



Annual Report 2004

COLO HEIGHTS PUBLIC SCHOOL

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Principal's message

Colo Heights Public School is a small caring school which is committed to providing quality educational programs through a personalised and individualised approach. The staff are professional and experienced and work closely with a supportive parent body to maximise learning opportunities for all students.

The school serves students from the surrounding areas of Colo Heights, Colo, Upper and Lower Colo and Putty. Most students travel to school by bus with many students travelling a considerable distance.

Colo Heights Public School is a well-resourced three-teacher school, featuring a modern two-classroom brick building, a fully resourced library and demountable classroom set in an attractive tree-studded playground with well-established gardens. The school also makes regular use of community facilities located adjacent to the school including hall, oval and tennis/basketball court.



The students of Colo Heights Public School enjoy the benefits of a small school while being provided with a range of opportunities similar to those available in larger schools.

I certify that 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.

Andrew Bowmer

Our achievements

Cultural activities

The students of Colo Heights PS are encouraged to participate in a variety of cultural activities. In 2004 these included:

- The school entered art work from 18 students in the Hawkesbury Show. Georgia Morris, Kirsty Klein and Zac Findlay received awards.
- The School Dance Group, comprising 22 students from Years 2 to Year 6, participated in the Hawkesbury Schools Music Festival, successfully performing a dance to the Elvis song, Jail House Rock.
- The school held Education Week activities featuring student performance of poetry, drama and song.



- The student representative council (SRC) organised a number of special activities including Crazy Hair Day, Soft Toy Day, Talent Quest and Mini Fete.
- Senior students were involved in a Small Schools Debating and Public Speaking Day at MacDonald Valley PS.

Sporting activities

A variety of opportunities in sport were provided for all students. These included:

- Specialist coaching was provided in gymnastics over eight weeks, tennis for Years 2 to 6 students for twenty weeks and special day-programs in soccer and cricket.
- The school ran its own five-day learn-to-swim and swimming training program in Term 4.
- The school held an athletics carnival as well as participating in the Small Schools Cross-Country Carnival.
- The school participated in the Small Schools Swimming Carnival with Kesha Unsworth advancing to the district carnival.
- The school participated in the Small Schools Athletics Carnivals (track and field) finishing 8th out of 13 schools our best ever result. Jackson Neowhouse was awarded Juvenile Boys Champion.
- Sara Klein advanced to the district carnival in athletics going on to compete at the regional carnival at Homebush in high jump.
- Colo Heights organised a successful interschool sports day with Kurrajong North Public School.
- The senior students participated in an oz-tag competition hosted by Panthers Rugby League Club with the girls' team becoming Small School Champions.



General and specific school initiatives

Other school programs and achievements include:

- the development of a school brochure for the promotion of the school in the local area;
- the provision of school uniforms with the school logo;
- the organisation of school sport shirts for all Year 2 to 6 students;
- continued work in updating the library's computer technology and initiating electronic stocktaking which allows for easier tracking of resources;
- the removal of the old staffroom;
- improvement of the school grounds as a result of a successful enviro-day which included the planting of \$1000 of turf, construction of pathways and seating and the construction, planting and mulching of gardens;
- students' participation in school-initiated fundraising events including Jeans 4 Genes Day, Royal Hospital for Women, Red Nose Day and Stewart House;
- involvement of the Year 4 students in environmental activities at Longneck Field Study Centre; and
- involvement of many Year 4, 5, and 6 students in an outdoor education camp on the mid-north coast of NSW.

Key evaluations

Educational and management practice

Leadership

Background

In order to make decisions to improve the effectiveness of the school there is a need to gauge the opinions of people on aspects of educational and school practice. In 2004 the school decided to determine stakeholders' ideas and attitudes about leadership.

Surveys from SchoolMap were distributed to parents. There were 23 families that responded to the survey, a return rate of 85%.

Findings and conclusions

The surveys were overwhelmingly positive, indicating that in general the community is happy

with the school's leadership and the direction the school is taking.

