

Mowbray Public School

Annual Report

2017



4015

Introduction

The Annual Report for 2017 is provided to the community of Mowbray 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.

School contact details

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Message from the Principal

Mowbray Public School maintained its reputation as a nurturing and inspiring educational facility for 4–12 year olds in 2017. With a relentless focus on teacher professional learning to enhance student engagement and cater to individual needs, Mowbray Public School has been able to strengthen its culture of personalised learning and preparing students for life as informed citizens.

The school received significant funding through the Resource Allocation Model, which sees financial resources provided to schools based on need.

Our invested parent body supported the school to raise funds for continued maintenance of our site and provision of additional human resources, for which we are most grateful. They also worked tirelessly to coordinate events which maximised community participation.

Mowbray Public School's population has continued to grow with shifts in local area zoning and the development of apartment blocks. The school is well-positioned to cater for the growing and diverse population. Our ethos of inclusivity underpins all decision making and will be a central focus of the 2018–2020 School Plan.

Tom Moth

Relieving Principal

Message from the school community

Thank you to all P&C members who have given their time and efforts to support the P&C through last year, particularly outgoing office bearers. The P&C is such a great force for change and celebration in the school because of the behind the scenes efforts of our members and volunteers.

I want to extend my sincere thanks to Ms Anna Blakeney whose 23 years of dedicated service to the school ended with her retirement at the end of 2017. She poured her heart and soul into this school for more than two decades and the school will forever owe her a debt of gratitude for her efforts.

Matt Hodgkiss

P&C President

School background

School vision statement

Mowbray Public School commenced a significant upgrade in 2015 which will increase the student numbers from 380 in 2015 to a potential future enrolment of 1,000 housed in a 21st century learning facility.

The involved and committed staff is supported by an active and informed parent community.

Our school has a reputation as a caring community in which the welfare and education of the individual child is given high priority.

Mowbray Public School delivers quality education to develop the individual talents, interests and abilities of our students.

Our aim is to develop and maintain a vibrant and responsive learning community that provides children with the capability and confidence to succeed as citizens of the 21st Century.

School context

Mowbray Public School offers excellence in education through a nurturing, co-operative environment designed to bring out the best in our students.

One of the high-achieving Public Schools in our area, we also provide many opportunities for students through our sports and award-winning music programs.

Our highly qualified and dedicated teachers develop stimulating programs catering for the learning needs of all our children who come from a wide range of ethnic backgrounds.

Self-assessment and school achievement

Self-assessment using the School Excellence Framework

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

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

Learning

Areas within the Learning domain were largely assessed at the 'delivering' mark. Delivering means that the school is meeting expected performance measures that significant opportunity for improvement exists. Higher levels are 'sustaining and growing' and 'excelling'. Self-perceived strengths in this domain include the implementation of effective transition to school programs, school procedures which support high rates of student attendance and curriculum provision where evidence-based teaching strategies provide a culture of high expectations. Wellbeing, assessment and reporting were identified as the most prominent areas of immediate attention.

Teaching

The Teaching domain featured perceived strengths in the quality of classroom teaching, with explicit instruction and strategies such as questioning and provision of feedback highly prevalent in most classrooms. The learning and development of teaching staff rated relatively highly, with internal evidence of successful professional learning and a culture of sharing and disseminating learning enabling this judgement to be made. The school is working towards improving its use of student data such as collecting and reviewing evidence to support the effectiveness of programs and initiatives.

Leading

Within the Leading domain, an acknowledgement that more instructional leadership could occur to better support classroom teachers has been made. That said, a culture of both teaching and non-teaching staff proactively seeking to

improve their performance is noted alongside both formal and informal mentoring programs which also drive development. Minimal consultation in the past about School Planning is an area of opportunity in which the school will hope to grow in future years.

Our self-assessment 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

2015–2016 To achieve a successful and smooth transition to our upgraded school with minimal disruption to student learning. 2017 To enhance assessing and reporting practices.

Purpose

2015–2016 To plan and carry out changes associated with the upgrade building program so that disruptions are minimised and the benefits of the new school are fully appreciated.

2017 To enhance assessing and reporting practices so that teaching programs are responsive to student need and parents are informed and well-placed to partner teachers in educating our students.

Overall summary of progress

Significant progress was made in 2017 towards achieving the stated goals of this direction. Parent/student/teacher three way conferences continued, supported by a reflective process undertaken by students where they reported back on perceived strengths and areas of improvement for the term ahead. The executive staff worked together to create a consistent schedule of assessments and through consultation with the teaching staff, devised and implemented what was envisioned as a more informative and professional written report template. Diagnostic assessments in both literacy (including CARS) and numeracy were researched and implemented, enabling assessment to better inform the teaching and learning cycle, differentiation of instruction and tasks, and grouping of students.

