



Mount Gambier
North
R-7 School

Annual Report

2014



Government of South Australia
Department for Education and
Child Development

1. CONTEXT

School Name:	Mt Gambier North School	School Number:	0953
Principal:	Jane Turner	Partnership	Limestone Coast

Mt Gambier North is set in a complex and dynamic community. This complexity includes two District Special Classes for children with intellectual disabilities, and classes providing the early orientation to schooling for up to five classes of humanitarian refugees. With families and industries under pressure in recent years our school is experiencing increasing levels of poverty and transience.

- Our core values are Doing Your Best, Fair Go, Generosity and Respect. Through community partnerships and a belief that all children are capable of success, we commit to foster each child's unique potential towards lifelong learning.
- We aim for academic excellence through with an ongoing Literacy and Numeracy focus, with a range of intervention opportunities to encourage an 'I Can Do It' attitude.
- We engage learners through experiences beyond the school with our bus constantly on the road.
- We celebrate diversity and social awareness as our community includes aboriginal, special needs and second language learners. We offer a wealth of cultural and social experiences for our diverse community.
- We provide specialist Physical Education, Science and Music Programs. All children participate in instrumental music, which leads to an opportunity to participate in the High School advanced music classes. There are regular active lifestyle opportunities to develop children's physical and emotional wellbeing. Meanwhile the Landcare area provides opportunities for environmental awareness, learning and action. The garden supports Science understandings about living things and systems, and develops oral language skills.
- We partner with ac.care to provide services to our families in the Mount Gambier North School Community Hub.

2. REPORT FROM GOVERNING COUNCIL

Mount Gambier North Primary School

Chairperson's report

Annual General Meeting

March 18, 2015

I want to begin my report for thanking everyone for electing me as chair for the Governing Council in 2014. It has been an honour and a privilege to be able to serve in this capacity.

- 2014 was a year of many highlights.
- The first came during the very first meeting after the AGM, when a delegation of students requested that the Council purchase a second-hand Pedal Prix car to replace one that had become all but unserviceable. We rejected the request, agreeing instead to fund the purchase of two brand new cars. It has been a good year for developing and consolidating partnerships formed in previous years.
- Notably, the Hub has grown into its niche and it's been wonderful to see a variety of services becoming available, not to mention tea and coffee!
- The winding down of OPAL meant that we were able to secure funding for a large section of the bike track, which we hope to see completed in the not-too-distant future.
- It was wonderful to read a story on the ABC recently with MGNPS listed as one of the most improved schools in the state on the 2014 round of NAPLAN testing. I can't take any of the credit for that, but I do take some pride and satisfaction in being involved with the school during this time. It's great to know that our kids are making progress, and I commend Jane and her staff for the difficult and sometimes thankless work they do every day.
- This sort of brings me to my biggest highlight for the year: the Year Seven graduation. As a parent I was simultaneously proud and sad to see my youngest child graduate. As chair of the Council I was humbled to see a great bunch of young men and women who have been shaped by this school receive recognition for getting to this point in the journey.
- Of course, since my youngest has now completed her time at MGNPS, my formal association with the school ends. I have immensely enjoyed my time here, and I am glad to have been able to serve the school and the wider community in this way.

Cameron Horsburgh
Chair

3. 2014 HIGHLIGHTS

SPECIAL EVENTS FOR 2014 included

- Mt Gambier North School Community *HUB Opening* and an *Emerging Partnership* award.
- *Graduation Night* including the Concert Band, singers and dancers.
- *Christmas Parade* – many joining us for the family fun.
- End of year *Community Breakfast* and *Staff Christmas Dance*.

GENEROSITY continued with

- *Student fundraising* including *Ring Pulls* for wheel chairs, *Pancake Day* for Uniting Church, Market Day and Oxfam.
- Over 20 *student mentors* support others during playtimes, especially in the JP yard.
- *The Student Environmental Leaders* attended Earth Keepers Camp and supported Landcare.

