Principal’s message

Castle Cove Public School, founded in 1952, is located in a quiet, leafy suburb situated on a peninsula on the north shore of Sydney. The school environment is warm and welcoming with well-resourced learning areas, spacious grounds and excellent sporting facilities.

Our enrolment numbers this year were 481 on census date and comprised 239 boys and 242 girls. We enjoy the diversity that a range of ethnic backgrounds brings and are proud of the harmony that exists across the school community.

Castle Cove enjoys a strong reputation through high academic results and a commitment to the development of values and life-long learning skills in our students. At Castle Cove we value and appreciate a rich and stimulating learning environment where students can feel safe, valued and respected. Our students are enthusiastic about and engaged in their learning and strive to be the best person they can be. We offer high quality learning programs that are differentiated to meet the needs of all students. Our enthusiastic and dedicated staff members embrace continual development of their professional practice. We greatly appreciate a high level of parental support through active involvement in classrooms and contribution of skills and expertise to other areas of school life.

Each term students have engaged with our learning programs and school initiatives, striving to achieve their best, meeting daily challenges with effort and enthusiasm. The personal best of so many at both a team and individual level has resulted in recognition for many students in the academic areas and in sport, public speaking, debating, Robotics, music, choir, dance and chess, to name some other areas. Many of these achievements are recognized on the pages following.

This year has seen the planning for and the introduction of iPads as a device for enhanced teaching and learning. With the wonderful P&C supporting us, ninety iPads have been purchased and are being utilised by all stages in the classrooms.

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.

Jeanette Cope

P & C message

The P&C was again able to contribute meaningfully to the school’s educational and community activities throughout 2013. Highlights for the year included the social and fundraising events that bring together the Castle Cove community and the introduction of an iPad program at the school.

This year we were excited to be able to fund the rollout of an iPad program to students in all years. The school now has 90 iPads, each colour coded to the stage year, to stimulate and challenge the students in a variety of collaborative and interactive ways. This program is an example of how P&C funding can help support the innovative and motivated teaching staff at CCPS to provide students with learning programs and tools to give them the skills for the future.

The P&C continued to direct the bulk of its funding towards providing additional teaching resources to support the special programs offered to students at CCPS. These programs are tailored to individual student needs and allow reduced class sizes that benefit all students. In January, the P&C was also able to complete its multi-year program to install air conditioning in every classroom at the school.

The financing of these initiatives comes from a mix of direct contributions from families and a variety of fundraising and social events held over the course of the year. One of the highlights of this year’s social calendar was the Gatsby-themed social night, which brought together parents from all years for a night of 1920s entertainment. The children were also involved in social and community events including the school discos, afternoon teas and the Spring Fair.

2013 was another year where the P&C was able to provide effective support to the school. Many thanks go to the generous families that provide not only financial support but who volunteer their valuable time to organise and run these events.

Peter Gallagher, President
Student representative’s message

2013 at CCPS has been fun and rewarding. Working with other prefects and students is one of the most exciting parts of the year as well as representing the school at various events and occasions. Some other exciting and rewarding events were:

**Fun run.** All students had lots of fun running around Holly Street Oval dressed up in odd-ball outfits. The students were asked to collect sponsors. All proceeds went to the Castle Cove P & C. This fundraiser was a great achievement for all and every one had fun (including the teachers)

**Surf education.** Years 4, 5 and 6 we have been able to take part in Surf School every Friday afternoon. At Surf School we have an hour of fun at the beach where we can either, surf or body board. For us this has been a major highlight.

**Tournament of the minds (TOM).** Tournament of the Minds is an extra activity that I, myself (Gabby), have taken part in. TOM is a mind building activity that helps to develop confidence in thinking, acting, speaking and team building. At the end of term we competed against other teams from different schools and places, performing and showing our projects worked on throughout the term.

**Robotics.** Fourteen students, including us, had much of enjoyment building robots and programing them. After weeks of hard work we participated in the Regional competition at Macquarie University. Our team made it through to nationals. This was really exciting for us and we are both really proud of our school’s efforts.

**School camp.** The Stage 3 students went on a 3 day excursion to Canberra as a follow on from our study of government. We went to many exciting places including both New and Old Parliament House, Questacon, The War Memorial, AIS (Australian institute of Sport) and many other fun places. We all enjoyed the camp and learnt and experienced many new things.

