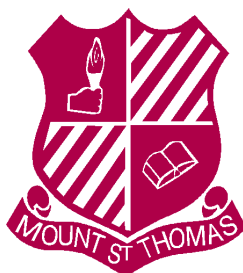


Mount St Thomas Public School

Annual Report



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Introduction

The Annual Report for **2017** is provided to the community of **Mount St Thomas Public School** as an account of the school's operations and achievements throughout the year.

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

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School background

School vision statement

At Mount St Thomas Public School, we are committed to building a collaborative school-wide culture that demonstrates educational aspiration and provides a quality education for all. Through personalised learning we will develop the individual talents, interests and abilities of our students in an engaging, positive, and respectful learning environment.

This will be fostered within a dynamic culture of teaching and learning that sets high expectations for achievement and success. Every student will be empowered to reach their potential and become engaged, self-aware, productive and responsible, learners and global citizens.

School context

Established in 1952, Mount St Thomas Public School serves the community of this peaceful and picturesque suburb of Wollongong. Strong community links exist to support the ongoing highly successful programs in literacy and numeracy, student welfare, technology, sport, environmental education and the creative arts. The school has an enrolment of 335 students including 9 Aboriginal students.

The school structure consists of 11 multi-grade classes and 2 straight classes. The teaching staff is a mix of experienced and early career teachers, who are dedicated and regularly engage in a variety of professional learning opportunities to enhance their teaching practices. The school motto of "Facing the Future Together" underpins the ideals and practices of the whole school community. Teachers deliver high quality learning programs to maximise student learning in a supportive and safe environment. The community has high expectations for the school and its students and actively supports all aspects of school life.

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 and participated in an external validation. The framework supports public schools throughout NSW in the pursuit of excellence by providing a clear description of high quality practice across the three domains of Learning, Teaching and Leading. During the external validation process, an independent panel of peer principals considered our evidence and assessment of the school's progress, aligned with the standards articulated in the School Excellence Framework.

The results of this process indicated that in the School Excellence Framework domain of Learning:

In the the element of Learning Culture our school is Sustaining and Growing. At Mount St Thomas Public School, our staff and school learning community exhibit a demonstrative commitment to school learning priorities and strive to deliver a quality, inclusive and personalised education for every student. Professional learning opportunities, actively sought by staff, continue to strengthen teacher efficacy and impact in the classroom.

In the element of Wellbeing our school is Sustaining and Growing. We believe that positive student wellbeing is integral and underpins all school life, allowing our students to learn and thrive, exceeding their potential. We proudly implement a whole-school approach at Mount St Thomas and have had great success in 2017 with the Rock and Water program, among others. All teachers consistently exhibit a positive, respectful and personalised approach, with students always at the centre.

We have shown great strength in the area of Curriculum and Learning and as such are proud to be Excelling against the School Excellence Framework. Curriculum and Learning is demonstrative of continued commitment to quality curriculum provision for all students through proactive differentiated instruction and personalised learning practices. All teachers have implemented quality, inclusive and integrated units of work K-6 based on the NSW syllabuses, with a strong student-centred focus, ensuring all learning environments foster student self-regulation, visibility, negotiated learning goals and continue to promote learning excellence.

Focused professional learning and the implementation of evidenced-based practices across the school led to a judgement in the element of Assessment and Reporting of Excelling. We have clearly aligned processes and school systems for the collection and analysis of data and strive to incorporate new and innovative ways to share this information with our school community. This year saw the school-wide introduction of Seesaw, a communication tool for

teachers, students and parents to use on a daily basis. This encourages continuous feedback and has become a comprehensive digital learning record of the progress, improvements and achievements of our students. In addition, student friendly rubrics and assessment tasks designed and informed by qualitative and quantitative student achievement data, enable students to reflect on their learning and plan for their future learning. As a result of these practices and our continued growth in student results, Mount St Thomas Public School is Sustaining and Growing in the element of Student Performance Measures.

The results of this process indicated that in the School Excellence Framework domain of Teaching:

Mount St Thomas Public School is Sustaining and Growing in the element of Effective Classroom Practice. Formative assessment strategies are embedded in every classroom, across all curriculum areas with staff using formative assessment data to inform minute by minute teaching decisions, future planning for lessons and units of work. Feedback forms an integral part of all teaching and learning programs with feedback being timely, instructive and explicit. In the element of Data Skills and Use Mount St Thomas is Sustaining and Growing. We have used information from Scout as part of the analysis of current practice and to inform our school reporting and School Excellence Framework self-assessment. All teachers at Mount St Thomas Public School incorporate data analysis in their planning for learning by using a range of summative and formative assessment measures.

In the element of Collaborative Practice, our school is Excelling. Teachers at our school actively engage in professional learning opportunities to deepen their syllabus knowledge, pedagogy and practice, and improve their performance. All teachers and leaders plan personalised Performance Development Plans(PDPs) that are aligned to the school strategic directions using tools such as; Australian Professional Standards for Teachers, Australian Professional Standard for Principals, NSW Quality Teaching Model, Classroom Practice Continuum and the Performance Development Framework. School leaders and teachers regularly draw on qualitative and quantitative evidence of teacher practice and student achievement through Action Research, Quality Teaching Lesson Study Rounds, formative and summative assessment, PLAN and NAPLAN data, to determine student goals for achievement and to inform the effectiveness of teaching practice and school performance.

In the element of Learning and Development, our school is Excelling. Our staff have undertaken professional learning with a particular focus on developing teachers' knowledge and understanding of effective teaching practices in targeted aspects of literacy and numeracy, to ensure that teaching and learning is differentiated and personalised to meet students' learning needs. All staff are actively engaged in targeted professional learning to meet the needs of our diverse learning community, which is moving student learning to a higher level.

Mount St Thomas Public School is Sustaining and Growing in the Professional Standards element. All teachers are actively engaged in planning their own professional development to improve performance through the formulation of Professional Development Plans. As a result, teachers continually reflect on the effectiveness of their teaching practice, and this respectful, professional feedback is evidenced by a strong learning community committed to supporting one other to improve practice and student learning.

The results of this process indicated that in the School Excellence Framework domain of Leading:

In the element of Leadership Mount St Thomas Public School is Sustaining and Growing. The leadership team are responsive, strategic and communicative in their dealings with the school and broader community. They use internal and external performance measures and feedback to continually evaluate school programs and initiatives. Developing the capacity of both staff and student is central to the Mount St Thomas Public School motto of "Facing the Future Together."

In the School Planning, Implementation and Reporting element, Mount St Thomas Public School is Excelling. Our priorities have established an evidence-driven, dynamic whole school community, school planning and evaluation process, for the systematic collection, analysis and interpretation of internal and external data, school finances, school progress and improvement.

Mount St Thomas Public School is Excelling in the element of School Resources. Our school is committed to continual improvement for all members of our community including staff and students. Leadership is transparent, inclusive and collaborative ensuring succession planning is implicit to all school programs. Mount St Thomas Public School distributes and uses resources strategically to ensure that financial and other assets are used to provide equity, drive improvement and leverage student learning. The school facilities are used purposefully by the school community with the community garden project providing more opportunities for the wider community to use Mount St Thomas Public School as a hub for community engagement and relationship building.

Mount St Thomas Public School values the feedback of our students and broader community on the school's practices and procedures. The Appreciative Inquiry process coupled with school evaluation practices such as the Tell Them From Me survey and other school-based reflection tools, provide opportunities for stakeholders to have their say about the school. As well as formal feedback opportunities, the staff and leadership team work closely and collaboratively with the students and community, bringing concerns and ideas to planning and communication meetings as needed. For these reasons, in the element of Management Practices and Processes our school is Excelling.

Our self-assessment and the external validation process will assist the school to refine our school plan, leading to further improvements in the delivery of education to our students.

For more information about the School Excellence Framework:

<https://education.nsw.gov.au/teaching-and-learning/school-excellence-and-accountability/sef-evidence-guide>

Strategic Direction 1

Student Learning – Building strong foundations.

Purpose

The learning of every student in our care is at the core of what we do, and is key to our students being successful and productive global citizens.

