

Waitara Public School Annual Report



2016



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Introduction

The Annual Report for **2016** is provided to the community of **Waitara 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.

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Message from the Principal

Waitara Public School is an innovative, vibrant and engaged school community committed to delivering rich, inclusive learning in a nurturing environment. Our school's success is underpinned by a highly dedicated staff who demonstrate commitment within the school to strengthen and deliver on school learning priorities and provide an inclusive environment where all students are nurtured and encouraged to achieve their personal best.

Our students are a passionate and motivated group of young people who are keen to learn and participate in the extensive range of educational opportunities provided for them at the school. Waitara's curricular and extra-curricular learning opportunities are excellent and are strongly aligned with the schools vision and values. Waitara Public School enjoys tremendous support from our parent body and local community. We work collaboratively to ensure collective responsibility for our students learning and success.

Parents continue to be valued and supportive in the many roles they undertake. Community relationships are integral to the growth and development of students within our school. A key component to our schools success is our active community engagement process.

For Waitara Public School in 2016 our achievements were identified as;

- completion of the External Validation Process with excellent results
- all staff participated in professional development for Science Technology Engineering Art Mathematics (STEAM)/Project Based Learning and 21st Century Fluencies.
- three way conferences were implemented to acknowledge student progress, achievements and future learning goals.
- digital student portfolios were rolled out across the school.
- Parent and Community Expo was introduced in support of our community.

Dany Coelho

Relieving Principal

School background

School vision statement

Waitara Public School is an innovative, vibrant and engaged school community committed to delivering rich, inclusive learning in a nurturing environment. Students will be successful, creative independent thinkers who challenge themselves and inspire others, embodying a genuine passion for lifelong learning through equity and excellence in education.

School context

Waitara Public School is a growing school in the Hornsby School Education Area. There are approximately 864 students enrolled from Kindergarten to Year 6, including two Opportunity Classes. Students come from diverse language backgrounds with approximately 85% from language backgrounds other than English. There are 52 cultures represented within the school community, with Chinese, Indian, Korean and Sri Lankan the predominate groups.

There are approximately 64 school based personnel including executive staff, classroom teachers, specialist EAL/D, a Reading Recovery teacher, Teacher Librarian, School Counsellor, School Learning Support Officers, administrative staff and a general assistant.

Student achievements in NAPLAN assessments are excellent, with a large percentage of students achieving in the top two bands in all areas.

School staff is enthusiastic and highly committed. The school enjoys a good mix of enthusiastic young teachers supported by highly skilled, experienced colleagues. One laudable feature of the staff at Waitara is the level of team work, supported by a strong commitment to ongoing professional learning.

Waitara is equipped with the technology to support 21st Century learners with a strong technology infrastructure that allows all students access to wireless hubs and a selection of devices. A continued focus will be staff professional development to increase ICT competency, differentiating the curriculum and the ongoing implementation of the Positive Behaviour for Engagement in Learning (PBEL) program to improve student learning.

Parents continue to be valued and supportive in the many roles they undertake. Community relationships are integral to the growth and development of students within our school.

Self-assessment and school achievement

Self-assessment using the School Excellence Framework

This year, our school undertook self-assessment using the School Excellence Framework and participated in an external validation. 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. During the external validation process, an independent panel of peer principals considered our evidence and assessment of the school's progress, aligned with the standards articulated in the School Excellence Framework.

This year, staff members at Waitara Public School have discussed the School Excellence Framework and its implications for informing, monitoring and validating our journey of excellence. Time was dedicated at our School Development Day in Term 3 to thoroughly examine the school plan to determine the elements of the School Excellence Framework that the school plan most strongly addressed. Staff reflected on the progress being made across the school as a whole based on the expectations identified in the School Excellence Framework. This ensured that our improvement efforts align with these high level expectations.

The results of this process indicated that in the School Excellence Framework domain of Learning that Waitara Public School demonstrates a culture where there is demonstrated commitment within the school to strengthen and deliver on school learning priorities and there are systematic policies, programs and processes to identify and address student learning needs. Wellbeing at Waitara is evident in every learning environment, providing students with opportunities to connect, succeed and thrive in areas that are relevant to their stages of learning and development. Waitara Public School has explicit processes in place to collect, analyse and report internal and external student and school performance data. The school: – achieves good value-added results, and/or – around 20 per cent of students achieve at high levels of performance on external performance measures.

The results of this process indicated that in the School Excellence Framework domain of Teaching, teachers regularly use student performance data and other student feedback to evaluate the effectiveness of their own teaching practices. The school ensures teachers clearly understand and utilise assessment for learning, assessment as learning and assessment of learning in determining teaching directions, school performance levels and effectiveness. Waitara teachers collaborate to improve teaching and learning in their year groups, stages, faculties, or for particular student groups and explicit systems for collaboration and feedback to sustain quality teaching practice is embedded into school culture. There is a particular focus on improved teaching methods in literacy and numeracy, with professional learning activities focused on building teachers' understandings of effective teaching strategies in these areas. The school ensures professional learning is aligned with the school plan, evident in teacher's Professional Development Plans and its impact on the quality of teaching and student learning outcomes is evaluated. The school leadership team engages the school community in reflecting on student performance data.