The findings showed:

- 100% of parents believed that principal and staff are looking for ways to improve the school and introduce positive changes for the students;
- 100% of parents thought that the principal understood the school and got the best from staff and students;
- 100% of parents thought that the principal is open to new ideas; and
- some parents indicated that the community and students could be more involved in some decision-making and leadership roles in the school.

Future directions

Areas that will have further investigation and development in 2005 include:

- increasing the role of the SRC in school activities and leadership; and
- exploring ways of increasing parent and community support of the P&C.

Curriculum

Science and Technology

Background

In 2000 the Board of Studies issued a new Science and Technology K-6 Outcomes and Indicators document. Over the past years the staff has made initial attempts to implement the changes required by this document. In 2003 it was established that Science and Technology was an area that needed attention. It was recognised by staff that this new syllabus involved considerable changes in how Science and Technology would be taught and content requirements for each stage.

The staff decided to implement a number of programs to familiarise themselves with the new syllabus and implement a number of changes in the teaching and learning program.

In 2004 the following steps were initiated:

- introduction and training of the staff on the Outcomes and Indicators document by the district consultant;
- implementation of a specialised science and technology program for both the K/1 and Year 4/5/6 classes;

- holding a technology day for the whole school based on design and construction principles;
- a visit by Questacon Science to the school for a special science presentation; and
- the involvement of the senior students in a mini beasts survey facilitated by the Australian Museum.

In order to ascertain our success and to establish areas for further staff development in this Key Learning Area (KLA) and to enable teachers to move students towards the stage appropriate outcomes, the following data was collected:

- Interviews of randomly selected students from Stages 1, 2 and 3; and
- Whole staff discussion on the teaching and learning program.

Findings and conclusions

Staff:

- The staff found the inservice by the science consultant very valuable.
- The majority of the staff utilised the CD support material and units of work as a starting point for their own teaching.
- The staff found the technology day a most valuable learning activity.

Students:

- The majority of students enjoy Science and Technology especially the hands-on activities.
- The majority of students could recall topics of investigation and facts learnt throughout the year. The students could not equate these topics to a syllabus content strand.
- The majority of students could indicate that they had engaged in all three of the learning processes (investigating, design and making, and using technology) during the course of the year.

Future directions

- The staff believed that the school needed to continue to develop a flexible whole-school plan for the teaching of Science and Technology.
- The staff indicated that Science and Technology still required a continued focus as it had a tendency to be squeezed out by other KLAs and activities.

Other programs

Technology

Background

Computer technology has continued to be enhanced throughout 2004. The school is well resourced with computers. The school has a ratio of approximately one computer to every four students. Computers are used in all classrooms and the library, and all locations have Internet access.

Computers are used to develop students' operational skills and word processing and to enhance their learning across a range of key learning areas (KLAs).

Teaching practice and student learning outcomes have been improved through:

- regular integration of computer programs into the teaching of Literacy and Numeracy in the Kindergarten and Year 1 program;



- the redistribution of computers, ensuring two additional computers were located in the K/1 classroom to facilitate publishing;
- the purchase of a new digital camera and the instruction of senior students in its operation;
- instruction to students in Years 4, 5 and 6 to develop their skills in PowerPoint presentation, creating spreadsheets and graphs, Internet research, word processing and desktop publishing;

Future directions

The implementation of a systematic teaching program in the use of computer technology has been a feature in 2003 and 2004. For 2005 the following areas need further attention:

- more consistent computer teaching and learning opportunities for Year 2 and 3 students;

- improved teacher-training to develop confidence in a greater variety of programs and functions; and
- increased opportunities for students to integrate computer technology in a meaningful way into other KLAs.

Learning Difficulties

Background

The school is allocated a support teacher learning difficulties (STLA) for approximately two and a half hours per week. The school is able to supplement this allocation, increasing it to approximately six hours. During this time an experienced staff member works with individuals and small groups of students to improve their literacy skills.