**NSW Parliament House afternoon tea.** One of the things that we both particularly enjoyed this year was our visit to NSW Parliament House. This was a huge privilege for us to experience this. Whilst we were there we went on a private tour (with the other school captains of the area) of Parliament House, we also received certificates for our hard work and effort for our roles at school this year. After the presentation we were able to attend a special afternoon tea with Gladys Berejiklian which was very tasty and enjoyable.

Being school the captains has helped us both in many ways such as building confidence, being more responsible, learning new skills and life lessons and being more confident with public speaking. Overall, I think that 2013 at CCPS was one of the best school years. It was most definitely the most rewarding in our schooling life so far.

Gabriella Black & Hamish Wood

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Student information

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

Student enrolment profile

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**Enrolments**

![Graph of Student Enrolments](image)

**Students**

- **Male**
- **Female**

**Year**

- 2007
- 2008
- 2009
- 2010
- 2011
- 2012
- 2013
Student attendance profile

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Management of non-attendance

As can be seen from the student attendance profile, attendance rates are very high across all grades. Any student absence that becomes a cause for concern is followed up personally by the school. A DEC Home School Liaison Officer is available to assist the school should there be a need.

Workforce composition

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<th>Position</th>
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<td>Principal</td>
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<tr>
<td>Deputy Principal(s)</td>
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<td>Teacher of ESL</td>
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<td>Total</td>
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The Australian Education Regulation, 2013 requires schools to report on Aboriginal composition of their workforce. At Castle Cove School, we have nil members of staff of Indigenous background.

Teacher qualifications

All teaching staff meet the professional requirements for teaching in NSW public schools. Many staff members hold more than one degree with postgraduate studies ranging from certificate level courses at universities, through to postgraduate diplomas, a second degree or a masters degree in educational areas.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Qualifications</th>
<th>% of staff</th>
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<td>Degree or Diploma</td>
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<tr>
<td>Postgraduate</td>
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Financial summary

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

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<td>Balance carried forward</td>
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A full copy of the school's 2013 financial statement is tabled at the annual general meeting of the parent body. Further details concerning the statement can be obtained by contacting the school.
School performance 2013

Arts

Dance

Castle Cove Dance Groups brought colour, light and energy to the stage in 2013. Each year the level of skill and precision demonstrated in our groups is of a high standard and this year was no different. Students from Years 3-6 auditioned over two weeks to gain a place in either the Junior or Senior Performance Dance Groups. These groups then worked over two terms to audition, prepare and perform for the Sydney North Public Schools Dance Festival held at Glen St Theatre. The groups demonstrated their professionalism and creativity at every performance and also presented their dances to the school community at Open Day and Term 2 A-Day Assembly.

Junior Dance Group (Years 3 and 4) filled the stage with their dramatic gold wings, performing “Hold My Hand”. This piece, choreographed by Bonnie Shepherd, invited the audience to fly away on a journey with a group of beautiful gold birds.

Senior Dance Group (Years 5 and 6) performed as Superheros in “Waiting for the Call”. These girls excelled themselves in their ability to tell the story of what happens to all the Superheros when the world no longer needs them. This group worked on technique each week and were able to perfect double pirouettes, grand jetes and side leaps, adding these into the choreography.

Tatum LeTard, Gabriella Pancino and Megan Yun (Stage 3 students) represented Castle Cove PS at the Sydney North Public Schools Junior Dance Workshops in Term 1, 2013. These workshops were held in the prestigious Sydney Dance Company studios at Walsh Bay and gave our dancers an excellent opportunity to work with professionals in a variety of styles.

Cassie Baker, Lara Dempsey, Gabriella Pancino and Megan Yun (Year 5 students) were nominated to audition for the 2014 Sydney North Public Schools Junior Dance Ensemble. The girls were required to attend a contemporary class where approximately 100 students presented their skills and performance quality to a panel of judges. Gabriella Pancino was successful and gained a place on Junior Dance Ensemble for 2014.