Our purpose is:

To provide a school-wide, consistent and integrated approach to: quality learning, quality teaching, evidence-based curriculum planning and delivery, assessment and reporting practices, and extra-curricular learning opportunities, to support the diverse learning needs of all students and promote learning excellence. **C&L A&R**

To provide a quality learning environment that:

- promotes a culture of personalised learning where every student is provided with opportunities to be an engaged and successful learner (**ESES**), and take responsibility for their ongoing learning **LC**; and
- promotes students' cognitive, emotional, social, physical and spiritual wellbeing, with positive, respectful and caring relationships between staff, students and parents. **W**

Strong foundations support learning for students in our school and for life.

Overall summary of progress

Our school-wide, consistent and integrated approach to implementing a quality evidence-based curriculum has enabled our teachers to design differentiated instructional strategies and personalise the learning processes to support the diverse learning needs of all students in an engaging, positive, flexible and respectful learning environment.

This student-centred approach to learning has ensured increased visibility and consistent use of learning goals in literacy and numeracy programs, as evidenced in action research results, observations, and student engagement results. Students' negotiated learning goals are continuing to show more awareness of their areas of need. Learning intentions, success criteria and assessment practices are visible in learning activities, to support students to set their own high expectations to plan their own learning paths.

Students are given the opportunity to analyse their progress, make informed judgements about their successes and future learning directions through feedback in formative and summative assessment practices. This is having a positive impact on student engagement across all areas of learning.

The design and implementation of a whole school systematic approach to collect, analyse, interpret, track, evaluate and report on school based and external data across the curriculum has ensured that students receive timely feedback, using a variety of visible learning strategies.

Student wellbeing strategies delivered through our Positive Behaviour for Learning (PBL) program has ensured the use of a consistent approach to teaching and learning of appropriate behaviours in the various school contexts. There have been significant observable changes in behaviour featuring more positive and respectful relationships throughout the school community.

Progress towards achieving improvement measures

Improvement measures (to be achieved over 3 years)	Funds Expended (Resources)	Progress achieved this year
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 80% of students will achieve their year appropriate expected growth in literacy and numeracy with 25% achieving above the expected growth, across DoE Literacy and Numeracy continuums.	Literacy and Numeracy Funding: \$8745 Low Level Adjustment Disability Flexible Funding–School Learning and Support Teachers	Growth for Year 3 to Year 5 in NAPLAN Reading from 2016 to 2017 was 76.3. Focus on Reading Explicit teaching of Super 6 Comprehension Strategies, vocabulary development and strategies

Progress towards achieving improvement measures

Improvement measures (to be achieved over 3 years)	Funds Expended (Resources)	Progress achieved this year
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 80% of students will achieve their year appropriate expected growth in literacy and numeracy with 25% achieving above the expected growth, across DoE Literacy and Numeracy continuums. 	<p>Equity Loadings:</p> <p>Socio-economic Background \$13074</p> <p>Aboriginal Background \$4836</p> <p>English Language proficiency \$4029</p> <p>P&C Funds to support student resources \$25000</p>	<p>to improve fluency has increased students' ability to read and critically interrogate text.</p> <p>K-2 Literacy</p> <p>In 2017, the Synthetic Phonics program continued to be implemented in Kindergarten.</p> <p>94% of Kindergarten students achieved at or above expected levels indicated by Hear and Record assessments, compared with 81% in 2016.</p> <p>K-2 Instructional Reading Tracking Data</p> <p>Consistent Coding across K-2</p> <p>78% of Year 1-6 students meet or exceed expected school-based grade oral fluency guidelines;</p> <p>90% of Kindergarten students have achieved above Level 9 by end Term 4, compared to 73% in 2016;</p> <p>% of Year 1 students meet or exceed expected reading levels;</p> <p>% of Year 2 students meet or exceed expected reading levels.</p> <p>Years 3-6 Writing</p> <p>Growth for Year 3 to Year 5 in NAPLAN Writing from 2016 to 2017 was 61.1.</p> <p>81.3% of Year 3 students achieved in the top two proficiency bands in NAPLAN Writing in 2017.</p> <p>There was continued development and implementation of school based English Scope and Sequence and a consistent approach to the design of units that incorporate Focus on Reading pedagogy and Formative Assessment practices.</p> <p>Mountso Writing Assessment Continuum (MWAC)</p> <p>The average growth in writing across K-6 in 2016-2017 using the MWAC was 32%. Data incorporates aspects including sentence structure, grammar and punctuation.</p> <p>Years 3-6 Numeracy</p> <p>Growth for Year 3 to Year 5 in NAPLAN Numeracy from 2016 to 2017 was 82.0.</p> <p>Teachers consistently use:</p> <p>Formative Assessment practices to accurately identify individual entry levels and to drive personalised planning and teaching;</p> <p>TOWN numeracy practices, including individual</p>

Progress towards achieving improvement measures

Improvement measures (to be achieved over 3 years)	Funds Expended (Resources)	Progress achieved this year
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 80% of students will achieve their year appropriate expected growth in literacy and numeracy with 25% achieving above the expected growth, across DoE Literacy and Numeracy continuums. 		<p>assessment, student grouping and tracking of identified students learning needs;</p> <p>PLAN to plot, assess and personalise student achievement on the Numeracy Continuum;</p> <p>Problem Solving Scaffold as a student thinking tool;</p> <p>Mathematics Syllabus and school based scope and sequence to drive unit based learning.</p> <p>K–2 Numeracy: TEN (Targeting Early Numeracy)</p> <p>96% of Kindergarten students are at or above perceptual counting strategy;</p> <p>95% of Year 1 students are at or above figurative counting strategy;</p> <p>93% of Year 2 students are at or above counting on/back strategy;</p> <p>K–2 Teachers consistently use:</p> <p>Formative Assessment practices to accurately identify individual entry levels and to drive personalised planning and teaching;</p> <p>TEN numeracy practices, including individual assessment and tracking of identified students;</p> <p>PLAN to plot, assess and personalise student achievement on the Numeracy Continuum;</p> <p>Mathematics Syllabus and school based scope and sequence to drive unit based learning.</p> <p>Learning and Support Evaluation</p> <p>School–wide Learning and Support evaluation conducted with all stakeholders through the School Self–Evaluation Package:</p> <p>Revised LST Policy, explicit support processes defined, informative student and parent referral forms developed, LST tracking data established;</p> <p>Personalised Learning Pathways developed in consultation with the AECG.</p> <p>Wellbeing Initiatives</p> <p>Rock and water program implemented across K–6;</p> <p>PBL practices reinforced and lessons explicitly taught across the school;</p> <p>87% reduction in serious behaviour incidents from 2016;</p> <p>56% reduction in minor behaviour incidents from 2016.</p>

Next Steps

Continued implementation of the Mountso Writing Assessment Continuum (MWAC) with explicit success criteria targeted to imaginative, informative and persuasive texts. Aligned with the Literacy Continuum and utilising the NAPLAN Writing Marking Guide, the continuum is used as an assessment tool to identify and measure student achievement and improvement. Ongoing data collection informs the collaborative development of explicit programs in teaching writing K–6. Feedback (teacher to student, student to teacher, student to student) and student reflection will promote student achievement.

Continue K–2 consistent approach to code and collect Instructional Reading Tracking data to inform teacher practice and provide feedback for students.

Implementation of Building Blocks for Numeracy to provide quality professional learning around successful teaching practices and pedagogy based on current research. Teachers will engage with numeracy initiatives, such as the Targeted Early Numeracy Intervention Program (TEN), Taking Off With Numeracy (TOWN) and Count Me In Too (CMIT) to support the planning and development of explicit teaching practices in numeracy, informed by formative assessment. Numeracy programs will align with and track students along the Numeracy Continuum with personalised teaching and learning designed to increase numeracy proficiency.

Cohesive programs to improve effective classroom practice and data skills and use to leverage intellectual capital and drive excellence.

Quality data available and used in day-to-day learning decisions.

Students demonstrating agency by choosing learning goals and pathways.

Improved value-added student performance against external performance measures.

Innovative and effective data sharing and use to make learning explicit and pathways clear for every learner.

Classroom teacher progression along the Formative assessment matrix.

Continue to build upon extra-curricular activities that reflect the vision, needs and interests of the school and its community.

Continue to expand the Bring Your Own Technology (BYOT) trial across all classes 3–6. Stage teams will collaborate to ensure that software, applications and tools selected enhance the learning.

