2009 Annual School Report
Upper Orara Public School

NSW Public Schools – Leading the way
Messages

Principal's Message

Upper Orara Public School is located in the Orara Valley 15 minutes north west of Coffs Harbour. It serves a rural community and operates on a strong sense of personal, social and civic values.

At Upper Orara Public School our mission is to involve the students, staff, families and wider community in the creation of a challenging, relevant learning environment where students will develop knowledge, skills and attitudes that enable them to make positive contributions to our society.

At the centre of our role is the provision of high quality educational programs in all Key Learning Areas (KLA's), with particular emphasis on literacy and numeracy.

The educational outcomes for each student are closely monitored to ensure their needs are being appropriately addressed in the classroom.

The welfare of each student is a prime area of responsibility. Peer support groups, anti-bullying programs and various health and safety programs are an integral part of the school curriculum. Values such as freedom, honesty and trustworthiness, integrity, respect, responsibility and understanding, tolerance and inclusion, form the core of the welfare program at Upper Orara Public School.

Our school is a part of the Orara Valley Learning Community which has enabled us to work collaboratively to engage students in challenging educational experiences with other Orara Valley Schools. This includes excursions, sporting activities, debating and stage based learning activities which are aimed at developing individual talents and skills.

In conclusion, this year the Federal Government has enabled the school to undertake many large scale projects which will enhance the teaching and learning environment of the school. These included the commencement of construction on a new primary classroom, enlarging the infants classroom by removing a dividing wall, the construction of a new covered outdoor learning area (COLA), a new drainage system and stabilisation of the school oval and a new sports storage shed.

Mr Robert Craig
Principal

P&C Message

The P&C Association welcomed our new Principal, Mr Robert Craig to our school community and looked forward to his new ideas.

Our annual fundraising at the Orara Valley Fair could not proceed because of cancellation of the event due to bad weather. The P&C instead elected to conduct a ‘Mega Raffle’, with an incentive prize for the family selling the most tickets. The raffle was a huge success.

Throughout 2009 the P&C were able to financially assist the school with transport for the annual Intensive Swimming Scheme, District Sports Carnivals and the purchase of reading resources.

The P&C Association would also like to take this opportunity to thank all the helpers from our school community for supporting the school throughout 2009 and look forward to a successful 2010.

Mrs Susan Doherty
President

Student Representative's Message

School Captains for 2009 were Jessica Murray and Owen Cootes.

A Student Representative Council was elected each term and organised structured activities, such as a Mother’s Day Stall and Mini-Fete. Theme days were also conducted at the school to raise money to support charities and the community.

Senior students had the responsibility of conducting assemblies and being leaders in the Peer Support program. In these leadership roles students led groups in Science Week activities and Book Week functions.

Students represented the school when marching in the Anzac Day ceremony in Coffs Harbour. School captains also share the role of meeting special guests at the school.

Our School Captain for 2010 was also elected and we congratulate Chloe Seccombe on her success.
School Context

Student Information

It is a requirement that the reporting of information for all students must be consistent with privacy and personal information policies.

Student Enrolment Profile

The following table shows our class sizes as reported at the 2009 class size audit.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Roll Class</th>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Total Per Year</th>
<th>Total In Class</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>K/1/2</td>
<td>K</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>K/1/2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>K/1/2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3/4/5/6</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3/4/5/6</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3/4/5/6</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3/4/5/6</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Structure of Classes

At the end of 2009 the school was composed of two multi-age classes, K-2 and 3-6 with a total of 43 students.

Staff Information

It is a requirement that the reporting of information for all staff must be consistent with privacy and personal information policies.

Staff Establishment

The school had a staffing entitlement of 2.336 for the 2009 school year.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Position</th>
<th>Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Principal</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Classroom Teachers</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Part-time teacher</td>
<td>0.168</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher RFF</td>
<td>0.084</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher Librarian</td>
<td>0.084</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>2.336</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Class Sizes

In March 2003 the Government announced its commitment to publish primary class sizes in annual school reports in order to provide parents with as much local information as possible.
Staff Retention

2009 began with a permanent classroom teacher for the K-2 class. The new Principal and 3-6 classroom teacher's vacant position was filled by Mr Robert Craig.

