

Whalan Public School

Annual Report



2018



4378

Introduction

The Annual Report for **2018** is provided to the community of Whalan 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.

Michelle Gallop

Principal

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Message from the Principal

It gives me great pleasure to present the 2018 Annual School report for Whalan Public School.

I certify that the information in this report is the result of a rigorous school self-evaluation process and is a balanced and genuine account of the school's achievements and areas for development. 2018 has been an extremely busy year with relentless focus on inspired learning, great teaching, student engagement and empowerment.

As detailed throughout this report, the students, staff and community have worked tirelessly to unify as a team committed to the social, emotional and academic growth of our students. I feel confident that as a result of this, every student at Whalan feels known, valued, cared for, confident and proud.

I am extraordinarily proud of the achievements of the Whalan Public School learning community and look ahead to an even stronger 2019.

Michelle Gallop

Message from the students

This year, the school leaders and the Student Representative Council members were active throughout the year and achieved a number of initiatives and school-based improvements.

They worked tirelessly to:

- * donate care packages for overseas troops sending 13 boxes in total.
- * find a solution to the rubbish in the top playground, by sourcing large bins for the area.
- * compose an educational film to teach students about the environmental effects of littering.
- * fundraise and purchase a number of large trees for shade.
- * raise money for farmers devastated by drought by conducting a local community 'Fiver for a Farmer' event.

School Leaders and SRC

School background

School vision statement

At Whalan Public School we have a commitment to building a school-wide culture of high expectations and a shared purpose for student engagement, learning, and success.

We value inquiry, creativity and self expression.

With a strong focus on high quality teaching practices we work to develop leading learners, who continually challenge themselves to higher standards and become confident, capable, global citizens.

School context

Whalan Public School is built on Darug land. It is a vibrant school that serves a diverse community with a current enrolment of 384 students, including 60 preschool children who attend on a part-time basis, and children in 4 support classes. Aboriginal students make up 21% the student population and 32% students come from language backgrounds other than English.

The school is involved in the Early Action for Success strategy. Literacy and Numeracy are significant priorities.

The school applies principles of Positive Behaviour for Learning, with high expectations for student behaviour and academic achievement. Our core expectation 'We are safe respectful learners' is reflected in our daily work.

As a Stephanie Alexander Kitchen Garden school our students grow, harvest and cook nutritious food. Whalan has a successful biennial art show with all students producing artworks that show sustained effort and the implementation of the Visual Arts syllabus. On alternate years we produce a concert to highlight student performance skills and talents. Our school programs address and celebrate the Aboriginal and multicultural heritage of our community.

Self-assessment and school achievement

Self-assessment using the School Excellence Framework

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

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

In the Learning Domain, we are sustaining and growing in the elements of Wellbeing and Reporting. We have identified the element of Assessment as an area to grow.

In the Teaching Domain, we are sustaining and growing in the element of Learning and Development. The school's induction program, its collaborative practices and its focus on coaching, professional learning and feedback are evidence of the focus on teacher learning. We have identified the element of Data Skills and Use as an area to grow.

In the Leading Domain, we are sustaining and growing in the elements of Educational Leadership, School Planning, Implementation and Reporting and School Resources. The leadership team clearly communicate priorities and practices to the school community. We have identified the element of Management Practices and Processes as an area to grow.

Our self-assessment process along with the External Validation process in 2019, 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

Inspired Learning

Purpose

Our students will be leaders of their own learning through:

- ***engagement in high quality literacy and numeracy experiences***
- ***immersion of goal-driven learning experiences and effective feedback***
- ***development of 'expert learner' skills and understandings to inspire growth in learning***

Overall summary of progress

This year L3 was implemented across Early Stage 1 and Stage 1. One new teacher was trained in L3 ES1 with two Instructional Leaders successfully completing their OPL year. In Stage 1, four teachers undertook their initial training year in L3 Stage 1.

Instructional Leaders undertook an audit of goal setting and feedback practices in classrooms K–6. Instructional Leaders have observed and coached teachers in the use of Learning Intentions and Success Criteria through all lessons and have supported teachers to ensure students refer back to these in order to monitor their learning.

Teachers across all stages engage in collaborative planning of inquiry-based, integrated units and are beginning to embed the four Cs – collaboration, cooperation, critical and creative thinking more explicitly.