The results of this process indicated that in the School Excellence Framework domain of Leading there is a commitment for the school leadership team to support a culture of high expectations and community engagement, resulting in sustained and measurable whole school improvement. Waitara prides itself on the delivery of a shared school-wide responsibility through leadership, teaching and learning and community evaluations to review learning improvements and evaluate the school strategic plan. Long term planning is evident to ensure resources are strategically used to achieve improved student outcomes. Current management systems, structures and processes will continue to strengthen to ensure ongoing school improvement and the professional effectiveness of all school members.

Our School moved from Sustaining and Growing in the Domains of Teaching, Leading and Learning to excelling in the following: Curriculum and Learning, Assessment and Reporting, Student Performance Measures, Collaborative Practice, School Planning Assessment and Reporting and Management Practices and Processes.

Our self-assessment and the external validation 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>

Strategic Direction 1

Highly engaged, resourceful and reflective lifelong learners.

Purpose

To provide an authentic learning environment that enables all students to be actively engaged in meaningful, challenging and future – focused learning experiences, in order to achieve and thrive as learners, leaders and responsible, productive citizens.

Overall summary of progress

The majority of teaching programs reflect a change in pedagogy with 21st Century fluencies, embedded use of technology and differentiated teaching to address the learning needs and levels of engagement of all students.

In 2016 our classroom assessments continued to inform teaching and learning programs, drive differentiation practice (assessment for learning), ensure learning is appropriate, allow for frequent monitoring of learning (assessment of learning), reflect the teaching program and relate to syllabus outcomes, (assessment of learning) and demonstrate instructional needs along learning continuums– PLAN.

The instruments used for assessment include; formal and informal observation of students' work, notes that teachers make, teacher judgement, peer and self– assessment checklists, reflection and goal setting processes, teacher constructed assessment tasks specific to outcomes, using rubrics, and standardised, diagnostic and criterion referenced tests.

Staff collaborate for planning and curriculum at a stage level to ensure continuity across the grades for our students. Stage meetings allow time for tracking, moderation and analysis of specific data which leads to common assessment tasks. At a class level teachers use the information to differentiate curriculum, create individual PDP's and make referrals to Assistant Principals and the Learning Support Team.

Students use personal goal setting to reflect and improve their learning. In 2016, K–6 implemented this in all classrooms. Our Annual *Celebration of Learning* assembly acknowledges students goal achievements.

Progress towards achieving improvement measures

Improvement measures (to be achieved over 3 years)	Progress achieved this year	Funds Expended (Resources)
80% of students achieve their expected cluster on the Literacy and Numeracy Continuums.	All staff were professionally developed in the implementation of PLAN. All students by the end of the year were plotted on the literacy continuum.	
Students in Years 2,3,4,5, and 6 demonstrate growth in their scores using the ACER online Comprehension and Maths Assessment Tool.	Super Six strategies were implemented in classes 2–6 through the learning and support teacher working collaboratively with the classroom teacher.	\$21,000
Tell Them From Me (TTFM) surveys reflect growth in scores relating to student engagement in learning.	The Tell Them from Me surveys results showed 80% of students in this school were interested and motivated. these results are above the government norm. 84% of the girls and 77% of the boys in our school were interested and motivated. These are above the NSW Government norm of 83% for girls and 73% for boys.	

Next Steps

- Implementation of KidsMatter in the school in 2017 and mindfulness sessions across K–6.
- Academic partner leading 'Vocabulary Project' focusing on Tier 2 vocabulary. teachers use reflection on assessment and reporting processes and feedback to plan learning.
- Literacy Continuums used across the school using PLAN
- All teaching programs reflect a change in Pedagogy with 21st century fluencies, embedded use of technology and differentiated teaching to address the needs of all students.
- Students are involved in their learning and decision making through a continuing whole school commitment to Science Technology Engineering Arts Mathematics –STEAM, authentic Inquiry Based Learning , students voice, students goals and leadership.
- Continue to build on and improve support for Gifted and Talented students in Stage 2.



Strategic Direction 2

Innovative and collaborative teachers and leaders demonstrate a high standard of professional educational practice.

Purpose

To create a culture where all staff strive to meet the teaching professional standards through ongoing professional learning recognising that quality teachers are crucial for achieving an overall improvement in student learning outcomes. As 21st Century educators we model reflective practice and seek to build our leadership capacity for the benefit of all.

Overall summary of progress

As a result of mining student performance in NAPLAN and PAT data from 2015 and with consideration for our high percentage of NESB students the Term 2 learning priority for stage planning was working collaboratively with an external mentor to build vocabulary using the quality teaching framework and authentic experiences. At the end of Term 1, the school employed an external professional literacy educator, to lead the school in building explicit teaching of vocabulary and authentic experience. This embodied **Strategic Direction 2 in creating a culture where all staff strive to meet the teaching professional standards through ongoing professional learning recognising that quality teachers are crucial for achieving an overall improvement in student learning outcomes. As 21st Century educators we model reflective practice and seek to build our leadership capacity for the benefit of all.**

Our mentor initially worked with the executive team to map out the processes required to achieve our final outcome. Executive staff and the mentor, then led their stages in planning the units of work that linked History and English to create an authentic task that would allow students to drill down and draw on their experiences in writing to improve their vocabulary. She did this by; supporting teachers in planning writing activities with a vocabulary and authentic experience focus, suggesting a range of rich texts to support teaching and learning of the unit and preparing and modelling the use of higher order questioning to lead a discussion of a piece of rich literature. School executive demonstrated instructional leadership when delivering TPL on teacher observation using the quality teaching framework. Executive modelled and discussed the process of implementation of lesson observation so it could be implemented in a collaborative, supportive and non-threatening way for all teachers.