The School Administrative Manager continues to work 3.5 days per week. An ESL teacher was employed in Semester 1 and a RFF/Library/Computer Teacher for 2 days per week.

Staff Attendance

Staff have access to leave entitlements such as sick leave and long service leave. In 2009 the average daily attendance rate for staff, as determined by the Department, was 99.8%.

Teacher Qualifications

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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Qualifications</th>
<th>% of Staff</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Degree or Diploma</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Postgraduate</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Financial Summary

This summary covers funds for operating costs and does not involve expenditure areas such as permanent salaries, building and major maintenance.

Financial Summary

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date of financial summary:</th>
<th>30/11/2009</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Income</td>
<td>$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Balance brought forward</td>
<td>93,877.14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Global funds</td>
<td>50,670.19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tied funds</td>
<td>25,460.15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School &amp; community sources</td>
<td>21,518.08</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interest</td>
<td>3,432.22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trust receipts</td>
<td>2,237.40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Canteen</td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total income</strong></td>
<td><strong>103,318.04</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Expenditure

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Teaching &amp; learning</th>
<th>$</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Key learning areas</td>
<td>15,357.89</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Excursions</td>
<td>4,652.03</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Extracurricular dissections</td>
<td>7,939.48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Library</td>
<td>1,045.47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Training &amp; development</td>
<td>587.79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tied funds</td>
<td>41,004.38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Casual relief teachers</td>
<td>2,630.07</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Administration &amp; office</td>
<td>16,378.74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School-operated canteen</td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Utilities</td>
<td>5,750.33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maintenance</td>
<td>9,796.58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trust accounts</td>
<td>1,598.64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Capital programs</td>
<td>5,831.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total expenditure</strong></td>
<td><strong>112,572.40</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Balance carried forward</strong></td>
<td><strong>84,622.78</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A full copy of the school's 2009 financial statement is tabled at the annual general meetings of the School Council and/or the parent body. Further details concerning the statement can be obtained by contacting the school.
School Performance 2009

Achievements

Arts
Performance and student involvement in creative arts continue to be a most significant component in the educational experiences of our students. A variety of opportunities allow them to showcase their talents to the local and wider community. Highlights of 2009 included:

- Outstanding musical performances by students at the school's 2009 annual concert and presentation evening;
- All students in years 4-6 participated in interschool debating and public speaking programs. The school debating team participated in the Orara Valley Interschool Debating Program featuring 7 schools. The school team of Year 5 and 6 students were an impressive team, presenting effective arguments and rebuttals.
- All students were invited to become involved in the school choir which performed at assemblies and the end of year concert and presentation evening.
- All students participated in weekly music lessons with specialist teaching, learning singing and un-tuned percussion.

Sport
Sporting programs at Upper Orara Public School continue to be focused on involvement, skills development and enjoyment. A wide range of opportunities is provided to students.

- All students participated in the school's annual athletics carnival. This was held on the school playing field which saw a high level of parent involvement;
- All students attended the intensive swimming and water confidence program which was heavily supported by parents;
- Students in Years 3-6 participated in soccer, cross country, swimming, cricket and softball carnivals and clinics;
- A number of students represented the Orara Valley in Cross Country and Swimming;
- Daily PE for all students helped develop skills and healthy lifestyle habits.
- Tennis was introduced as a Friday sport for Year 2-6 students. The students were coached by a visiting tennis professional.

Environmental
The school is situated in the picturesque headwaters of the Orara River and has abundant wildlife within the school grounds. Most students come from homes in the country and bring their interest in and understanding of nature to school. The school grounds afford daily opportunity for students to interact with their nature.

- In 2009, students from Year 6 have participated in term meetings and workshop days for the local Youth Environmental Council.
- The vegetable patch was planted and cared for by the K-6 students. The result was organically grown produce that was eaten at school or taken home to share with families.
- Year 3-6 were involved in a day where they bushwalked for 10km through Bongil Bongil National Park and experienced many educational opportunities including bush tucker, Aboriginal heritage, local history and ecology.

Technology
Technology has continued to be a focus with use of both laptop and desktop computers by all students K-6. Students used technology to email one another and save their work onto personal USB drives.