Our commitment to Student Wellbeing will be strengthened through personalised learning practices K–6, explicit Learning and Support processes and practices to enhance student learning at all levels, Personalised Learning Pathways for Aboriginal students, continued implementation of the Rock and Water Program and through the establishment of a school-wide environmental program in the Mountso Community Kitchen Garden using the student wellbeing funding.

Strategic Direction 2

Teacher Learning – Building strong and effective instructional expertise.

Purpose

Teacher quality and instructional expertise are key to promoting teaching excellence that inspires learning.

Our purpose is :

To ensure our teachers demonstrate deep pedagogical and curriculum knowledge and innovation in a shared and systematic approach across the school and the wider school community, through targeted professional learning, dialogue, feedback, action research, collaborative planning and systematic exchange of expertise, resources, programs and ideas. **(GTIL). T-CP L&D**

To ensure our teachers have the capacity and opportunity:

- to make informed decisions based on the analysis of collected qualitative and quantitative evidence about student achievement and their own teaching practices; and
- to identify, understand, design and implement the most effective evidence-based, proactive, differentiated instructional strategies and practices. **T-ECP T-DS&U**

Our students deserve strong and effective, expert teachers.

Overall summary of progress

A collaborative and inclusive learning culture exists across our professional teaching community. It is founded on the development of deep pedagogical knowledge and enhanced by contemporary research (Timperley/Hattie/Wiliam) to maximise student achievement, particularly in literacy and numeracy. High quality units of work are designed and refined to reflect new knowledge and skills required in addressing syllabi incorporating the Australian Curriculum. Extensive use of data, internal and external, ensures that all teachers have extensive knowledge of each student and is able to personalise instruction to move learning forward. Teachers actively research their own teaching practices through cycles of inquiry, lesson study and action research protocols. Systems have been devised to more consistently track and monitor student progress and ensure learning is visible, feedback is timely and students reflect on and celebrate their learning. All staff set and review ambitious goals aligned to our school's strategic directions and are supported through coaching and mentoring. The implementation of the Performance and Development Framework has been pivotal in personalising professional support for all staff. Professional tools, which include the Australian Professional Standards for Teachers and Classroom Practice Continuum, are key reflective tools in goal-setting and reflective practice.

Progress towards achieving improvement measures

Improvement measures (to be achieved over 3 years)	Funds Expended (Resources)	Progress achieved this year
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 100% teachers use evidence, research and professional tools such as; Australian Professional Standards for Teachers & SAT, NSW Quality Teaching Model, the Classroom Practice Continuum and the SEF to design, reflect and report on the achievement of their own learning and leadership PDP goals.• 5% increase of student achievement in literacy and numeracy tasks as measured by Pre and Post Assessment data from Action Research Projects as a result of effective classroom practices and use of data.	<p>TPL Funding 2017 24 teacher days @ \$450 = \$10800</p> <p>QTSS= 0.244 = 1.5 days per week.</p> <p>1. Position 1– Focus on Reading Phase 2 – K–6 Instructional Coach</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Support for Student learning–in Reading and Action Research= 1.0 day per week.2.. <p>Position 2– K–6–</p>	<p>All teachers are able to reflect and gain feedback through the Quality Teaching Rounds and Lesson Study process to inform current and future practice to improve student outcomes in literacy and numeracy.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Teachers trained and effectively implementing L3, Focus On Reading Phase 1 and Phase 2, TOWN, TEN and problem solving scaffold in classroom programs.• Differentiated instruction, personalised learning and visible learning practices are evident in all teaching programs and class learning environments.• All teachers have developed a deeper

Progress towards achieving improvement measures

Improvement measures (to be achieved over 3 years)	Funds Expended (Resources)	Progress achieved this year
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 100% teachers use evidence, research and professional tools such as; Australian Professional Standards for Teachers & SAT, NSW Quality Teaching Model, the Classroom Practice Continuum and the SEF to design, reflect and report on the achievement of their own learning and leadership PDP goals. • 5% increase of student achievement in literacy and numeracy tasks as measured by Pre and Post Assessment data from Action Research Projects as a result of effective classroom practices and use of data. 	Instructional Coach <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MWAC writing project = 0.5 days per week – K–2 	understanding of Differentiated Instruction and personalisation strategies to support and engage all learners as evident from two action research cycles and Lesson Study Observations. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teachers plan collaboratively and give and gain feedback on practice using observation, feedback and tools of reflection to promote effective instructional expertise. • Stage 1 – 21% overall growth from pre to post assessment. 2017 MWAC collection data. • Stage 2 – 18% overall growth from pre to post assessment. 2017 MWAC collection data. • Stage 3– 16% overall growth from pre to post assessment. 2017 MWAC collection data.

Next Steps

All classroom teachers and support staff engage in further action research, centred on personalisation of learning. Staff will be encouraged to experiment with new learning initiatives and collect evidence to support this. 'Cycles of Inquiry' will form the framework for investigation.

A minimum of two formal lesson observations will occur. Lesson study protocols will guide lesson preparation and delivery and be informed by Quality Teaching elements. All staff will be given the opportunity to give and receive feedback through structured dialogue.

Revised data collection protocols will be implemented and monitored via electronic tracking. Data centralisation will ensure that all teachers have greater access and transfer of information.

All staff will continue to access a suite of professional learning options which reflect needs, career stage and development. Whole-school initiatives include; Focus on Reading (Phase 2), Formative Assessment for Learning (Dylan William), inquiry-based learning.

Continue to use reflective professional tools to set, monitor and reflect on aspirational goals. Build associations with a range of professional networks. For example Community of Schools, Leadership– Illawarra Networks Key Stakeholders(L–INKS).

All staff will access professional learning in Building Blocks for Numeracy with a focus on Count Me In Too, TEN and TOWN initiatives and formative assessment practices.

Continued professional learning in innovative teaching practices.

NAPLAN task analysis to inform planning directions.

PLAN2 and National Literacy and Numeracy Progressions professional learning.

PDP and professional learning evaluation.

Student mapped on PLAN2 using the National Literacy and Numeracy Progressions.

Strategic Direction 3

School and Leader Learning – Building leadership capability to lead excellence in educational and organisational practice.

Purpose

School leaders are key to leading school excellence.

Our purpose is:

To build a collective and collaborative approach to whole school planning for the achievement of excellence in learning, teaching and leading; at all levels, where planning and evaluative thinking processes are accountable, evidence-based, reflective, transparent and innovative, and reflect our school vision and strategic priorities. **L-SPI&R**

To provide leadership development and professional learning opportunities which build collective efficacy to lead curriculum innovation and sustain excellence in instructional and organisational practices across the school. **L-L**

To build effective and meaningful relationships with key community partners, who can support the school with resources, expertise and experiences to enrich the school's standing within the local community and promote excellence in teaching, learning and leadership **L-L**.

Our school leaders are committed to achieving educational and organisational excellence to improve outcomes for our students.

Overall summary of progress

Our commitment to the establishment of an evidence-driven, dynamic whole school community has been achieved through an inclusive, school planning and evaluation process, inclusive of External validation in 2017. Regular planning and evaluation meetings ensure that there is broad understanding, monitoring and support to uphold school expectations and aspirations for improving student achievement and engagement. All stakeholders are informed and there are clear processes to actively engage the school community in the decision making process. School systems for the systematic collection, analysis and interpretation of internal and external data, school finances, school progress and improvement employ evidence-based strategy and innovative thinking. We are committed to building the capability of all staff through personalised and targeted professional learning that supports our school's strategic directions and personal teacher goals. Engagement with a range of professional tools to reflect on practice, access to a broad network of support and seeking out community partnerships, strengthen our culture of continuous improvement. Contextual implementation of a range of initiatives/reforms ensures staff at all career stages are challenged and supported with a GROWTH mindset. Aligned to school priorities, our school has formed strong links in and across our local community. We have taken a proactive lead in curriculum design and development across our community of schools, which includes strong links with our local high school. A range of business partners are engaged to financially support our school and share expertise. Ongoing, is our positive relationship with the parent community, which has seen exceptional participation and inclusion, particularly through the establishment of our Mount St Thomas Community Kitchen Garden and at a range of school events throughout 2017.