Progress towards achieving improvement measures

Improvement measures (to be achieved over 3 years)	Progress achieved this year	Funds Expended (Resources)
100% of teachers at proficient level with an increased number of teachers aspiring to be Highly Accomplished and Lead teachers from 2 to 4.	This year across the Hornsby Community of Schools an Aspiring Leaders and Beginning Teacher Network was established with many Waitara teachers participating in these. Our Local Quality Teacher advisor ran executive development days on the classroom observation process. and sessions on maintaining accreditation at proficient and high level for the teachers at Waitara.	\$2000
Survey 21st Century Fluencies –TTFM pre–post critical and creative thinking capabilities survey for students and teachers.	All staff participated in a teacher professional learning on 21st Century fluencies and the age of disruption. Members of the technology committee and the executive also attend Turramurra's iOn the Future Conference.	\$4174

Next Steps

- Collaborative learning space set up in the OC classes.
- BYODD introduced across stage 3.
- Science Design processes and whole school language of 21st Century Fluencies established K–2 3–6.
- Induction program finalised for beginning and newly appointed teachers to the school.

Strategic Direction 3

A multicultural community working in partnership with a shared vision.

Purpose

To build a learning community with strong student, staff and parent relationships by leading and inspiring a culture of collaboration, engaged communication, empowered leadership and organisational practices.

Overall summary of progress

A committee was formed early in Term 1, 2016, which involved our ES1 Assistant Principal, the Community Engagement Officer, Mission Australia and Community Migrant Resource Centre representatives to develop an additional information session for Mandarin speaking 2016 Kindergarten families. Information regarding enrolment procedures, the transition process, curriculum and learning in a DoE setting, a typical day in kindergarten, information regarding English as an Additional Language or Dialect (EALD) programs, and a guest speaker from Disability Services was presented to the parents in both English and Mandarin with the support of a translator.

Opportunities to communicate with parents are actively sought through formal and informal contacts. As a result of a parent survey conducted in partnership with Macquarie University, parents indicated that they wished for a more effective way of communicating with the school. A new Schoolzine digital newsletter was introduced which enables translation options to cater for our diverse community. The school has a twitter account and through this platform we showcase the school's successes to the community. Another form of parent communication developed was 'Seesaw' digital portfolios. The roll out of these across the school is currently in progress. Seesaw empowers our students to independently document what they are learning at school. This Application offers our parents a personalised window into their child's learning.

The implementation of 'three way conferences' for students, parents and teachers has proven to be very successful. It demonstrates our understanding that positive and respectful relationships across the school community underpin a productive learning environment and support students' development of their responsibility as learners. Three-way conference provides a forum for teachers, students and parents to acknowledge student progress, achievement and future learning goals.

Progress towards achieving improvement measures

Improvement measures (to be achieved over 3 years)	Progress achieved this year	Funds Expended (Resources)
Our school is rated as building or sustaining on all seven dimensions of the School Assessment Tool Reflection Matrix.	This year at Waitara the school underwent the process of External Validation. The panel validated our assessment of sustain and growing in 8 elements and 6 in excelling.	\$8500
TTFM survey reflects growth in parent knowledge and understanding of their children's education.	The TTFM survey data indicated that. Parents strongly agreed with: Reports on my child's progress are written in terms I understand, If there were concerns with my child's behaviour at school, the teachers would inform me immediately. Three way conferences were implemented in stages 2&3. This enabled all stakeholders to take and active role in students learning.	\$295
TTFM survey reflects parent support of initiatives towards the development of their children's confidence and resilience.	The Tell Them From Me data indicated parents agree they are informed about their child's social and emotional developments and that the school helps prevent bullying. and the teachers help students develop positive friendships.	

Next Steps

- Increase the inclusion of all community groups through the support of the school Community Engagement Officer.
- EALD information session for parents.
- Families and the school share responsibility for student learning and wellbeing through building parent capacity to support learning at home, and improved communication.
- Parents have a greater access to students achievements with the Seesaw app and Science Technology Engineer Arts Mathematics in school showcases.



The screenshot shows the top section of the Waitara Public School website. At the top, there is a dark blue header with a white hamburger menu icon on the left and the text "WAITARA PUBLIC SCHOOL" in white. Below the header is a banner area. On the left side of the banner is the school's crest, which features a shield with a red rose and the motto "FEAR NAUGHT". To the right of the crest are two photographs: one of a group of children sitting on a bench, and another of three children sitting on the grass. Below the photographs is the school's motto: "TOGETHER WE LEARN AND GROW IN HARMONY". In the center of the banner is a "Select Language" dropdown menu with a downward arrow. Below the menu is the text "Powered by Google Translate". At the bottom of the banner area, the date "16 November 2016" is displayed. Below the banner is a blue bar with the text "Newsletter Articles" in white.