During 2004 the staff received extensive training and support from the district consultant, language difficulties. Strategies have been implemented to help students experiencing difficulties in this area.

Future directions

The school will carefully assess the 2005 financial situation to ensure that this program is able to continue at the 2004 funding level.

Student Welfare

Background

Student welfare is addressed through the school's Student Welfare and Discipline Policy. Issues are regularly discussed at weekly staff meetings. Features of student welfare this year include:

- successful implementation of a pro-social skills program for targeted students;
- recognition of student achievement at weekly assemblies and through the newsletter;
- two students attending the Student Representative Council (SRC) district leadership camp;
- student input into school decision-making and planning through the SRC;
- SRC leadership of school assemblies and special days; and
- regular counselling support.

Future directions

It is important for the school to be proactive in student welfare activities. These include:

- ongoing initiatives in student leadership; and
- providing special activities and days.

Student performance

Literacy

Basic Skills Test- Year 3

In 2004, 11 students in Year 3 sat for the BST in literacy. The average school performance was equal to the state average. Over the last 3 years 75% of students were placed in the top three bands. This compares favourably to the state proportion of 71% in 2004. The school had no students in the lowest band (1) in 2004 compared to 11% statewide. The 2004 results for Year 3 were the second best results that the school has achieved over the last 5 years.

The school's results showed little or no difference between Reading and Language.

In Year 3 reading, our students performed more strongly on questions involving locating information and questions requiring them to make connections between text and an image. Areas for further development include questions involving inference and interpretation.

In Year 3 language, our students performed equally well in all aspects of the test.

Basic Skills Test- Year 5

In 2004, 6 students in Year 5 sat for the BST in literacy. The average school performance was below that of the state. Over the last 3 years 88% of students were placed in the top three bands. This compares favourably to the state proportion of 78% in 2004.

The school's results showed that students performed better in language than reading.

In Year 5 in both reading and language, it was difficult to identify trends due to the small numbers of students.

Progress over time

All matched Year 5 students have made progress between Year 3 and 5. On average, our students have achieved a growth rate of 9 marks which is 2.9 marks above the state average. The 2004 growth rate was the second best growth rate over the last seven years.

Primary Writing Assessment

In 2004, 12 students in Year 3 sat for the PWA. All students were placed in the top three bands. On average the Year 3 students performed just below the state average. Our students performed better in writing the narrative than the discussion and in sentence structure and spelling of commonly used words.

In 2004, 6 students in Year 5 sat for the PWA. All students were placed in Band 3 or above. The school

average for Year 5 students was below the state. Our students performed better in writing the discussion than the narrative. It was difficult to identify any other trends due to the small numbers of students.

All of the Year 5 students made progress in their writing achievements since 2002. The school's average growth rate was 1.3 marks above that of the state. The results indicate that the school has been more successful in increasing the performance of students who were placed in the lower bands in Year 3.

Numeracy

Basic Skills Test- Year 3

In 2004, 11 students in Year 3 sat for the BST in numeracy. The average school performance was just below the state average (0.5%). Over the last 3 years 80% of students were placed in the top three bands. This compares favourably to the state proportion of 70% in 2004. The school had no students in the lowest band (1) in 2004 compared to 11% statewide.

The school's results showed little or no difference between measurement, space and number.

In Year 3, our students performed more strongly in identifying 2D shapes and addition and subtraction questions. Areas for further development include working mathematically and aspects of measurement.

Basic Skills Test- Year 5

In 2004, 6 students in Year 5 sat for the BST in numeracy. The average school performance was below that of the state. Over the last 3 years 83% of students were placed in the top three bands. This compares favourably to the state proportion of 81% in 2004. In 2004 there were no students placed in the bottom 2 bands compared to 6% of the state.

The school's results showed that students performed better in number than in space and measurement.

In Year 5, our students performed more strongly in area and perimeter, money and division, it also indicated that areas for further development include working mathematically and some aspects of space.

