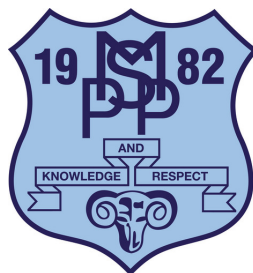


Matthew Pearce Public School

Annual Report



2016



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Introduction

The Annual Report for 2016 is provided to the community of Matthew Pearce 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.

Kim Fawcett

Principal

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Message from the Principal

2016 proved to be another wonderful year for Matthew Pearce Public School. We celebrated academic, sporting and creative arts achievements. Throughout the year we continued to honour our expectations of being safe, respectful and responsible, keeping them an intrinsic part of all teaching and learning programs.

Our school community continues to recognise the importance of the development of the whole child, within a context of a rapidly changing world. Our highly qualified, dedicated and professional staff, work collaboratively to ensure our students strive to achieve their best in a safe, challenging and nurturing environment.

I continue to be proud of the pedagogical capacity of our teachers and their commitment to life-long learning. They combine a strong sense of caring with a professional approach, high expectations and a willingness to contribute well above normal expectations. Teachers are well supported by an equally committed administrative and support staff.

A strong partnership exists within the school between staff and the community. Thank you to our P&C, the various sub committees and all their volunteers for the time and effort in supporting our school, all of which enhances teaching and learning programs.

I commend and thank the students, dedicated teaching and administrative staff, families and the wider community for their commitment, collaboration and care throughout 2016. The achievements outlined in this report would not be possible without your continued support.

Kim Fawcett

Principal

Message from the school community

2016 has been another busy and successful year for the Matthew Pearce Public School P&C Association. We have continued the tradition of being able to make a significant financial contribution with \$71 568 being donated to the school in 2016. Funds were received from general fundraising, canteen and uniform shop operations (\$38 846), as well as voluntary P&C fundraising (\$32 721). In 2016 the P&C provided funding for technology, ground improvements and catering for social and community events, as well as financial support for the school chaplaincy program and the Walking School Bus.

In 2016 through the generous support of many volunteers, the P&C facilitated the Mother's Day and Father's Day stalls and two school discos. The P&C also provided representatives for several merit selection panels. The P&C businesses, the canteen and uniform shop, have continued to provide outstanding service to the school. We thank all the volunteers who have given up their time to work in the canteen as your generosity is greatly appreciated. We also greatly value the hard work of the managers. The school and the P&C work together to achieve the best outcomes for all of the Matthew Pearce Public School community.

Julie May

P&C President

Message from the students

As I sat in the audience of last year's Presentation Assembly all I knew was that I was going to be a prefect. No one knew who the school captains were going to be. When my name was called out as school captain and I walked out onto the stage I was extremely shocked and excited at the same time. I felt extremely proud and honoured as I was given my hat and badge and happily accepted the opportunity to lead my peers.

2016 was full of opportunities to help the school. Along with other leaders I had many different responsibilities and duties such as representing the school at events, proudly supporting my peers, raising and lowering the flags, helping in the canteen and speaking at assemblies.

I also attended a memorable ANZAC Day service in Castle Hill where I laid a wreath on behalf of Matthew Pearce Public School with Kylie and Danielle in memory of the soldiers.

I was honoured to speak at assemblies such as Recognition, ANZAC Day, Remembrance Day and Harmony Day.

I felt privileged to be part of this school because of its diverse and multicultural community. The school provides many opportunities for students to be involved and to get the most out of their school life.

I would like to thank all the staff for their guidance and support during this year.

I appreciate the trust and support my peers have placed in me and feel very privileged to have been School Captain of Matthew Pearce Public School 2016. I have had so much guidance and support in everything that I have done and I leave you with this: We are all leaders and role models in everything that we do, you don't have to have a title to be a leader.

Mark

School Captain 2016

School background

School vision statement

Matthew Pearce Public School is committed to providing all students with a comprehensive education to ensure that they develop to their full potential in a creative and dynamic environment.

At Matthew Pearce Public School we strive for students to be:

Safe,

Respectful,

Responsible learners.

School context

Matthew Pearce Public School community has a medium to high socio-economic profile with a large percentage of families having dual incomes. The school enjoys an excellent reputation and as a result, homes within the school's drawing area are keenly sought.

The school student population is approximately 1395 students and trends indicate that the population should continue to increase .

Our school celebrates many cultures with almost 80% of students from a language background other than English.

The school's programs reflect the high priority of the community for academic excellence in a positive, safe and caring environment. It is accepted that a key role for the school is to ensure that its students are committed to the process of life-long learning that is necessary in this 21st Century.

Self-assessment and school achievement

Self-assessment using the School Excellence Framework

For all schools (except those participating in external validation processes):

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.

Our staff used the School Excellence Framework to inform, monitor and validate the progress and impact of our teaching and learning strategies throughout the year. We reviewed the school plan to determine the elements of the School Excellence Framework that the plan most strongly addressed. Staff reflected on the progress being made across the school based on the expectations identified in the Framework. This provides an important overview to ensure our improvement efforts align with these high level expectations and lead to further improvements in the delivery of education to our students.

The wellbeing of students is a priority for all members of the Matthew Pearce Public School community. Our whole school approach to wellbeing has clearly defined behavioural expectations, which have created a positive teaching and learning environment for both students and staff. This has been evident in the data collected through our school referral system. The school expectations of being safe, respectful and responsible learners for the positive behaviour of all members of the school community, reflects the rich, productive learning culture of the school. Respectful relationships are evident among students, staff and parents, promoting student wellbeing and improving student learning outcomes. Attention to individual learning needs has been another component of our progress throughout the year. Students with

high learning needs are being identified early and their parents are increasingly involved in planning and supporting the learning directions for them. Teaching and learning programs are differentiated with accommodations and adjustments to meet the needs of most students, while those requiring significant additional support had individualised learning plans developed for them.

In the domain of teaching our focus has also been on collaboration. Collaborative practices have ensured the successful sharing of innovative teaching practices that explicitly aims to improve student outcomes. Opportunities have been provided for staff members to plan, share and to receive and provide constructive feedback as a team through lesson study and the Quality Teachers, Successful Students (QTSS) initiative. The development of expertise in new syllabus documents such as History; the use of technology for learning to develop future-focused skills also integrated with Project-Based Learning; and criteria-based assessment rubrics to ensure consistent teacher judgement evidences a teaching culture that holds high expectations for all.