Progress towards achieving improvement measures

Improvement measures (to be achieved over 3 years)	Funds Expended (Resources)	Progress achieved this year
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 100% of school leaders have personalised Performance Development Plans aligned to Australian Professional Standards for Teachers and Principals which are designed collaboratively and supported by supervisors.• 10% increase in parent participation in supporting classroom learning, school based initiatives and P&C activities.	TPL Funding 2017 14 teacher days @\$450= \$6300 Beginning Teacher Funding – \$3665.50	Aspiring leaders have participated in and lead internal and external professional development opportunities and Network meetings, such as L-INKS. PDP Plans are successfully meeting the PL needs of all teachers, aspiring leaders and leaders. Current leaders Performance Development Plans are aligned to Australian Professional Standards for Teachers and the Principals' Standard, and regularly reflect, share and discuss professional learning needs, accomplishments and leadership goals with teachers/leaders.

Progress towards achieving improvement measures

Improvement measures (to be achieved over 3 years)	Funds Expended (Resources)	Progress achieved this year
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 100% of school leaders have personalised Performance Development Plans aligned to Australian Professional Standards for Teachers and Principals which are designed collaboratively and supported by supervisors. • 10% increase in parent participation in supporting classroom learning, school based initiatives and P&C activities. 		<p>Current leaders engage in targeted programs to access all levels of accreditation and promotion.</p> <p>Continued parent and community support in classrooms in 2017.</p> <p>Programs in place to enhance parent and caregiver satisfaction and engagement in class, school and community activities. The school, P&C and community members (groups) have worked together to support the growth and development of the students and school.</p> <p>Some of these activities are:</p> <p>School gardening group; fete helpers; school archives; classroom helpers; Library helpers; basketball teams formed for Snake Pit; games once/week; business sponsorship and support; and productive relationships with key community partners –P&C, families and community members.</p> <p>Relieving Principal, SAM, Assistant Principals, SAOs and SLSOs have all successfully trained in LMBR procedures and implementing these</p>

Next Steps

Completion and implementation of the community kitchen garden environmental sustainability program.
 Appreciative Inquiry Process for planning the new School Plan for 2018–2020.
 Milestones and school programs planned using the data and reflections from completing External Validation.

Effective financial management to support 2018 –2020 School Plan projects.

Community kitchen garden environmental sustainability program garden is collaboratively planned to maximise student learning outcomes and engagement.

All stakeholders reflections and feedback on the current school plan, Appreciative Inquiry process evaluated and embedded in the 2018 – 2020 School Plan.

A scoped and resourced school milestones document, with continued focus on teacher efficacy and maximising the learning outcomes for every student.

Key Initiatives	Resources (annual)	Impact achieved this year
Aboriginal background loading	RAM Aboriginal Background Flexible Funding: 9 students –2017 Total = \$4836	Additional Learning and support teacher is employed to support classroom programs for all 9 Aboriginal students and develop a Personalised Learning Pathways (PLP) for each student. All students are making progress across the literacy and numeracy continuums. Cultural significance is included in all PLPs in consultation with the AECG.
English language proficiency	RAM EAL/D = \$4029	Additional Learning and Support Teacher(LAST) is employed to support classroom programs, EAL/D programs and students with learning needs. They also provide in class and mentor support for
Low level adjustment for disability	Low level Adjustment for Disability: Total = \$22933/\$36.64 Allocated hours=626 hrs x SLSO LAST teacher allocation 0.6, extended to 0.8 with RAM funding = \$20823	All students requiring adjustments and accommodations are catered for within class programs and other whole school strategies. School Learning and Support Officer (SLSO) supports students and classroom programs for students who are identified and assessed for immediate support. 42 students were identified by the Learning and Support Team for additional support in 2017 (includes students on recurring monitoring and newly identified students). 35 students required differentiated practices within the classroom context to support learning needs. 25 students required supplementary support, 8 students required substantial support with Individualised Learning Plans (ILPs) and 2 students required extensive levels of adjustment.
Quality Teaching, Successful Students (QTSS)	QTSS= 0.244 = 1.5 days per week	Provide release time for a school executive member to support teachers to implement a whole school systematic approach to collect, analyse, interpret, track, evaluate and report on student learning and growth across DoE Literacy continuums in aspects of writing relevant to expected timeframes. Support teachers to develop processes for students to give and gain feedback and reflect on assessment processes to plan their current and future learning.
Socio–economic background	RAM Socio–economic Background Flexible Funding Total = \$13074	Additional Learning and Support Teacher(LAST) is employed to support classroom programs and students with learning needs.They also provide in class and mentor support for classroom teachers.
Support for beginning teachers	See Beginning Teacher Funding: \$12512 Semester 1 \$12512 Semester 2	Two beginning teachers received additional support in the first three years of their career. Beginning teachers are provided with access to additional support, professional development and mentoring time with their supervisors.
Flexible Wellbeing Funding	Student Support Officer SLSO ½ day /week as required \$8,207 Classroom Teacher Release PBL 1 day /week \$20,405	Provide release time for a school executive member to support teachers to implement a whole school integrated approach to promote Positive Behaviour for Learning (PBL) and the Rock and Water program.

Student information

Student enrolment profile

Students	Enrolments			
	2014	2015	2016	2017
Boys	165	159	160	174
Girls	148	158	165	161

Student attendance profile

School				
Year	2014	2015	2016	2017
K	96.5	95.9	95.6	95.7
1	94	93.5	94.3	94.7
2	95	95.1	94.5	94.6
3	94.5	96	94.6	95.6
4	95.8	93.8	95.8	96
5	94.5	95.6	94	95.3
6	95.2	95	94.3	94
All Years	95.1	95	94.8	95.1
State DoE				
Year	2014	2015	2016	2017
K	95.2	94.4	94.4	94.4
1	94.7	93.8	93.9	93.8
2	94.9	94	94.1	94
3	95	94.1	94.2	94.1
4	94.9	94	93.9	93.9
5	94.8	94	93.9	93.8
6	94.2	93.5	93.4	93.3
All Years	94.8	94	94	93.9

Management of non-attendance

Regular attendance at school is essential to assist students to maximise their potential. Schools, in partnership with parents, are responsible for promoting the regular attendance of students.

Encouraging regular attendance is a core school responsibility. Class rolls are marked daily and monitored regularly by the class teachers for patterns of students' partial or non-attendance. The Learning Support Team monitors the attendance of students. If a concern is identified, the team works with the student, parent and class teacher to improve attendance. Parents are contacted by the school and informed of their responsibility to ensure children attend school regularly. The support of the Home School Liaison

Office is sought if required.

School staff:

- provide a caring teaching and learning environment which fosters students' sense of belonging to the school community;
- recognise and reward excellent and improved student attendance;
- maintain accurate records of student attendance;
- implement programs and practices to address attendance issues when they arise;
- provide clear information to students and parents regarding attendance requirements and the consequences of unsatisfactory attendance; and
- keep notes and records of verbal explanations for absences and retain these for two years from the date of receipt.

Class sizes

Class	Total
KEIRA 4	18
KEIRA 3	19
KEIRA 2	21
OUSLEY 2	25
OUSLEY 1	25
KEIRA 1	27
DRUMMOND 1	26
NEBO 2	30
NEBO 1	29
NEBO 3	23
KEMBLA 2	28
NEBO 4	28
KEMBLA 1	30

Workforce information

Workforce composition

Position	FTE*
Principal	1
Deputy Principal(s)	0
Assistant Principal(s)	3
Head Teacher(s)	0
Classroom Teacher(s)	11.29
Teacher of Reading Recovery	0
Learning & Support Teacher(s)	0.6
Teacher Librarian	0.8
Teacher of ESL	0
School Counsellor	0
School Administration & Support Staff	2.92
Other Positions	0

*Full Time Equivalent

<Use this text box to report on the Aboriginal composition of your school's workforce>

Delete text not required.

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

All teachers were involved in a range of professional learning activities throughout the year. Professional development is strategically planned to meet the needs of all staff and is in line with whole school planning and departmental priorities.