Key Initiatives	Impact achieved this year	Resources (annual)
Aboriginal background loading	<p>All students have an individual Personalised Learning Pathways (PLP) and are making progress across the literacy and numeracy continuums. Aboriginal students are demonstrating progress above the average level compared with non-Aboriginal students.</p> <p>Funding enabled students to have in class support with a focus on literacy and numeracy achievements</p>	\$1,327
English language proficiency	<p>Super Six strategies were used to assist students gain English language proficiency under the guidance of an experienced practitioner. The teachers are involved in team teaching with EALD staff to improve their skills and understandings.</p> <p>The Community Engagement Officer communicated with parents and invited them to parent information sessions : PPP parenting classes, She also ran a Parent Café on Wednesday afternoons.</p> <p>A range of strategies have been incorporated in the school's communication with parents/carers and community members from culturally diverse backgrounds. These included increased use of interpreters and the Schoolzine digital newsletter with translator capabilities. As a result these measures are strengthening parent and community engagement in school activities.</p>	\$408,781
Low level adjustment for disability	<p>The school's Learning and Support Team processes have been enhanced with a focus on supporting teachers in personalising learning and support and differentiation. The school used the Nationally Consistent Collection of Data (NCCD) to engage teachers in meaningful professional dialogue about how to cater for the varied needs of students in their classes and the learning and support teacher facilitated classroom teachers' discussions about adjustments to support individual student learning.</p>	\$97,730
Quality Teaching, Successful Students (QTSS)	<p>Waitara Public School has created collaborative practices which allowed teachers to jointly plan and observe each other's lessons. All stages have developed units of work and collaborative assessment tasks. Teachers reported that this assisted them to improve their understanding of student learning and effective classroom practice.</p> <p>Effective mentoring and coaching practices provided constructive feedback to individual teachers on lesson delivery, programming, assessment and classroom management. All teachers received support with accreditation processes and the new Performance and Development Framework within their Stage</p>	\$26,500

Quality Teaching, Successful Students (QTSS)	teams.	\$26,500
Socio-economic background	These funds were amalgamated with the ESES funding to support students learning in literacy and numeracy.	\$6,014
Support for beginning teachers	<p>Our three beginning teachers were released from class for two hours each week, to participate in a range of activities to support the development of their skills. These activities included mentoring and coaching sessions with their team leaders, lesson observation, professional learning on classroom management, student engagement and Maths and English curriculums. Support was also provided for the teachers to gather and annotate appropriate evidence to contribute to their accreditation.</p> <p>The teachers have also actively participated in stage planning and reporting. In feedback provided, the three teachers have that they were supported in the development of their skills and understandings, and that they felt they were a valued members of the learning community.</p> <p>Waitara Public School's mentoring and coaching program was effective and feedback from participants indicated that this support strengthened areas of need and improved classroom practice, behaviour management and understanding of whole school responsibilities. Teachers participated in the Hornsby Central community of schools Beginning teacher program.</p> <p>These teachers collaborated to create an Induction Program for future beginning teachers.</p>	\$34,917
Targeted student support for refugees and new arrivals	The New arrivals Program at Waitara is conducted by trained EALD teachers. Personalised withdrawal sessions are accommodated initially on a daily basis as is further support within the mainstream classroom.	\$400

Student information

Student enrolment profile

Students	Enrolments			
	2013	2014	2015	2016
Boys	319	345	363	401
Girls	295	314	330	331

The student enrolment profile table is prepopulated in early December with four years of enrolment data, for males and females, as of the census date.

Students come from diverse language backgrounds with approximately 85% from language backgrounds other than English. There are 52 cultures represented within the school community, with Chinese, Indian, Korean and Sri Lankan the predominate groups.

Student attendance profile

School				
Year	2013	2014	2015	2016
K	95.4	95.8	94.2	95.7
1	94.7	95.2	96.1	93.7
2	95.5	95.6	94.5	96.1
3	95.8	97.2	95.6	95.4
4	97.3	96.5	94.8	95.7
5	96.4	97.4	97.1	94.9
6	97	94.9	94.7	93.1
All Years	96.1	96.1	95.3	94.9
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
Deputy Principal(s)	1
Assistant Principal(s)	4
Classroom Teacher(s)	26.46
Teacher of Reading Recovery	0.42
Learning and Support Teacher(s)	0.6
Teacher Librarian	1.2
Teacher of ESL	3.8
School Administration & Support Staff	4.47
Other Positions	0

*Full Time Equivalent

In 2016 we did not have any Aboriginal teachers as part of the composition of Waitara's workforce.

Teacher qualifications

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

Teacher qualifications

Qualifications	% of staff
Undergraduate degree or diploma	76
Postgraduate degree	24

Professional learning and teacher accreditation

Significant amounts of Professional learning were undertaken by Waitara Public School staff in 2016. With the release of a different funding model and research supporting teacher quality being the single largest indicator of student success, this was a focus area for us. We had three beginning teachers access the Beginning teacher support funding under the Great Teaching, Inspired Learning reform. This funding allowed the teachers to access mentor time and professional learning. Professional learning complemented our strategic directions in the school plan.

Financial information (for schools fully deployed to SAP/SALM)

Financial summary

The information provided in the financial summary includes reporting from 1st January 2016 to 31st December 2016.