Progress towards achieving improvement measures

Improvement measures (to be achieved over 3 years)	Funds Expended (Resources)	Progress achieved this year
#New timetables, policies and procedures. #Well-informed parent body. #Continued access to technology and development of staff skills. #Student welfare programs and strengthened and ongoing support for staff.		

Next Steps

This strategic direction will carry-over into the 2018–2020 School Plan with focus on student self-assessment and formative assessment strategies enabling teachers to be agile in their lesson delivery. The school will engage with research from John Hattie and Dylan Wiliam, and consult with educational partners in revolutionising our assessment practices. Increased use of specific feedback to students, discussion around success criteria and publication of learning intentions will become part of the school's culture. The school will take guidance from the Department of Education about the introduction of Learning Progressions, statements of chronological achievement in literacy and numeracy commencing in Kindergarten, which will shape our practices in differentiating not only learning experiences for students, but also the assessments that they undertake in measuring learning and planning next steps.

Strategic Direction 2

To present learning for students in a creative and highly engaging way catering for the needs of all students.

Purpose

To ensure all students are appropriately engaged, challenged and extended through provision of stimulating learning environments and tasks that are designed to meet students' learning needs, levels of readiness and motivations.

Overall summary of progress

Progress in this strategic direction has been rapid, with teachers benefiting from local expertise in the identification and support of students with low level learning disabilities. Additionally, students at key transition points such as kindergarten and Year 6 were supported by initiatives designed to increase awareness and familiarity with new environments. Social programs were employed to enable a sense of belonging and engagement. All students benefited from learning in flexible spaces which redefine the traditional classroom. Student grouping is fluid and their positions within the four walls are not set. Particularly in Years 3 to 6, this environmental shift supported greater student to student collaboration and negotiation of tasks, mirroring what is occurring with greater regularity in the real-world. The school's continued Bring Your Own Device Program in Years 3 to 6 also enabled this highly engaging style of learning.

Progress towards achieving improvement measures

Improvement measures (to be achieved over 3 years)	Funds Expended (Resources)	Progress achieved this year
#All staff will be timetabled off class to visit other classrooms and observe other teachers. #Support and extension programs provided to all students. #Whole school schedule of assessment developed. #Professional Learning schedule developed. #Whole school involved in progressive approach to Public Speaking and Debating. #Parent information sessions held on a regular basis.		

Next Steps

In future years, significant professional learning for teachers about the Australian Curriculum Assessment and Reporting Authority's (ACARA's) General Capabilities will occur. These General Capabilities (Literacy, Numeracy, Intercultural Understanding, ICT, Creative & Critical Thinking, Personal and Social Capacity) will be reflected across the curriculum in all classrooms with an aim to further engage students and prepare them for a world in a workforce which is not yet known. Developing these 'soft skills' alongside content knowledge and understanding will position students ideally for life beyond Mowbray. Alongside this, students and staff will engage with STEM education (Science, Technology, Engineering, Mathematics) in a way which positions the student as chief scientist and investigator solve realistic global issues through hypothesising, questioning, testing, reflecting and reporting. The school will continue to support individual students who require adjustments to learning programs in order to access the curriculum on the same basis as their peers.

Strategic Direction 3

To provide professional learning, facilities and technology to support Strategic Directions 1 and 2.

Purpose

To provide professional learning opportunities which support teachers in their implementation of new curricula and to develop technology resources appropriate to current standards and our upgraded school facilities.

Overall summary of progress

A school culture that values the professional development of both teaching and non-teaching staff has enabled the school to achieve a high degree of success in this pursuit. Much of the professional learning that has occurred was intended to support teachers to best utilise the technologies made available to them in the classroom to support student learning outcomes. Observational data indicates that all teachers are confident and competent users of technology for both administrative and educational purposes. Whole-school professional learning in diagnostic assessment also occurred, allowing staff members the opportunity to implement new and improved strategies in an environment of high support. Our continued association with the North Harbour Learning Community has meant that higher level professional learning in Departmental initiatives has also been accessed by the staff at Mowbray Public School.

Progress towards achieving improvement measures

Improvement measures (to be achieved over 3 years)	Funds Expended (Resources)	Progress achieved this year
#Schedule of professional learning developed. #Available facilities used effectively during build. Input into choice and development of technology facilities in new buildings. #Continued use of Technology Scope and sequence to meet curriculum requirements.		

Next Steps

In future, professional learning will not be a discreet strategic direction, but will be embedded within other directions. Professional learning is the shared responsibility of the school and individual teacher. From 2018, all teachers within the Department of Education will be required to maintain their level of accreditation with the New South Wales Education Standards Authority, or be working towards achieving a proficient level of accreditation. This increased expectation reflects well on teaching as a profession and both teaching and non-teaching staff at Mowbray Public School will be supported to achieve within this new framework. Professional learning will be planned, purposeful and strategically aligned to the school's directions. All staff members will be required to keep a professional learning journal where they track and reflect upon their continued development, regardless of their career stage.