The main areas of focus in 2017 centred on:

- The accreditation and support of beginning teachers with the NESA;
- The maintenance of accreditation of beginning

teachers at Professional Competence;

- Whole school analysis of NAPLAN, PLAN and school based data to identify areas of need in all aspects of literacy and numeracy;

- Using PLAN data to identify and track all students' individual learning needs on the learning continuums to inform teaching practices and the design of teaching programs and individual learning plans;

- Implementation of the NSW English, Mathematics, Science, History and Geography Syllabuses, and the design of scopes and sequences and stage based units of work, for implementation;

- Cyclic assessment for learning strategy, to collaboratively plan literacy and numeracy assessment tasks, rubrics, and teaching programs, collect, analyse and consistently judge student achievement data aligned to NSW syllabus outcomes, and the NSW QTM;

- Focus on Reading Phase 1 embedding the Super Six Comprehension Strategies and pedagogies into a consistent, system wide guided reading framework;

- Action research was conducted by all staff, focusing on personalised learning. Two cycles of inquiry occurred throughout 2017 and presentations with findings showcased;

- Explicit teaching of problem solving skills in mathematics with an emphasis on language;

- Use of technology in the classroom with an emphasis on iPads, Google Apps, Web 2.0 tools, interactive programs and websites;

- Emergency Care Update; Asthma Awareness Update; ASCIA – Anaphylaxis training; Code of Conduct; Child Protection Update; and

- Mount St Thomas Public School has two beginning teachers working towards accreditation.

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

Financial summary

The information provided in the financial summary includes reporting from 1 January 2017 to 31 December 2017.

	2017 Actual (\$)
Opening Balance	186,909
Revenue	2,635,451
Appropriation	2,518,717
Sale of Goods and Services	2,810
Grants and Contributions	111,551
Gain and Loss	0
Other Revenue	0
Investment Income	2,373
Expenses	-2,702,776
Recurrent Expenses	-2,702,776
Employee Related	-2,475,475
Operating Expenses	-227,301
Capital Expenses	0
Employee Related	0
Operating Expenses	0
SURPLUS / DEFICIT FOR THE YEAR	-67,325
Balance Carried Forward	119,584

The three financial summary tables cover from 1 January 2017 to 31 December 2017).

The financial summary consists of school income broken down by funding source and is derived from the school Annual Financial Statement. This summary covers funds for operating costs and does not involve expenditure areas such as permanent salaries, building and major maintenance. A full copy of the school's 2017 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.

Financial summary equity funding

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

	2017 Actual (\$)
Base Total	2,194,455
Base Per Capita	49,669
Base Location	0
Other Base	2,144,787
Equity Total	105,816
Equity Aboriginal	4,836
Equity Socio economic	13,074
Equity Language	4,029
Equity Disability	83,877
Targeted Total	35,902
Other Total	63,559
Grand Total	2,399,732

Figures presented in this report may be subject to rounding so may not reconcile exactly with the bottom line totals, which are calculated without any rounding.

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.

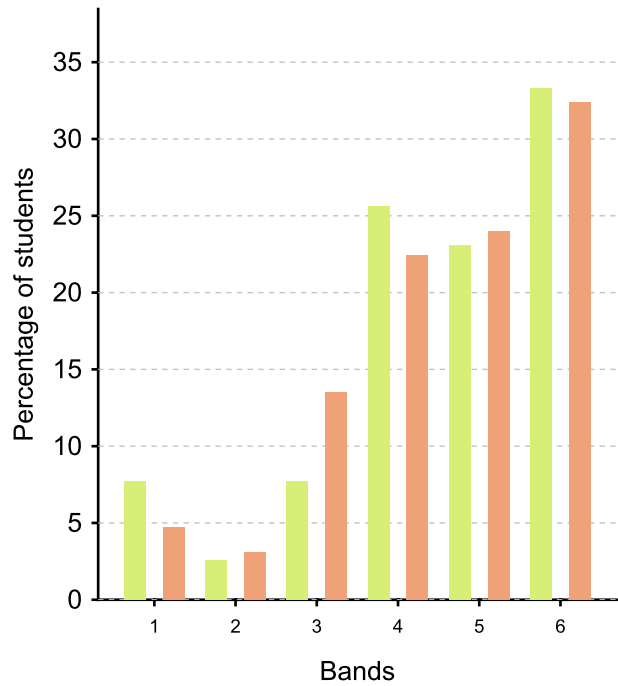
NAPLAN Year 3 Literacy

Thirty-nine Year 3 students sat the 2017 NAPLAN test in literacy (23 boys and 16 girls). In reading, 56.4% of students were placed in the top two proficiency bands compared with 51% of the state. In writing, 69.2% of students were placed in the top two proficiency bands compared with 53.2% of the state. In spelling, 51.3% of students were placed in the top two proficiency bands compared with 52.7% of the state. 89.7% of Year 3 students scored at or above the National Minimum Standards. Analysis of results has shown that students can identify information and main ideas and interpret information from pictures and text. A future focus area will be increasing results for boys in spelling and improving overall achievement in reading. Growth for Year 3 to Year 5 in NAPLAN Writing from 2016 to 2017 was 61.1. 81.3% of Year 3 students achieved in the top two proficiency bands in NAPLAN Writing in 2017.

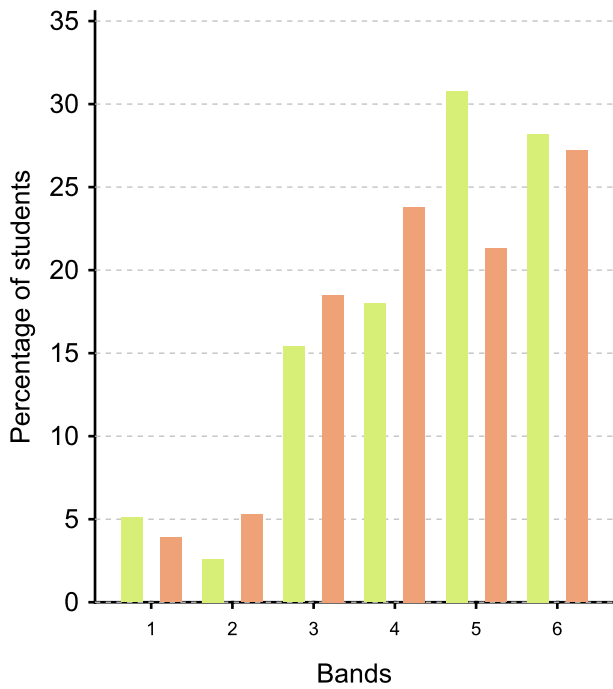
NAPLAN Year 5 Literacy

Fifty-one students in Year 5 sat the 2017 NAPLAN test in literacy (23 boys and 28 girls). In reading, 31.4% of students were placed in the top two proficiency bands compared with 39.7% of the state. In writing, 9.8% of students were placed in the top two proficiency bands compared with 18.1% of the state. In spelling, 22% of students were placed in the top two proficiency bands compared with 38.2% of the state. 90.2% of Year 5 students scored at or above the National Minimum Standards. Analysis of results has shown that students can identify events, purpose and main ideas, but need further development interpreting emotions, actions and opinion. In 2017, growth in writing and grammar and punctuation exceeded the state average.