Progress towards achieving improvement measures

Improvement measures (to be achieved over 3 years)	Funds Expended (Resources)	Progress achieved this year
Increase the percentage of year 3 and year 5 students in the top 2 bands in NAPLAN by 100%		Students in Years 3 and 5, have increased by an average of 10.7% in the top two bands. Comparing the growth (which follows the same cohort of Year 3 to Year 5) 2016 to 2018 there has been a growth of 5.35%
Increase by 30% year 4–6 students that experience flow in their learning as measured by the Tell Them From Me student survey 'high skill, high challenge quadrant for literacy and numeracy'		Tell Them From Me student survey data indicated a sustained score for the 'high skill, high challenge' quadrant for literacy and numeracy. Instructional Leaders have spent significant time in classrooms, modelling, co-teaching and observing classroom practice. Instructional leaders have also undertaken training in coaching skills to further support teacher growth. These embedded practices have made the following results possible: From 53% in 2017 to 62% in 2018 being a growth of 9%. It is interesting to note that this result is also 9% higher than the state norm. We have reduced the number of disengaged learners by 12% when the state cohort has plateaued.
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 80% Kindergarten reach reading L9• 80% year 1 reach reading L16• 80% year 2 reach reading L26	FTE 1.2 Instructional Leaders 2.8 school-funded Instructional Leaders	47% of Kindergarten students are reading L9 or above, with 19% close to the goal. 63% of Year 1 students have met or exceeded grade expectations in reading. 70% of Year 2 students have met or exceeded grade expectations in reading.

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% year 3 reach band 3+ in NAPLAN for reading 80% year 3 reach band 3+ in NAPLAN for Number, Patterns & Algebra 		<p>61% of Year 3 students have reached Band 3 or above in reading.</p> <p>62% of Year 3 students have reached Band 3 or above in Number, Patterns and Algebra.</p>

Next Steps

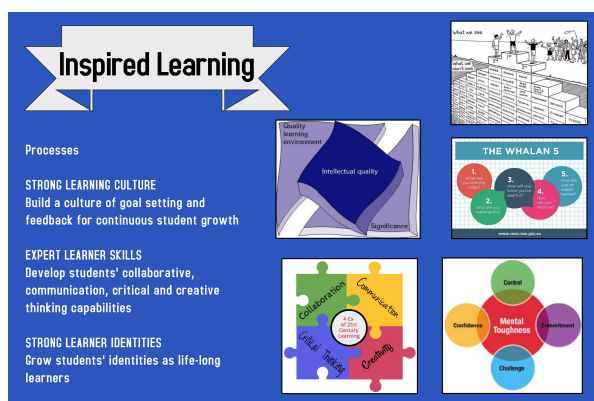
Continue to develop a strong learning culture by implementing differentiated practices around student goal setting and feedback. Through the implementation of goal setting and feedback, students will be coached to develop their identity as life-long learners. They will learn a variety of appropriate ways to give feedback to other students and their teachers and will utilise the feedback received from others to meet their own learning goals.

Having begun to differentiate the Expert Learner Framework for each stage, teachers will embed one element of the framework per term in order to develop students' collaborative, communication, critical and creative thinking capabilities.

English Stage 3–4 Programming and Assessment Project

Whalan PS joined Tregear PS and Chifley College Mt Druitt Campus to develop programming and assessment practices based on the English continuum of learning outcomes in the NSW English K–10 syllabus in Stages 3 and 4, incorporating the Literacy progressions and the English Textual Concepts resource. The project's outcomes included:

- * forging of relationships and collaborations between stage 3 and stage 4 teachers.
- * implementation of quality English units with high expectations for students' learning across years 6 – 7.
- * development of positive relationships between stage 3 students and high school teachers.
- * greater confidence and security for students transitioning from year 6 to year 7.



Strategic Direction 2

Great Teaching

Purpose

Teachers will grow as professionals:

- **by embedding research based practices**
- **by engaging in the collaborative practice of peer coaching and goal setting**
- **through deep knowledge, understanding and implementation of syllabus documents, National Quality Framework and Early Years Learning Framework**

Overall summary of progress

We asked teachers to identify research based teaching strategies they currently use in their classroom and these were shared across the school. In term 1 Baseline data was collected from the 'What works best in practice survey' where teachers were asked to reflect on their classroom practices. We identified the areas of Explicit Teaching and Effective Feedback as areas to provide further professional learning for. An analysis of student writing across K–6 revealed the need to provide school wide PL around writing and grammar. Instructional leaders began to look at teachers identifying what writing samples at A,B,C,D and E look like during stage meetings. Teachers completed NAPLAN online training to assist with identifying writing samples.