In the Domain of Leading, our priorities have been to improve leadership and management practices and processes. School leaders have supported teachers' professional learning in developing Performance and Development Plans (PDPs) that reflected the Australian Professional Standards for Teachers as well as school and personal goals through executive-led meetings, team discussions and meetings with mentors. Professional aspirations are further supported by providing opportunities for teachers to lead a wide range of school based activities. Their leadership roles support the School Plan and/or their goals as articulated in individual Performance and Development Plans.

The consistency and effectiveness of implementation of our key strategic directions throughout the year has been due to a strong foundation of leadership, building a shared ownership across the school. This approach recognises that leadership development is central to the achievement of school excellence. The leadership team has been successful in the initiatives outlined in this report, building the capabilities of staff to create a dynamic school learning culture.

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

Global Citizenship

Purpose

To promote harmonious relationships within our diverse society, embedding a system of values that develop students' social conscience. We will develop students who are resilient and recognise effort and perseverance in order to achieve goals; who generate and evaluate knowledge, ideas and possibilities whilst exploring various pathways and solutions.

Overall summary of progress

Through improved monitoring of Pearce Award data as part of our Positive Behaviour for Learning (PBL) initiative we have been able to monitor the progress of students from Kindergarten through to Year 6 and evaluate the use of positive rewards and feedback by our school staff. The EBS survey indicated the next step for our PBL team is training and implementation of targeted interventions. The Wellbeing framework was presented to all teaching staff at a whole-school professional learning session and links were made with the School Excellence Framework.

The Peer Support program was implemented this year giving our Year 6 students the opportunity to develop their leadership by working with students across the school. The unit in 2016 was resilience.

The new history and geography syllabuses were thoroughly investigated and all grades developed units of work incorporating meaningful intercultural understanding links for all 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">• 5% decrease each term, in the number of students receiving negative behaviour notifications. | Sixty-six minor negative behaviour notifications occurred in Term 1. Professional learning carried out with staff reviewing reporting processes and consistency of expectations and rewards during Term 2 led to an increase in reported minor incidences in Term 2 to 111. Data then evidenced a significant decrease in Term 3 and subsequently in Term 4 by more than 5% each term. (44.1% and 56.5% respectively) | \$2500 – Sentral Wellbeing \$600 – Peer Support \$5000 – Staffing salaries allocated for Professional Learning to implement Peer Support |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• 5% increase each term, in the number of students being recognised at end of term PBL reward activities. | Within each semester there was a greater than 5% increase in the number of students being rewarded at PBL reward days. | \$12,000 allocated for certificates, trophies and medals. |

Next Steps

- Update Sentral Wellbeing to ensure ease of use for all staff and monitoring of student behaviours that are relevant to our school needs.
- PBL team to engage in targeted intervention professional learning.
- Evaluate leadership data collected in 2016 .
- Evaluate History and Geography units for each grade and stage.
- Continue to monitor the consistency of rewards given throughout the school. Give all staff clear guidelines of expectations for giving our awards in the classroom, playground and extra curricular events.
- Investigate a peer mediation program.
- Continue Peer Support program enabling another group of Year 6 students to develop their leadership and share knowledge and skills with students from Kindergarten through to Year 6.
- Continue to provide meaningful opportunities to support wellbeing through our Chaplaincy programs.

Strategic Direction 2

Learning and Engagement

Purpose

To create engaged and successful citizens who are able to communicate, collaborate, think critically and be creative. They will adapt to the rapid change in education and demonstrate effective and ethical use of technology.

Overall summary of progress

A Project-Based Learning (PbL) team was established and began planning for implementation in 2017. This team comprised of a group of teachers across all stages. They attended professional learning sessions and made links with Merrylands East Public School by visiting and watching PbL sessions in action. The team organised a professional learning session led by a PbL mentor, sharing her experiences. The Matthew Pearce Public School PbL team presented their units of work to colleagues, which were reflective and evaluative of their initial experiences using PbL in their classrooms. Additional teachers explored and implemented PbL units.

Individual Learning Plans (ILPs) continued to support students at Matthew Pearce Public School. ILPs were written and evaluated regularly to ensure teaching programs were differentiated to engage students and enhance their learning. ILPs now accompany referrals to the Learning Support Team to ensure that student needs are being met. A comprehensive log of ILPs and program adjustments for students with specific needs is maintained.

There was one Lesson Study round in 2016. All staff worked collegially to evaluate student performance data to plan, evaluate, modify and re-teach content to improve student understanding and engagement and enhance teaching practice. This encouraged staff to have collegial discussions and to focus on engaging students in areas identified by grade performance data in order to improve student outcomes.

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">Project-based or open-learning tasks are included in 100% of all teaching programs. | A trial PbL team was established and units implemented across K-6. Teachers integrated a wide range of ICT including Google Suite, Apps and coding to engage students as future-focused learners. Classes held presentations on PbL completion sharing their experiences with staff, parents and their peers. Whole school professional learning introduced PbL pedagogy. | \$10 000 – Staffing salaries allocated for Professional Learning to implement PbL |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">75% of students are achieving expected growth or above in both Literacy and Numeracy as evident in NAPLAN results. | <ul style="list-style-type: none">74.43% of Year 5 students have achieved greater than or equal to expected growth in Literacy.76.8% of Year 5 students have achieved greater than or equal to expected growth in Numeracy. | Nil cost |

Next Steps

- PbL will be implemented in 100% of classrooms in 2017.
- ILPs will continue to be refined and improved to support the learning needs of all students. The Learning Support Team will continue to review and monitor ILPs and the adjustments made for students to access curriculum at the appropriate level.
- All staff will participate in Lesson Studies in Semester 2 of 2017. Lesson Studies will continue to analyse evidence-based data and engagement in learning with a focus on enhanced teaching and learning practices.

Strategic Direction 3

Professional Growth

Purpose

To encourage and equip teachers to have high expectations, enabling them to collaboratively develop and implement quality learning experiences through explicit teaching practices and intentionally relevant programs. Matthew Pearce Public School will provide opportunities for staff to further develop their professional expertise and leadership skills, participate in decision making processes within the school and contribute to forming a rigorous professional learning community.

Overall summary of progress

The implementation of the Performance and Development Framework (PDF) has led to staff being involved in a deeper reflective process that is guiding professional growth at both a collective and individual level. Consistent and ongoing monitoring and feedback processes are in place to discuss process, support and to plan for growth linked to the Australian Professional Standards for Teaching.

Leadership opportunities were provided throughout the year for staff to enhance professional aptitude in the form of targeted professional learning, App Hour and community information sessions to build leadership capacity amongst staff.

Staff met in strategic direction groups to collaboratively monitor the School Plan, evaluating and reviewing milestone implementation and its impact twice a term.

Using QTSS funds, grade teams cooperatively planned effective teaching and learning programs to enhance student outcomes.