- Students in Stage 2 and 3 have produced computer assisted work such as powerpoint presentations, movie documentaries and word processed documents.
- Students participated in teaching and learning using the newly installed interactive whiteboard.
- Students used programs such as Typing Tournament and Rainforest Maths in an effort to increase skills in both typing, mathematics and computers

Technology has continued to be a focus with upgrade of the server and essential parts of the network. This has helped provide a more reliable computer system to help enhance computer skills.

Academic
The school continues to strive for personal best and excellence in all academic and extra curricula areas. Literacy programs receive the greatest focus as they permeate all other key learning areas. Students with ability are challenged by using accelerated literacy strategies.
In 2009 students had the opportunity to participate in external academic competitions such as the University of NSW competitions in Maths, English, Science and Computer Skills.

In the National Assessment Program (NAPLAN), 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 understanding demonstrated in the assessments.

Year 3: from Band 1 (lowest) to Band 6 (highest)
Year 5: from Band 3 (lowest) to Band 8 (highest).

Minimum Standards
The Commonwealth Government sets minimum standards for reading, writing, grammar, punctuation, spelling and numeracy for Years 3, 5, 7 and 9.

The performance of the students in our school in the National Assessment Program – Literacy and Numeracy is compared to these minimum standards. The percentages of our students achieving at or above these standards are reported herewith.

The number of students in Years 3 and 5 is small and this will impact on percentage figures. The overall results in National testing should be viewed accordingly.

Percentage of Year 3 students in our school achieving at or above the minimum standard in 2009:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Percentage of Year 3 students achieving at and above minimum standards</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reading</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Writing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spelling</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Punctuation and Grammar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Numeracy</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

NAPLAN – Literacy (Year 3)
In the NAPLAN (Literacy) in 2009, nine Year 3 students sat the test. The four strands being reported on included writing, reading, spelling and grammar and punctuation.

- Overall our students performed well above the state average for literacy.
- The school average in reading was in the top band (band 6).
- The school average in writing was in band 5.
- The school average in spelling, grammar and punctuation was in band 6.

NAPLAN – Numeracy (Year 3)
In the NAPLAN (Numeracy) in 2009, nine Year 3 students sat the test. The areas being reported on included number, patterns, algebra and measurement, data, space and geometry.

- Overall our students performed significantly above the state average in numeracy.
- Students performed very well in number tasks involving addition, subtraction, division, whole numbers and multiplication.

NAPLAN – Literacy (Year 5)
In the NAPLAN (Literacy) in 2009, five Year 5 students sat for the test. The four strands being reported on included writing, reading, spelling, grammar and punctuation.

- In reading students performed around the state average.
- In writing students performed above the state average.
- In spelling students performed below the state average. Students were around the state average in grammar and punctuation.

Percentage of Year 5 students in our school achieving at or above the minimum standard in 2009:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Percentage of Year 5 students achieving at and above minimum standards</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reading</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Writing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spelling</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Punctuation and Grammar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Numeracy</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
NAPLAN – Numeracy (Year 5)

In the NAPLAN (Numeracy) in 2009, five Year 5 students sat for the tests. The areas being reported on included number, patterns and algebra, measurement, data, space and geometry.

- No student was placed in band 3 or 4 in numeracy.
- Students performed well in measurement and data tasks involving time and area.
- Students performed well in space and geometry tasks involving position, 3D, angles and symmetry.
- Students performed less well on questions involving fractions and decimals.
- Trend data indicates the students in 2009 performed above that of the previous 3 years.

Significant Programs and Initiatives

The school conducted a number of programs during 2009 to provide additional educational opportunities. The programs included:

Aboriginal Education

There are 2 aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander students currently enrolled at Upper Orara Public School. All students learn about Aboriginal culture and history through planned units of work. Our school also promotes the recognition of Aboriginal culture and custodianship of country through including the protocol of ‘Welcome to Country’ at school assemblies. The school also flies the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander flags on its yardarm flagpole. We celebrated NAIDOC week with an Aboriginal Cultural Day which included activities such as bush food walks, cooking, bark painting and beadwork.

