

Marks Point Public School Annual Report



2016



3898

Introduction

The Annual Report for 2016 is provided to the community of Marks Point 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.

Deborah Hall

Principal

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Message from the Principal

2016 has proved to be an exciting year for students at Marks Point Public School. We had many successes throughout the year in academics, the sporting arena and at cultural events.

Our high quality teachers have provided rich, exciting lessons for our students and we are lucky enough to have a supportive, involved parent community. I would like to thank our P & C for their tireless efforts in fundraising and supporting our school. This year the P & C donated over \$30000 worth of equipment to our school including home readers, sports uniforms, Year 6 shirts, Starstruck shirts, a donation towards the new play equipment, Quicksmart resources, bus hire for swim school a K– 2 play area and a Positive Behaviour for Learning start up.

Academically, we had our best ever result in the Newcastle Permanent Building Society Maths Competition with 7 distinctions and 9 merits awarded to students in Year 5 and 6. Our NAPLAN results showed excellent growth between Years 5 and 7 in all areas and we had fantastic results in the Galgabba Learning Community competitions with Annelie winning the spelling bee and Kyla and Remy winning their divisions in public speaking.

This year we introduced Powerful Learning Accountable Teaching (PLAT) to our classrooms to encourage students to own their own learning and as a way for teachers to track and monitor student success. It proved to be very successful and will continue and expand in 2017. Our football team were asked to participate in the Legends Cup in Sydney after their success in the Paul Harrogan Cup. The boys and Mr Gleeson had a fantastic day, even with the very rough weather conditions. This year we held our biannual concert with over 400 people attending two shows. Our Starstruck dancers were again fantastic school ambassadors, dancing in front of thousands at the Newcastle Entertainment Centre. Our Aboriginal Action Team continued to play an integral part in our school, developing a bush tucker garden and holding another wonderful NAIDOC celebration. Other successful programs during 2016 included the Got It and Fun Friends Programs, the continuation of our speech program and our professional development program for staff.

In 2016, we farewelled Mrs Sandra Banks as she moved into retirement. We wish her all the best in retirement and thank her for her dedication and service to our school over many years.

On a personal note, I would like to thank the staff, students and community for continuing to strive to ensure we provide our students with a high quality, well-rounded education. I am looking forward to 2017 being another fantastic year at Marks Point Public School.

Deborah Hall

Principal

School background

School vision statement

At Marks Point Public School, our vision is for a school which fosters confident and creative lifelong learners through inspired teaching and learning.

School context

Marks Point Public School is situated on Awabakal land on the eastern shore of Lake Macquarie and has a current enrolment of 151 students. Marks Point Public School services a wide variety of students and community members from a mixed socio-economic background with a Family Occupation and Education Index (FOEI) of 111. 12% of students are Aboriginal and the student mobility rate increased to 23% in 2014 with the majority of families moving to seek accommodation or employment.

A number of programs and strategies have been implemented to target specific outcomes such as Reading Recovery, Best Start, Language Learning and Literacy (L3), Focus on Reading (FoR) and Count Me In Too (CMIT). The teaching staff will continue to participate in explicit professional learning in the implementation of a range of literacy and numeracy programs.

The school is a part of the Galgabba Community of Schools with cohesive links in partnership across the six primary schools and high school. These links connect to Minimbah, our local Aboriginal Educational Consultative Group (AECG).

The school works in close partnership with the Galgabba Community of Schools and the Marks Point Public School P&C to deliver;

- Quality literacy and numeracy programs;
- Innovative technologies to meet the needs of 21st century learners;
- Differentiated learning to cater for student's individual needs
- Explicit teaching and modelling of the school's core values; and
- Inspired programs that embed responsible attitudes and develop active and informed citizens.