During semester 1 all Instructional leaders were coached in peer coaching and by Semester 2 Instructional Leaders began coaching their stage teams fortnightly. Staffing was changed to enable each stage to have an off-class Instructional Leader to ensure there is an ongoing emphasis on data analysis through coaching and data chats across the school.

Through peer coaching there was a strong focus on Intellectual Quality. Both teachers and Instructional leaders coded lessons looking at the dimension of Intellectual Quality. Teachers identified what the sub-element of Substantive Communication looks like in their classroom and this was shared with all staff P–6. Through a survey teachers identified the sub-element of Deep Knowledge as one they feel most confident integrating into their classroom practice.

Progress towards achieving improvement measures

Improvement measures (to be achieved over 3 years)	Funds Expended (Resources)	Progress achieved this year
Improved levels of research-based practices specifically, use of data, feedback and explicit teaching		Teachers identified their shared understanding of research based practices they currently use in their classroom; including differentiation, feedback, direct/explicit teaching, co-operative learning and inquiry teaching. Professional learning was provided for our whole school for grammar and writing focus. Professional learning was provided to teacher for the implementation of the new Science Syllabus. Teachers undertook NAPLAN training in order to identify A,B,C,D and E writing samples.
The average score for the QT dimension of 'Intellectual Quality' will increase to an average of 4		Compared to baseline data the average score for Intellectual Quality has remained the same (3.2) The benefits of Instructional Leaders coaching teachers has been that teachers have gained a deeper understanding of integrating Intellectual Quality. Teachers identified the sub element of Deep knowledge as an area they feel most confident about integrating into their classroom practice.
All school leaders trained in and implementing peer coaching to promote learning growth of all teachers.		Each stage has an Instructional Leaders working with their team. Instructional Leaders have been trained in Peer Coaching. Peer coaching has begun in stage teams. Instructional Leaders meet on a

Progress towards achieving improvement measures

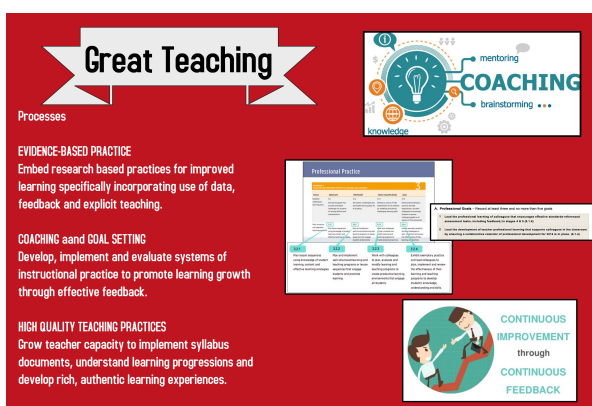
Improvement measures (to be achieved over 3 years)	Funds Expended (Resources)	Progress achieved this year
All school leaders trained in and implementing peer coaching to promote learning growth of all teachers.		regular basis with their teachers for individual coaching sessions

Next Steps

In 2019, professional learning for teachers will focus on the new PDHPE syllabus due to be implemented in 2020 and on goal setting and feedback to strengthen the school's visible learning practices.

The school leadership team will explore the introduction of Classroom Walkthroughs in 2019.

Teachers will continue to build their understanding of the elements of Intellectual Quality and through regular coaching, teachers will be supported to plan lessons with higher levels of Intellectual Quality focusing on Problematic Knowledge and Deep Understanding.



Strategic Direction 3

Engagement and Empowerment

Purpose

We will engage and empower our school community by:

- ***growing student leadership, identity and esteem***
- ***providing innovative learning experiences***
- ***providing inclusive enrichment programs***

Overall summary of progress

This year, the school formalised its processes for the selection of student leadership positions to support the development of student esteem and identity. Selection criteria for student leadership roles, reflect high standards. Throughout the year, the school leaders and the SRC undertook and completed a number of improvement projects. These included care packages for members of the defence force serving overseas, over a thousand dollars for our farmers, extra bins in the top areas of our playground and the planting of established trees to create shady areas in the playground.