FOCUS ON WELLBEING/LEARNING continued with

- *HUB activities* - scarf making, walking, cooking, the Face Book Page, Girls Group and Andrew Fuller.
- Partnership Brokers career education "*Heading In The Right Direction*".
- Continuation of the *Intensive English Program* and *Homework Club* at the Primary and High School.
- '*Play is the Way*' continued with the message "Be Brave - Participate to Progress".
- A '*Day For Daniel*' with the message of safety.
- Harmony Day, Refugee Week, Walk-Together activities supported our message of a *Fair Go*.
- Opals performance Professor Good Breaky.
- Continuation of our Christian Pastoral Worker.
- Breakfast Club.
- Facilities upgrades including a boom gate to keep children safe and tinted windows to reduce glare.
- Eat Smart Be Active performance with the "Boogie Woogies Super Hero Band".
- Tandara Grampians Camp for Years 6/7.
- Hands on Science workshops and the Planetarium Visit.

FOCUS ON PHYSICAL FITNESS continue with

- Sports Day – with the winners Kurrajong.
- Participation in Cross Country, Swimming, Pedal Prix, Active After School, Out of Hours School Sport and SAPSASA.
- Many clinics/carnivals including basketball, netball, football, hockey and golf.
- Stage 2 of our running track completed.
- Ongoing development of the Landcare

FOCUS ON THE ARTS continued with

- Primary and Junior Primary Music Performances and the second Battle of the Bands showcase.
- Book Week parade with the theme "Connected to Reading".
- Four bands years 5-7 supported by the Generations in Jazz Year 12 music students.
- Police Concert Band.
- Choir at the Festival Theatre and Sir Robert Helpmann Theatre,
- The School's African Drummers "Umoji" and visiting drummers Bortier and Sam Oshodi.
- Mount Gambier debating and the Lions "Mad Minute".

FOCUS ON COMMUNITY continued with

- Big Breakfasts, open classrooms, and parent information sessions.
- Whole School Art Show in the Gym and entries in the Mt Gambier Show.
- The gym is used for church groups, national day celebrations, sporting and art groups.

- Families using the grounds for walking, bike riding and playing sport.

4. SITE IMPROVEMENT PLANNING AND TARGETS

LITERACY

Moving forward in Functional Literacy it became clear a number of staff were not yet confident with the required learning. Ms Clark and Ms Tapp were trained and presented the *Language for Learning* modules in 2014. They are also able to deliver the more complex 'How Language Works' program. Following this all staff participated in a conference detailing how to use the assessment tool 'Language and Learning Levels'. A revised tool was developed to support teacher judgment in this most complex task. All staff then participated in moderation tasks. Samples of work are now the benchmarks for 2015 and will help us move forward in our teaching of writing – an area of need as seen in our Year 5 Grammar NAPLAN data, and the apparent but unexpected decline in Year 3 writing data.

Comprehension continued to be a focus building onto the work of the previous year. The Progressive Achievement Tests (PAT R) in reading is beginning to be used to track student progress from year to year and provide diagnostic information for teaching programs. A base line for our school has now been established. Class teachers have had training to enable them to use their data in 2015.

NUMERACY

The numeracy mentor coached staff who felt uncomfortable teaching numeracy. The teachers gained confidence over the life of the project. The work of the coached focused on automaticity of number facts, and children discussing a problem a day to develop problem solving skills. In classes supported by the Numeracy coach 70% of students made more than expected growth compared with 41% across the school as a whole. Years 4-7 closed the gap with high levels of growth. Some Year 3 students were not able to close the gap using PAT M and we began to inquire into the reasons for this. One consideration was that the on-line testing may have caused this result. Some children, who did not achieve expected results, repeated the test with additional instructions, slowing down their thinking, and performed much better. Learning that the test does not use the same quick action as computer games seems to be essential.

Intervention in numeracy has predominately been the Quick Smart program for automaticity. It is difficult at this stage to identify if the student growth rate is due to this intervention or changes in teachers' practice, although it is reasonable to assume that the program had some effect on the overall improvement.

PAT M is now used to guide areas for improvement at the school level and at the individual and class level, with children in Years 2-7 completing the test at the end of term 3. At the same time, the One Minute Maths test and Quick Smart are used to check on automaticity each term. Meanwhile an analysis of students' reflections in their End of Year reports is a source of perception data in which there has been a significant increase in the percent of children identifying their enjoyment of numeracy.