Choir

Castle Cove choirs were alive during 2013. Our love of singing and performance continued to build as our school embraced this exciting medium in our Performing Arts curriculum. All students participate in this program and during the year we have explored themes, music selection, theatrical and other features that ultimately created choirs that were harmonious in every way. These choirs demonstrated their creativity and love of singing at every performance presented to the community including Open Day, A-Day Assemblies and weekly assemblies.

A highlight of the year was our choir’s performance at the combined North Harbour Learning Community’s Tutti Concert which was held in Chatswood at The Concourse. The concert was a combined production with Mowbray and Chatswood Public Schools, Chatswood High School and our school.
Our choir sang Hushabye Mountain from Chitty Chitty Bang Bang but also sang as a combined choir with the other schools, two beautiful songs Brogla Dance and Wild Mountainside. It was a rich and a very rewarding experience.

**Castle Cove Bands**

The Band program at CCPS has had a very successful year in 2013. 103 students from Years 3-6 participated in the band program and were organised into 4 bands - Training Band (Year 3) 37 students, Intermediate Band (Year 4) 37 students, Concert band (Year 5 and 6) 29 students and the Stage Band (Year 5 and 6 by invitation) 16 students.

All students from our bands attended a two day band camp at Collaroy which provided them with an opportunity for intensive workshops, rehearsals and a performance back at school for parents.

The bands played at a number of events throughout the school year such as award days, Education Week, Grandparents Day, Open Day, and the Easter Hat parade. All bands participated in three interschool music competitions/festivals - Yamaha Music Festival, UNSW Music Competition and Ryde Music Festival.

This year’s Training Band has been the most successful in training band in CCPS band history. It received a Diamond award in the Yamaha Music Festival, a Silver award at Ryde East Music Festival and a Gold award at the UNSW Music Competition. Concert band also received Gold awards at both the Yamaha and UNSW competitions.

All bands also performed at the annual CCPS Spring Fair (formerly called the Jazz Fest). The quality of our band program has resulted in invitations for our bands to perform in public concerts. Selected Stage Band students trained in a combined schools band along with students from Chatswood Public School and Mowbray Public School. The combined school band performed in a spectacular Community of Schools concert at the Concourse in Chatswood. Stage Band was also invited to perform at the annual Castle Crag Fair and their performance was received with much acclaim.

**Visual Arts**

Tiarn Garland, (Year 3), entered several art works in the Young Australian Art Awards. Her impressive piece, a photograph entitled *Down at the Marina*, was selected as a finalist and Tiarn received a Gold medal award for being runner-up in her section.

Tiarn is clearly a talented artist as can be seen by another of her entries, *Dougal*, and which was also entered in the drawing section of the same competition.

Like last year, many of our students submitted an entry in the Willoughby Christmas Flag Competition to create the decorations for the main street of Chatswood CBD for Christmas celebrations of 2013. Once again, we were delighted that artworks by 18 of our students were selected as winning designs. These beautiful works were then created into banners and hung in Chatswood. The winning students attended a special presentation where they were awarded certificates. After the festive season, the students were also presented with the banners to keep.

**Sport**

2013 was a very successful year for Castle Cove Public School sport.

Interschool sports (PSSA) involved many of our year 3-6 students and provided opportunities for skills development in team sport.

The senior netball teams came up against strong opposition in their respective divisions. The junior netball grades were also successful and quickly adapted to playing at the high standard that our PSSA competition demands.

The A team came 3rd in the C Grade. The B team came 4th in the C Grade and the C team came 6th in the C Grade.

The PSSA AFL small schools competition was dominated by the boys A team, winning every game of the season. The girls team performed well in a tough competition.
The PSSA Soccer teams faced tough competition in the small schools divisions. The A Team came 5th in the A division and the B Team came 4th in the B division.

Tennis was outsourced and continued with booming numbers, displaying once again that this is a popular sporting choice for students not involved in PSSA sport. Tennis Cove was used by the senior students and a new company Keno Tennis (at Castle Cove Golf Course) was used in Term 4 for the first time for junior students. This was a well run program and will be continued next year.

In addition to PSSA and tennis, our school programs included K-6 gymnastics, athletics, dance and an intensive swimming skills program for K-2. Non-PSSA sport included tennis, cricket, rugby league, volleyball, hockey, T-Ball, and basketball. In Term 4, over 100 Year 4-6 students attended an 8-week sport program run by Manly Surf School.