Key Initiatives	Resources (annual)	Impact achieved this year
English language proficiency		
Low level adjustment for disability		
Socio-economic background		
Support for beginning teachers		

Student information

Student enrolment profile

Students	Enrolments			
	2014	2015	2016	2017
Boys	170	165	197	241
Girls	208	212	240	285

Student attendance profile

School				
Year	2014	2015	2016	2017
K	98	95.1	96.7	95.8
1	96	95.2	96.3	94.8
2	95.7	95.5	95.4	96
3	95.7	94.7	96.5	95.2
4	95.4	95.8	96.5	95.3
5	95.1	95.9	96.2	95.6
6	96.2	94.3	96	95.8
All Years	96.2	95.2	96.3	95.5
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

Student attendance rates in 2017 are shown to be lower than in previous years. This is partly due to new record keeping protocols which require schools to include students taking extended travel as 'absent' rather than 'exempt'. Non-attendance requires caregivers to provide a written explanation. Absences for illness and injury are recorded as 'sick' while absence for reasons such as domestic necessities and attendance at special events are recorded as 'leave'. When concerns about student attendance are held, the executive staff make contact with the caregiver and discusses strategies the school can employ to assist improve the student's attendance. Continued non-attendance results in a referral to the Department of Education's Home School Liaison

Class sizes

Class	Total
KB	20
KW	20
KR	19
KO	20
KM	20
1B	24
1W	23
1O	23
1M	22
2B	23
2W	22
2O	22
2M	22
3M	29
3/4W	30
3O	29
4O	28
4M	29
SENIOR W	31
SENIOR O	30
SENIOR M	31

Structure of classes

Class size and structure are informed by a standardised staffing formula. Kindergarten classes are filled with approximately 20 students. This number increases throughout the grades.

Workforce information

Workforce composition

Position	FTE*
Principal	1
Deputy Principal(s)	0
Assistant Principal(s)	4
Head Teacher(s)	0
Classroom Teacher(s)	20.1
Teacher of Reading Recovery	0
Learning & Support Teacher(s)	0.5
Teacher Librarian	1
Teacher of ESL	1
School Counsellor	2
School Administration & Support Staff	3.96
Other Positions	0

*Full Time Equivalent

The Australian Education Regulation, 2014 requires schools to report on Aboriginal composition of their workforce.

No staff members of Mowbray Public School are of Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander descent.

Workforce retention

In 2017, both Sean McElhenny and Belinda Bull were successful in joining the school's permanent teaching staff, while principal Anna Blakeney retired after a remarkable career of 53 years, dedicated to serving students in public schools.

Teacher qualifications

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

Teacher qualifications

Qualifications	% of staff
Undergraduate degree or diploma	54
Postgraduate degree	4

Professional learning and teacher accreditation

A thorough and proactive professional learning agenda was initiated in 2017. As always, significant attention was given to training in emergency response and first aid. Face to face training in cardiopulmonary resuscitation and administration of adrenaline auto-

injectors was provided to all staff, while the online training schedule in emergency care was maintained. Other mandatory training in Child Protection also occurred.

In meeting curriculum priorities, all teaching staff undertook development in grammar knowledge, awareness and teaching with an external specialist consultant. The aim was to develop the skills and understandings of teachers who could in-turn better support students in the classroom.

Mowbray Public School has positive relationships with a number of support professionals including speech pathologists and occupational therapists, who regularly ran sessions with teachers to maximise their skills in the classroom.

To support our wellbeing initiatives, the Live Life Well @ School program was introduced to Mowbray Public School staff through professional learning. This initiative assists teachers with strategies to engage students in physical activity throughout the day and nutrition awareness.

The school's ongoing participation in the North Harbour Learning Community continued. The focus of our professional learning here was on the quality of teaching occurring in each classroom. Professor Jenny Gore, from the University of Newcastle presented the research and expertise on Quality teaching Rounds. Quality Teaching Rounds enables teachers to draw on their own strengths and the advice of their peers to find creative ways of improving their practice. Using an evidence-based model whereby small groups of colleagues watch a lesson in progress and assess performance, each teacher takes a turn to host a round – similar to medical rounds used to teach junior doctors in hospitals. This practice facilitates professional collegial conversation and maintains the focus on the core business of our work – high quality teaching and learning.

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	455,608
Revenue	4,635,527
Appropriation	3,968,632
Sale of Goods and Services	52,677
Grants and Contributions	607,341
Gain and Loss	0
Other Revenue	0
Investment Income	6,877
Expenses	-4,561,964
Recurrent Expenses	-4,561,964
Employee Related	-3,875,816
Operating Expenses	-686,147
Capital Expenses	0
Employee Related	0
Operating Expenses	0
SURPLUS / DEFICIT FOR THE YEAR	73,564
Balance Carried Forward	529,172

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.

