evident among students, staff and community members. Extra-curricular learning opportunities are significant, support student development and are strongly aligned with the school vision, values and priorities.

Progress towards achieving improvement measures

Improvement measures (to be achieved over 3 years)	Progress achieved this year	Funds Expended (Resources)
Curriculum provision meets community needs and expectations	The school has in place a comprehensive and inclusive framework to support the cognitive, emotional, social, physical and spiritual well-being of students that individually and collectively improves wellbeing	\$2000 Socio Economic Background

Next Steps

YCDI program will continue to reinforce the school's vision, values and priorities. The completion of the school's Well Being guidelines will support the school culture. Reinforcement of YCDI values.

Opportunities for students to develop and demonstrate leadership.

Employment of a trained music teacher to provide students with the opportunities to develop into confident, happy and successful students in the area of performance.

Key Initiatives	Impact achieved this year	Resources (annual)
Aboriginal background loading	All students have an individual learning plan (ILP) and are making progress across the literacy and numeracy continuums.	Employment of SLSO to support students across the school to assist with differentiated and individualised programs for our Aboriginal students. Aboriginal Background (\$14667) • Aboriginal background loading (\$0.00)
Low level adjustment for disability	Students will have access to higher levels of support for students with specific learning needs.	Employment of SLSO to support student across the school to assist with differentiated and individualised programs (\$23358) • Low level adjustment for disability (\$0.00)
Quality Teaching, Successful Students (QTSS)	Additional support for K–2 students identified not reaching state benchmarks	Employment of LAST (\$2641)
Socio–economic background	Additional support for S2 and S3 students identified through NAPLAN not reaching state benchmarks	Employment of Learning and Support teacher. (\$12 142)

Student information

*Full Time Equivalent

Student enrolment profile

Students	Enrolments			
	2013	2014	2015	2016
Boys	16	17	17	16
Girls	17	21	19	21

Student attendance profile

School				
Year	2013	2014	2015	2016
K	91.3	92	95.6	95.1
1	91.2	97.8	94.5	94.9
2	94.7	95.9	95.9	94.8
3	90.9	96.7	95.1	98.1
4	93.1	94.1	95.6	88.7
5	96.6	95.9	90.6	96.4
6	96.3	91.8	93.7	97.6
All Years	93.1	94.4	94.2	95.2
State DoE				
Year	2013	2014	2015	2016
K	95	95.2	94.4	94.4
1	94.5	94.7	93.8	93.9
2	94.7	94.9	94	94.1
3	94.8	95	94.1	94.2
4	94.7	94.9	94	93.9
5	94.5	94.8	94	93.9
6	94.1	94.2	93.5	93.4
All Years	94.7	94.8	94	94

Workforce information

Workforce composition

Position	FTE*
Principal	1
Classroom Teacher(s)	1.25
Learning and Support Teacher(s)	0.2
Teacher Librarian	0.08
School Administration & Support Staff	1.01
Other Positions	0.11

Teacher qualifications

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

Teacher qualifications

Qualifications	% of staff
Undergraduate degree or diploma	100
Postgraduate degree	

Professional learning and teacher accreditation

Staff at Rocky River participated in high quality professional learning provided around using the writing work samples to plot students on the Literacy continuum to guide teaching. All classroom teachers trained in the Accelerated pedagogy for full implementation K–6 to provide a whole school approach and discourse.

High quality professional learning was provided around Writing process and using the writing work samples to plot students accordingly on continuum.

All teachers moderating writing using Writing moderation samples in the cluster document to improve outcomes for students in all processes of writing and as a result all 3–6 teachers using NAPLAN observation grids to improve writing outcomes for students in writing. The Thunderbolt's Alliance worked together to broaden their knowledge of English unit writing to include the Writing Processes and English Conceptual processes and concepts and developing a Thunderbolts English concepts scope and sequence.

Professional Learning across the Alliance also focused on Hattie research, A4L, visible learning to improve teacher capacity to provide feedback. Students understand their own personal learning intentions around writing with the aim that teachers will have high expectations and learning goals will be set for every student to progress and demonstrate growth by contributing to their own education.

Professional learning using the Numeracy continuum with a specific focus on EAS and assessment strategies in EAS through the use of Targeting Early Numeracy.

Professional Learning was provided in a disciplined collaborative professional learning environment which resulted in improved student outcomes.

In 2016, Miss Leah Miller became accredited at a Proficient level.

Financial information (for schools using OASIS for the whole year)

Financial information

This summary financial information covers funds for operating costs from 1 December 2015 to 30 November 2016 and does not involve expenditure areas such as permanent salaries, building and major maintenance.

Income	\$
Balance brought forward	54 992.64
Global funds	63 005.00
Tied funds	59 401.90
School & community sources	13 835.20
Interest	1 096.57
Trust receipts	70.50
Canteen	0.00
Total income	192 401.81
Expenditure	
Teaching & learning	
Key learning areas	7 754.95
Excursions	6 666.73
Extracurricular dissections	6 896.70
Library	155.00
Training & development	6 477.44
Tied funds	47 573.80
Short term relief	9 840.57
Administration & office	25 943.66
School-operated canteen	0.00
Utilities	4 089.93
Maintenance	4 462.58
Trust accounts	152.66
Capital programs	0.00
Total expenditure	120 014.02
Balance carried forward	72 387.79

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

School performance

NAPLAN

In the National Assessment Program, the results across the Years 3, 5, 7 and 9 literacy and numeracy assessments are reported on a scale from Band 1 to Band 10. The achievement scale represents increasing levels of skills and understandings demonstrated in these assessments.