Students, teachers and parents across the school, have a shared understanding of the language and benefits of STEM. Teachers undertook professional learning in the new Science and Technology syllabus with an emphasis on Digital Technologies. Teachers are member of the STEM Share community and all students K–6 had access to the STEM Share kits – Virtual reality and Tablet Robotics for an entire term. As a result, students were able to showcase their skills at the whole-school STEM Community Day.

Throughout 2018, selected students 4–6 took part in an inter-school STEM challenge, the school established a lunchtime coding club and the Learning Hub. The school was also successful in securing a Maker Space grant of \$5 000.

As a result, students across K–6 have been provided opportunities to develop their 'expert learning' capabilities of collaboration, communication, creative and critical thinking.

Progress towards achieving improvement measures

Improvement measures (to be achieved over 3 years)	Funds Expended (Resources)	Progress achieved this year
Increased engagement of students in utilisation of the capabilities.		Learning programs are integrated and teachers use the STEM learning principles to embed opportunities for students to engage in meaningful learning that promotes communication, collaboration, critical and creative thinking.
Improved satisfaction of parents with enrichment programs, STEM opportunities and improvement projects.		The school community indicated that they valued the school's commitment to providing enrichment programs, STEM opportunities and improvement projects. 70% of parents who were surveyed indicated that their child was always engaged at school, with a further 27% indicating that their child was usually engaged. The schools broad provision of clubs, extra-curricular activities, Learning Hub and STEM programs have contributed to greater student engagement.
Increase school's attendance rate to 94%.		<p>The school's Attendance Grant has had a positive impact on student attendance.</p> <p>Comparison of attendance term by term from 2017–2018:</p> <p>Term 1, attendance rate increased from 89.8 to 90.4%</p>

Progress towards achieving improvement measures

Improvement measures (to be achieved over 3 years)	Funds Expended (Resources)	Progress achieved this year
Increase school's attendance rate to 94%.		<p>Term 2, attendance rate increased from 87.3 to 89.2%</p> <p>Term 3, attendance rate increased from 83.9 to 89.2%</p> <p>Term 4, attendance rate increased from 86.7 to 88.8%</p>

Next Steps

In 2019, the school has plans to redesign the library and turn it into a digital learning hub. The space will feature a permanent filming studio and a Maker Space.

Instructional leaders will co-teach with other teachers utilising the space for greater engagement and to grow students' communication, collaboration, critical and creative thinking skills.

The school will also grow its student leadership programs and revise its student leadership procedures.


Parent engagement in learning will be promoted through a variety of interactive workshops.

Engagement & Empowerment

Processes

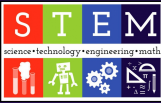
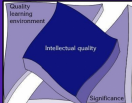
STUDENT LEADERSHIP
Develop and implement school and community improvement projects to build student esteem and identity.

INNOVATIVE LEARNING
Develop collaboration, communication, creative and critical thinking capabilities through Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) programs.



STEM Guiding Principles

- Learning through doing
- Knowledge integration
- Project based (problem based (engineering/empathy))
- Inquiry driven, student directed, skill development
- Purposeful and relevant to real-world applications
- Incorporates 4Rs (Rigour, Risk taking, Resilience, Reasoning)
- Emphasises 4Cs (Communication, Collaboration, Critical thinking, Creativity)

Key Initiatives	Resources (annual)	Impact achieved this year
Aboriginal background loading	\$97 465	<p>All Aboriginal students have a Personalised Learning Pathway (PLP) which is written in conjunction with parents and/or carers to map learning goals for students. 100% of students achieved their goals as documented in their PLPs.</p> <p>For the second year in a row, a Community Engagement Officer worked across Preschool and Kindergarten as part of the Tunin' In Early Years Initiative. Aboriginal families are more engaged in school events and their child's learning as a result of this initiative. The Storypark app is used daily to promote early literacy and numeracy learning of students with their families.</p> <p>The annual Deadly Awards was a wonderful culmination and celebration of culture, student effort and achievement. This year, the event attracted our largest audience to date.</p>
English language proficiency	\$67 045	<p>Teachers continue to use the EAL/D learning progressions to identify needs of students in their classes and plan teaching and learning programs accordingly. Teachers discuss the specific needs of students during data chats and set goals for individual students. The PM reading program was implemented across K–2 classes. The program has provided daily reading to enhance the school's literacy learning programs. Preschool and Kindergarten children were targeted for speech therapy. All students have shown an improvement in their articulation, receptive and expressive skills.</p>
Low level adjustment for disability	\$266 471	<p>Students who receive integration funding all have Individual learning Plans, which are collaboratively reviewed at regular intervals and communicated to all stakeholders. All students within this category achieved their goals.</p> <p>All students with a disability have been added to NCCD data base with adjustments and modifications made accordingly. School Learning Support Officers support students in accessing a differentiated curriculum.</p>
Quality Teaching, Successful Students (QTSS)		<p>Instructional Leaders have been aligned to each stage to provide teachers with ongoing, regular coaching, constructive feedback on lesson delivery, programming and assessment. Instructional Leaders have worked shoulder-to-shoulder with teachers to embed visible learning practices. All teachers had a Performance and Development Plan which detailed their professional goals and achievements.</p>
Socio-economic background	\$ 1 030 163	<p>Student achievement and improvement is evident for all students, including at-risk students. A greater understanding of the interpretation of learning data has led to teachers being more responsive to student</p>