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">• 100% of New Scheme Teachers meet the Australian Professional Standards for Teachers. | New Scheme Teachers have worked towards either maintaining or achieving accreditation. Eighteen teachers are maintaining their proficient status. Nine teachers have been working towards achieving accreditation at proficient status and four of those have achieved proficient level. Accreditation professional learning meetings were conducted for New Scheme Teachers in Terms 2 and 3 to support the accreditation process. | \$50 038 – DoE beginning teacher funding |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• 10% or more of staff working towards Highly Accomplished and Lead Teacher levels of the Australian Professional Standards for Teachers. | 34% of teachers indicated an interest in achieving Highly Accomplished or Lead accreditation levels and attended an information session to support this. In 2016 one staff member commenced the Lead accreditation process. | Nil cost |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• PDPs reflect a range of goals and professional learning options. | 100% of staff have completed a Performance and Development Plan (PDP) cycle inclusive of a school goal, a collaborative grade goal and a personal goal in negotiation with school executive. | \$40 295 – Professional Learning funds |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• PDPs demonstrate teacher reflection of practice against National Teaching Standards. | 100% of staff completed two mandatory lesson observations as per PDP guidelines inclusive of reflective professional dialogue to enhance quality practice. | Nil cost |

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">• A cross section of staff leads in-school professional learning as well as parent information sessions. | 74% of teachers across the school have engaged in purposeful leadership opportunities to develop their capacity and provide support for colleagues. Programs such as App Hour, parent workshops and mentoring opportunities have allowed teachers to develop their leadership capacity and play a pivotal role within the school and the wider community. | Nil cost |

Next Steps

- PDPs will continue to focus on whole school, grade and personal goals.
- The QTSS mentor will be provided with priorities outlined in personal goals across the school. The QTSS mentor will guide, support, mentor and source professional learning opportunities for teachers.
- The QTSS role will allow teachers to perform targeted classroom observations and have time to evaluate their teaching practice and engage in professional, reflective dialogue with their colleagues.
- A K – 6 professional learning timeline will be created and sequenced to ensure training is reflective of DoE, school and personal goals.
- After analysing the staff leadership survey, greater opportunities for teachers to develop their leadership capacity will be provided.
- The school will continue to fund cooperative planning days to allow grades to collaboratively program and build consistent teacher judgment across key learning areas and assessments.
- A Highly Accomplished accreditation support group is to be formed.

| Key Initiatives | Impact achieved this year | Resources (annual) |
|---|---|--|
| Aboriginal background loading | <p>Aboriginal perspectives were reflected in teaching programs, class discussions, reading and viewing material and participation in performances.</p> <p>Funding for 2016 was used to purchase resources to use in the library to support Aboriginal Education.</p> | <p>\$873.06 – Purchase of reading material</p> |
| English language proficiency | <p>The English Language Proficiency funding was used to staff our English as an Additional Language or Dialect (EAL/D) teaching positions. Students from non-English speaking backgrounds form nearly 80% of our school's population.</p> <p>A staffing allocation of 4.0 was provided through this funding to support EAL/D students to develop and improve their English language competency and learning outcomes across the curriculum to a level where they can fully participate in schooling. Ongoing collaborative in-class support by specialist EAL/D teachers continued across Kindergarten to Year 6. Students needing intensive support with English were withdrawn from class for more direct individualised learning programs on a regular basis.</p> <p>Flexible funding of \$19574 was used to purchase technology to support learning programs for EALD students.</p> | <p>\$427 657.85</p> <p>\$408 084 – Staffing salaries of 4 EAL/D teachers</p> <p>\$19 574 – Flexible funding</p> |
| Low level adjustment for disability | <p>Students requiring adjustments and accommodations are catered for within the school.</p> <p>Low Level Disability Funding was allocated to the school to support the learning needs of students requiring additional support to achieve planned outcomes. The flexible funding allocation was used to employ School Learning Support Officers (SLSOs) to work as teachers' aides in classrooms. Timetables reflected the use of specialist teaching staff and SLSOs to ensure learning was optimised and students received meaningful assistance. Funding also allowed for time for staff to develop Individual Learning Plans for identified students.</p> | <p>\$121 470.62</p> <p>\$71 415 – Staffing salaries allocated for 0.7 Learning Assistance Support Teacher (LaST)</p> <p>\$50 056 – Staffing salaries allocated for School Learning Support Officers (SLSO)</p> |
| Quality Teaching, Successful Students (QTSS) | <p>Discussion about how to best use this valuable resource occurred between staff. Staff elected for each grade to be provided with release time to address specific professional learning needs for their grade. Two days was provided for each teacher to deepen skills and knowledge and enhance professional practice to improve the quality of classroom teaching, through collaboration and reflective practice.</p> <p>Each grade and specialist teachers developed a proposal specific to their needs. Most grades spent the professional learning</p> | <p>\$49 467 – staffing salaries for release from face-to-face teaching.</p> |

| | | |
|---|--|---|
| Quality Teaching, Successful Students (QTSS) | allocation funding refining assessment practices within the school. Through collaborative practices, grades and specialist teachers, jointly developed and evaluated units of work. Teachers designed classroom assessment tasks and rubrics that have clear, consistent scoring criteria and can be analysed to adapt and inform their teaching practice. | \$49 467 – staffing salaries for release from face-to-face teaching. |
| Socio-economic background | This funding was used to support families experiencing financial hardship. It was used to support with the purchase of uniforms and cost of excursions. | \$9 069.84 |
| Support for beginning teachers | <p>The beginning teacher program supported nine early career teachers in 2016. With fortnightly meetings and release provided from class for an additional two hours each week, teachers were given further support and mentoring by executive and experienced teachers.</p> <p>Classroom teachers and grade groups across the school also supported these teachers by providing practical assistance, collaboratively programming and modelling lessons including reading and maths groups, incorporating ICT and linking Key Learning Areas across the curriculum.</p> | \$52 125.35 – staffing salaries to release beginning teacher mentors. |
| Targeted student support for refugees and new arrivals | <p>Newly arrived students enrolling at our school with little or no English are identified and assessed for immediate support to ease their transition into school.</p> <p>Specialist EAL/D teachers focus on intensive English language lessons and social skills for all newly arrived students. They also provide in-class and mentor support for classroom teachers. An allocation of two teaching days per week was provided by Department of Education (DoE) to support this program.</p> | \$38 000 – Staffing salaries of EAL/D teachers at 0.4 per week (2 days) |

Student information

Student enrolment profile

| Students | Enrolments | | | |
|----------|------------|------|------|------|
| | 2013 | 2014 | 2015 | 2016 |
| Boys | 592 | 603 | 651 | 701 |
| Girls | 561 | 586 | 609 | 643 |