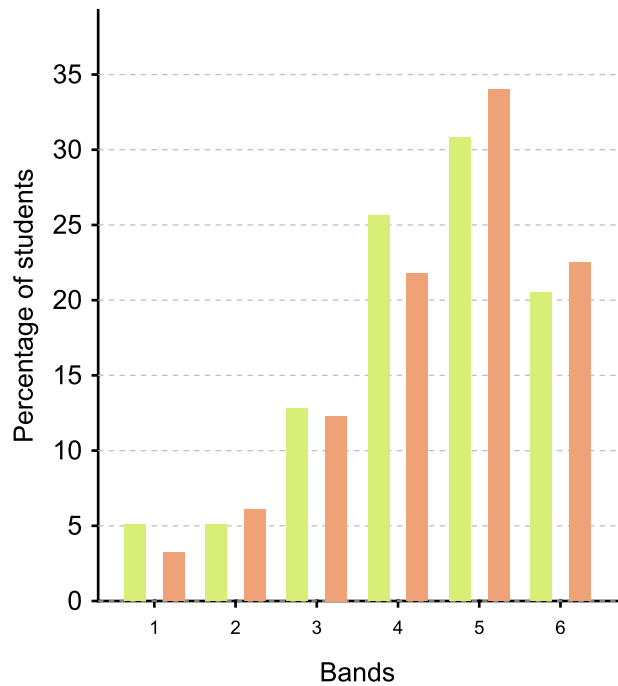
**Percentage in bands:
Year 3 Reading**



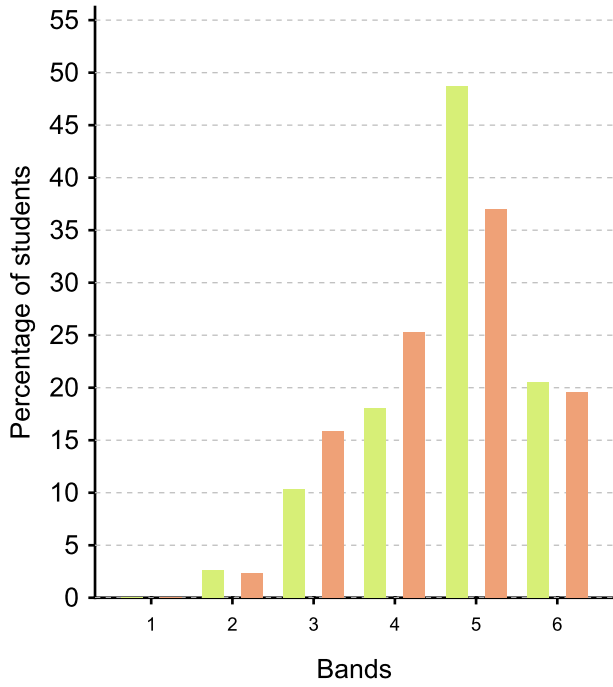
**Percentage in bands:
Year 3 Grammar & Punctuation**



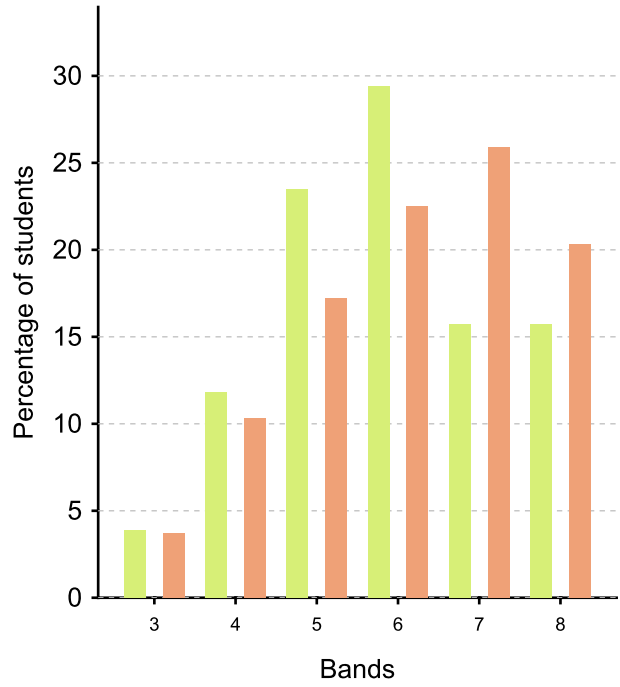
**Percentage in bands:
Year 3 Spelling**



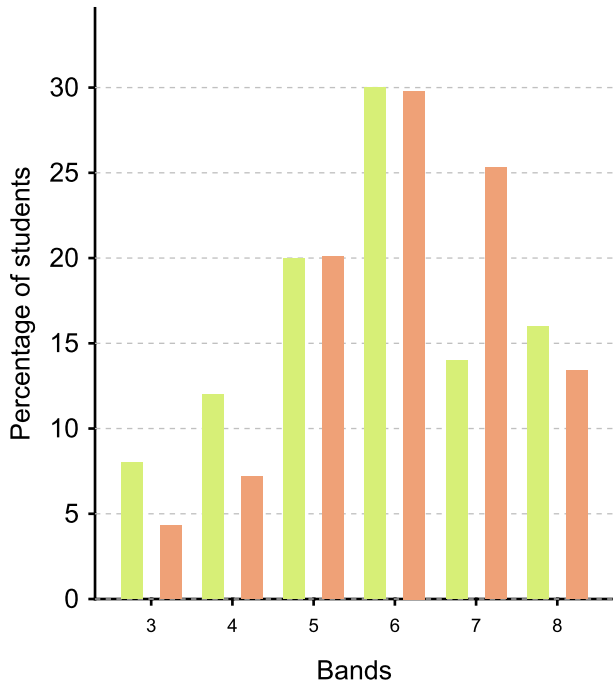
Percentage in bands:
Year 3 Writing



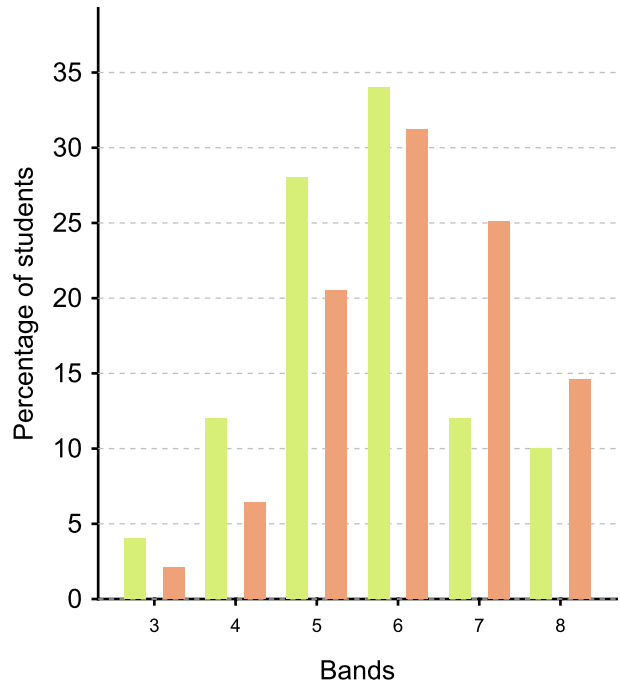
Percentage in bands:
Year 5 Reading



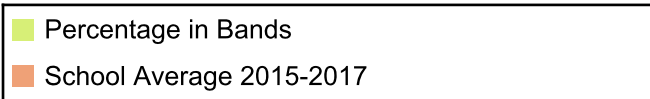
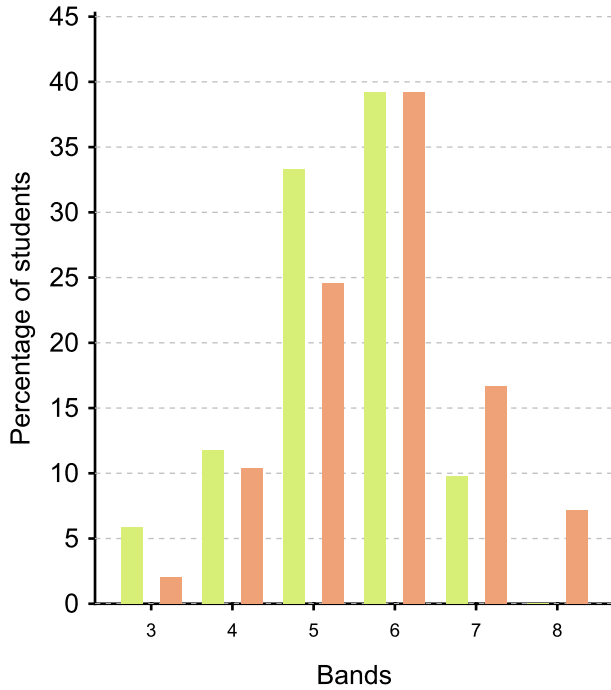
Percentage in bands:
Year 5 Grammar & Punctuation



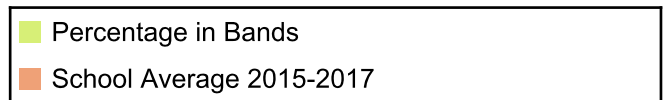
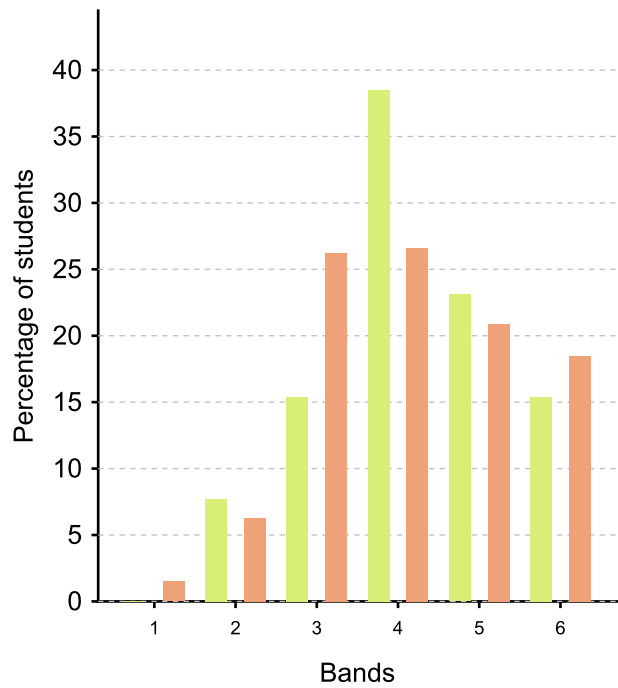
Percentage in bands:
Year 5 Spelling