Socio-economic background	\$ 1 030 163	need at the point of need. Staff are better equipped to differentiate programs to address identified needs in both academic and wellbeing facets. The learning environment has been enhanced across the school to support learning anywhere at any time. The school has provided technology in classrooms, smaller class sizes and upgrades in flexible learning spaces to improve student engagement and learning outcomes. A pedagogical shift that allows for the development of 'expert learner' skills and capabilities has meant that students are active and empowered in their learning.
Support for beginning teachers	\$4 164	Instructional leaders across K–6 worked closely with new teachers to ensure strong literacy and numeracy programs were implemented. The school's comprehensive induction program was again implemented successfully and beginning teachers benefited from the department's additional funding which allowed for extra release from face-to-face time and professional learning opportunities related to whole school programs.
Early Action for Success	\$191 127	<p>Early Action for Success strategy has built staff capacity in the teaching of literacy and numeracy. Mentoring, coaching and facilitating the sharing of effective classroom practices and supporting teachers to use data to inform their decisions and teaching practices has led to improved student learning outcomes as seen in these results:</p> <p>Kindergarten: 47% of students achieved at or above stage expectations in reading and comprehension. 56% of students achieved at or above in counting (being able to count to 30 and give the number after). 56% of Kindergarten students are working at or above in early arithmetical strategies (counts visible items and build and subtract numbers by using concrete materials to represent each number to find the total count).</p> <p>Year 1: 64% of students have achieved stage expectations or above in reading and comprehension. 80% of students achieved at or above in counting (can count to 100 and give the number after). 75% are achieving end of year expectations in early arithmetic strategies (use known facts and other on-count-by-one strategies to solve problems).</p> <p>Year 2: 70% of Year 2 have achieved or are working beyond minimum expectations in reading and comprehension. 81% are working at or above stage expectations in counting (counting beyond 100) and 65% of students are working at or above expectations in early arithmetic strategies (use known facts and other non-count-by-one strategies to add</p>

Student information

Student enrolment profile

Students	Enrolments			
	2015	2016	2017	2018
Boys	163	172	173	166
Girls	132	143	147	134

In 2018 there were 300 students enrolled in classes K–6 with another 84 children enrolled in the preschool and Early Intervention Unit.

Student attendance profile

School				
Year	2015	2016	2017	2018
K	90.4	88.1	87.6	86.1
1	88	87.1	86.7	90.7
2	88	89.5	92.2	89.5
3	91.1	87.4	90.7	89.6
4	90.5	90.4	88.7	90.4
5	91.6	91.4	89	89.8
6	90.9	92.3	91.4	92.9
All Years	89.9	89.1	89.2	89.9
State DoE				
Year	2015	2016	2017	2018
K	94.4	94.4	94.4	93.8
1	93.8	93.9	93.8	93.4
2	94	94.1	94	93.5
3	94.1	94.2	94.1	93.6
4	94	93.9	93.9	93.4
5	94	93.9	93.8	93.2
6	93.5	93.4	93.3	92.5
All Years	94	94	93.9	93.4

Management of non-attendance

In 2018 our attendance rate was 89.90. The attendance rate of our year 6 students is better than that of year 6 students across the state. The school's Attendance Grant has made positive improvements each term to the school's attendance rate.