Highlights from the year’s sports carnivals and gala days included:

- Swimming – CCPS is considered a smaller school in our local PSSA competition. However, we continue to be competitive with larger schools achieving pleasing results at all levels of swimming. CCPS was placed 10th in the Zone Carnival. A highly talented team consisting of Lexie Gersback, Angus Warren, Jesscia Sywak, Lily Vance, Juel Harding and Anxia Wentworth-Ping qualified for the Regional Carnival. All students performed at a high standard while competing for their Zone Team. Lexie Gersbeck came 4th in the final for the 50 metre butterfly and narrowly missed out on a spot in the Regional Team.

- Cross Country – CCPS was placed 13th in the zone (small schools division) with a team of 42 runners making up our school team.

- Athletics – Our athletes finished 9th overall 2013 North Shore Zone Athletics Carnival. The breakdown was: Field- 7th place. Track- 11th place. Combined position- 9th overall.

With 9 students winning selection in the North Shore Zone team to compete at the regional event. An honourable mention to the Year 4/5 girls 100m relay team, Greta Andrews, Lily Vance, Danica LeTard, Ivy Leggett and Michelle Foerderer who won selection from the Zone Carnival into the NSW PSSA State Carnival.

- Rugby - For the third year Castle Cove participated in the ARU rugby GALA days.

Manly 7’s Competition - In May, Year 3 & 4 students competed in this day which was greatly enjoyed and in which they gained a great deal of playing experience.

Gordon 7’s Competition – With the benefit of experience from last year’s event, Castle Cove was able to better their placing in all age divisions. A highlight from the day was our junior A team who came second in their competition. The senior team performed exceptionally well with only one substitute and made it through the group stages to the semi-finals. We look forward to growing the sport of Rugby in our school next year and become involved in more gala days across the Northern Sydney Region.

Debating and Public Speaking

Year 5 Debating Club has worked hard each Thursday to prepare for the Ryde District Friendly Debating Competition. The students were coached and supported to learn and improve skills in public speaking, teamwork, brainstorming and argumentation. They also developed their critical thinking skills as they delved deeper into their initial thoughts and analysed the reasoning behind their peers’ points. We have enjoyed seeing how the students have grown in their confidence and practice over the year.

Year 6 students participated in the Premier’s Debating Challenge Competition in the North Sydney Region, which involved the debaters having just an hour to prepare as a team prior to the debate, and without teacher assistance. The nine debaters competed against Killarney Heights, Northbridge and North Sydney PS with topics about education, the media, Australian society, and health and fitness. Students participated in weekly coaching sessions which developed debating techniques and were given opportunities to hold mock debate with peers. The students all worked hard to develop logical arguments and present them in a sophisticated and well-considered manner. The team achieved some wins and the experience was enjoyed by all. A very successful year was had by Charlotte, Claudia, Frederique, Gabriella, Gemma, Hamish, Kate, Samantha and Zoe.
Kate Kellow, a very talented speaker, represented the school at the Rotary Public Speaking Contest and won 1st place in the Year 6 section (see picture, P9).

The Multicultural Perspectives Public Speaking Competition aims to heighten the awareness of multicultural issues among NSW primary school students while developing their interest in public speaking and improving their confidence and speech-writing skills.

At each stage of the competition contestants present a prepared speech on a multicultural topic chosen from a list provided and which must have multicultural content, and an impromptu speech. The impromptu speech is chosen by the adjudicator on the day, and is on a general, non-multicultural theme.

Our school representatives this year from Stage 2 were Laura Halliday and Taylah Bondy. Stage 3 speakers were Lara Dempsey and Claudia Levett.

**Robotics**

Students at CCPS have continued to have access to a before school Robotics Club thanks to the extraordinary efforts of parents Geoff Shuetrim and Mike Wellin. Mike set up the initial Robotics club in 2008 with the aim of promoting critical thinking, problem solving and cooperative work through the use of Lego™ NXT Mindstorms Robots.

The club has continued to grow in popularity and this year 15 lucky Stage 3 students made it through two rounds of auditions to join the club. The club met every Tuesday morning in Terms 3 and 4 to learn how to program the robots to solve a series of increasingly complex and difficult challenges.