	2016 Actual (\$)
Opening Balance	344 224.85
Revenue	5 688 691.70
(2a) Appropriation	5 015 516.01
(2b) Sale of Goods and Services	10 775.27
(2c) Grants and Contributions	653 583.30
(2e) Gain and Loss	0.00
(2f) Other Revenue	0.00
(2d) Investment Income	8 817.12
Expenses	-5 728 012.08
Recurrent Expenses	-5 728 012.08
(3a) Employee Related	-4 957 727.52
(3b) Operating Expenses	-770 284.56
Capital Expenses	0.00
(3c) Employee Related	0.00
(3d) Operating Expenses	0.00
SURPLUS / DEFICIT FOR THE YEAR	-39 320.38
Balance Carried Forward	304 904.47

The Finance committee oversees and monitors the budget process

Financial summary equity funding

The equity funding data is the main component of the 'Appropriation' section of the financial summary above.

	2016 Actual (\$)
Base Total	4 391 907.22
Base Per Capita	37 557.04
Base Location	0.00
Other Base	4 354 350.19
Equity Total	513 852.78
Equity Aboriginal	1 327.40
Equity Socio economic	6 013.70
Equity Language	408 781.22
Equity Disability	97 730.46
Targeted Total	400.00
Other Total	46 343.77
Grand Total	4 952 503.77

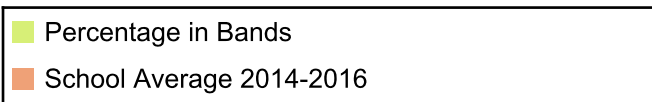
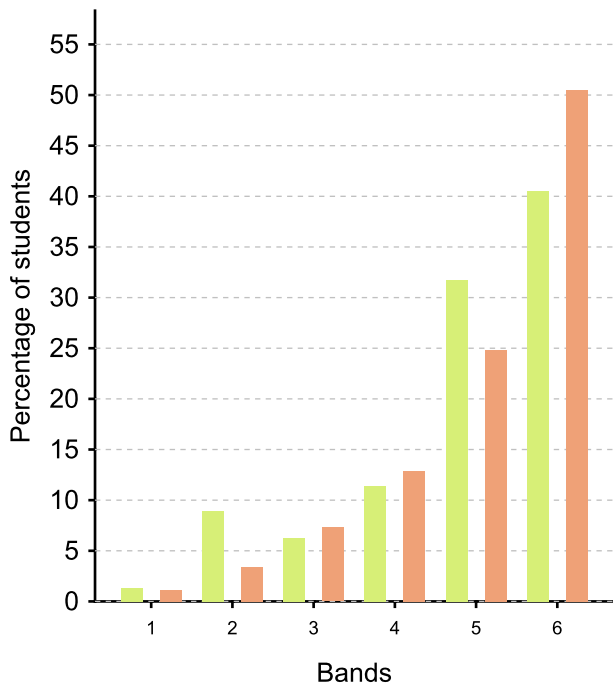
A full copy of the school's financial statement is tabled at the annual general meetings of the parent and/or community groups. Further details concerning the statement can be obtained by contacting the school.

School performance

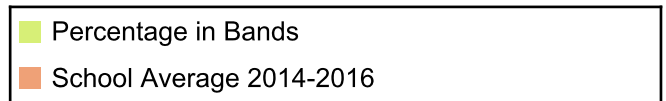
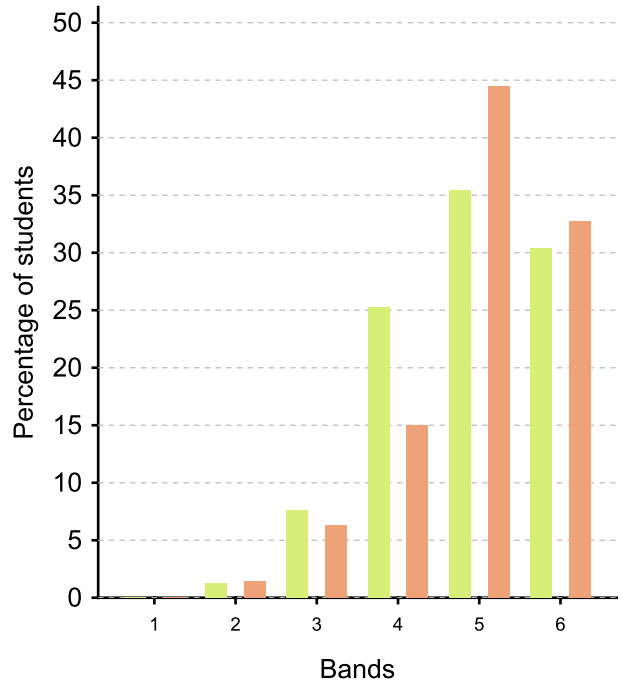
NAPLAN

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.