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, we have focused on developing scopes and sequences for areas in literacy, the implementation of Powerful Learning, Accountable Teaching (PLAT) and our learning support processes. The development and implementation of new scope and sequences for grammar, punctuation and spelling have resulted in a consistent approach to teaching these areas of literacy in all K – 6 classes. The introduction of Powerful Learning, Accountable Teaching (PLAT) in K – 2 classes for reading levels has allowed students to track their own learning on data walls and allowed teachers to monitor student learning through five-weekly data sharing sessions. Learning and support was also a focus this year and the Got It! Program was introduced in Term 1 for students and parents identified through the Got It! implementation process. Got It! was implemented in partnership with Hunter New England Health and worked with parents and students on modifying behaviours. Fun Friends was taught to students in K – 2 classes alongside Got It! and was effective in teaching students how to identify emotions and regulate the emotions.

In the domain of teaching, continuing with our collaborative practice model was a priority for 2016. Staff were able to meet in stage teams and across stage teams to develop programs for the implementation of Powerful Learning Accountable Teaching (PLAT), the grammar/ punctuation scope and sequence and the spelling scope and sequence.

These collaborative sessions resulted in consistent teacher judgement and K – 6 programs being consistently implemented in literacy. Achieving individual goals for staff Performance and Development Plans was also a priority for 2016. Our assistant principal was released from class one day per fortnight to work with teachers to achieve goals in plans. This proved to be a successful strategy with staff visiting other schools, other classes within our school and team teaching to develop their professional skills. This program will be expanded in 2017 to one day per week to assist staff in achieving their goals and for our assistant principal to mentor our new beginning teachers.

In the domain of leading, our priority for 2016 was capacity building amongst staff and to develop an effective leadership team. With a new assistant principal and a changeover of several long term staff during the year, ensuring key programs could continue with minimal disruption and ensuring all staff have knowledge in the systems and processes of the school is vital. The staff roles and responsibilities allocation allowed new staff to shadow more experienced staff in roles to ensure a transfer of knowledge. This proved to be a successful strategy with new staff now indicating they are capable of coordinating events. Regular executive meeting and communication between executive has been successful in developing an effective leadership team. The leadership team has been successful in leading the school through initiatives in the school plan.

Our self assessment has shown that 2016 has been a successful year in implementing our 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>

Strategic Direction 1

Enhance the quality of student learning and improve student achievement

Purpose

Every student at Marks Point Public School is engaged in meaningful learning experiences and is developing as a confident and creative lifelong learner, a leader and a responsible, active and informed citizen.

Overall summary of progress

In 2016, we had a continued focus on curriculum with the development of scope and sequences in grammar, punctuation and spelling to ensure consistency in teaching and progression from Kinder to Year 6. All classes are now using these learning progressions allowing for students to move through the content at their own pace. Teachers report that the scope and sequences are easy to follow and easily guides their planning and programming for students.

We also introduced Powerful Learning, Accountable Teaching (PLAT) this year to foster student ownership of their learning, to provide a continuous assessment model for teachers and develop an intervention plan for students who need extra assistance in literacy. All teachers are using PLAT strategies in their classrooms with students now able to verbalise what they have learnt and what they need to learn next to progress. In 2017, we will develop this model with a more formal intervention model.

In Learning Support, we provided parents and students in K – 2 the opportunity to participate in the Got It! program to develop behaviour management strategies for both students and parents. Students who were not selected for the program participated in the Fun Friends program in class. This program focussed on identifying emotions and how to control them. Participation in these programs had a positive impact on student emotional regulations.

Progress towards achieving improvement measures

Improvement measures (to be achieved over 3 years)	Progress achieved this year	Funds Expended (Resources)
A reduction of 10% of students with severe and moderate speech and language delays after LOLA implementation each year.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• In February 2016 – 80% of students displayed age appropriate speech. After intervention, in December 2016 – 95% of students displayed age appropriate speech.• Only 5% of students in the LOLA program require ongoing assistance at the end of 2016.	\$7025
A 10% reduction each year in the number of K–2 students failing to meet benchmarks in Literacy and Numeracy; 2014 PLAN data as baseline.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• K – 2 students show growth in reading levels. In February 2016, 26 students required Tier 1 – 3 intervention. In December 2016, 7 students required Tier 1 – 3 intervention.	\$14 677
A 10% reduction each year in the number of Yr 3–6 students failing to achieve expected growth in NAPLAN for literacy and maths. 2014 data as baseline.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• An increase of 11% of students achieving expected growth in NAPLAN numeracy from 2014 to 2016.• An increase of 18% of students achieving expected growth in NAPLAN grammar from 2014 to 2016.	\$13 126