Two teams of students were entered into the annual First Lego League competition held at Macquarie University in late November. The competition attracts both primary and secondary school teams from the region. Teams are judged on a number of aspects including how well their robot performs in completing set challenges as well as team work, creativity and group dynamics in their presentation of a research project. One of our teams – the Robotics, was successful in getting through to the National level of the FLL competition. The nationals were held on the 7th of December, again at Macquarie University, and although the team did not progress any further, they performed very well on the day and impressed the judges with their professionalism and creativity.

**Chess**

Chess is a valuable activity for children, developing their logical thinking skills as well as being a source of much enjoyment. It requires concentration and discipline, problem solving skills and the ability to think some moves ahead.

Once again a successful year of chess has been experienced. The students in the club from Years 1-6 meet on Wednesday mornings from 8.15 to 9.15. In this time they have both a lesson and play games.

We ran two in-school competitions and the top 30 students from the second one competed in the inter school tournament. Castle Cove hosted this event for the third year in a row.

The school has greatly appreciated the parent volunteers who contribute to the smooth running of the club.

**Tournament of Minds**

Tournament of Minds is a problem solving program for teams of students. It aims to enhance the potential of students by developing diverse skills, enterprise, time management and the discipline to work collaboratively within a competitive environment. Teams of seven students involved in the competition are to solve a pre-prepared challenge from a choice of disciplines as well as a spontaneous challenge. The rules of the competition involve space, timing and number of competitors within the performance area. The students need to submit plans prior to performing.

The winning team Robotics at the First Lego League competition
Castle Cove PS entered a team of students from Years 4 to 6 (Rowena, Molly Lara, Gabi, Cassie, Gabby and Sammy), in the Language Literature discipline where students were required to create a picture book based on the theme of “Harmony”. The picture book included characters from a selection of books and the students dramatised their story.

Another team from Castle Cove PS, comprising students from Years 2-6 (Macklin, Olivia, Victoria, Mitchell, Ellie, Charlotte, Luke) entered the Applied Technology discipline. The students were required to create an avatar and dramatise its function in a real life context. Bonus points were awarded for props and costumes.

The Castle Cove students showed commitment and enthusiasm. They worked well within their teams in the planning and implementation of their vision. The students were able to solve the problems using creativity and collaboration. We look forward to participating in Tournament of Minds in the future.

Other Programs

During 2013 the school has continued to be involved in a number of initiatives (some already detailed) to support students’ academic, social and physical development.

- Student Leadership and SRC
- Transition Buddy Program
- K-6 Peer Support
- Literacy and Numeracy enrichment programs
- Literacy and Numeracy support programs
- Multi-lit
- Maths Olympiad
- Premier’s Debating Challenge and Ryde District Debating
- Multicultural Perspectives Public Speaking Competition
- Rotary Public Speaking Competition
- Rotary’s Australia, My Country Writing Competition
- PSSA Sport
- Gymnastics
- Intensive Swimming Program K-2
- Year 5/6 Camp
- Choir
- Dance
- Chess
- Training, Intermediate, Concert and Stage Bands
- University of New South Wales Competitions
- Scientists in Schools program
- Robotics
- Cove Earth Kids Club
- CSIRO Science Incursions
- Surf Education
- C.A.R.E.S Bike Education
- Life Education
- Year 4 Social Skills Program

Academic achievements

Literacy

All Year 5 students participated in the Willoughby City Council Poetry Writing Competition. Hamish Grant, Lily Raymond, Hannah Shaw and Megan Yun were the finalists from CCPS. They attended an awards ceremony last week at Warners Park in Northbridge where they were presented with a certificate and a prize and had afternoon tea with the Mayor, Pat Reilly.

Ella Humphries, (Year 2), achieved Gold in the annual NSW Board of Studies WriteOn competition for her story *Super Dog*.

Charlotte Bosler (Year 6) entered the NSW Storywriting Guild Writing Competition and was awarded first place in the Years 5/6 Division for her story titled “The Fox’s Blue Side”. Charlie was also awarded first place for her impressive opening line: *A breeze is not enough to blow away my anguish.*
Charlie (pictured right) was also first place winner in the Year 6 section of the Rotary Club of Roseville Chase Essay Writing competition.

With her is Kate Kellow who won the Rotary Club Year 6 Public Speaking Competition mentioned on Page 7.