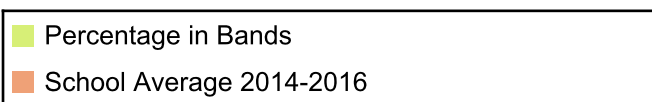
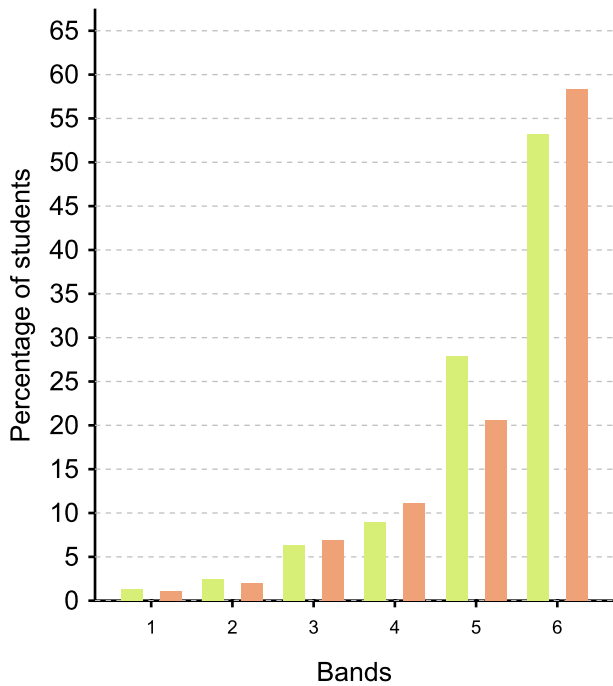
Percentage in bands:
Year 3 Reading



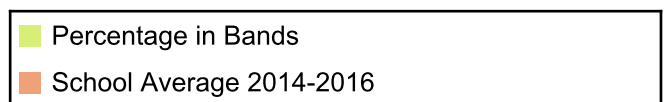
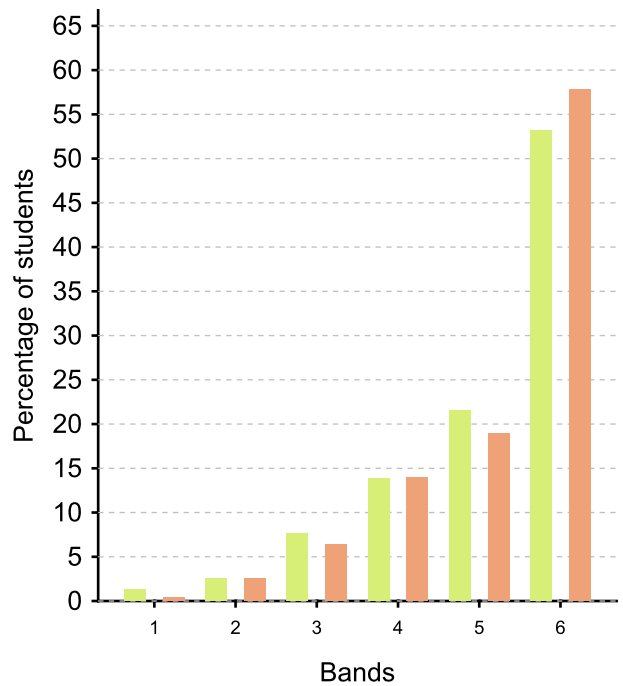
Percentage in bands:
Year 3 Writing



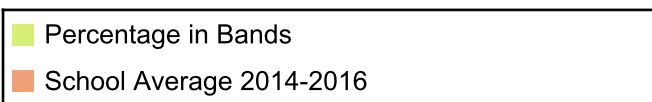
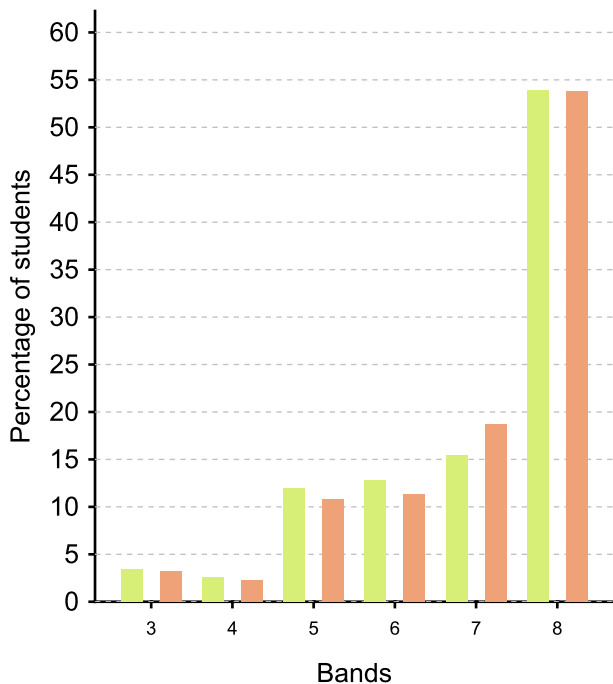
Percentage in bands:
Year 3 Spelling