AUSTRALIAN CURRICULUM

The staff continue to develop skills and understandings in the Australian Curriculum. In 2014 geography was studied with teachers developing confidence in its implementation. In 2015 we will focus on ICT and hopefully participate in the review of the Australian Curriculum to reduce the overcrowding of the curriculum and its complexity. All teachers use the Australian curriculum for planning.

COMMUNITY

The Mount Gambier North School Community Hub was refurbished and began cooperation in second term. It quickly became a valued part of school life. The numbers of parents attending school gatherings such as sports day and other special events increased, as well as the gentle trickle of families through the doors each day it is open. Without the Hub families in crisis would be directed to services away from their community knowing that they were unlikely to access them without direct support and draining the energy from those seeking help and those wanting to help.

Social isolation is one of the biggest factors for mental health and its impact on the lives of children, who often become the carers. The social connectedness is one of the most surprising and yet most valuable outcomes. When compared to similar models such as the Children's Centres the small Hub model is an efficient use of funds while putting the service exactly where it is needed – in the local community.

Given the initial success of the pilot project ac.care and the North School will working towards continuing in 2015. A Social Worker will be employed by ac.care and continue to engage with parents. Ac.care and the school will share this cost. The School will provide 0.1FTE in administration and coordinating support for this and processes will be streamlined to enable long term sustainability. The Student Counsellor and the social worker will be key partner as they seek opportunities to extend the programs.

4.1 Junior Primary and Early Years Scheme Funding

The Early Years funding is used directly to support smaller class sizes in Years R-2, with the school allocating additional funds to ensure all classes remain manageable throughout the year. With increasing transience a small margin is allowed for enrolling children. Teachers are able to support the most traumatized children and in feedback state that they are able to stay on track and teach more of the time. This funding is increasingly important with more children beginning their school life at four and a half with language and speech delays. The Running Record levels are significantly above like schools, while our performance in NAPLAN 2014 was similar to like school average in three of the five domains.

4.2 Better Schools Funding

Better schools funding has allowed us to run the Quick Smart Program for a significant number of students, with a positive impact for a number of children. The Funding has also allowed the extension of the wellbeing team's support to classrooms so they can provide support for children, who are unable to cope in class because of trauma or mental health. The Team refers children or parents to the Student Counselor who is proactive in seeking support. This team not only supports the child, it also allows the teacher to stay on task knowing that the child will be supported and the class remains settled.

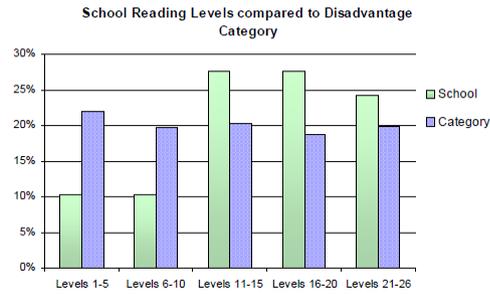
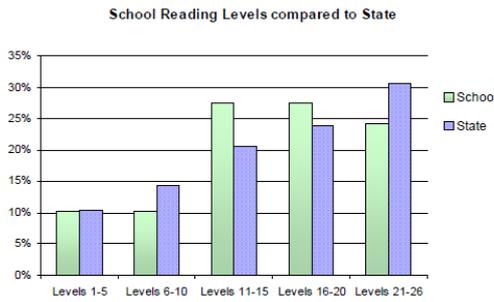
The Smarter Schools National Partnerships funding provided money for a Numeracy Coach to coach Years 3-7 staff on teaching Problem Solving, developing basic facts and implementing the Quick Smart Program.

5. STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT

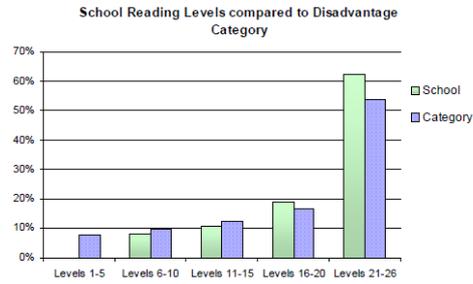
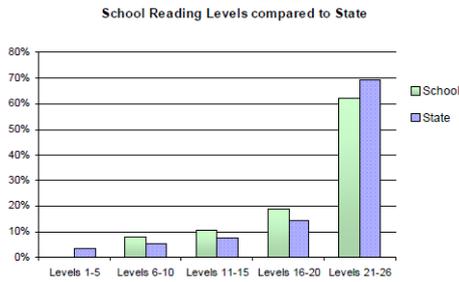
Similarly comparisons across the years are particularly difficult due to the numbers of children with English as a second language entering our mainstream classes in irregular and unpredictable groupings coupled with increasing levels of poverty. With an increased level of transience in the community added to this complexity it is difficult to compare one year to the next. In 2014 19 children left during the year, while 63 children enrolled after the year began. At times there may be only a third of a class that began their schooling at Mt Gambier North Primary School. The interpretation of all data needs to consider this complexity, which intensifies as the year levels go from Year 3 up to Year 7.

RUNNING RECORDS

Year 1 results



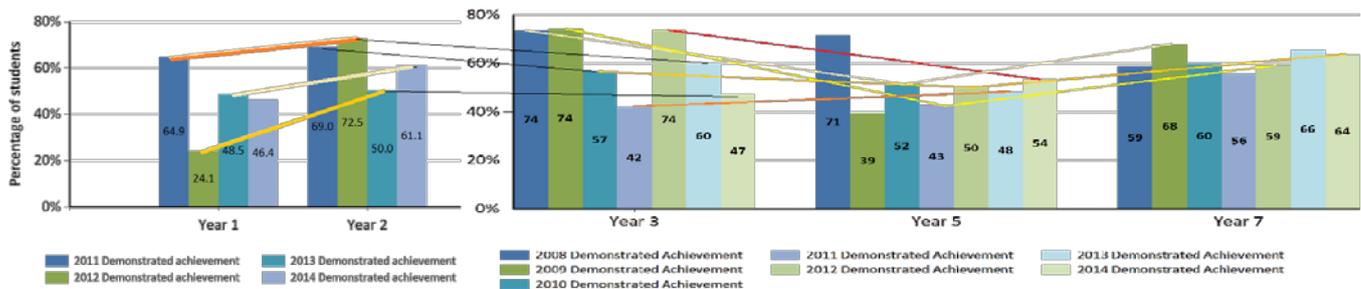
Year 2 results



The DECD Running Records target is to achieve *more than the historical average*. For a site with increasing poverty, numbers of ESL students and children with significant language disorders, this is an extra challenge. In Year 1 the target was missed by 2%, while in Year 2 we exceeded the target by 13%. Most importantly for each year in JP the percentage of children reaching the age appropriate zone has increased. In the Year 2 graph the percent that achieved standard was 65% not the 61% recorded, due to a data entry problem. The most important measure for our school is the growth and an analysis was undertaken of the relationship between the Early Years Running Records and NAPLAN reading data.

Looking at running records it is clear that our students out perform like schools, and that the numbers achieving standard increase consistently between years 1 and 2. At the critical point of Year 3 there is a small drop in performance, which could be anticipated because of the significantly higher expectations and complexities of Year 3 work, as well as children being new to the formal testing environment. It is pleasing that in 2014 the decline in performance was much less, although this cohort was coming from a lower than usual base. From Year 3 to Year 5 there has historically been a significant decline in performance. These years have seen a relatively low number of children making the highest level of growth in reading.

When Year 3 begins there is the largest per cent of children in the highest bands of reading, which falls dramatically from year 3 to Year 4. This is most likely a lack of stretch for more talented students, which is confirmed by the drop of the numbers of students in higher bands. In recent years the class structure has included year 2/3 combinations, which may have impacted on the levels of growth for year 3. 2015 will have a new structure with year 2 students remaining in the Junior Primary allowing the Year 3 students to be extended. Preparation of the children in how to sit the test is also paramount so that the students are given the best chance of success.