**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.

Yr 3: from Band 1 (lowest) to Band 6 (highest)
Yr 5: from Band 3 (lowest) to Band 8 (highest)
Yr 7: from Band 4 (lowest) to Band 9 (highest)
Yr 9: from Band 5 (lowest) to Band 10 (highest)

The *My School* website provides detailed information and data for national literacy and numeracy testing (NAPLAN).

Click on the link [http://www.myschool.edu.au](http://www.myschool.edu.au) and enter the school name in the *Find a school* and select GO to access the school data.

**NAPLAN Year 3 - Literacy**

Literacy results at Castle Cove were outstanding for Year 3 in all of the literacy areas assessed.

The following four graphs show the six Year 3 bands and the percentage of our students (pink) placed in each of those bands. Also shown is a three-year school average (lilac), the similar school group (SSG) average (green) and state average (blue).

At CCPS we strive to see as many students in the top two bands as is possible. In reading, 86% of our students were placed in the top two bands compared with 44% in the state. Around two-thirds of our students are in the top band which is highly pleasing!

In writing, 82% of our students were in the top two bands compared to 50% in the state – again, excellent performance. We are also delighted that every student falls into the top half of the Bands (ie. 4, 5 and 6)! It is interesting to note that it appears to be more difficult for most children to achieve Band 6, not just here, but in similar school groups and right across the state, as the graph clearly shows. In the other areas of literacy our largest group always falls in Band 6. We will continue to adopt writing strategies that we hope will give our students as much of a boost as can be effected in their writing performance. It should also be noted that only one writing genre is tested in NAPLAN out of the 10 or so that are taught.
The graphs for spelling and grammar and punctuation also show very strong results with, again, our largest numbers in Band 6.

NAPLAN Year 3 - Numeracy
The following graph shows our Year 3 students’ outstanding performance in numeracy. 75% of our students were in the top two bands and showed that, again, we are out-performing the state (36%) by a considerable margin. We are pleased that no students are in the bottom band.

NAPLAN Year 5 - Literacy
The results for Year 5 NAPLAN assessments are reported over six bands from Band 3 (lowest) to Band 8 (highest). Castle Cove students are performing at an outstanding level, consistently out-performing the state in each area.

Our aim is to see as many students in the top two bands as is possible. In reading, 59% of our students were placed in the top two bands compared with 34% in the state.

In writing, the task was a persuasive text-type and close to three-quarters of all our students were placed in the upper half of the bands following, but out-performing, the state-wide
trend (48%). With the bulk of students in Bands 6 and 7 across the state, it can be reasonably suggested that persuasive writing is a difficult task for children! Our challenge is always to maximize student performance by teaching good writing skills and strategies that will enhance their work.

NAPLAN Year 5 - Numeracy

The following graph shows our Year 5 students’ strong performance in numeracy. More than half of the students are placed in Bands 7 and 8 (56%) compared to the state average of 26%. Close to 80% are in the highest three bands.

Significant programs and initiatives

Aboriginal education

The teaching and learning about Aboriginal history and culture is embedded within the school’s curriculum. At all assemblies and special occasions we observe the protocol of acknowledging country. At our A Day Assembly Karen Smith, Aboriginal Education Officer from
the Aboriginal Heritage Office, not only gave the Acknowledgement to Country but also explained to the students the meaning and significance of the Aboriginal flag.

NAIDOC Week was celebrated with Yidinji Culture visiting. The students gained an insight into traditional Yidinji practices and came away with a better understanding of Aboriginal people and their connection to the land. During this week, units of work were completed, and each classroom was given an Aboriginal name.

In August our school celebrated Science under the Stars which included a fascinating talk by Dr. Duane Hamacher, founder and Chair of the Australian Society for Indigenous Astronomy. He spoke about Aboriginal mythology and its relationship to constellations in the sky. He also showed how these were linked to sacred sites in Australia.

Staff members attend regular Aboriginal Studies Association Network meetings and this year a one day TAFE training program entitled, ‘Aboriginal Cultural Educational Program’. The course notes are now accessioned and available to all staff.

The purchase of Aboriginal Education resources is ongoing. The most recent acquisition is a 2.7m x 2.7m floor mat made out of recycled material. Named “The Yarning Circle”, it was designed by De Greer Yindimincarlie who uses indigenous symbols to tell a story and for showing directions.