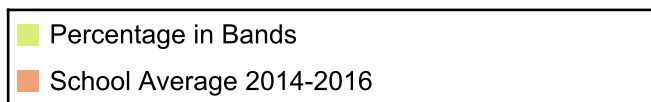
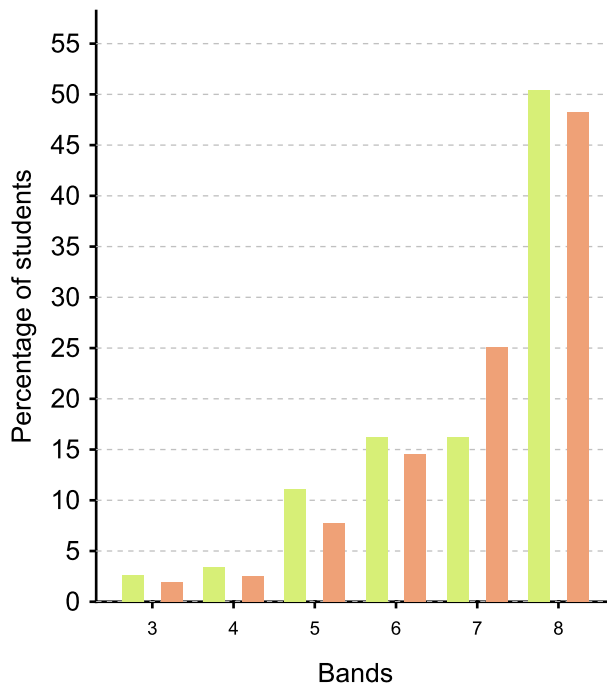
Percentage in bands:
Year 3 Grammar & Punctuation



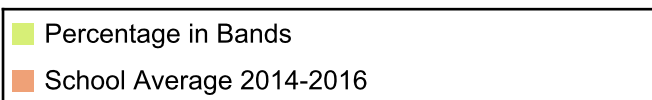
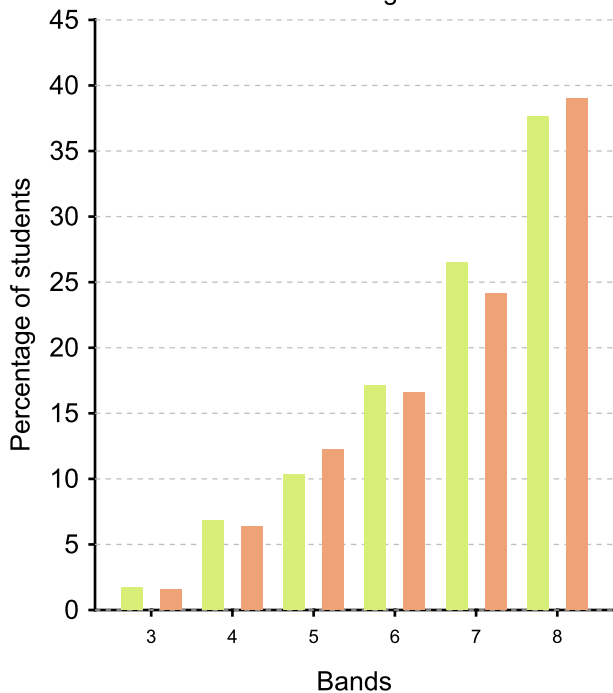
Percentage in bands:
Year 5 Grammar & Punctuation



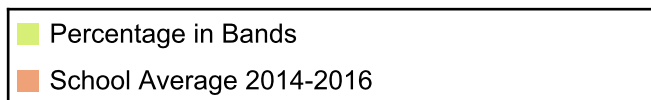
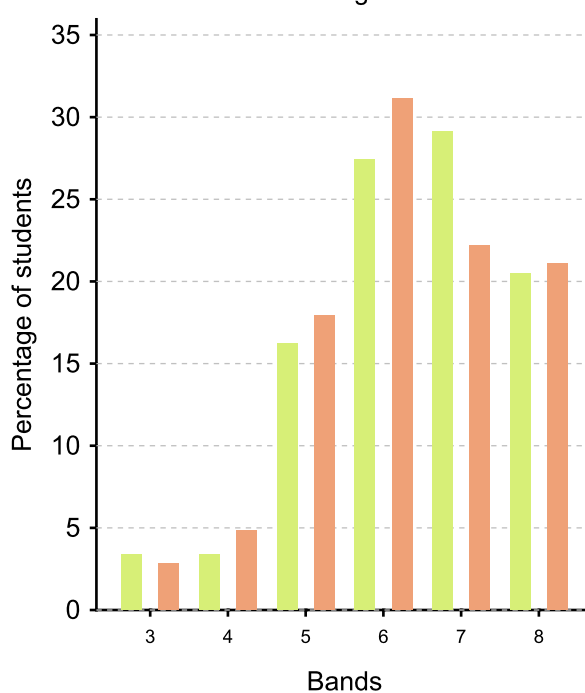
Percentage in bands:
Year 5 Spelling



Percentage in bands:
Year 5 Reading



Percentage in bands:
Year 5 Writing



The My School website provides detailed information and data for national literacy and numeracy testing. Click on the link <http://www.myschool.edu.au> and insert the school name in the Find a school and select GO to access the school data.

Parent/caregiver, student, teacher satisfaction

In 2016, the school sought the opinions of parents, students and teachers about the school. Their responses are presented below:

In The Tell Them From Me Surveys 80% of students in this school were interested and motivated. The NSW Government norm for these years is 78%.

The majority of parents believe that teachers have high expectations for their children to succeed and that teachers take account of their children's needs abilities and interests. Parents believe that teachers take an active role in ensuring all students are included in school activities and listen to the concerns that they have. Parents indicated teachers are friendly, kind, caring and encouraging with students and that their children love coming to school.

Staff at Waitara collaborate with each other to develop common learning opportunities. Staff talk with other teachers about strategies that increase student engagement. Teachers set clear classroom expectations and differentiate activities. and set high expectations for learning.