Multicultural Education

Most students from Upper Orara Public School are from white European descent. The school feels it is important to look at cultures beyond its own. Students gain an insight into other cultures through teaching and learning activities associated with the COGS (Connected Outcomes Groups) units and content in the key learning area of HSIE (Human Society and its Environment).

Students participated in Harmony Day activities related to tolerance and respect for others different from themselves.

Several students won prizes in a multicultural art competition, organised by the Coffs Harbour City Council.

Respect and Responsibility

Students are Upper Orara Public School are given daily instruction and demonstration of the importance of respecting self and others, and what responsibilities they have towards promoting a harmonious school and society. In 2009 measures towards these ends have included: participation in school and community ANZAC ceremonies; a range of welfare programs fostering social skills and mutual respect; the acknowledgement of the importance of different cultures, and in particular Aboriginal culture; recognition of students’ consideration towards others, both by teachers and fellow students at school assemblies; and consistent role modelling and reinforcement of exemplary respect and responsibility by teaching staff. Senior students showed “family care” towards the younger students, adding to the “small school – big family” culture of our school. Year 6 hosted and participated in Peer Support activities and then used these skills to bring harmony and acceptance to the whole school through our Peer Support Program.

The Student Representative Council (SRC) was active in fundraising for charities such as World Vision, Jeans for Genes Day and the Cancer Council.

Student Welfare

The welfare of students at Upper Orara Public School is part of the culture of our school. A large range of policies and programs support our students to keep them safe and happy and foster relationships between students.

Student behaviour is outstanding at Upper Orara Public School. Behaviour issues are dealt with through support of peers, senior students, teachers, parents and DET support staff who work cooperatively to help any students with inappropriate behaviours.

The Learning Support Team formally monitors the welfare needs of our students and co-ordinates support for children in need.
Students needing support are given a senior student as a mentor and support person to help them with their needs. Senior students are trained in social skills support at a combined schools Peer Support Day and return to school with skills to support younger students.

Peer support continued as a long running program in semester 2. The benefits of creating cohesive multi-age groups who work to improve the social skills of all students are evident from this program.

**English as a Second Language (ESL)**

One student was recognised as having English as a second language and attracted DET funding support during Semester 1. A part time ESL teacher was employed to support this student.

Learning experiences included support in language development areas such as pronunciation, vocabulary development, phonics, grammar and writing.

Great progress was made and the student was able to communicate with her peers and teachers effectively across a wide range of social situations.

**Progress on 2009 Targets**

**Progress in Literacy**

Trend data for the last three years indicates our average growth in literacy for matched students between Year 3 and Year 5 has been similar to the state average.

**Progress in Numeracy**

Trend data for the last three years indicates our average growth in numeracy for matched students between Year 3 and Year 5 has been similar to the state average.

**Progress on Targets – Target 1**

*To improve the literacy standards of all students with specific emphasis on writing.*

Our achievements include:

- Year 3 students in the NAPLAN performed very well in writing with all students placing in band 4 or above.
- Year 5 students in the NAPLAN performed above the state average for writing.
- Interactive whiteboards were extensively used in accelerated literacy writing lessons.
- Explicit and comprehensive teaching of writing strategies was implemented in each classroom.

- Teaching staff were involved in an Orara Valley Small Schools 'Improving Comprehension' program.
- New reading resources were purchased to enhance comprehension materials.

**Progress on Targets – Target 2**

*To improve the numeracy standards of all students, with specific emphasis on working mathematically.*

Our achievements include:

- Year 3 students in the NAPLAN performed significantly above the stage average in numeracy.
- Year 5 students in the NAPLAN performed above the state average in numeracy.
- Mathematical resources were purchased for hands-on lessons and independent activities.
- Improved results in in-school testing were evident.

**Progress on Targets – Target 3**

*Connected Classroom computer technology used daily in classroom teaching and learning.*

Our achievements include:

- All staff participated in professional learning in interactive whiteboard (Smartboard) technology.
- Moved towards daily use of computers and interactive whiteboards by all students.
- Improvements in hardware for the delivery of information technology. A new server and associated devices were purchased and installed to improve the school’s network and connectivity.

**Key Evaluations**

Literacy was chosen as the Key Learning Area for evaluation in 2009. The survey was sent out to all families and approximately 70% of families responded.