5.1 NAPLAN

Once every 2 years children in Years 3, 5 and 7 sit the National Literacy and Numeracy test. The current data was collected early in 2014 and as such reflects the year 2012/2013 teaching. This means it is difficult to draw direct links between current initiatives and results. For many years the only measure of performance via “My schools” web site has been the average (mean) score, which did not acknowledge different contexts. It is pleasing that the growth rate is now considered as a key measure. In 2014 the North School was one of 307 Australian and 28 South Australian schools that were recognized as having made significant improvement compared with students in similar contexts. This positive growth rate is also seen across the school.

The long term goal is achieve above average growth in reading and numeracy across the three periods of NAPLAN, with 30 % of student recording high growth 50% medium growth and 20% in low growth.

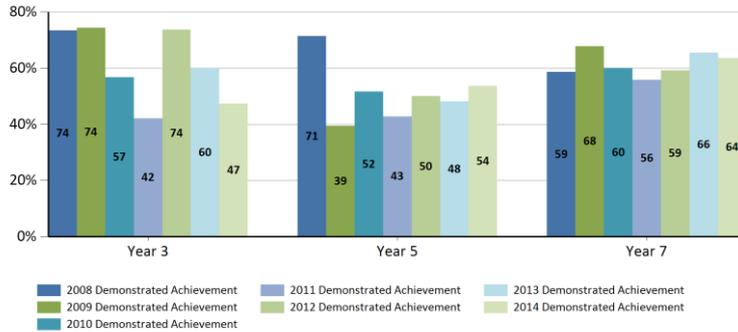
Average Progress	Reading		Numeracy	
	Years 3-5	Years Y5-7	Years 3-5	Years 5-7
Low 25%	25%	14%	21%	21%
Medium 50%	61%	57%	37%	37%
High 25%	14%	29%	42%	42%

HIGHER BANDS

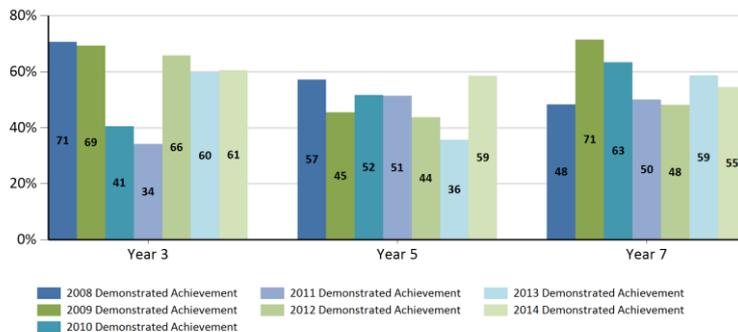
The target of having some children achieve in the higher bands, in Literacy and Numeracy, has been achieved. The aim is keep the children who are in higher bands in the early years achieving excellence throughout their primary schooling. The goal is to have 15% of students in the high bands in Literacy for years 5 and 7 and 10% in Numeracy.