Aboriginal Education is an important perspective within the school’s programs and this emphasis will be maintained throughout 2014.

**Multicultural education**

The students at Castle Cove Public School have backgrounds from over twenty different cultural backgrounds. At CCPS, we endeavour to build an inclusive environment where all cultures are equally valued. Multicultural perspectives have been embedded into all Key Learning Areas. Students studied and shared the traditions, arts and celebrations of their own cultures and other cultures.

K-6 students participated in Harmony Day celebrations with classes playing traditional games and sharing food from other cultures. Students from some classes studied another country and its culture and came dressed in that country’s colours or traditional costume for Harmony Day. On Harmony Day, students wore clothes that represented their own cultural backgrounds or dressed in orange, the recognised colour for Harmony Day.

Students in Years 3-6 participated in the Multicultural Perspectives Public Speaking Competition which allowed them to address how multiculturalism enhances our cultural identity. Some of our students went on to represent our school at the regional level.

**Environmental Education**

Environmental Education is embedded in the culture of Castle Cove Public School.

In 2013 we built upon already strong environmental practices. The goal of our Environmental Education is to provide the school community with a holistic and purposeful understanding of sustainable waste management. We ensure that as many waste products as possible are incorporated into the waste management system by recycling all paper, food and green waste. The final stage of this system involves using the composted waste on our gardens in the form of mulch, worm castings and worm tea.

We have continued to promote the Waste Free Wednesday program where children are encouraged to reduce the amount of waste they bring to the school by packing their lunch and recess in either reusable or recyclable packaging. Classes log the percentage of children with waste free lunchboxes and the winning class for each week is announced at the weekly K-6 assembly. The winning K-2 class wins Klara Koala for the week and Warwick the Wombat is looked after by the winning 3-6 class.

CCPS Earth Kids (Years 2-6) and Junior Earth Kids (Year 1), our student environmental groups, continued to grow in popularity. The 25 enthusiastic students of CCPS Earth Kids met every Thursday at lunchtime and participated in various activities designed to look after and manage the environment around CCPS. These include: managing the compost bins; worm farms; weeding, feeding, planting and harvesting the gardens and collecting rubbish. The Earth Kids also act as ambassadors for the earth in their classrooms, promoting good practices such as switching lights and fans off when leaving the room, keeping doors closed when air conditioners are being used and promoting
Waste Free Wednesdays. There are approximately 12 volunteer Year 1 Junior Earth Kids on the K-1 site. These students are rostered once a week, to collect and empty classroom and playground compost bins and tend the worm farms. There are five worm farms and they are tended each school day by the Year 1 Junior Earth Kids. The worm juice and casts are used to fertilise the two vegetable gardens.

CCPS is also privileged to have a stingless native bee hive on the grounds thanks to the efforts of our General Assistant, Mr Andrew Sutcliffe. There are plans to supplement our already rich plantings of shrubs in the school grounds with native flowering plants that will provide food for the bees through the year.

Carbon Cops was student initiative that grew out of a program called CCES (Climate Clever Energy Savers). A dedicated group of 15 Stage 3 students have continued to monitor energy wastage in the school by checking classes during recess and lunchtime, and placing a ‘black balloon’ on the door if any electrical appliances had been left on. All classes not receiving a black balloon go into a ‘draw’ to win the privilege of looking after the Carbon Cop mascots Penny Penguin and her baby. The initiative has been extremely successful with fewer and fewer classes needing to be black ballooned through the year.

CCPS also participated in the annual Clean Up Australia Day in Term 1. All students spent some time during the morning using gloves and tongs to pick up rubbish around the school. It was heartening to see their enthusiasm for tidying up all the areas of the school playground.

Environmental education has also been integrated into the teaching programs across all stages. Year 3 completed a unit on Biodiversity in Term 3 and participated in an excursion to the Field of Mars EEC where they had the opportunity to learn about the importance of habitats in promoting biodiversity. In December, all four Kindergarten classes participated in a free Bush Christmas excursion at Holly Street Oval. This excursion was run by the environmental education officers from Willoughby Council. The students had the opportunity to learn about the local bush environment around the oval. As part of their learning in a unit on Biomes, Year 2 participated in a video conference with Field of Mars EEC about tree holes and their importance for native species of birds and mammals. The video conference culminated in the building of tree boxes which will be installed in appropriate trees on the grounds early in 2014. We look forward to observing how they will be used by our rich local wildlife.