95% of Year 3, 4, 5 and 6 students also completed a survey on the school literacy program.

**Findings and Conclusions**

100% of all parents and carers who responded agreed that literacy is a vital part of learning.
84% of parents and carers stated that the school provided useful information in reports.

24% of parents and carers would like more frequent reporting on literacy.

84% of parents and carers agreed that their children had learnt new skills in reading and writing this year.

76% of parents and carers agreed that the school is well resourced.

92% of parents and carers were positive about the importance of reading at home and the home reading program.

All students agreed with the statement that it is important to learn literacy skills. They enjoy reading and writing and like working with other students in groups. They also like to use the computer for publishing their writing.

Future Directions

Upper Orara Public School will continue to deliver high quality programs for its students and communicate effectively with the community. The school values the contribution of individuals and groups within our school community. Opportunities for active parent and community participation will continue and ways to improve communication on the school's policies and programs will be sought.

The school will continue to place great importance on the teaching of all aspects of literacy. We will endeavour to inform parents and carers on the teaching of this vital area. We will conduct sessions for parents and carers outlining how they can assist their children with literacy. We will endeavour to strengthen the home reading program and have all students participating.

Professional Learning

Staff at Upper Orara Public School participated in a wide range of professional learning during 2009. Such activities were in line with priorities from the School Plan and directions from the NSW Department of Education and Training.

These included:

- CPR Training (all staff)
- Anaphylaxis training (all staff)
- The Quality Teaching and Learning Conference (teaching staff)
- Best Start Training (K-2 class teacher)
- Australian Early Development Index (AEDI) Training (K-2 class teacher)
- Connected Classroom (Interactive Whiteboard) Training (all staff)
- Self-Nominated Project (Orara Valley Small Schools) – Literacy (teaching staff)
- ERN Training – SASS (school administration manager)
- Road Safety Program Development Workshop (K-2 class teacher)

School Development 2009 – 2011

Targets for 2010

Target 1

To improve the literacy standards of all students, with a specific emphasis on spelling.

Strategies to achieve this target include:

- Revising the teaching of spelling and creating a spelling plan for K-6 students.
- Revising and extending the teaching of spelling through explicit spelling lessons in the classroom.
- Purchasing of resources for Interactive Whiteboard (Smartboard) and teacher resources.
- Professional learning for teachers in the area of literacy using Accelerated Literacy strategies.

Our success will be measured by:

- Improved results in NAPLAN.
- More accurate use of high frequency words in classroom writing by all students.
- An improvement in student spelling in general writing and spelling based assessments.

Target 2

To increase the number of students achieving in the upper bands in NAPLAN through explicit teaching of basic skills. To have 80% of students achieve stage outcomes in numeracy.
Strategies to achieve this target include:

- Use of Best Start analysis to inform individual learning needs in Kindergarten.
- Targeted support for individual learning needs of particular students including students experiencing difficulties and high achieving students as determined by analysis of NAPLAN and school based data.
- Inclusion of professional learning opportunities for teachers in the teaching of numeracy, including support for teachers using ICT in teaching and learning where available.
- Working with staff from the Orara Valley Learning Community to facilitate sharing of expertise and resources.

Our success will be measured by:

- Targeted groups showing growth at least commensurate with school population.
- Classroom practices demonstrating Quality Teaching elements embedded in programs and delivery.
- A professional learning evaluation indicating an increase in knowledge in the use of interactive technologies and ICT based curriculum resources in numeracy teaching and learning.

**Target 3**

*To promote an understanding of the need for a more sustainable future.*

Strategies to achieve this target include:

- Students will plan and help establish systems to reduce, reuse and recycle through composting, work farms, etc.
- Students will plan and help establish new vegetable gardens, herb gardens and an orchard.
- Students will plan and revegetate an eroded site to create a native bushland area.
- Students will be taught and encouraged to reduce the use of electricity and water within the school.

Our success will be measured by:

- Students being actively involved in the planning of a sustainable future.
- The establishment of systems to reduce our use of resources.
- The construction, planting and care of new vegetable and herb gardens and an orchard.
- The planting of native species to revegetate the eroded steep slopes below the school playground.