Next Steps

- Expand Powerful Learning Accountable Teaching (PLAT) markers to years 3 – 6 in grammar, punctuation and writing.
- Continue to build on the LOLA speech program to support students.
- Introduce Positive Behaviour for Learning to build engagement in school.

Strategic Direction 2

Foster quality teaching and leadership

Purpose

Build teacher capacity through focused professional learning and development that creates a culture at Marks Point Public School in which every staff member is engaged in ongoing, relevant, evidence based learning and practice.

Overall summary of progress

The continuation of the Collaborative Teaching Model has enabled us to achieve significant progress in this strategic direction through a considered approach to professional development. The inclusion of structured time for staff to achieve their Performance and Development Plan goals, being mentored by executive staff has furthered developed our teachers' capacity to provide enriching, quality lessons for our students.

Teachers this year collaboratively planned the implementation of PLAT markers and new scope and sequence documents for grammar, punctuation and spelling. The collaboration has ensured consistency of content in all K – 6 classes and a clear understanding of expectations of explicit instruction.

Time was allocated to each teacher to work on achieving goals for their Performance and Development with structured meetings with executive staff to guide and assist in achieving the goals. Staff had opportunities to visit other schools and other classes within our school to develop their skills and classroom strategies. This process ensured our teachers are continually improving their skills to be quality teachers in our classrooms.

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">Annual Staff Professional Learning Survey using Guskey's levels of Professional Development indicates improvement from Collaborative Planning Model using beginning 2015 data as baseline.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Staff engaged in collaborative planning for literacy, spelling, grammar and Powerful Learning Accountable Teaching markers.Staff indicate professional learning rated highly on the Guskey thermometer and had impact on learning outcomes.	<p>\$13 378 Beginning Teacher funding</p> <p>\$23 450 Equity funding</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Teaching staff produce and implement a Performance and Development Plan each year.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Staff engaged in professional development towards their PDP goals.Staff engaged in lesson observations with colleagues during the year.All staff achieved at least one goal in their PDP.	<p>\$10200 Equity funding</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none">SAP, SALM and OLIVER are utilised effectively in the school by all staff.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">SAP and SALM are effectively being used by staff.Implementation of OLIVER began in Term 4.	<p>\$6260 LMBR funding</p>

Next Steps

- Continue to provide time for teachers to collaborate on curriculum and best practice.
- Expand the mentor time from one day per fortnight to one day per week to allow time for teachers to engage with executive and achieve their goals in Performance and Development Plans.
- Implement Beginning Teacher Program with three teachers.
- Provide professional learning on cross curriculum priorities for all staff.

Strategic Direction 3

Strengthen partnerships and enhance community engagement

Purpose

The Marks Point Public School community works collaboratively with the local Community of Schools, parents and other agencies to provide a learning environment which is purposeful, engaging, and supportive; catering for the learning needs of all students and community members.

Overall summary of progress

The continuation of the Aboriginal Action Team has developed our engagement with the indigenous community, providing opportunities for them to be involved in school activities including the development of a bush tucker garden and NAIDOC celebrations both at our school and with the Galgabba Community of Schools.

Links with Marks Point Preschool continue to forge a strong partnership. Visits by our students to perform and work with the pre-schoolers and visits from the pre-schoolers to our school have been frequent and successful in allowing the students to feel part of the school community before beginning kindergarten.