Student attendance profile

| School | | | | |
|-----------|------|------|------|------|
| Year | 2013 | 2014 | 2015 | 2016 |
| K | 96.8 | 97.1 | 95.8 | 96.1 |
| 1 | 96.2 | 96.4 | 95.6 | 96.2 |
| 2 | 95.4 | 96.1 | 94.9 | 96.1 |
| 3 | 96.8 | 96.5 | 95.4 | 96.3 |
| 4 | 97.2 | 96.8 | 95.9 | 96 |
| 5 | 97.5 | 97.5 | 96.2 | 96.1 |
| 6 | 95 | 95.3 | 94.2 | 94.7 |
| All Years | 96.4 | 96.5 | 95.4 | 96 |
| 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) | 2 |
| Assistant Principal(s) | 6 |
| Classroom Teacher(s) | 48.27 |
| Teacher of Reading Recovery | 0.53 |
| Learning and Support Teacher(s) | 0.7 |
| Teacher Librarian | 1.8 |
| Teacher of ESL | 4 |
| School Counsellor | 1 |
| School Administration & Support Staff | 7.27 |
| Other Positions | 0 |

*Full Time Equivalent

The Australian Education Regulation 2013 requires schools to report on the Aboriginal composition as a proportion of their school's workforce. At Matthew Pearce Public School one staff member is from an Aboriginal background.

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 | 40 |

Professional learning and teacher accreditation

Staff participated in a number of professional learning activities designed to build their capacity to achieve key priorities as set out in our School Plan. Additionally, staff have been involved in professional learning programs that have built the capability of early career teachers, current teachers and aspiring and current school leaders.

Beginning teachers were provided with access to additional support, professional development and advice from their mentors who provide guided and modelled support to assist them to adapt and develop their pedagogy, classroom management, career goals and productive relationships with parents and caregivers. Matthew Pearce Public School had nine

new scheme teachers working towards NSW Education Standards Authority (NESA formerly BOSTES) accreditation, while 21 of our new scheme teachers are working towards or maintaining accreditation at Proficient level.

Matthew Pearce Public School recognises that all teachers benefit from a sustained focus on improving the quality of teaching practice through professional learning. As a result participation across the following areas occurred:

- one teacher has continued to attend Reading Recovery teacher training workshops;
- the principal, SAM and SAO attended finance and EBS4 training in preparation for deployment to SAP/SALM system;
- the executive team participated in PESG conferences focusing on DoE reforms;
- the Project-Based Learning team attended workshops;
- teachers attended PLAN training and implementation;
- teachers attended music mentoring training and classroom practice workshops;
- some Stage 1 teachers attended Jolly Phonics training; and
- voluntary coding and robotics workshops were heavily supported.

K–6 professional learning included workshops in the following areas, in which staff have:

- completed professional learning in the History module training;
- participated in a Project-Based Learning workshop guiding learning in collaborative and critical thinking;
- participated in App Fest, developing future-focused skills through the purposeful integration of technology;
- participated in developing the School Strategic Plan and milestones;
- participated in professional learning, which examined the elements of the School Excellence Framework;
- participated in a workshop focused on the Wellbeing Framework and its implications for our school; and
- completed their compulsory Emergency Care, CPR and Child Protection professional learning.

The total school expenditure on valued professional learning was \$53 181 allocated through tied grants provided by the Department of Education and school funds.

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.

| Income | \$ |
|--------------------------------|---------------------|
| Balance brought forward | 619 268.09 |
| Global funds | 801 551.19 |
| Tied funds | 284 390.60 |
| School & community sources | 794 770.25 |
| Interest | 10 862.78 |
| Trust receipts | 126 548.90 |
| Canteen | 0.00 |
| Total income | 2 637 391.81 |
| Expenditure | |
| Teaching & learning | |
| Key learning areas | 306 457.77 |
| Excursions | 93 391.10 |
| Extracurricular dissections | 277 350.31 |
| Library | 17 999.06 |
| Training & development | 1 595.25 |
| Tied funds | 212 419.45 |
| Short term relief | 177 343.51 |
| Administration & office | 197 373.71 |
| School-operated canteen | 0.00 |
| Utilities | 74 800.03 |
| Maintenance | 62 079.07 |
| Trust accounts | 106 015.22 |
| Capital programs | 68 769.47 |
| Total expenditure | 1 595 593.95 |
| Balance carried forward | 1 041 797.86 |

The information provided in the financial summary includes reporting from 1st December 2015 to 31 December 2016.

| | 2016 Actual (\$) |
|---------------------------------------|-------------------------|
| Opening Balance | 0.00 |
| Revenue | 1 323 743.85 |
| (2a) Appropriation | 1 078 716.85 |
| (2b) Sale of Goods and Services | 9 723.73 |
| (2c) Grants and Contributions | 232 508.47 |
| (2e) Gain and Loss | 0.00 |
| (2f) Other Revenue | 0.00 |
| (2d) Investment Income | 2 794.80 |
| Expenses | -784 575.49 |
| Recurrent Expenses | -784 575.49 |
| (3a) Employee Related | -261 951.77 |
| (3b) Operating Expenses | -522 623.72 |
| Capital Expenses | 0.00 |
| (3c) Employee Related | 0.00 |
| (3d) Operating Expenses | 0.00 |
| SURPLUS / DEFICIT FOR THE YEAR | 539 168.36 |
| Balance Carried Forward | 539 168.36 |

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, conversion from OASIS finance system to LMBR occurred. Rollover from OASIS occurred in August, 2016.

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 | 7 528 822.77 |
| Base Per Capita | 67 737.26 |
| Base Location | 0.00 |
| Other Base | 7 461 085.51 |
| Equity Total | 559 071.37 |
| Equity Aboriginal | 873.06 |
| Equity Socio economic | 9 069.84 |
| Equity Language | 427 657.85 |
| Equity Disability | 121 470.62 |
| Targeted Total | 13 619.99 |
| Other Total | 161 526.84 |
| Grand Total | 8 263 040.98 |

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.

In 2016, in accordance with the Premier's priorities: Improving education results, schools are required to report on their student performance for the top two NAPLAN bands in reading and numeracy.

The percentage of Year 3 students in Bands 5 and 6 for reading, and numeracy remains consistently above those achieved for all state and DoE students. 79.8% of students in reading and 73.9% of students in numeracy attained the top two bands.

The percentage of Year 5 students in Bands 7 and 8 for reading, and numeracy also remains consistently above those achieved for all state and DoE students. 71.4% of students in reading and 70.9% of students in numeracy attained the top two bands.