Progress over time

There were only a small number of matched Year 5 students. On average, our students have achieved a growth rate of 9.57 marks which is almost 2 marks above the state average. The 2004 growth rate was the second best growth rate over the last five years.

Our targets

Progress on 2004 targets

Target 1. To improve student numeracy outcomes in number

Our achievements include:

- an initial review of the school's scope and sequence to include new additional content of the Mathematics Syllabus;
- extensive inservice of the Stage 2 teacher in Count Me In Too which included the implementation of CMIT into Stage 2;
- consolidation of CMIT program in Stage 1;
- the purchase of a variety of resources to support numeracy.
- 70% of students achieving staged outcomes; and
- CMIT bench marking of student indicates all students have moved on at least one level in early arithmetical strategies.

Target 2. To improve student literacy outcomes in talking and listening

Our achievements include:

- extensive inservice of staff by the district consultant;
- extensive audit of the school resources;
- comprehensive review of current teaching practices;
- 25% increase in the opportunities for public speaking; and
- student surveys indicate that 50% of students feel more confident and skilled in public speaking.

Target 3. To improve student outcomes in physical education focusing on skill development and fitness

Our achievements include:

- introduction of a daily fitness program;
- increase in specialised coaching;
- greater emphasis in skill development in weekly sport;
- students on average have displayed a 25% improvement in basic fitness and 20% improvement in skill level; and

- greater success by students in interschool and district competitions.

Targets for 2005

Target 1. To improve student numeracy outcomes in measurement

Strategies to achieve this target include:

- review the school's scope and sequence in measurement to bring it in line with the expectations of the new Mathematics Syllabus;
- involvement in the Regional Measurement Facilitators Project for Stages 2 and 3;
- utilize regional consultant to assist in staff training and program implementation;
- implement the new Mathematics syllabus and measurement support documents through regular practical staff training;
- initiate at least two measurement activity days with practical problem-solving activities in measurement for the whole school; and
- purchase additional resources to support the programs.

Our success will be measured by:

- 80% of students achieving at or beyond stage outcomes;
- improvement in the BST results for Year 3 and 5 students, evidenced through the tracking of results over the last three years; and
- benchmarking students at the beginning and end of the year to show improvement.

Target 2. To improve student literacy outcomes in writing with a focus on language development

Strategies to achieve this target include:

- review the current teaching of language skills to ensure that students are receiving comprehensive, sequenced and explicit instruction;
- review the Primary Writing Assessment and Basic Skills Test results in language over the last three years to identify areas of language that need development;
- inservice staff on criterion reference marking as done in the PWA to inform teaching and assessment practice;

- initiate timetable and organisational changes to ensure that language and writing are included as part of a morning literacy session; and
- STLA support for students with learning difficulties to include a language focus.

Our success will be measured by:

- 80% of students achieving at or beyond staged outcomes;
- improvement in the PWA and BST language results for Year 3 and 5; and
- 20% improvement in the quality of writing produced as indicated through criterion reference marking of writing samples at the beginning and end of the year.

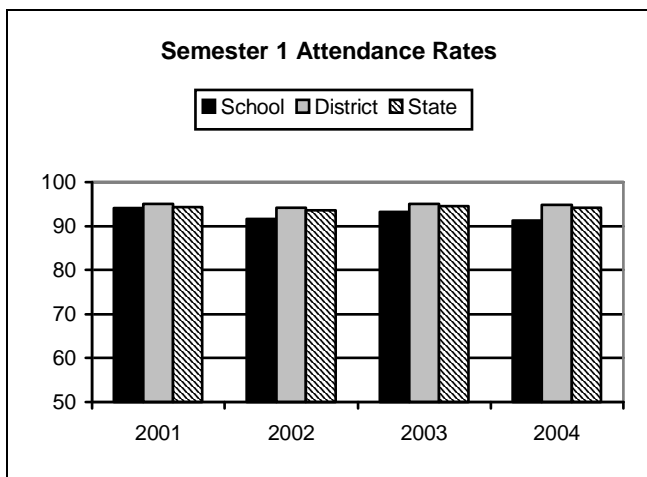
Our context

Enrolment profile

Our enrolment at the beginning of 2004 was 55 students. As the year progressed a number of families moved out of the area, this impacted on our current student numbers. Our anticipated enrolment for 2005 is 48 students.