Communication with the parent community has continued to be strong with our Facebook page and Skoolbag app being very successful in sharing news, events and successes of our students. Our P & C is evidence of strong community support with the fundraising committee raising over \$30000 for the school in 2016. Parent and community participation in special events was strong again this year with over 400 people attending our school concert in two performances.

The Galgabba Community of Schools provided rich opportunities with public speaking, a science fair, CAPApillar Day and for the first time, a spelling bee for students.

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">Annual parent satisfaction survey on communication in Term 3 2015 gives baseline for comparison.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Parent viewing of our Facebook page is regular with most posts reaching over 500 people.Parents engage with the Skoolbag app to see messages, notes and newsletters.	\$2690
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Aboriginal Action team is formed and provides cultural program for indigenous students each year.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Aboriginal Action Team designed and built a bush tucker garden with student assistance.NAIDOC Day was a success with indigenous community members participating.Aboriginal cultural lessons were provided for all indigenous students.A didgeridoo group was formed for Year 3 – 6 indigenous boys and friends.	\$1188 NAIDOC \$10000 Aboriginal Cultural lessons
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Marks Point Preschool rates of attendance at MPPS increase using 2014 as a baseline.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Preschool students attended Easter celebrations and book week activities.12 students from Marks Point Preschool enrolled for 2016.	\$2500
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Increase in one level on Community Partnerships Matrix from base levels in January 2015.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">In January 2015, the school was at 'building' level for 'communicating' with the community. In December 2016, the school is at 'sustaining' level for 'communicating' with the community.	\$5400

Next Steps

- Community collaboration project to update use of the community hall.
- Customer Service 360 Tool to determine effectiveness of community communication and set next goals.
- Update of school website.

Key Initiatives	Impact achieved this year	Resources (annual)
Aboriginal background loading	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aboriginal Action team coordinated NAIDOC events. • Indigenous students engaged in 'My Story' lessons to connect with their culture. • Bush tucker garden was designed, planted and established. • All indigenous students worked on goals identified in their Personal Development Plan. 89% achieved their goals. 	\$17 120
English language proficiency	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students achieved results consistent with peers in literacy and numeracy. 	\$1550
Low level adjustment for disability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • LAST employed one extra day per week to assist students. • All students with a disability worked on IEP goals. 90% of students achieved those goals. 	\$12 234
Quality Teaching, Successful Students (QTSS)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff engaged in professional development for Performance and Development Plan with guidance from executive mentor. 	0.06 teacher allocation
Socio–economic background	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Revision and implementation of new scopes and sequences for grammar, punctuation and spelling were developed and implemented in all classes. • Technology was updated with 24 laptops bought for senior classes and two new interactive screens. • Flexible learning spaces were designed and built using future focused furniture for the Stage 3 classroom and the science classroom. • Powerful Learning Accountable Teaching was implemented across the school to develop literacy growth. • Financial student assistance was provided for excursions, educational resources and uniforms. 	\$40 114
Support for beginning teachers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Beginning teacher accessed release from face to face time to be mentored by executive and attended professional learning on futures learning, classroom management and creative and performing arts. 	\$13 378

Student information

Student enrolment profile

Students	Enrolments			
	2013	2014	2015	2016
Boys	75	72	75	74
Girls	81	79	85	76

Student attendance profile

School				
Year	2013	2014	2015	2016
K	95	92.6	93	94.6
1	93.5	93.4	91.1	95.6
2	95.8	93.3	96.5	94.9
3	93.7	95	92.8	94.7
4	93.7	93.5	93	94.1
5	92.6	93.5	94.2	95
6	93	94.4	93.3	94
All Years	93.8	93.6	93.4	94.7
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

Class sizes

Class	Total
KJ	20
1/2M	21
1L	20
2/3B	24
4/5G	33
5/6D	32

Workforce information

Workforce composition

Position	FTE*
Principal	1
Assistant Principal(s)	1
Classroom Teacher(s)	5.55
Teacher of Reading Recovery	0.5
Learning and Support Teacher(s)	0.4
Teacher Librarian	0.4
School Administration & Support Staff	1.71
Other Positions	1.06

*Full Time Equivalent

Currently we have no staff working in the school who identify as indigenous.