Percentage in bands:
Year 5 Writing



Percentage in bands:
Year 3 Numeracy



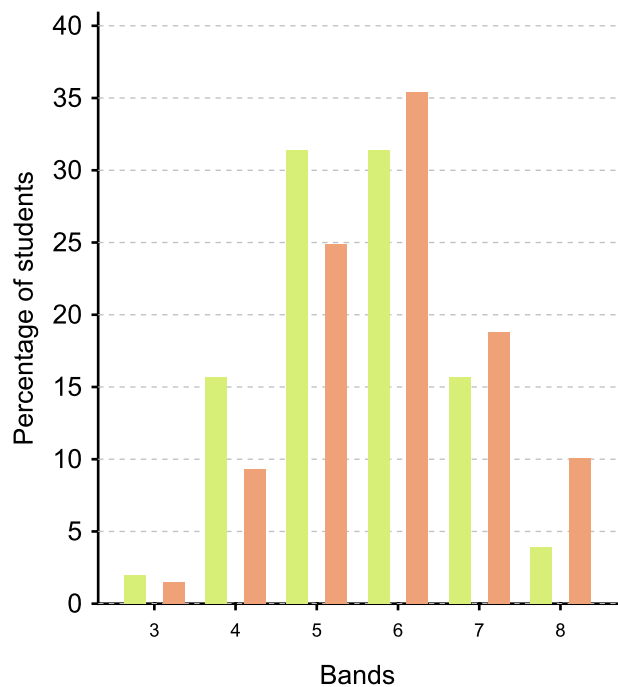
NAPLAN Year 3 Numeracy

Thirty-nine Year 3 students sat the 2017 NAPLAN test in numeracy (23 boys and 16 girls). In numeracy, 38.5% of students were placed in the top two proficiency bands. 92.4% of Year 3 students scored at or above the National Minimum Standards. Analysis of results has shown that students have good number skills across each of the operations. A future focus area will be measurement concepts; time, area, length, mass and volume and capacity.

NAPLAN Year 5 Numeracy

Fifty-one students in Year 5 sat the 2017 NAPLAN test in numeracy (23 boys and 28 girls). In numeracy, 19.6% of students were placed in the top two proficiency bands. 83% of Year 5 students scored at or above the National Minimum Standards. Analysis of Year 5 numeracy results indicated that our future areas of focus include matching equivalent fractions and decimals; multi-step problem solving; and comparing masses using balance scales. In 2017, 45.7% of students achieved growth of equal to or more than expected growth in numeracy.

Percentage in bands:
Year 5 Numeracy



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

Parent/caregiver, student, teacher satisfaction

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

Their responses are presented below:

- 94% of parents agree that they receive adequate notice of school events;
- 98% of parents are pleased their child/ren attend Mount St Thomas PS;
- 88% of parents agree that the school has high expectations of its students;
- 96% of parents agree that the school provides helpful information about their child's progress;
- 91% of parents agree that teachers provide a stimulating and challenging environment for their child/ren;
- 97% of parents agree that the school has a safe and secure environment;
- 100% of parents agree that the school regularly praises and rewards students when successful; and
- 95% of parents agree that the school values their support and that they can talk to their child's teacher.

Policy requirements

Aboriginal education

Mount St Thomas Public School continues to develop Aboriginal programs to enhance the learning outcomes of our nine Aboriginal students. These programs have been achieved through the continuation of the design and implementation of Personalised Learning Pathways (PLPs) for each of our Aboriginal students. These PLPs continue to support the students in the further development of a strong commitment to learning and increased performance and achievement of outcomes. The PLPs were designed for each Aboriginal student with specific learning goals and are aimed to target each student's academic, social and behavioural needs.

Mount St Thomas Public School continues to focus on the teaching of Aboriginal Education across the curriculum. Teachers provide students with experiences to develop a deep understanding and knowledge of Aboriginal culture. Human Society and Its Environment, History, Creative and Performing Arts, and Science and Technology units allow for the study, celebration, appreciation and understanding of Australian Aboriginal culture. As a sign of respect, students commence assemblies with the traditional Acknowledgement of Country and our National Anthem is sung to Aboriginal music.

Multicultural and anti-racism education

Mount St Thomas Public School continues to actively promote multicultural education through a range of initiatives and events. Through teaching programs, school systems and a range of events throughout the year, we strive to promote a shared vision of Australia based on cultural understanding and community harmony. Multicultural education aims to equip all students with the necessary skills, knowledge and values to participate successfully in our diverse society.

Teachers recognise and respond to the cultural needs of the school community;

Teachers, librarian, Learning and Support teachers and EAL/D teachers work cooperatively to develop strategies for students' individual needs;

Tolerant attitudes and understanding towards cultures were promoted through our school Harmony Day activities and assembly, including members of our parent community who spoke to the students about their experiences as migrants and refugees;

Students were presented with inclusive teaching practices that recognise and value the backgrounds and cultures of all students;

Teaching and learning programs supported the particular learning needs of targeted students from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds; and

One staff member is trained as an Anti-Racist Contact Officer. The school is committed to the elimination of racism and discrimination through our school's curriculum, policies and working environment.

Other school programs

Arts

Creative Arts is a key learning area that is boundless, and when combined with other key learning areas opens the door for children to express themselves as enthusiastically as they see fit. All forms of artistic expression encourage students to use life skills, such as cooperation, risk taking, tolerance and promotes self-esteem. In 2017, our students enjoyed great success in all areas of the arts.

Visual Arts

Every school in New South Wales is invited to participate in Operation Art, an initiative of The Children's Hospital at Westmead in association with the New South Wales Department of Education. The Operation Art Competition provides a forum for schools and students to demonstrate their visual arts achievements through exhibitions, at the Newington Armory Gallery, Sydney Olympic Park and the Art Gallery of New South Wales. Every year Mount St Thomas PS selects children's works to enter the Operation Art Competition in Sydney. To choose our pieces of art to represent Mount St Thomas Public School, we select some works from each class across

the school and then vote for the winners.

Two children have their work selected by popular vote to represent our school in the Operation Art Competition at Newington Armory Gallery, Sydney Olympic Park.

Band

Mount St Thomas Public School, in conjunction with the Wollongong Conservatorium of Music, continued the Years 3–6 Band Program in 2017. Twenty six students participated in music lessons each week. The school band had many opportunities to perform at school and community events, including the 48th Combined Schools Instrumental Festival and the Country Music Festival. Many thanks to our Wollongong Conservatorium of Music teacher, Jenny Cook, and the many parents who have supported their children to participate in this exciting music program.

Choir

Mount St Thomas Public School had 2 choirs, a Junior choir made up of 25 enthusiastic students from K–2 led by Mrs Jacquie Webster and a Senior choir made up of 45 talented students from Years 3–6 led by Mrs Kylie–Ann Pearce and Mrs Audrey Hoy. Both choirs gave up their lunchtimes to rehearse and enjoyed performing at school assemblies and events. The Senior choir participated in the Southern Illawarra Music Festival which culminated in a beautiful performance at the University of Wollongong grand hall. They also participated in the Chortly Loud choral festival performing in Wollongong city Mall. The students in the choir displayed great commitment and a love of the performing arts and worked together as a team to produce quality performances.

In August 24 students from years 3–6 performed as part of a mass choir of over 400 students at Southern stars at the Wollongong Entertainment Centre. The choir prepared at school and at 2 mass rehearsals in the lead up to performance dates. Each student enjoyed the opportunity to perform and be part of such a large scale production. Mount St Thomas public school students represented their school with pride.