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	3,422,242
Base Per Capita	66,785
Base Location	0
Other Base	3,355,457
Equity Total	191,616
Equity Aboriginal	631
Equity Socio economic	4,132
Equity Language	113,809
Equity Disability	73,044
Targeted Total	26,013
Other Total	268,616
Grand Total	3,908,487

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

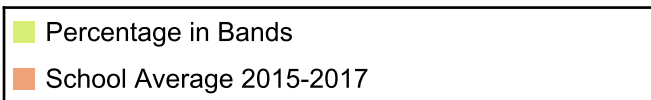
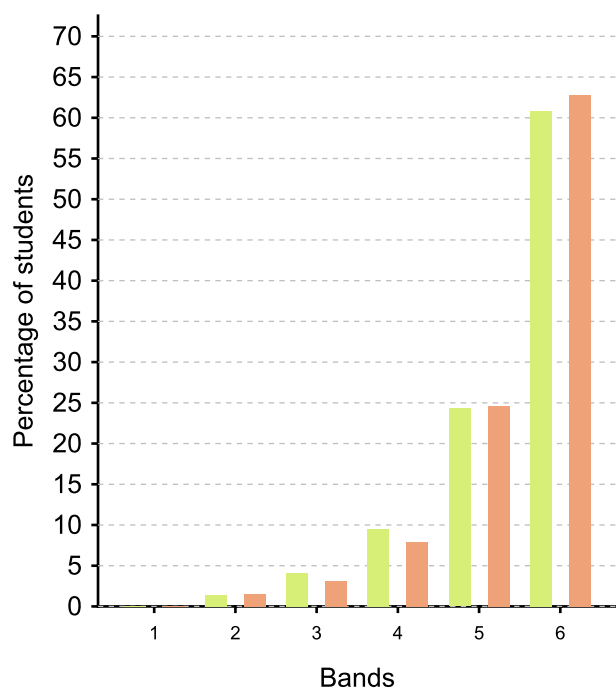
NAPLAN

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.

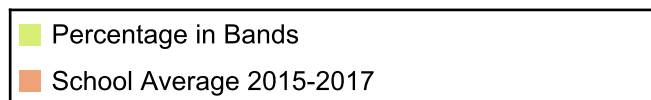
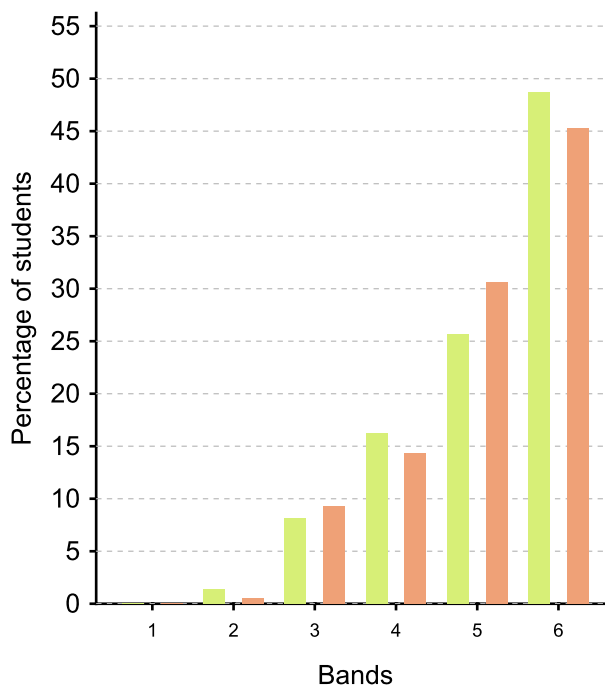
Students at Mowbray Public School continue to excel in the literacy components of NAPLAN. Year 3 reading performance has seen a steady increase since 2015. Over 70% of students achieving in the highest band in reading and 83% of students achieving in the two highest bands in writing are remarkable feats. A future target will be to increase the proportion of students in band 6 for writing.

Year 5 student performance in literacy has remained strong although lower than usual in 2017. Improvements in grammar and punctuation and writing will be targets for coming years.