	Year 3	Year 5	Year 7
Reading	15.8%	12.2%	6.1%
Numeracy	5.3%	4.9%	6.1%

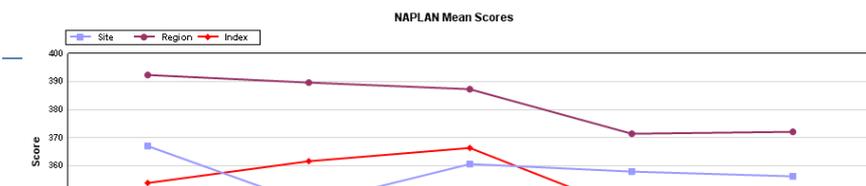
LITERACY MEANS



NUMERACY

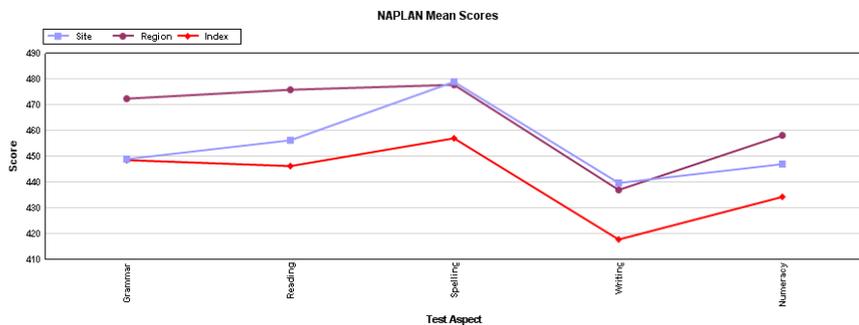


COMPARING WITH LIKE SCHOOLS



YEAR THREE

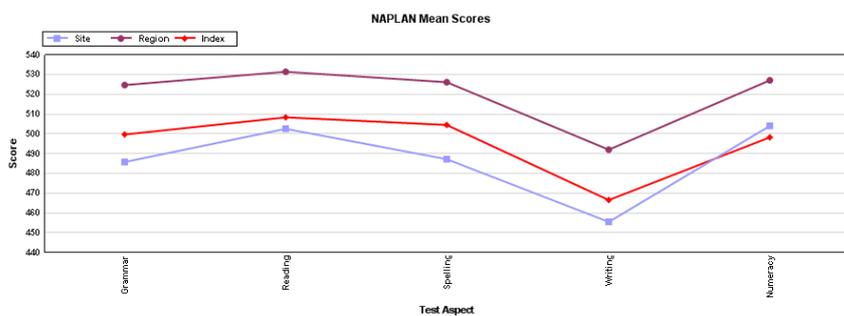
There are many challenges when interpreting this data. This cohort had relatively low reading scores in Year 2, which continues. This pattern is unusual however as reading the



YEAR FIVE

This data tells us that four aspects of the test are above like school average. Grammar is an area of focus..

This cohort of children made excellent growth in Numeracy but need to make more progress Reading.



YEAR SEVEN

This data shows that this cohort has struggled with learning despite excellent growth rate in both Literacy and Numeracy.

This is the only cohort where our performance in writing is very low and supports our direction in functional literacy.

6. STUDENT DATA

6.1 Attendance

Table 9: Per Cent Attendance by Year Level

	2012	2013	2014
Reception	92.4	87.0	92.8
Year 1	91.3	94.4	89.6
Year 2	93.7	91.8	92.6
Year 3	92.3	91.4	93.2
Year 4	94.2	93.6	91.6
Year 5	94.0	90.5	91.4
Year 6	92.0	91.2	91.1
Year 7	93.8	91.7	91.2
Primary Other	93.4	89.4	93.9
Total All Year Levels	93.0	91.4	92.0

We have continued to work hard to attain a target attendance rate of 93%, although this state wide target is a much harder stretch for Category 2 schools. The overall percent of 92% is pleasing and significantly above that of like schools at 89.6%. There are many factors that impact on attendance rates.

Enrolling chronic non-attenders looking for a fresh start has not improved their attendance, unfortunately their continued non-attendance affects our results, but more importantly there seems little that can be done, even when involving other agencies. Mental health services are scarce and this may be a factor in ingrained habits and fears being formed early.

The Student Counselor continues to contact parents by phone, messaging and in person. Regular reminders educate parents to understand the importance of informing the school about unexplained absences. The process of signing in if late has made parents and students more aware of the impact of this habit.

The Student Counsellor refers cases to the Regional Office and, where necessary, seeks external support when the issue is beyond our capacity to help. There is limited power to make change when families refuse, or are unable, to send their child to school. We will continue to contact and work with parents and DECD to give every child an opportunity for success.