Rocky River had 4 students in year 3 and 5 students in year 5 sit the NAPLAN.

Due to the small cohort size and to maintain the privacy of the student results there is no reporting of statistical data from NAPLAN.

The *My School* website provides detailed information and data for national literacy and numeracy testing. Click on the link *My School* and insert the school name in the *Find a school* and select *GO* to access the school data.

Parent/caregiver, student, teacher satisfaction

Each year schools are required to seek the opinions of parents, students and teachers about the school. Their responses are represented below.

100% of parent responses believed the use of *You Can Do It* developed the link between home and school creating a consistent language around wellbeing. Students and staff also agreed that by using YCDI, there are clear rules and expectations for classroom behaviour and students understand these and teachers maintain high expectations that they be followed.

Students feel accepted and valued by their peers and by others at their school and have friends at school they can trust and who encourage them to make positive choices. They believe that education will benefit them personally and economically, and will have a strong bearing on their future and are interested and motivated in their learning.

Students feel challenged in their English and Maths classes and feel confident of their skills in these subjects. Students find the classroom instruction is well-organised, with a clear purpose, and with immediate and appropriate feedback that helps them learn.

Policy requirements

Aboriginal education

In 2016 there were 9 Aboriginal students enrolled at the school.

Targets were based on improving student outcomes in

Numeracy and Literacy with a particular focus on Writing using the Accelerated Literacy pedagogy and Early Arithmetic Strategies using the Targeting Early Numeracy intervention. The use of Accelerated Literacy(AL) methodology to tackle low literacy levels within our Alliance with a particular focus on our Indigenous students. By implementing AL across our Alliance, the use of regular routines based on strategies that provide a context for classroom lessons and created a common professional discourse that is ongoing and sustainable.

STEM was also a targeted area to engage our Indigenous students in Science, Technology, Mathematics and Engineering. Trial STEM lessons were taught with our own classes. Examples of STEM lesson implementation so far included: iPad App – Water Bears, coding, design and building challenges using cups and marshmallows, creative and critical thinking design challenges. Challenges have been trailed from the new BOSTESISTEM sight MiniMe program with great success. These challenges encouraged students to not only participate in STEM but also a step further in using the design process.

All teaching programs were embedded with Aboriginal perspectives including history, culture, high profile Aboriginal role models and the celebration of NAIDOC Week.

After being surveyed, our Aboriginal students reported that they felt good about their culture when at school and that their teachers had a good understanding of their culture.

Multicultural and anti-racism education

In line with the School plan, the school has reviewed its teaching and learning programs this year to ensure that culturally inclusive classroom and school practices are embedded for all students. Further to this our programs foster students' understandings of culture, cultural diversity, racism and active citizenship within a democratic, multicultural society.

Teachers participated in professional learning and included strategies for embedding multicultural and anti-racism education into their teaching and learning programs.

The school engaged the 'Circle of Drumming' learning to provide an opportunity for all students to become immersed in cultural activities. The drum group performed for our local community. Rocky River also enjoyed participating in Harmony day and numerous multi cultural opportunities throughout the year.

Other school programs

During the year our students have challenged themselves academically, on the sporting field and culturally. Some entered external competitions, took on enrichment programs, spelling bees and the Premiers

Reading Challenge. Others represented our school on the sporting field in many different sports and at many different levels. Some students began a musical instruments through private tuition whilst others continued to develop their drama skills performing in our wonderful Christmas play.

The Premier's Spelling Bee was a successful and enjoyable event and all students in Upper Division were involved in the initial class testing, culminating in a school challenge which saw Emma Page, Harrison Miller, Bella Marsh and Tilly Reynolds represent our school at the regional finals in Armidale

This year, P.E. was run as a PE block 4 days a week and K-6 PE program was developed in line with the government initiative Good for Life Good for Kids and NSW Sporting grants. In term 4, students were given the opportunity to participate in the Lifesaving Program and the Learn to Swim Program at Uralla Pool. These programs enabled students to develop water awareness skills and the knowledge to assist someone in trouble without putting themselves in danger. The school is grateful for the support provided by instructors from Harwood's Swim School.

In sport this year, students enjoyed participating in our 3 main small school carnivals, swimming, athletics and cross country. A number of students were selected to participate in the Armidale District and Zone carnivals and a particular mention goes to Harrison Miller who represented Australian the Junior Archery world titles.

Kindergarten Transition was run for a full term this year and was extremely successful in preparing our students for "big school" in 2017.

Students also participated in the annual safety day again this year. This day allows students to rotate through activities to remind them before the holidays about how to be safe.

Students also enjoyed participating in a variety of activities to raise money for childhood diseases.