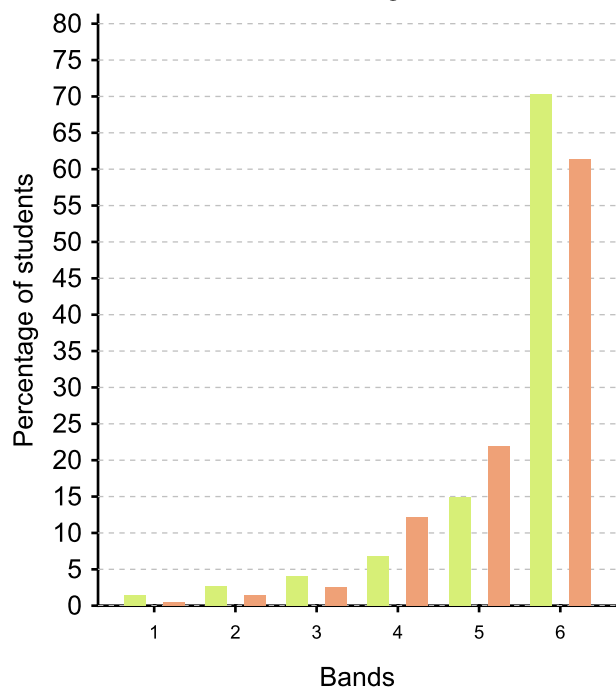
Percentage in bands:
Year 3 Grammar & Punctuation



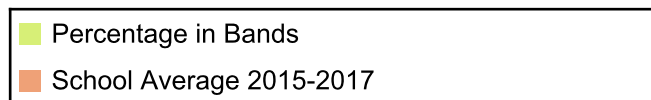
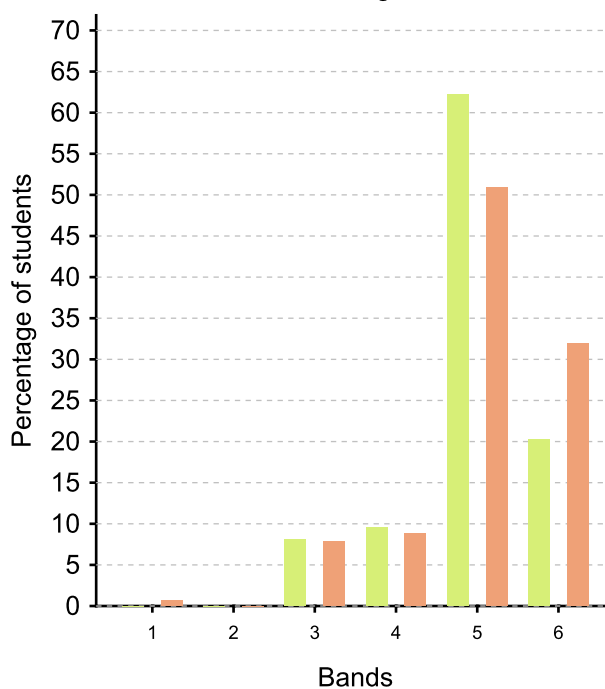
Percentage in bands:
Year 3 Spelling