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	0

Professional learning and teacher accreditation

Professional learning was undertaken by staff in 2016 to support school goals and directions and also to develop individual goals identified in Professional Development Plans. Our collaborative planning model continued in 2016 with staff having regular time to collaborate and plan to improve lessons and student outcomes.

Four teachers are currently undergoing accreditation at the maintenance phase and all teachers tracked goals using the Teaching Standards. We had one beginning teacher in 2016 who worked with a mentor throughout the year to develop positive classroom practices and effective strategies.

Our school administrative staff participated in professional development around the introduction of Local Management and Business Reform (LMBR) and School Learning Support Officers were given the opportunity to develop skills in the implementation of Powerful Learning Accountable Teaching (PLAT).

\$11698 was spent on professional learning in 2016.

\$18700 was also spent to release executive staff to work with staff on fulfilling their Performance and Development Plan goals.

Financial information (for schools using both OASIS and SAP/SALM)

Financial information

The three financial summary tables cover 13 months (from 1 December 2015 to 31 December 2016).

The financial summary consists of school income broken down by funding source and is derived from the school Annual Financial Statement.

The information provided in the financial summary includes reporting from 27 January 2016 to 31 December 2016.

	2016 Actual (\$)
Opening Balance	0.00
Revenue	349 778.16
(2a) Appropriation	301 190.59
(2b) Sale of Goods and Services	-94.41
(2c) Grants and Contributions	48 075.45
(2e) Gain and Loss	0.00
(2f) Other Revenue	0.00
(2d) Investment Income	606.53
Expenses	-183 338.15
Recurrent Expenses	-183 338.15
(3a) Employee Related	-114 615.02
(3b) Operating Expenses	-68 723.13
Capital Expenses	0.00
(3c) Employee Related	0.00
(3d) Operating Expenses	0.00
SURPLUS / DEFICIT FOR THE YEAR	166 440.01
Balance Carried Forward	166 440.01

There is no opening balance recorded in the SAP finance table. The opening balance for the school for this reporting period is recorded as the Balance Brought Forward in the OASIS table.

The OASIS Balance carried forward amount (ie, funds on date of migration) is included in the (2a) Appropriation amount in the SAP table.

Any differences between the OASIS Balance carried forward and (2a) Appropriation amount is the result of other accounts and transactions being included in the (2a) Appropriation amount.

In 2016, the school playground equipment was reviewed and it was determined it needed replacing. As a result, funds have been held over until 2017 to purchase and install new equipment.

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	1 122 724.73
Base Per Capita	8 633.78
Base Location	0.00
Other Base	1 114 090.95
Equity Total	111 829.97
Equity Aboriginal	17 120.73
Equity Socio economic	40 114.74
Equity Language	1 551.15
Equity Disability	53 043.35
Targeted Total	28 650.00
Other Total	164 340.57
Grand Total	1 427 545.27

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

School-based assessment

In 2016, we assessed our students by many different means including rubrics, against the literacy and numeracy continuums, outcome checklists and Powerful Learning Accountable Teaching markers. We also regularly used the effect size calculator to determine the effectiveness of our teaching.

Some results include:

- Students, on average displaying more than two years growth between years 3 and 5 for reading, grammar and numeracy assessments.
- 12 Year 1 students moving from Tier 2 intervention level in reading to the zone of expected achievement or the zone of high

achievement by December.

- Students displaying less than expected growth using the effect size calculator being targeted to work with the Learning and Support Teacher for intervention.

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.

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

Students

This year our senior students completed the Tell Them From Me survey about their satisfaction at school. Our survey results indicated:

- 100% of students in Year 5 and 90% of students in Year 6 had positive relationships at school.
- 100% of all students valued schooling outcomes.
- 88% of Year 5 students and 94% of Year 6 students try hard in their learning.
- 57% of students in Year 5 and 45% of students in Year 6 had positive homework behaviours.
- 12% of students report being victims of bullying, less than the government school average of 36%.
- All students reported being involved in an extra curricular activity at school.