Workforce information

Workforce composition

Position	FTE*
Principal(s)	1
Assistant Principal(s)	5
Classroom Teacher(s)	20.75
Teacher of Reading Recovery	0.42
Learning and Support Teacher(s)	1.8
Teacher Librarian	0.8
School Counsellor	1
School Administration and Support Staff	11.82

*Full Time Equivalent

In 2018, our Aboriginal staff consisted of one Aboriginal Education Officer (AEO), two School Learning Support Officers (SLSO), a Community Liaison Officer (CLO) and one classroom teacher.

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	10

Professional learning and teacher accreditation

Whalan PS has established a culture of professional learning which is continuous, sustained and tailored to meet the needs of each teacher. In order to strengthen teacher capacity to improve student learning outcomes, in 2018 we provided professional learning opportunities focused on curriculum and pedagogy with a particular emphasis on writing and the new Science and Technology syllabus. Teachers attended weekly professional learning sessions, three staff development days and four Twilight sessions.

Financial information

Financial summary

The information provided in the financial summary includes reporting from 1 January 2018 to 31 December 2018.

	2018 Actual (\$)
Opening Balance	297,684
Revenue	5,896,053
Appropriation	5,801,256
Sale of Goods and Services	30,098
Grants and Contributions	58,637
Gain and Loss	0
Other Revenue	1,369
Investment Income	4,693
Expenses	-5,542,158
Recurrent Expenses	-5,544,545
Employee Related	-4,953,428
Operating Expenses	-591,117
Capital Expenses	2,386
Employee Related	0
Operating Expenses	2,386
SURPLUS / DEFICIT FOR THE YEAR	353,895
Balance Carried Forward	651,578

Financial management at Whalan Public School is aligned too strategic directions and management planning. Input is provided by staff, the community and parents and is linked to the school's strategic plan.

The principal determines total funds available to educational programs, administrative programs, reserves for capital expenditure items and contingency.

Financial summary equity funding

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

	2018 Actual (\$)
Base Total	2,254,982
Base Per Capita	71,071
Base Location	0
Other Base	2,183,911
Equity Total	1,127,628
Equity Aboriginal	97,465
Equity Socio economic	696,647
Equity Language	67,045
Equity Disability	266,471
Targeted Total	869,542
Other Total	1,418,871
Grand Total	5,671,023

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.

From 2018 to 2020 NAPLAN is moving from a paper test to an online test. Individual schools are migrating to the online test, with some schools attempting NAPLAN on paper and others online.

Results for both online and paper formats are reported on the same NAPLAN assessment scale. Any comparison of NAPLAN results – such as comparisons to previous NAPLAN results or to results for students who did the assessment in a different format – should take into consideration the different test formats and are discouraged during these transition years.

In the area of literacy which incorporates reading, writing, spelling, grammar and punctuation, there has been a drop of 11% in the number of students in the bottom two bands and an increase of 18% in the number of students in bands 3 and above.

Additionally, the year 3 average NAPLAN score for literacy is 373.60 which is 11.6 points higher than

been extremely fortunate to have Jie Pittman implement his 'Liven Deadly' program and help us learn about culture through story, dance and performance. Our Aboriginal students presented an entertaining and informative NAIDOC celebration and our Aboriginal students performed dances for Harmony day and our annual Deadly Awards. The Yarn Up newsletter goes home twice a term and continues to provide a strong link with our community. This year each edition of Yarn Up included highlights of student work/excursions/school events and information about the Aboriginal 8 Ways of Learning. Aboriginal 8 Ways of Learning are included in every lesson and are recognised through learning intentions and the Aboriginal 8 Ways Symbols. Timber signage for the Aboriginal 8 Ways of Learning have been placed in various outdoor areas throughout the school grounds.

Personalised Learning Pathways (PLPs) have been written in conjunction with parents and/or carers to map learning goals for students. The annual Deadly Awards was a wonderful culmination and celebration of culture, student effort and achievement. The event was opened by all Aboriginal students K–6 welcoming everyone through dance. This year they welcomed our biggest ever audience.

The school's Aboriginal Education Officer implemented a familiar reads program with all Aboriginal students K–3. The Tunin' In – Early Years Education initiative provided funds for a Community Engagement Officer, three days a week with school funds extending the position to fulltime. The Community Engagement Officer was able to support and engage Aboriginal parents in the education of their preschool aged children and maintain relationships with parents of children entering Kindergarten. This program was extremely successful, with all Aboriginal parents maintaining ongoing engagement with their child's learning throughout the year.