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. Students from Years 4, 5 and 6, parents and staff were given the opportunity to respond to the 'Tell Them From Me' survey statements. This report provides highlights based on data from 552 students, 246 parents and 74 teachers. Their responses are presented below.

- 83% of students felt accepted and valued by their peers and by others at their school with a high sense of belonging.
- 90% of students had positive relationships and identified having friends at school they can trust and who encourage them to make positive choices.
- 96% of students believed that education will benefit them personally and economically, and will have a strong bearing on their future and valued school outcomes.
- 96% of students had positive behaviour and stated that they did not get in trouble at school for disruptive or inappropriate behaviour.
- 79% of students did homework for their classes with a positive attitude and in a timely manner.
- 82% of students were interested and motivated in their learning and 95% of students tried hard to succeed.
- 63% of students had a high rate of participation in extracurricular activities taking part in art, drama, music groups or a school committee.
- 8.5 out of 10 students felt important concepts are taught well, class time is used efficiently, and homework and evaluations support class objectives.
- 8.3 out of 10 students found classroom instruction relevant to their everyday lives.
- 8.4 out of 10 students found the classroom instruction is well-organised, with a clear purpose, and with immediate and appropriate feedback that helps them learn.
- 7.9 out of 10 students felt that they have someone at school who consistently provides encouragement and can be turned to for advice.
- 8.5 out of 10 students feel teachers are responsive to their needs and encourage independence with a democratic approach.
- 7.6 out of 10 students felt that there are clear rules and expectations for classroom behaviour. Students understand these and teachers maintain high

expectations that they are followed.

- 9 out of 10 students felt that the school staff emphasises academic skills and hold high expectations for all students to succeed.

Successful schools foster greater communication with parents, encourage parental involvement in their child's schoolwork, and enlist parents to volunteer at the school and participate. The scores for the Likert-format questions (i.e., strongly agree to strongly disagree) have been converted to a 10 point scale. A score of 0 indicates strong disagreement; 10 indicates strong agreement; 5 is a neutral position (neither agree nor disagree).

- 7.9 – Parents felt welcome and well-informed about school activities, with the administrative staff being helpful to answer questions and solve problems.
- 7.4 – Parents felt informed with student progress reports being communicated in understandable terms.
- 7.1 – Parents felt that the school supported learning with 7.6 parents identifying that their child was encouraged to do his or her best.
- 7.8 – Parents supported positive behaviour with 8.5 identifying that their child has clear understanding about the rules for student behaviour.
- 7.5 – Parents felt that Matthew Pearce Public School is a safe school with behaviour issues being dealt with in a timely manner and their children feeling safe at school.

Teachers felt that school leaders supported them in their every day operation.

- 7.7 – Teachers stated school leaders had helped staff establish challenging and visible learning goals for students and have supported in the creation of new learning opportunities.
- 7.5 – Teachers agree that school leaders have provided useful feedback about teaching and stated that school leaders have helped improve their teaching.
- 8.3 – Teachers stated school leaders had supported them during stressful times.
- 8.7 – Teachers work collaboratively in developing learning opportunities and discuss strategies that increase student engagement.
- 8.9 – Teachers set high expectations for students and monitor individual student progress with 8.7 teachers stating that their students are very clear about what they are expected to learn.
- 9.2 – Teachers establish clear expectations for classroom behaviour.
- 8.9 – Teachers strive to understand the learning needs of students with special learning needs, are regularly available for support and create opportunities for success.

- 8.4 – Teachers state students have opportunities to use computers or other interactive technology for describing relationships among ideas or concepts and to analyse, organise, and present subject matter.

Overall the responses from students, parents and staff indicate a positive level of satisfaction with the current school culture and leadership.

Policy requirements

Aboriginal education

In 2016 we continued with our invitation to an Aboriginal artist so that students had the opportunity to participate and learn about Australian Aboriginal culture. Phil Geia, a Bwngcol man and a Cultural Officer from Palm Island performed *Island Dreaming*, a storytelling program and a unique murri presentation, created for reconciliation. Students learnt cultural insights through traditional stories given modern relevance and conveyed by song, dance and instrumentation.

Matthew Pearce Public School promotes respect for the unique and ancient culture of Aboriginal people. Teaching programs are designed to educate all students about Aboriginal history, cultures, perspectives and current Aboriginal Australia. Aboriginal perspectives are integrated across KLAS so students can develop deep knowledge and understanding about Australia's first people.

The library program during Term 1 focused on all students developing knowledge and understanding of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander history and culture in Australia through the English cross-curriculum priority. They engaged with texts that gave them experience of the beliefs and value systems of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. Students explored a range of experiences and achievements of Aboriginal peoples in historical and social contexts and the links between cultural expression, language and spirituality.

Multicultural and anti-racism education

At Matthew Pearce Public School, nearly 80% of the students come from a language background other than English (LBOTE). There are over 50 different languages spoken in the homes of students in the school. Mandarin, Sinhalese, Tamil, Hindi and Korean groups have the most speakers. Multicultural education ensures that all students have access to inclusive teaching and learning experiences. These experiences allow students to successfully take part in a rapidly changing world where cross-cultural understanding and intercultural communications are essential. A multicultural perspective is evident throughout all KLAS of the curriculum. The school celebrates its rich cultural diversity in many ways.

All students in the school participated in Harmony Day, an annual celebration that encourages the values of

inclusiveness and respect for all cultural backgrounds. In 2016, the Harmony Day theme was 'Diversity is our Strength'. Each student in the school created an artwork by decorating a footprint. These were displayed around the school and echoed the theme from the Calendar for Cultural Diversity 2016, of 'Walking Together'. Students researched their cultural background with their families and were given the opportunity to share this knowledge with their class. Parents and caregivers were invited to attend the Harmony Day assembly to celebrate multiculturalism with the school community. During the assembly, the entire school joined together in the singing of a song about belonging together in community.

Each year, students are encouraged to enter an artwork for the Department of Education's Calendar for Cultural Diversity, a competition that has hundreds of entries from all over NSW. This calendar is displayed in our school for students and staff to appreciate the artwork and messages it conveys about multiculturalism.

The Year 2 Cultural Dance group continued to showcase dances from around the world. They performed at the school's Creative Arts Evening and the Term 3 Recognition Assembly. The students enjoyed learning dances from a mix of cultures including Mexican, Indian and Chinese.

Teaching and learning programs foster students' understandings of culture, cultural diversity, racism and active citizenship. Staff, students, parents and community members have worked hard to create a harmonious, tolerant and welcoming school environment. Anti-racism initiatives are addressed through class strategies and the school's Anti-Racism Contact Officer (ARCO) is an additional resource should the need arise.