Areas for development include:

- Completing a homework review to encourage positive homework habits.
- Continue to offer support for students who feel bullied.

Parents

In 2016, the P&C surveyed parents to see what the school was doing well and what could be improved.

Our results indicated:

- Parents were happy with the way the school was doing academically and in sport.
- Parents wanted to have more channels of communication between the school and parents.

- Parents wanted the school to purchase new playground equipment and new sporting uniforms.

Areas we are improving resulting from the survey:

- New playground equipment will be installed for student use.
- The school will purchase new sporting uniforms.
- We will continue to endeavour to provide high quality academic learning and sporting opportunities.

Staff

This year our staff were surveyed on the effectiveness of teacher professional learning. This data will be compared to the baseline data collected in 2015 and the final data collected in 2017 to determine improvement of professional learning sessions. Our survey results indicated:

- 80% of teachers rated their professional learning in 2016 as having made 'changes to student learning outcomes'.
- 10% of teachers rated their professional learning in 2016 as having made 'changes to student learning practices and behaviours'.
- The Performance and Development Plan professional learning time was well received by staff.

Areas for consideration in 2017 include:

- The continuation of the Performance and Development Plan professional learning time being provided to all staff.
- The continuation of professional learning being determined by the school plan and individual learning needs of staff.

Policy requirements

Aboriginal education

Marks Point has a small number of students who identify as Aboriginal.

K – 6 teachers this year embedded Aboriginal perspectives into curriculum areas throughout the year.

In 2016, our Aboriginal Action Team continued to focus on developing understanding of the indigenous culture for all students in our school. NAIDOC Day was celebrated with all students engaged in Aboriginal art, singing, stories and bush tucker tasting. Our bush tucker garden, 'Dhakiliku' (which means 'to eat' in the local Awabakal language) was established with all students taking part in the planting of the bush tucker plants. Indigenous community members were involved in both the planning and running of the day. It was again, a very successful day connecting to country.

Our indigenous students were involved in cultural lessons this year with students undertaking the 'My Story' project to give them an opportunity to explore their family history, tribe and culture.

Our primary boys were engaged in didgeridoo group during Term 4. This group was coordinated through our

partner high school, Swansea High, and enabled indigenous boys and their friends to learn how to play the didgeridoo and the history behind the use of the didgeridoo in different tribes. It was a very successful program and will continue in 2017.

Multicultural and anti-racism education

A multicultural focus has been addressed through all areas of the curriculum, providing programs and perspectives which develop the knowledge, skills and attitudes required for living in our culturally diverse society.

Harmony Day has become an important event on our school calendar. We celebrate diversity in culture and advocate tolerance, friendship and empathy. It was celebrated in classrooms this year with all students involved in making hands to celebrate all cultures joining together and respecting diversity. The gifted and talented art group also made a Harmony Day mural for the school office.

Other school programs

Creative and Performing Arts

Our school continues to have a focused commitment to the arts and is generously supported by the school community. We offer a wide range of learning experiences in performing arts, utilising staff expertise and community to maximise the learning opportunities.

In 2016, we began a new 'Creative and Performing Arts Afternoon' across the school. Students had the opportunity to select a program they wished to participate in including bucket drumming, guitar, art, dance, drama, music and choir. Bucket drumming, guitar and art sessions were lead by a professional artist and professional musicians. The culmination of the program was our school concert 'Marks Point's Got Talent'. Two shows were held for the school community with over 400 parents and family members attending. The Creative and Performing Arts program was very well received and will continue in 2017.

Sixteen student dancers participated in Starstruck at the Newcastle Entertainment Centre in June. Our dancers were once again selected to dance in two dances during the show along with the finale. Teachers and parents worked with the students to learn the dance, make the costumes and transport the students to rehearsals and the performances. In 2017 we will extend our participation to include a Starstruck choir group.