6.2 Destination

Table 10: Intended Destination 2013

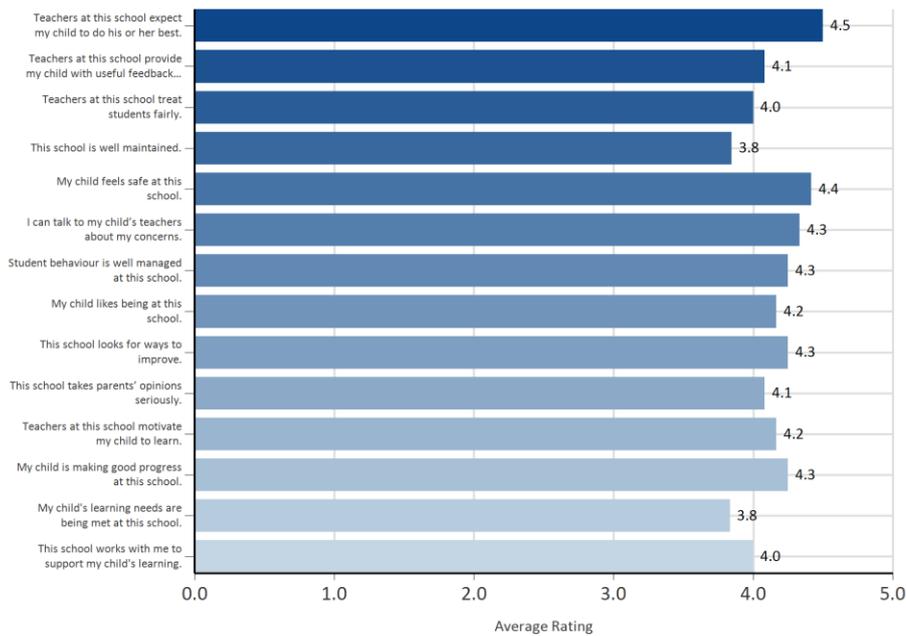
	School		Index	DECD
	No	%	%	%
Employment			3.4%	3.0%
Interstate/Overseas	13	13.8%	8.3%	10.1%
Other			2.9%	1.4%
Seeking Employment			5.3%	3.6%
Tertiary/TAFE/Training	2	2.1%	5.0%	4.6%
Transfer to Non-Govt Schl	9	9.6%	6.6%	9.7%
Transfer to SA Govt Schl	70	74.5%	49.9%	47.4%
Unknown			18.6%	20.1%

7. CLIENT OPINION

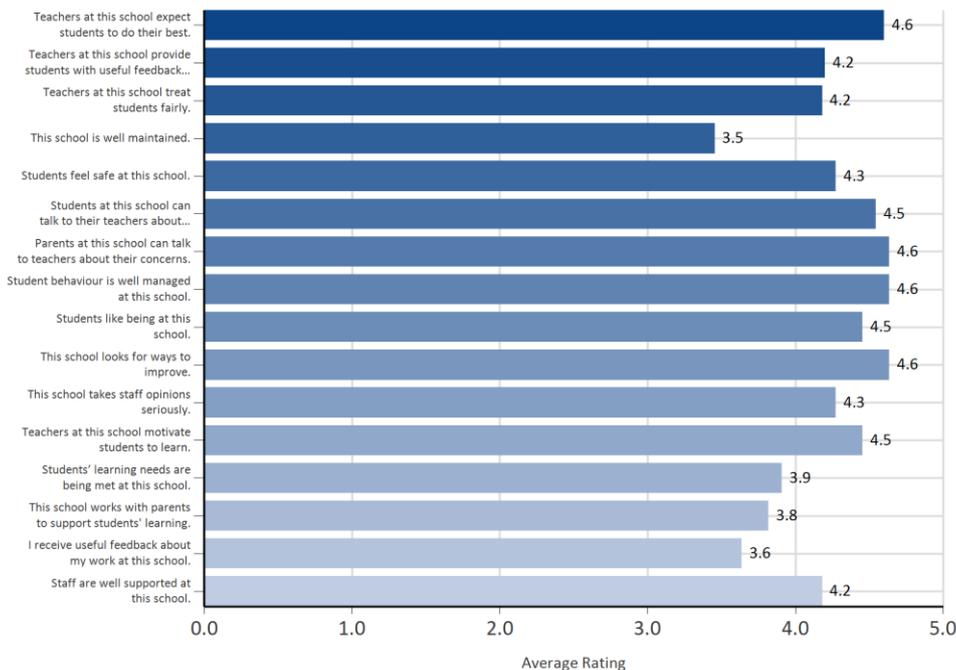
As the previous Opinion Survey tool is not supported by DECD the National Survey tool was used, which is flexible and easy adapt. In an endeavor to increase our participation rate we trialled posting the survey on our Face Book page and sending it out in the new year. This proved unsuccessful and the numbers still remained low. This may be a lack of computer access for families, a short time frame or a lack of personal contact. All of these strategies will be considered for 2015, as will timing it in term 3, before the Christmas rush. Because this is a new survey there is no historical data, Parent and teachers surveys are analysed. The Student and SSO Opinion Surveys did not have adequate numbers to provide a report,