English as an Additional Language or Dialect (EAL/D) student support aims to develop EAL/D students' English language competence and improve their learning outcomes throughout the curriculum to a level where they can fully participate in schooling. EAL/D student support is provided by specialist teachers who deliver EAL/D education in a variety of ways to meet the diverse needs of EAL/D students at different stages of learning English. They include intensive and post-intensive English language support to both newly arrived and continuing EAL/D students from Kindergarten to Year 6. At Matthew Pearce Public School there is a strong focus on providing early intervention and in regards to EAL/D learners, this means a high level of support is allocated to Kindergarten students and newly arrived students in the form of collaborative in-class support and targeted small group instruction. Students in Years 1–6 who are continuing to develop English language proficiency are supported in the classroom setting.

Other school programs

Student Voice and Leadership

The Year 6 student leadership program has 24 student leaders along with 16 sport house leaders, chosen by ballot following a program of nomination, grade voting and speaking. Students from Years 2–5 vote for their preferred candidates.

Our 2016 leaders represented the school and their grade at various events including ANZAC day at the Castle Hill RSL Dawn Service and many in-school events and celebrations. They led assemblies and guided visitors around the school, participated in carnivals and learnt valuable leadership skills.

In 2016, the MPPS Peer Support program commenced. All Year 6 students were trained as leaders and then in Term 2, 93 groups operated on a weekly basis to complete the program. Year 6 student were excellent role models and mentors for our K–5 students. The program was a highlight of 2016.

Student Leadership – SRC

The Student Representative Council (SRC) comprised of 35 students from Years 2 to 6, raised awareness and funds to support an assortment of different charities. A highlight for 2016 was the *Matthew Pearce Has Talent Showcase*, at the end of the year, which was enthusiastically orchestrated by the Year 6 SRC members.

Our achievements for 2016 included:

- a 'Mix 'n' Match, Inside Out, Back to Front, Upside Down' mufti day which raised \$1546 to support two World Vision sponsored children in Laos and their communities.
- \$750 fund raiser for Stewart House, as well as donations to the Smith Family Clothing Appeal.
- a super hero mufti day that raised \$1200 to assist children who suffer from heart disease.
- 1000 bandannas sold in just one week in support of Can Teen Bandanna Day.
- Friendship Connections for students who may not have anyone to play with or for those who enjoy playing with the provided sporting equipment around the Friendship Tree. The SRC also purchased some Buddy Benches, which students use as a meeting venue or a quiet place to chat and play
- **Chaplaincy Program**

The chaplaincy program has continued to support our students, families and staff with Mrs Megan Harris being with us for two and a half days per week. In 2016, more than 150 students were enrolled in programs to assist with social skills, managing anxiety, self-esteem and helping to cope with grief and loss.

A new group began during lunch to continue to support social skills and give a space for students

who prefer a quieter setting for play. Passive play involved our chaplain and a number of leaders from Year 5, assisting students with board games and group puzzles.

Community engagement was also a priority in helping new parents integrate into our school. A number of morning teas for new parents were held at the beginning of 2016, to help parents and caregivers connect and learn more about the programs that are available for the wellbeing of our students.

At the end of 2016, we were also able to assist some families with food hampers and Christmas gifts that were donated to our school from the local church community.

Through the wonderful support of the P&C and the generosity of the school, the chaplaincy program will increase to 3 days per week in 2017.

Choirs

Matthew Pearce Public School was fortunate to have four choirs led by eight talented and passionate teachers in 2016. Together these choirs involved over 120 students. Stage 1, Primary Proms, Opera House and the Hills Festival Choirs each participated in music and choral education for students from Years 1 to 6. Culminating in various high quality performances, the choirs had relevant and challenging repertoires.

The Stage 1 choir included our youngest choristers, sharing demonstrated commitment and enthusiasm. The Primary Proms (Years 3 & 4) and the Opera House (Years 5 & 6) choirs were run in conjunction with the Arts Unit of the Department of Education. Their repertoire is set and they combine for large-scale performances at the Sydney Town Hall and Sydney Opera House respectively. The Hills Festival Choir, comprised of students from Years 3 to 6. With a challenging and interesting repertoire, they combined with five other schools as the massed choir for the Hills Performing Arts Festival. This exciting evening at Penrith Panthers is always a sell out performance, with students learning much about singing and harmony.

Each of our choirs performed at Recognition Assemblies and at the Creative Arts Showcase evening, where over 600 parents were able to watch and listen to their talents.

Band

Our band program has continued to be an important component in our students' educational experiences. Under the musical direction of Mr Garry Clark and Mrs Renee Burrows we had 183 students across our three bands in 2016 participate in a range of activities including;

- our annual band camp at Vision Valley.

- Senior Band gaining third place in the McDonald's Sydney Eisteddfod and in the NSW Band Festival awarded gold. Intermediate Band gaining second place in the McDonald's Sydney Eisteddfod and in the NSW Band Festival awarded silver. Junior Band gaining first place in the McDonald's Sydney Eisteddfod in the NSW Band Festival gold.
- performances by the Senior Band at the prestigious Primary Proms at Sydney Town Hall and the Australian National Band & Orchestra Conference at the Sydney Conservatorium of Music.
- all three bands performing at school recognition and celebration assemblies, and showcased their talents at an end of year concert.
- **Dance**

Matthew Pearce Public School was fortunate to have 8 dance groups.

Kindergarten and Year 1 dance groups were formed at the start of the year with each of the Kindergarten and Year 1 classes represented in the groups. The groups performed at various events throughout the year including the Hills Performing Arts Festival, recognition assemblies, Sports and Cultural presentation assembly, 2017 Kindergarten orientation day and the Cultural Arts performance evening. The groups grew in skill and confidence through the year and loved to perform in front of family and friends.

The Year 2 dance group were a dedicated group of enthusiastic dancers who achieved several first place awards at eisteddfods in 2016. They also performed at school and community events and were successful in their audition to be part of The Hills Performing Arts Festival.

The Year 2 cultural group provided a great dance and performance experience for learning different dances from countries around the world. The group aimed to develop social skills and enhance the self-esteem of 38 boys and girls. Students were divided into three groups and learnt the Indian dance Bangara, a Mexican Hat dance and the Chinese Ribbon dance. Audiences appreciated their colourful presentations.

The Year 3 dance group was formed in 2015 while the students were in Year 2. The students performed at the Opera House for the Sydney Eisteddfod where they were highly commended. The dance group was also successful in their audition to be part of The Hills Performing Arts Festival and Synergy Dance Festival, both initiatives of the Department of Education.