After a wonderful showcase of dance at the opening of the school's biennial Art Show, the Aboriginal students were invited to perform at Chifley College Dunheved's Multicultural Celebration.



Multicultural and anti-racism education

Harmony day was celebrated once again with a showcase of cultural dance followed by parents and community members visiting classrooms where students proudly shared their term 1 learning. The school has maintained its focus on multicultural education, by providing programs that develop the knowledge, skills, understanding and attitudes required for living in a culturally diverse society. Our school community is representative of 24 countries and 18 different language backgrounds. Inclusive educational practices are a feature of school activities and cultural diversity is celebrated and included in curriculum areas, including History, Geography, Creative Arts and English. Teachers use the EAL/D learning progressions to analyse and discuss student progress for listening, speaking, reading and writing. This has assisted teachers to successfully plan teaching and learning activities for EAL/D students in their classes. One member of staff is trained as an Anti-Racism Contact Officer (ARCO). Any instances of racism that occur are referred to the officer who conducts an investigation where necessary according to department guidelines.

Other school programs

Preschool

In 2018 our Preschool was invited to join a practitioner research project with The Hive and Western Sydney University. Our focus was to implement aesthetic change in four areas of the outdoor environment, sustained shared thinking and intentional teaching strategies. In doing so, we sought to increase engagement in learning experiences as well as to improve literacy and numeracy outcomes for our children. As a result, we found that creating four inviting, resource-rich areas not only led to deep and engaging learning conversations between our educators and children but also amongst our children. We heard many numeracy concepts being discussed by the children on a daily basis. We also saw the children making more connections between letter sounds, names and written forms.

Through our project we not only strengthened our relationship with The Hive but made new friends through the St Clair Mens' Shed who helped to build two beautiful mud kitchens. With many thanks to our tremendously generous families who baked and provided so many cupcakes to sell for our mud kitchen fundraiser.

We were privileged to continue our working partnership with Sharon Pierce, Occupational Therapist, who guided us in providing literacy-rich resources and experiences that we were able to embed into our program. She also provided professional learning and support to target our children's fine and gross motor development.

Michelle Kennedy, our Community Engagement Officer, has continued to involve our Aboriginal families in our learning through the Kinderloop App as part of the

Department of Education's 'Tunin' In' project. The Kinderloop App has been a vital tool for communicating learning as well as for families to share important information with educators.

Celebrating Harmony Day and National Simultaneous Storytime provided exciting opportunities for our children, their families and our educators to work together.

Our community connections continued with Mt Druitt Community Health through StEPS free vision screening and with Blacktown City Council whose Road Safety Officer visited to discuss all aspects of road, car, bike and pedestrian safety.

Support Unit

Whalan Public School has a Support Unit with four classes for students with disabilities. Our Special Education classes consist of one multi-categorical class, one class for students with a mild intellectual disability, one class for students with a moderate intellectual disability and an Early intervention class which aims to support students who are of pre-kindergarten age. These classes are supported with a Student Learning and Support Officer (SLSO). All students within Special Education access the curriculum in all key learning areas.

All students have an Individualised Learning Plan. These plans are developed in consultation with parents/caregivers to closely focus on the student's learning needs and academic goals. SMART goals (Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Results Oriented and Time-Bound goals) are created to best suit the learning needs of each individual student and to allow for generalisation of skills to occur within differing contexts. Strategies to achieve these goals are shared to further personalise teaching and learning programs. Parent meetings occur formally throughout the year, incorporating ILP meetings and an Annual Review meeting to discuss appropriate student placement and report on their academic, behavioural and social abilities.

The Support Unit values Transition Programs for new student enrolments and students transitioning to the High School setting. In 2018, High School teachers were invited to meet with Year 6 students in their current classroom context. New student enrolments for 2019 were supported with a personalised Transition Plan and visited throughout Term 4.

We continually strive for improvement and this year our achievements include being student focused, providing professional learning to the parent community and school staff, facilitating High School teacher visits to support Transition programs, enhancing reporting formats and staff training in Key Word Sign Language.

Students are integrated into various aspects of the school's routine. All students have had the opportunity to participate in excursions, swim school, AFL clinic, acknowledgement days, in school events, school assemblies, the whole school fitness program, playground integration and special events alongside

their mainstream peers.