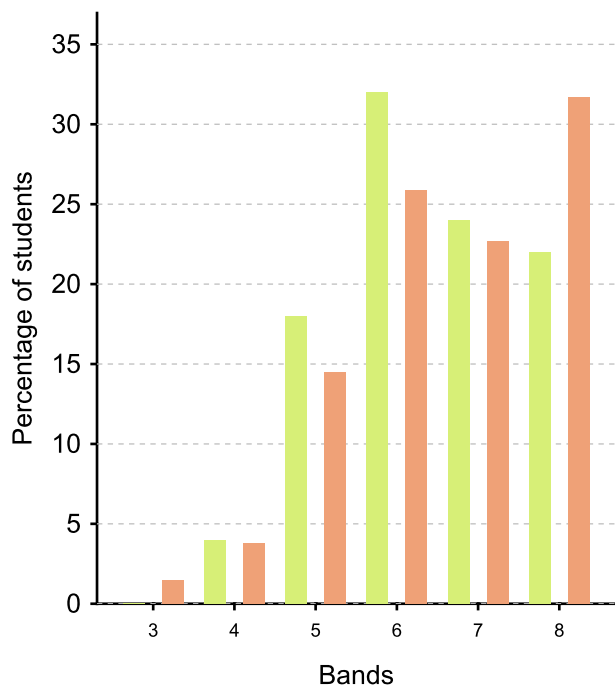
Percentage in bands:
Year 3 Reading



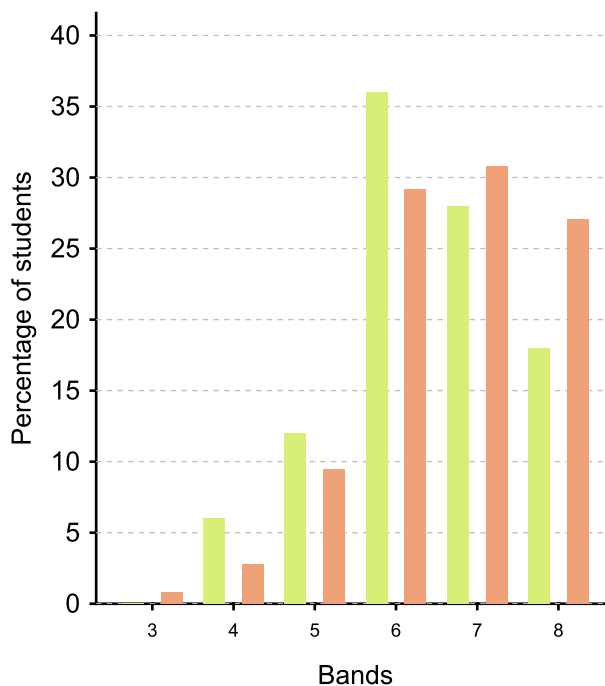
Percentage in bands:
Year 3 Writing



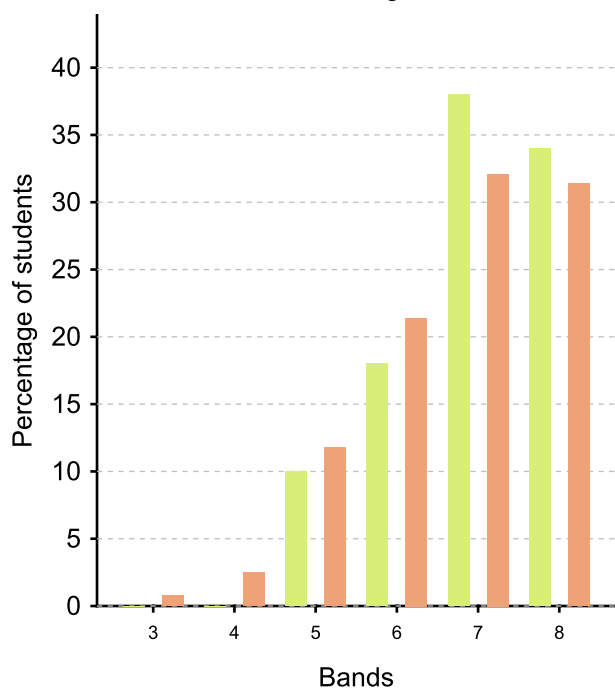
Percentage in bands:
Year 5 Grammar & Punctuation



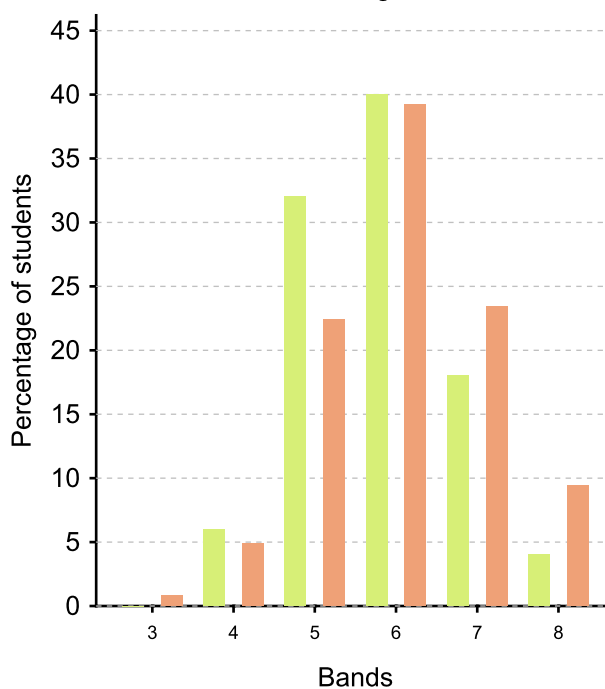
Percentage in bands:
Year 5 Spelling



Percentage in bands:
Year 5 Reading



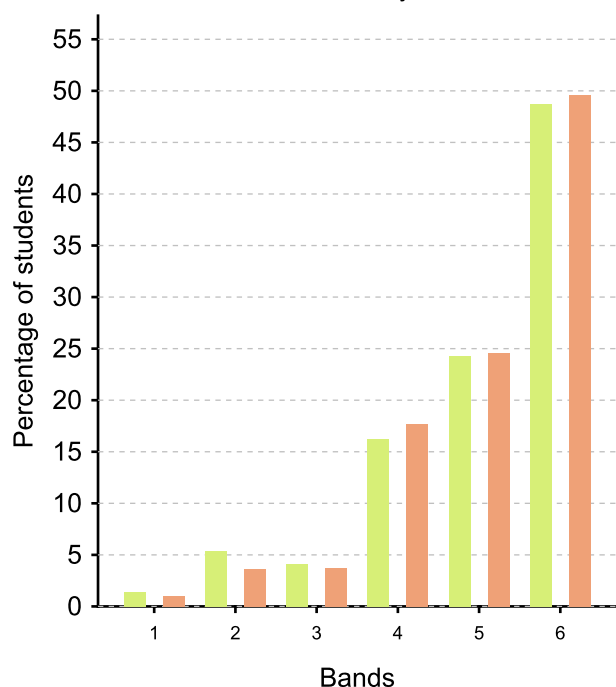
Percentage in bands:
Year 5 Writing



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Percentage in bands:
Year 3 Numeracy