The Years 4 and 5 dance groups were an interest group where the girls learnt to put a routine to a variety of music. The groups performed at recognition assemblies and at the cultural evening that showcased their talents and enthusiasm. They enjoyed trying out new routines and interpreting various movements to music.

The Year 6 dance group were an outstanding group of students, who enthusiastically participated in multiple events to appreciative audiences during the year, both in and beyond the school. These included the Synergy Dance Festival, The Hills Performing Arts Festival and several eisteddfods throughout the year at which they gained many first place awards.

Sixteen very talented students from Year 6 were selected from auditions to be part of the Schools Spectacular Dream Big. Once students were chosen they were taught a routine and auditioned via a video link. After the group acceptance they worked extremely hard to learn choreography, both for their section and the finale. They were in a segment with approximately fifteen other schools. It was an incredible opportunity for these students as they were part of approximately 4500 students that produced an amazing show.

Drumming Group

2016 was a great year for the Stage 3 drumming group. Many Year 5 and Year 6 students eagerly tried out for this group at the beginning of the year and 20 lucky students were selected to take part. These students rehearsed on a weekly basis and learnt how to strike a drum, create interesting rhythms and most importantly, work as part of a team. Highlights included performances for the Term 1 Recognition Assembly and Open Day.

The Stage 2 Drumming group consisted of 22 enthusiastic students from Years 3 and 4. Students attended rehearsals each week and enjoyed learning different beats. The group had the opportunity to perform at the Term 3 Recognition Assembly and Kindergarten Orientation.

Both groups displayed their talents at the cultural arts performance showcase evening. Students enjoyed creating their own rhythms and drumming songs during weekly rehearsals.

Recorder Group

2016 was another great year for the Matthew Pearce Public School Recorder Band! Nineteen very dedicated and enthusiastic students attended practices to develop their skills in learning to play the recorder and to have fun playing music together. In 2016 we were able to have two different ability groupings – Descant 1 and Descant 2. New recorder players, with absolutely no experience in playing the recorder, were soon off to a good start and learnt to read and play simple music in the Descant 2 group. Students with prior recorder experience from the previous year were given the opportunity to learn to play a more challenging repertoire in the Descant 1 group. Both groups achieved admirable improvement, extending their musical knowledge, developing their skills and building confidence to perform in front of large audiences.

The climax to the students' hard work throughout the year was their participation in the 2016 Festival of Instrumental Music, which was held at the Sydney Opera House in mid-August. For many students this was their first time performing at such a distinguished venue and they benefited immensely from the experience.

In addition, the Matthew Pearce Public School Recorder Band performed at the school's Education Day concert, the Cultural Performance Evening, the Music Count Us In sing-in and at various recognition assemblies during the year.

The String Ensemble

The String Ensemble was formed early in 2016, comprising of four enthusiastic violinists from Year 4 and Year 6. Throughout the year, they attended weekly lunchtime rehearsals to learn to play together as an ensemble, to develop their musical skills and to improve their confidence to perform.

The String Ensemble performed at the Creative Arts Evening in September and the recognition assembly in Term 4. Their most memorable achievement was combining with the Recorder Band for an enchanting performance of Stephen Chin's, Pagodas by the Heavenly Lake at the Sport and Cultural Assembly. The students each performed admirably, playing their repertoire with confidence and musicality.

Music Count Us in 2016

Music Count Us In is Australia's biggest music initiative and this year it was 10 years old. The program was introduced at Matthew Pearce Public School five years ago, as it was the perfect way to introduce music into every child's day. It has grown remarkably over the years from class to classes, from stage to stages and this year created Matthew Pearce Public School history with a 100% class and teacher involvement. Our 2016 participation in the program culminated in an unforgettable opportunity for our students. Sixty Years 3 to 6 students were invited to perform on Celebration Day at the Sydney Opera House and Lulu and Ivan addressed the nation with absolute brilliance on a LIVE stream from the Sydney Opera House. The sixty selected students were students who volunteered every Wednesday for six weeks to attend rehearsals during lunchtimes. These incredibly enthusiastic students created, rehearsed and recorded a dance for the 2016 song Let it Play, or practised and played the music on their instruments. Celebration Day at Matthew Pearce Public School was also a magnitude of excitement as over 1300 voices joined together to sing the song Let it Play, with all of Australia at the same time. The Celebration Day highlighted the fantastic talent of the recorder band, additional K-2 dancers and musicians and the skill of our school photography team. All 1356 Matthew Pearce Public School students and staff

showcased the 2016 song, accompanied by 13 talented guitarists at the 2016 Presentation Day. This provided an opportunity for our community to experience a little bit of the magic that electrified the Sydney Opera House on Celebration Day.

Musica Viva

Throughout 2016, K-6 students actively participated in two live Musica Viva concerts. At the beginning of Term 2, students experienced performing Sailing the Sounds of South America with the group Tigramuna. Entourage performed Tree Tales at the end of Term 3. 2016 celebrated 35 years of Musica Viva in Schools. Musica Viva gives students the opportunity to listen and learn from live music, which energises young minds and expands cultural awareness. Musica Viva firmly believe in the importance of music education in developing 21st century creative thinkers.

Sport

Matthew Pearce Public School demonstrates a positive, committed attitude towards sports and physical activity. With inclusion in every PSSA team across the Castle Hill Zone, our students demonstrate teamwork and commitment. Not all students selected have outside experience in each sport, however dedicated and passionate teachers train students to build new skills and refine existing talents. The PSSA program is highly valued with over 500 students trying out for positions in each of the summer and winter periods.

Our school swimming, cross-country and athletics carnivals involved many students and provided opportunities to excel in these areas. Over 30 students qualified for the zone carnival in swimming; 70 plus in athletics (field and track) and approximately 25 in cross-country. Some of these students went on to represent the zone at the Sydney West Carnivals. For the first time in 2016, field events were run in grade groups, with all students Years 3 to 6 having the opportunity to throw and jump in the four disciplines. Grades ran these sessions together, building on skills of teachers and students alike, with high levels of engagement and participation.

Each week, all students not involved in PSSA, remain at school and participate in the highly engaging Sport in Schools program. Gymnastics, gross motor, team building and fitness activities are carefully organised and skilfully taught by qualified and pre-service physical education teachers.

Table Tennis

2016 was the third year we have run a table tennis competition for eager students from Years 5 and 6. The competition took a knock-out format and was held during lunch times throughout Term 3. There were over 200 children who participated

and the skill level of many students was quite impressive. The school purchased a new table tennis table and net which enabled the competition to run more smoothly. Many students in the lower grades keenly look forward to when they are in Years 5 and 6 and they can participate.