Rating	Score
Strongly agree	5
Agree	4
Neither agree nor disagree	3
Disagree	2
Strongly disagree	1

Parent Opinion Survey



TEACHER OPINION SURVEY



Despite a low number of responses the aspects of the facilities and addressing learning needs are consistent. The learning needs may be addressed by a focus on stretching learners throughout the children's lives. While the aging facility is getting a make over this will of necessity be slow as it has to be achieved with limited funds. A complication for our school is the lack of minor works funding over a number of years.

Parents on average agree that "the school works with me to support my child's learning" while teachers rate this area lower.

The teachers express a need for more feedback. The change in line management structures is being established to address this need.

My School website

<http://www.myschool.edu.au/>

8. ACCOUNTABILITY

8.1 Behaviour Management

http://www.decd.sa.gov.au/aboutdept/files/links/cossey_report_document.pdf

Number of suspensions and exclusions

Year	Suspensions		Exclusions		Enrolment
	Incidents	Students	Incidents	Students	Students
2010	7	5	0	0	333
2011	7	4	0	0	337
2012	3	2	0	0	329
2013	20	14	0	0	327

Data Source: DECD Term 2 Behaviour Management data collected in the Term 3 School Enrolment Census, extracted November 2014

	Suspension	Violence	Enrolment
2012	3	2003	329
2013	27	1726	327
2014	18	426	320

In an endeavour to reduce the level of violence there was a concerted attempt to respond consistently to any incident of violence using suspensions to signal that this would not be accepted, while giving staff time to prepare plans for re-entry. The Wellbeing Team and all staff have worked together, which can be seen in the steady decline in the number of violent incidents. The implementation of "Play is the Way" has provided a common language and developing more powerful problem solvers.

An analysis of the data indicated that while violence has diminished, other behaviours have increased. Although walking out is a preferred option the next challenge is to provide children more productive ways to deal with overwhelming emotions.

8.2 Relevant History Screening (formerly Criminal History Screening)

<http://www.decd.sa.gov.au/docs/documents/1/RelevantHistoryScreenin-1.pdf>

All staff are required to have up to date Police Checks and RAN training, including facilities workers. All volunteers who come into the school to work with children, and new Governing Council Members complete RAN training and police checks. Copies of approved checks are filed and data is recorded. Volunteers training is undertaken when required. The volunteers training in 2014 was undertaken by the Deputy. In 2015 this will be managed by the Student Counsellor. Approximately 4 hours per week is taken on processing data for these checks. The cost is covered by the Department.

8.3 HUMAN RESOURCES - Workforce Data

8.3.1 Teacher Qualifications

All teachers at this school are qualified and registered with the SA Teachers Registration Board.

Qualification Level	Number of Qualifications
Bachelor Degrees or Diplomas	41
Post Graduate Qualifications	11

Please note: Staff that have more than 1 qualification will be counted more than once in the above qualification table. Therefore the total number of staff by qualification type may be more than the total number of teaching staff.

8.3.2 Workforce Composition including Indigenous staff

Workforce Composition	Teaching Staff		Non-Teaching Staff	
	Indigenous	Non Indigenous	Indigenous	Non Indigenous
Full-time Equivalents	1.00	26.36	0.80	16.51
Persons	1	30	1	30

9. FINANCIAL STATEMENT**Income by Funding Source**

	Funding Source	Amount
1	Grants: State	4 405 573.27
2	Grants: Commonwealth	10 984.55
3	Parent Contributions	90 370.27
4	Other	112 597.44