One of many highlights this year for our Special Education students was exploring the STEM room (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics). Students interacted with Virtual Reality Kits, Blue-Bots and Dash Bots. They were involved in problem solving activities that required them to create solutions to real life problems. Students worked alongside with their peers and identified solutions through hypothesising, testing, justifying and trial and error.

Stephanie Alexander Kitchen Garden

Students 3–6 continued their participation in fortnightly kitchen lessons led by the school's kitchen specialist. A wide variety of recipes were created often based on culture and traditions. These recipes made use of the seasonal produce from the school garden. The Kitchen specialist led fortnightly kitchen lessons where students harvested produce for their kitchen lessons and planted a variety of vegetables and leafy greens. The vertical garden in the anniversary garden area located outside the kitchen enabled us to raise plants from seed with great success, and introduce edible flowers to the students. The school also entered the Blacktown Council Garden competition and awarded second place in the Best Education Facility – Primary School category. We enlisted the experts from Bunnings Warehouse to assist with the new design of kitchen garden and this has been a great success.

Achievement in the Arts

The school Drumming Group led by Ms Bryce and the Junior Dance group led by Miss Keany performed at Mount Druitt Westfield during Education Week. For many students this was their first performance in such a large and open venue. All students managed their nerves and gave an enthusiastic and skilled performance. The Junior Dancers performed to 'How Long' and the Whalan Drummers gave a loud and exciting performance of their composition. This piece included bass and tenor djembes and was written by the students with their teacher, to give the idea of walking through the bush, coming to a waterhole and walking out in a rainstorm. Both performances were greeted with enthusiastic applause from supportive family members and the general public. Miss Towers coached the Dance Sport students, comprising year 5 and 6, to a very successful Championship on October 25 2018. Originally starting with 16 competitors, a final 4 couples successfully competed through to the semi-finals at the Penrith Sports Stadium. One couple presented their Foxtrot to the judges and were placed 5th in the finals. All dancers show school spirit and personal pride in striving for excellence.

Achievement in Sport

2018 has been a very successful sporting year for Whalan PS. Increasing the PSSA options to 3 sports in summer (AFL, Newcombe Ball/ Volley Ball and League Tag, and 3 in winter (soccer, touch footy and netball) gave students increased choice. The winter competition was the most successful as the Girls touch footy team competed strongly to be narrowly defeated in a nail-

biting final. AFL was a new PSSA option to the first time at Whalan PS and both the senior and junior teams increased their skill and ability to read the play on the field. Sporting Schools grants made the provision of weekly AFL coaching sessions to selected students from years 1–3 possible. These coaching clinics strengthened student skill and fitness in readiness for the 2019 season. They also ran skill-based games at recess and a modified refereed

game at lunch. Term 4 saw weekly rugby clinics run by Rugby Australia through the Sporting School program, for targeted Stage 2 and 3 students. This is in preparation for Rugby 7s gala days in 2019. Two NRL gala days were also a popular event on the Whalan PS sporting calendar. The senior team made the semi-finals and played a tough game. A big thankyou to all coaches who organised weekly training activities to build the students' skills and fitness and travel outside of the school to provide the children with competitive opportunities.

The Cross Country carnival took place on May 4th at Whalan reserve. Students in year 2–6 ran 2 or 3 km around the reserve which took great stamina and commitment. Forty eight boys and girls went on to represent Whalan PS at the Zone Carnival. This event took place at Morreau Reserve at Rooty Hill on May 11. Everyone ran hard over a demanding course and should be proud of their efforts.

The Athletics Carnival was held on a very windy day on August 7, at Popondetta Park. The whole school participated in the carnival at both field and track events. Students K–2 also competed at their own modified events. Although the weather wasn't favourable, students aimed for personal best times and distances in a bid to qualify for the zone carnival. We sent a very strong team to the Zone carnival at Blacktown Olympic Park with 22 students competing in the field events on August 29 and 25 students running in track events on August 30. Many students made finals including the six students who ultimately went on to represent their school at the Regional carnival. Whalan PS proved strong in the senior boys 100m, junior boys 200m, senior girls relay team, together with the long jump and shot put events. All students gave their best with one making the State team. This student competed in the 13yr boys 100m sprint and progressed to the semi-finals where he placed 7th– a very creditable performance.