Debating

2016 saw yet another successful year for debating at Matthew Pearce Public School. With our newly named teams, The MPPS Persuaders (Year 5) and the MPPS Defenders (Year 6) we were ready to once again take on the Premier's Debating Challenge. Both teams participated in a series of round-robin debates against strong competition. With only an hour to prepare, all students worked together to build well-developed arguments and presented these with confidence. Throughout every debate, all students impressed their audiences with the manner in which they spoke, the method they used to convey their ideas and the content matter they presented. At the conclusion of the zone rounds, our Year 6 team remained undefeated, winning the zone round for the second year in a row and progressing through to the knockout regional rounds. After facing a number of difficult topics and strong competition, the MPPS Defenders successfully earned their spot in the regional final. The team presented many strong arguments and rebuttals, and whilst unsuccessful in this final debate, we were proud of all our debaters and the commitment they showed towards their team, their school and the Premier's Debating Challenge.

International Competitions and Assessments for Schools

The International Competitions and Assessments for Schools (ICAS) are independent skills-based assessments with a competition element. Over one million student entries are accepted annually from over 6300 schools in Australia and New Zealand. In 2016, Matthew Pearce Public School submitted 965 entries from Years 3 to 6 in two ICAS competitions, English and mathematics. Results achieved are as follows:

- English – 22 High Distinction, 106 Distinction, 146 Credit, 52 Merits and 154 Participation certificates.
- Mathematics – 58 High Distinction, 149 Distinction, 137 Credit, 39 Merit and 102 Participation certificates.
- One Year 3 student was successful in winning a gold medal in the English competition.
-

Premier's Reading Challenge

The challenge aims to encourage a love of reading widely for leisure and pleasure in students and to enable them to experience quality literature. The Premier's Reading Challenge

supports the K–6 English syllabus by encouraging readers to read for understanding, interpretation, critical analysis and pleasure. At Matthew Pearce Public School we encourage all students to take part in the challenge and provide time for students to read and add books to the online site. This also provides students with a chance to negotiate the internet in a safe, guided way.

Premier's Reading Challenge results for 2016:

- 25 students achieved a Platinum award, received for 7 consecutive years of completion.
- 84 students from Years 3 to 6 attained a Gold certificate, completing the challenge for four years in a row.
- 53 Kindergarten students completed the challenge with the help of their parents.
- 152 Year 1 students, 97 Year 2, 86 Year 3 students, 104 Year 4 students, 163 Year 5 students and 21 Year 6 students were able to record books they read independently.
- **Premier's Spelling Bee**

In 2016, students from Years 3 to 6 participated in a school-based Spelling Bee challenge. Students participated in a range of activities that improved literacy skills by developing vocabulary and spelling skills. A representative was chosen from each class to participate in a grade competition. From each group, a grade winner was chosen to represent Matthew Pearce Public School at the Regional Final. All representatives competed very well against some very talented students from over 20 schools in the area.

Multicultural Perspectives Public Speaking Competition

In 2016, students in Years 3 to 6 were invited to participate in the annual Multicultural Perspectives Public Speaking Competition. Students were required to prepare a speech on a multicultural topic. They also had to present an impromptu speech on a given topic with only five minutes preparation time. Four students were chosen to represent Matthew Pearce Public School at the local finals. All students competed and represented our school very well. One student was recognised with a highly commended award in the senior division.

Maths Olympiad

Each year Matthew Pearce Public School participates in the Australasian Problem-Solving Mathematical Olympiads. This is a problem-solving competition comprised of five tests with five problems to solve in each test. The school entered four teams into the 2016 Australasian Math Olympiad Competition. The teams performed well with students collaborating and thinking critically to solve problems and reflect on solutions. The teams were commended for their performances and pride in representing the school in a challenging competition.

Olymp-a-thon

In 2016 the Olymp-a-thon fundraising event raised \$30127.65 that went towards purchasing sets of MacBook Air laptops so that students could continue to develop future-focused technology skills and work with 21st Century tools. Students proudly wore green and gold and rotated around eight Olympic-inspired sporting events. A crowd favourite was the equestrian event. Students participated enthusiastically and our community generously supported the school in our continued resourcing to ensure the delivery of rich learning experiences and the development of vital skills for flourishing now and in future years.

Chess Club

In 2016 students from across different grades enjoyed attending the school chess club. Students showed enthusiasm for playing, both with their friends as well as making friends while sitting across a chess board. Some students had the opportunity to represent the school across several tournaments, representing their school with pride. The students thoroughly enjoyed each event and the challenge of their opponents. Each student respectfully played to the best of their ability and even made some friends on the day.

Book Club

There were 12 members of the book club in 2016. Book club met every Wednesday in the library and encouraged students to develop a life-long commitment towards reading. Students had an opportunity to engage in conversations that focused on exploring themes and character traits. They also developed an understanding about how authors try to influence readers to think about real-life problems and issues. The goal for 2017 is to help students to be more critical readers by thinking about particular questions before the book club session in order to promote and create a richer discussion about books. Edmodo is used as an online platform to encourage students to share their passion for books in order to inspire others to read and become lifelong readers.

Environmental Group

Forming a Year 2 Environment Group has been a positive way to get students energised about taking care of the Earth and helping protect the school community. Over the year we have focused on environmental issues within the school grounds including energy conservation, rubbish collecting and recycling. Artwork has been created using recycled materials and posters were designed and displayed to teach students about the importance of saving water. Enthusiastic students met once a week to discuss our role as environmentalists and to patrol the playgrounds to pick up rubbish. The whole school took part in the Hills Shire Council's Waste Free

lunch day for the second year running.

Environmental Art Group

This year an Environmental Art Club was established. Students from Years 4, 5 and 6 were offered lessons every Wednesday, during lunch time in environmental art. Enthusiastic students created a variety of artworks such as sculptured foil trees, seascape paintings, textured tree rubbings, sketching foliage, creating fun bugs from finger prints and designing gardens to mention just some of our creative sessions. It is hoped that in 2017 the Environmental Art Club will continue to grow and give more students the opportunity to develop their artistic skills and appreciation of art in the environment.

Gardening Group

In Term 1, 2016 under the guidance of our Assistant General Assistant, a garden group was formed consisting of Year 4 students. This group offered students experience in growing vegetables, propagating plants, weeding, transplanting and maintaining garden beds throughout the school. The students showed great pride in the garden beds that they planted. They were especially excited to harvest vegetables that they grew from seeds.

Photography Group

The photography team consisted of 14 enthusiastic photographers. Each Monday during lunchtime, they participated in workshops and small projects to enhance their skills and experience in taking photographs. Their hard work and dedication is displayed in the school hall. They are to be congratulated for their creative efforts and artistic talent.