Southern Stars Dance

30 students from Years 3 to 6, enthusiastically performed in mass dance items as part of Southern Stars at the Wollongong Entertainment Centre. The theme for the show was 'Postcards', which took the audience on a colourful tour to different places and times. Our school was part of the item 'When I Get My Name in Lights' from 'The Boy From Oz.' The students also danced in the 2 finales: Nutbush and Geronimo. All of the students were a credit to themselves and the school.

Southern Stars Drama

Thirty children performed in the drama group, as part of the 2018 Southern Stars "Postcards" Arena Spectacular, at the Wollongong Entertainment Centre in August. They performed in two massed drama items

with The Southern Stars Performing Company called "Where is the Love?" and "Sound of Silence".

Public Speaking

Students from K–6 participated in the annual Public Speaking Competition again this year. Each class' nominated representative participated at the stage final. The winners of these finals then presented their speech at our Education Week Assembly. Four students from Stage 2 and 3 also represented our school in the Multicultural Perspectives Public Speaking Competition, with one of our students making the Regional final.

Sport

Mount St Thomas has had a very successful and rewarding year with sports in 2017. Students took part in the three major carnivals for the year – swimming, cross country and athletics, and participated in various in–school programs. Ninety six students competed at our school swimming carnival. Another thirty six students then went on to represent our school at the Central District Swimming Carnival. Mount St Thomas swimmers were well placed throughout the day. Overall our school came sixth. Six students then competed at the South Coast Area Swimming Carnival. Following our school cross country, fifty six students represented our school at the Central District PSSA Cross Country Carnival, held at Kembla Joggers track. Forty eight students participated in the District Athletics Carnival, and five students competed further in the State Athletics Championships at Homebush.

District Sports Trials

Thirty–seven students nominated to try out for selection in Central Wollongong District sports teams. Sports include Soccer, Tennis, Cricket, Hockey, Basketball, Rugby League, Touch Football, Softball, Netball, AFL and Rugby Union.

Premier's Sporting Challenge

All classes 3–6 participated in the Premier's Sporting Challenge in 2017, even enjoying a special visit from the Premier's Sporting Challenge Ambassador.

Basketball

We had great success in basketball in 2017. The under 12 boys basketball team, "MTSO" were winners of the 2017, U12 Boys Division 1 Basketball Illawarra competition and our senior boys team won the NSW PSSA Boys Basketball Knockout, awarding them the title of State Champions.

Swimming Scheme

In December 2017, sixty students from Years 2–5 participated in the School Swimming Scheme. This is a long running Department of Education program that is free for all students with students only needing to pay for the cost of transporting them to the pool. As Australians who live close to the coast and water it is important that every student in our school has the opportunity to learn water safety and survival skills.

Students made impressive gains throughout the 2 week program and it is hoped that we can increase numbers involved in 2018.

Premier's Reading Challenge

Mount St Thomas Public School has been participating in the PRC for a number of years and it has become an important part of our ongoing promotion of literacy within the school community. This year fifty four students from Kindergarten to Year 2, completed their challenge of reading twenty five books. Students in Years 3 to 6 had to complete twenty books up to and including quite difficult novels. Sixty three children completed this challenge.

CBCA Literary Lunch

Eight of our avid readers and committed library monitors, participated in a Literary Lunch with Author, Peter McInnes.

Reconciliation Walk

In Term 2, five Aboriginal students and their families participated in the annual Reconciliation Walk at Bellambi school. The day involved meeting at a park in Bellambi and in mass, walking along Cawley Street to the grounds of Bellambi school with nearly 1000 other students and families from local schools. Once at the school, elders and local Aboriginal community members told the story of the area. The students then watched story-telling dance, involving all the teachers and students of Bellambi school and a local Aboriginal dance group who had been working with the school. This day was a perfect chance for our Aboriginal students and their families to celebrate their culture and history in an all inclusive environment.

Student Representative Council

The student representative council consisted of twenty eight students from Years 1 to 6. The SRC is involved in school decision-making, fundraising and community initiatives. Involvement in our SRC develops leadership skills, social awareness, communication skills and a sense of responsibility.

Grip Leadership

During Term 2, our four School Captains attended an intense all day workshop, building leadership skills. They participated in intensive activities that promoted leading and supporting their peers using everyone's unique strengths and skills. These students were then able to return to school with their new learnt leadership skills to better carry out their roles in 2017.

Council Consultation Session

During Term 4, thirty of our Mount St Thomas students were asked to participate in a Wollongong City Council consultation session as part of their Community Strategic Plan process. The consultation session lasted for just under an hour and gave our students the opportunity to engage in conversations of priorities for local amenities to ensure the Council was reflecting the

right vision, goals and strategies for the area. Opportunities such as these, allow our students to have a voice in the future of our city.

Code Club

Code Club met once a week at lunch time. Students participated in programming activities from the Code Club Australia curriculum. As part of the curriculum, students completed set tasks using Scratch. Coding strengthens problem solving skills and logical thinking, and supports key academic subjects such as Science, Mathematics and Technology. Students thoroughly enjoyed this extra-curricular opportunity and their skills are advancing rapidly.

Techsperts

Techsperts met once a week at lunch time. Students participated in learning activities linked to technology use that is planned for classroom teaching and learning programs. Techsperts familiarised themselves with new skills and then played a leadership role in class to support their class mates and the teacher. This year, techsperts have been working on Adobe Spark, computational thinking, Google Apps, iMovie and DoInkgreenscreen app. Students' skills and dedication to learning new things is commendable and their enthusiasm is infectious.

Minecraft Education Edition

Mount St Thomas Public School students participated in the pilot of the Minecraft Education Edition, where they were asked to create their ideal playground. Deploying key mathematical skills of scale and measurement at the same time as unleashing their innovation and creativity potential. Water parks and parkour courses were just some of the way-out designs that had grounding in mathematical reality.

Life Education

Happy Harold came in the Life Education Van to visit our school in Term 4. Students learnt about nutrition, drug education and anti-bullying strategies.

Environment

This year Mount St Thomas Public School has continued to maintain their environmental initiatives:

Mountso Community Kitchen Garden

In 2016, the community garden group and parents from the P&C prepared a submission to council for a community garden and were awarded a grant. The garden was completed in November 2017, transforming an unused assembly space into a tiered kitchen garden for use by students and the community.

Class Gardens

Classes take time out of their busy schedules to plant and water the class gardens in the school grounds. Everyone regularly enjoys the fruits of their labour at harvest time.

Compost Challenge

Two classes participated in the compost challenge with the Wollongong Botanic Gardens, winning Champion School.

Chickens

Our school chickens are looked after by volunteer Keith, who has an extensive knowledge and experience with poultry. At times during the year school families have volunteered to feed and care for the chickens when needed.

Community Outreach

Our school has a strong community link with volunteers of all ages, who form our school Garden Group. The volunteers are from the school community and surrounding suburbs. Their collective commitment is to maintain and improve our beautiful school environment. The volunteers work every Wednesday, with Mike coming in 3 days a week, on weekends and school holidays to continue maintenance and improvements. Our school gardens look absolutely spectacular from their efforts, and their ability to propagate and access a wide range of plants from Wollongong City Council and donations from the community.

The Garden Group

The school Garden Group now in its 10th year, runs plant stalls at school community events such as Family Fun Night, Smart Start BBQ and Election days with money raised funding purchase of tools, equipment, seeds, plants, stakes and soil. There are always plants for sale at the front office. This amazing group cooks BBQ lunches at school events such as the regional Cross Country at West Dapto and end of Year 6 sausage sizzle. Members of the Garden Group have been involved in many school and community activities including:

Ongoing collection and storage of donated items for the school fete, and organising and running 3 stalls on the day;

- Cleaning out and reorganising storerooms and storage areas;

- Using recycled materials in the school environment;.

- Organising World Tree Day at school where School Council Representatives planted 40 native bushes on the bank;

- Completing major projects around the school including rejuvenation and renovation of the Rainforest Walk behind Ousley and nearby pond areas, and the huge bank area which has been cleared and planted with native flora identified by yellow stakes;

- Two working worm farms have been located in a shaded position near Ousley building and Drummond; and

- Setting up the School Archive Room in Nebo building where extensive archives are accessioned and stored as valuable records of our school's history.

Volunteer Hours:

2008–176

2009–226

2010–353

2011–476

2012–525

2013–729

2014–1105

2015–1250

2016–1262

2017–1451