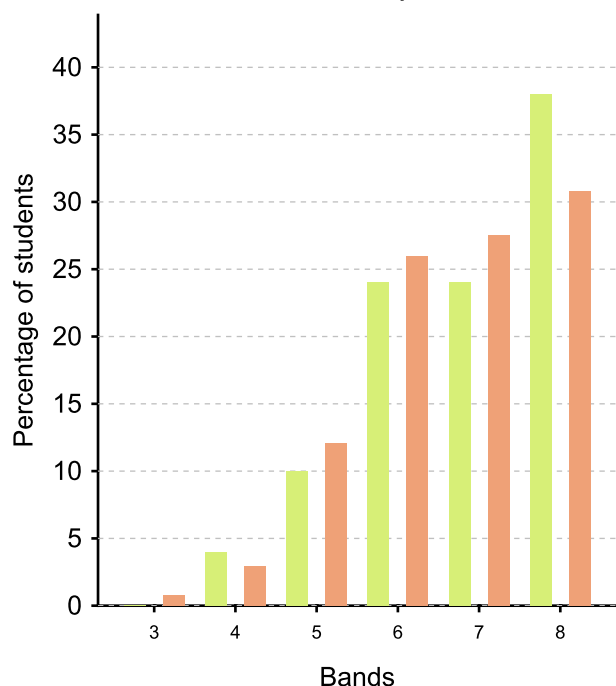


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<Use this text box to comment on mandatory reporting requirements in accordance with the *Premier's Priorities: Improving education results* and *State Priorities: Better services – Improving Aboriginal education outcomes* for students in the top two NAPLAN bands>

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Percentage in bands:
Year 5 Numeracy



<You may choose to use this text box and statement to refer readers to the My School website:

The My School website provides detailed information and data for national literacy and numeracy testing. Go to <http://www.myschool.edu.au> 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. A Google Form was used to collect responses. There were 157 parent, 38 staff member and 128 student responses.

Parents, students and staff members were surveyed and asked to indicate their level of satisfaction with a number of school practices. The highest and lowest areas of satisfaction for each group of stakeholders are summarised below.

Students:

- Would like more story books in classrooms
- Would like updated laptops in classrooms especially in Year 6
- Would like additional interest clubs or groups

Staff:

- Seek greater support from the school and Department in assisting students with individual needs
- Would like communication to be clearer and more consistent
- Feel under pressure to maintain high standards at the cost of personal wellbeing

Parents:

- Communication with teachers is inconsistent
- Would like a return to focus on academic achievement
- Seek increase in inclusivity of various cultures
- Would like provision of additional, expert support from learning and support personnel

The full data set is available at the school office.

The large majority of parent, student and staff feedback was of a positive nature which is encouraging and validates many of our current practices.

Student responses indicated a widespread understanding that learning is a personal responsibility. This is encouraging as research demonstrates that internal motivation to learn is a greater indicator of success than learning through coercion. Although three quarters of students responded that they like coming to school, one quarter were unsure or responded negatively. This is an area for concern, as our aim is to provide a stimulating educational environment where all students feel valued and like they belong. We strive for all students to positively identify with the school. To this end, in 2018 and beyond, the school will be investigating a range of programs to support student

wellbeing. As a small school, Mowbray Public School was able to respond to individual cases of concern where students experienced bullying, loneliness or disengagement. As a large school, broader research-based systems are required to provide both positive reinforcement of desired behavioural and learning choices, and fair and reasonable consequences for inappropriate choices. As part of this review, the school will consider how students are engaged during break-time with interest given to student responses requesting additional interest clubs/groups.

The parent/carer body has indicated that communication practices can be enhanced. In 2018 and beyond the school will examine its communication guidelines and investigate the introduction of a smart device application. If an application is used, feedback will be sought from users to cater its usage to the needs of its end-users. Many parents/carers made comment that the school's learning and support structures and access to experts such as school counsellors requires review. Early in 2018 the school plans to initiate some whole-staff professional learning with regional Assistant Principals responsible for Learning and Support to better understand the concept of individualised support in the mainstream classroom. Although parents identify social programs and opportunities to participate as a school strength, they also trend towards seeking a renewed focus on academic achievement and recognition. The school will closely monitor student achievement data in the next school planning cycle to measure impact of various educational strategies through a process known as visible learning.