Policy requirements

Aboriginal education

Aboriginal Education and the Aboriginal Education Policy are important components of the school's curriculum. Ensuring that all students have an understanding of Australia's indigenous people and their history is embedded within the school's Human Society and its Environment program. In 2016, the school; provided an entertaining performance during Naidoc Week for students to view and through class programs raised awareness of reconciliation issues.

Teachers on the Aboriginal Committee were trained on the '8 Ways' Indigenous resource.

Through classroom activities throughout Naidoc Week; provided all students K–6 with programs focusing on Aboriginal history, social, artistic and sporting achievements; implemented individualised Personal Learning Pathways; ensured whole school, stage assemblies and other presentations begin with an Acknowledgement of Country. In 2017, Personalised Learning Pathways (PLP's) for Aboriginal students will be continued.

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. Further to this our programs foster students' understandings of culture, cultural diversity, racism and active citizenship within a democratic, multicultural society.

In March once again Waitara celebrated Harmony Day, with many students dressing in their national costume and marching proudly in the flag parade. Groups of students sang, danced and played musical instruments for a special outdoor concert, and a wonderful team of parents prepared food for the students to sample.

A range of strategies have been incorporated in the school's communication with parents and community members from culturally diverse backgrounds. These included; increased use of interpreters, the introduction of Schoolzine, our online newsletter with translator features. As a result, these strategies are strengthening parent and community engagement in school activities.

The Community Engagement Officer held weekly parent cafes where parents could come together to chat and often listen to an organised guest speaker. During the year to build understanding of parenting practice, PPP parenting sessions were offered in English and Mandarin. In 2016 a Parent and Community Expo was organised. Fifteen local area health specialists were invited into the school for parents to access their resources.

Other school programs

Dance Report

This year has been a successful and sparkly year for Dance at Waitara. We had 150 children from Years 3–6 audition for our Boys and Girls performance dance troupes. Our troupes have performed at the Sydney North Dance Festival, On Pointe troupe festival, Hornsby Girls High School Fair, Hornsby Music Festival and Carols in the Park. Our troupes have always been praised for their enthusiasm, performance and presentation.

Students have attended the Sydney North Dance Festival workshops at Sydney Dance Company, State based dance workshops and have auditioned for Sydney North ensembles. At school all students K–6 have participated in dance lessons, with focus on movement from the Creative Arts curriculum. Our dance teacher Klien Hicks has been phenomenal with his choreography, attention to detail and ability to inspire all our students to become dancers.

Sport Report

2016 proved to be an exciting year for sport at Waitara Public School with a variety of teams and individuals representing our School, Zone and Area.

In March, 28 students competed at the Zone Swimming Carnival at Ku-ring Gai Fitness and Aquatic Centre. Jamie from Year 6 was able to break 2 zone records. Jamie went on to represent Hornsby Zone at the Area

Swimming and then our Area at the NSW State carnival.

In May, 28 students were selected to represent Waitara at the Zone Cross Country Carnival at Rofe Park. Leo and Eva from Year 5 went on to be representatives at the Area Carnival in Gosford. Leo then represented our Area at the State carnival at Eastern Creek.

August saw 44 students from Waitara Public school go on to the Zone Athletics Carnival at Narrabeen. An overall 5th place was our most successful result in years. 8 students went on to represent Hornsby Zone at the Area carnival at Homebush, and Eva went on to the State Carnival for the 800m.

2016 proved to be a successful year for Waitara in the PSSA inter-school competition. Our amazing softball team went on to become Zone Champions for the second year in a row. The girls' soccer team topped the table and were narrowly defeated in the finals. Both cricket and mixed league tag made it through to the semi-finals.

The sporting talent at Waitara allowed for many students to be selected as Zone, Area and State representatives in a wide variety of sports including soccer, softball, touch football and cricket. Highlights included Giang and Krystal being selected in the Area soccer team, Vansh being selected for State cricket and Krystal being selected for State touch football.

The year culminated with Krystal being awarded Sportsperson of the Year and Tama with the Premier's Sporting Challenge Award.

Music Report

All students K-6 participate in a weekly, 40 minute music lesson with Mrs Bell or Mrs Still. Mrs Bell is our dedicated Music specialist and her high expectations and outstanding musicality have resulted in a high quality, engaging music program implemented throughout the school. 150 students at Waitara participate in the school's extracurricular music program. To accommodate the high demand of student's participation there are 5 Choirs and numerous musical ensembles. Our choirs were entered in music festivals and eisteddfods winning many awards.

Waitara Singers were involved in the Arts Alive Choral Festival early this year. In May Waitara Voices and Waitara Junior Voices competed in the Sydney Eisteddfod. They both performed so well that they competed against each other in the Choral Championship at the Sydney Eisteddfod with our Waitara Voices taking out a very close second place. Our Recorder and String Ensemble performed at "Festival of Instrumental Music" at the Sydney Opera House.

This year we had a new band program and new Band Director Adam Tomkins. The Senior Band and our Tone Chime Ensemble competed in the Ryde Eisteddfod in August and both gained Highly Commended.

The OC classes in Term 3 perform in a major musical production bi-annually in which they act, sing and play musical instruments. This year they performed the HMAS Pinnafore. They performed to a sold out show at the evening performances.