Junior and senior dance groups taught by professional dance instructors and coordinated by the P & C dance committee again were a highlight in 2016. Both groups performed at the school concert, Grandparents Day and at Belmont Citi Centre Christmas Concert.

Selected Stage 3 students participated in CAPApillar activities with the Galgabba Community of Schools.

Students attended full day workshops in drama, dance, art, photography and music.

Sport

Marks Point Public School is renowned for opportunities and success in sport and 2016 has continued this tradition. We began the year with our 3–6 students loading the buses, full of colour and cheer for our annual swimming carnival at Swansea Pool. The sun was shining and there was plenty of cheering from the stands. It was wonderful to see so many students participating and having fun. The house points were close with Albatross being the eventual winners. We had a number of students proudly represent Marks Point at the East Lakes Zone Carnival. We then began training for the cross country carnival. The K–2 cross country was held on school grounds and the 3–6 event was held at Baxter Oval. We have a number of talented long distance runners with Chloe and Matt representing East Lakes at the Hunter Region Carnival and Amanda and Luka going on to represent the Hunter at the NSW Championships.

Our K–6 athletics carnival provided opportunity for maximum participation with students rotating around the competitive or novelty events. Swans were the winning house but it was fantastic to see all students cheering on their team mates. At the zone carnival Marks Point students once again gave their best effort with fabulous results from an amazingly talented small school. The finals medal count placed Marks Point 5th across all Eastlakes schools – with 5 gold, 3 silver and 2 bronze. Amanda, Luka, Jobie, Olivia and Daisy all went on to represent East Lakes at the regional competition.

Marks Point fielded PSSA knockout teams in soccer, softball, netball and touch football with all students proudly wearing their green and gold and giving their best effort. The netball team excelled making it to the preliminary quarter final of the state knockout. Students also had the opportunity to participate in gala days for netball, soccer, oztag and the Galgabba Cup. The rugby league team had a successful year representing the school admirably in the Knights Knockout, Jarrod Mullen Cup and the Paul Harragon Cup and were then selected to travel to Sydney to participate in the Legends shield.

With funding from the federal government Sporting Schools Australia program all students participated weekly for a term in a gymnastics program developing core fundamental movement skills. In Term 4 all Kindergarten to Year 2 students and 47 of our students from years 3–6 participated in the intensive school swimming and water safety program to provide students with the basic skills in water safety and survival.

Marks Point again achieved highly at a representative level from zone through to national carnivals. Outstanding achievements were:

- Brayden being selected in the regional softball and rugby league teams and went on to represent NSW at the Australian Rugby League Championships held in

Canberra. To cap this year off in representative sport; Brayden was selected for a Hunter Sports award for Excellence in the region.

- Chloe travelled to Albury representing the Hunter at the State Netball Championships.

- Sam travelled to Dubbo representing the Hunter at the State Softball Championships.

During 2016, the 3–6 students from Marks Point were given a variety of school sport options such as beach swimming/surfing and sand games, school based touch football, the interschool Macquarie Shield netball, the interschool Graham House rugby league competition, school based tabloids and gymnastics and circus skills. The wide variety contributed to maximum participation, enjoyment and growth in sport. Whatever the sport and wherever the venue– Marks Point students gave their best effort, always displaying sportsmanship. A big thank you to all our parents that helped coaching, managing, transporting or supporting students – these fantastic opportunities wouldn't happen without you.

Public Speaking and Spelling Bee

This year all of our students participated in the school public speaking competition. Our stage winners then represented our school at the Galgabba Public Speaking Competition and the Zone Public Speaking Competition. Kylah and Remy both won their stage competition at the Galgabba finals.

This year we also ran a spelling bee across the school with the winner from each stage representing our school at the Galgabba Spelling Bee finals. The competition was well received with Annelie going on to win her division at the Galgabba finals.