Attendance profile

The student attendance rate in 2004 is under that of the 2003 rate as reported in the table below.



Class sizes

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

The following table shows our class sizes, as reported at the class-size audit that was conducted on Wednesday 31 March 2004.

Roll Class	Year	Total per Year	Total in Class
K/1	K	6	15
	1	9	
Year 2/3	2	6	19
	3	13	
Year 4/5/6	4	5	17
	5	8	
	6	4	

The school is structured into 3 multi-aged/multi-staged groups. Each class has been of a small size which has been of a great benefit in providing the flexibility to meet the educational needs of all students.

Parent and caregiver involvement and participation

Parent, caregiver and community support is one of the main features of the school. In 2004 parent and community support, involvement and participation include:

- involvement in the P&C, Annual School Report Committee, Disco and Games Night Committee, Yengo Endurance Ride Raffle Committee and other fundraising activities;
- the organisation by the P&C of the Newcastle Variety Bash visit;
- the regular involvement of many parents in helping in the classrooms with reading, craft and other activities;
- involvement of parents in the making of costumes for the dance group;
- a large number of parents involved in the school's special events including carnivals, gala days, picnic days, swimming programs and SRC special days;
- involvement of parents in a successful enviro-day, resulting in significant improvements to the school grounds; and
- assistance by parents with supervision and transport of students to various sporting activities and other activities.

Financial statement summary

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

Date of financial summary:	30/11/2004
Income	\$
Balance brought forward	25 669.26
Global funds	42 741.16
Tied funds	23 031.55
School & community sources	10 867.91
Interest	1 388.89
Trust receipts	1 941.84
Canteen	0.00
<i>Total income</i>	<u>105 640.61</u>
Expenditure	
Teaching & learning	
Key learning areas	2 490.77
Excursions	3 905.00
Extracurricular dissections	5 989.82
Library	2 006.02
Training & development	1 018.31
Tied funds	21 512.58
Casual relief teachers	7 146.44
Administration & office	26 337.47
School-operated canteen	0.00
Utilities	4 899.58
Maintenance	8 132.10
Trust accounts	1 813.31
Capital programs	609.00
<i>Total expenditure</i>	<u>85 860.40</u>
Balance carried forward	<u><u>19 780.21</u></u>

A full copy of the school's 2004 financial statement is tabled at the annual general meeting of the P&C. Further details concerning the statement can be obtained by contacting the school.

This balance is made up of tied grants which are funds tied to a specific purpose, unpaid orders and casual salaries, provision for asset replacement and a reserve.

About this report

In preparing this report, the self-evaluation committee has gathered information from evaluations conducted during the year and analysed other information about the school's practices and student learning outcomes. The self-evaluation committee has determined targets for the school's future development.

Members of the school self-evaluation committee included:

Mr Andrew Bowmer, Principal
 Mrs Janet Norris, Teacher
 Mr Mark Wilkes, Teacher
 Mrs Virginia Stewart, Teacher/Librarian
 Mrs Roslyn Hilsden, Administration Manager
 Mr Lance Ryle, P&C Secretary
 Mrs Belinda Mackintosh, P&C Treasurer

The school education area chief education officer has provided guidance to the school during the self-evaluation process and validated the analysis of student performance data contained in this report.

Ken Gill
Chief Education Officer
Windsor/Blacktown

The school education director has endorsed the targets contained in this report, which will be used to facilitate area planning and allocation of area resources.

Barry Foster
School education Director
Windsor