Staff members echo the parent view that communication can be enhanced. As the school population continues to grow and additional human resources are acquired, this need will become even greater. Similarly, staff members seek greater support best catering for students with disabilities and other learning needs. By up-skilling our executive staff members in learning support and involving regional experts it is anticipated that great day-to-day support will be provided. It is pleasing to note that the vast majority of staff members enjoy working at Mowbray Public School and consider the leadership team

Policy requirements

Aboriginal education

Students at Mowbray Public School consider Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures and histories across all Key Learning Areas. Significant events are celebrated including NAIDOC week and National Sorry Day.

Other school programs

Environment

Bushtucker Garden

Stage 2 students have been spending time throughout the year in our Outdoor Learning space, the Bushtucker Garden where they learn about native and introduced plants and importantly the traditional use of native plants for medicine, food and utilities by the Aboriginal people of Australia.

School Tree Day – July 2017

Thanks to Willoughby City Council for their continued support of School Tree Day at Mowbray Public School. The new garden designed by Jan Felton, Landscape Architect from the Willoughby city Council, is around the flag poles and features shrubs and a centrepiece tree in a pleasing design. Students followed the “plan” and established the plants which included White Correa, Hairpin Banksia, Dianella and Lomandra Tanika.

Chess Club

Chess club operated each Tuesday lunchtime in the Library with 30 students in Semester 2.

The Sydney Academy of Chess provided our coach and many students developed into strong chess players and enjoyed the companionship and encouragement of their tutor and other players. An in-school chess competition resulted in a school chess champion being presented a trophy at our 3–6 Celebration evening. The school appreciates the support of the teachers Miss Simionato and Ms Spartalis as well as the Academy who made this possible. We hope to expand the Chess Club in 2018 into 2 groups to cater for different skill levels.

Enrichment

In 2017 Mowbray piloted the first Enrichment program for 5 weeks in Term 4. A small group of selected students from Kindergarten to Year 6 were withdrawn from class in each grade to participate in an enrichment program that offers a stimulating learning environment. Our aim is to support students by developing partnerships that are collaborative in nature. These areas are focused on making a commitment to develop and implement effective learning experiences to ensure the needs of all students are catered for and realise their potential. These opportunities exist in addition to opportunities provided within the classroom. Through their participation, the students further develop their abilities, communication skills and self-confidence as well as obtain a strong sense of individual and group achievement. Students were given the overall goal of developing a tool for their peers that would better their understanding and enjoyment of Mathematics.

Sport

It was a huge year for school sport at Mowbray Public

School in 2017. Our Athletics, Cross-Country and Swimming Carnivals were all huge successes with passionate house spirit, enthusiasm and amazing sporting abilities showcased. We had a number of students continue on to represent Mowbray at our Zone, Area, State and even National Carnivals this year! We held our first K – 2 Cross Country Carnival which involved laps around our school and we look forward to adding this event to our school calendar annually.

Library

The library hub was utilised by all K–6 students in timetabled 40 minute sessions per week with the teacher librarian. Teaching programs for the K–2 focused on supporting units of work in the classroom with a literature emphasis. 3–6 programs ranged from research skills and processes, literature exploration, utilising Web 2 tools and visual literacy.

Many keen and enthusiastic 4–6 students successfully completed the library monitor training program throughout the year. We are very fortunate to have a bevy of keen, dedicated students that donate their time to the library each week. Book Fairs, author/illustrator visits, Book Week celebrations! These were just a few of the highlights in 2018! K–6 students embraced the book fairs with much excitement and anticipation. During Book Week celebrations the K–2 students had a workshop with author and illustrator, Gus Gordon. 3–6 students were given valuable writing and illustrating skills and tips from internationally acclaimed, Tobey Riddle. We also trialled our first Makerspace program with some Stage 2 students in Term 4. The success of this trial means that in 2018 we will be including a makerspace program in the extra-curricular program for all stages.

Premier's Debating Challenge

During 2017 Mowbray Public School participated in the 'Premier's Debating Challenge'. Ten students were selected from Years Five and Six to compete in the 'Premier's Debating Challenge'. These ten students were split into two teams called: 'The Masterminds' and 'The Megaminds'.

Students from both teams spent time every Monday morning before school in Terms 2 & 3 looking at how to effectively prepare and debate at a high level. In Term 1 all students participated in a training session run by, 'Masters Academy'.

Both Premier's Debating Teams took part in numerous debates throughout Terms Two and Three. One of the teams were the overall winners of our zone. The team then went on to debate in the Regional Debating Competition at Collaroy Education Centre where they finished fourth out of 160 participating teams. This was the school's first time entering a team into the Regional Debating Competition and we were very proud.

Next year, we plan to further expand the Mowbray Debating Program by setting up an extra team of five students. This team will participate in a friendly, 'Interschool Debating Competition' against other local

schools. We are looking forward to participating in this friendly competition and seeing how this extra team goes.

Mowbray's Debating Program was coordinated and coached by Mr Sean McElhenny and he is excited to continue running the program again in 2018.