**Respect and Responsibility**

At the beginning of the school year all of Stage 3, as senior students and leaders of the school, participated in a whole-day leadership program delivered by Rising Generations. It was a fun day for all and led the students through a series of activities and team building exercises. The goal and focus was to provide the students with skills to develop their ability to take on their roles and responsibilities and to increase their awareness of what it takes to be a leader. Leadership is promoted at Castle Cove Public School through the school prefect system, Peer Support Program, Student Representative Council (SRC), the Buddy system and the school’s Middle School Program (encompassing all Stage 3).

All students in Years 5 and 6 also undertook an intensive day’s training program to become Peer Support leaders. The Peer Support Program is designed to enhance the social and emotional wellbeing of students and to build relationships across the school which, in turn, develops self-esteem, social networks and reduces bullying.

In Term 1, pairs of Stage 3 students in the role of leader and co-leader, were assigned a group of twelve students from Years K-3. They involved them in activities to teach them about values (specifically kindness and respect), and how to work as a team. The students all began to know each other better and they recognised each other around the school.

Towards the end of 2012 each of the Year 6 and 5 students for 2013 were allotted a 2013 Kindergarten buddy. The senior students participated in the Kindergarten Orientation days, meeting their buddy, looking after them and getting to know them through a series of stories, craft and play activities. In 2013 the senior students helped their buddy settle into their classroom, and met with them at recess and lunch on their first day of school. This greatly enhanced the transition from home to school for the Kindy students.
Throughout the year there have been many opportunities for the buddies to get together with many firm friendships and support networks being developed for our youngest students.

Students from classes in Years 2 to 6 elected representatives who attended Student Representative Council (SRC) meetings each fortnight. There, students following meeting procedures, discussed school issues, made decisions and reported back to class, determined fundraising activities and led action groups. SRC representatives used the SRC blog back to facilitate their meetings and to post relevant comments regarding class issues and decisions. The fundraising highlights in 2013 included the raising of money for Stewart House through two collections of unwanted clothes, donations and sales of “hi-bounce balls”. Funds were also raised for the RSPCA through the “Million Paws Walk”, for the Children’s Medical Research Institute through a “Jeans for Genes” day, and for World Vision through whom we sponsor a child in Laos.

School planning and evaluation 2012—2014

School evaluation processes

NSW public schools conduct evaluations to support the effective implementation of the school plan. In 2013 our school carried out evaluation of our Learning Support Curriculum and Reporting processes and practices.

Learning Support Curriculum

A review of our learning support curriculum was undertaken in 2013, to determine the effectiveness of our programs for students with particular learning needs. The progress of students accessing support and extension programs was tracked using longitudinal data collected over a four year period and teachers, parents and students provided feedback.

Recommendations

Withdrawal groups will continue to be used as a strategy to support students with learning difficulties and conceptual difficulties in mathematics and English.

Team teaching practice will be further developed and encouraged across the school to allow students experiencing difficulty in literacy and numeracy to maintain access to their grade curriculum, while receiving more personalised support.

Diagnostic testing of students who are not achieving sound outcomes in literacy and numeracy will take place at the point of identification to allow appropriate support strategies to be developed and implemented. Their progress will be plotted using the K-10 literacy and numeracy continuums and regularly reviewed.

Learning plans for students requiring significant adjustments to their curriculum will be developed in collaboration with the class teacher, support teachers and LaST and stored on the Sentral Database. Learning plans will be reviewed each term.

Students without diagnosed learning difficulties but who continue to require access to support programs after 12-18 months will be referred to the Learning Support Team.

Professional development for all teachers in understanding and catering for a range of learning difficulties will be provided.

Procedures to improve the transitioning of students between grades will be developed and implemented. These will include a more efficient transfer of information such as learning plans and the results of diagnostic testing.

Reporting processes and practices

The phased introduction of new curriculum for all NSW subjects has triggered a review of our current reporting practices. The existing reporting
system was evaluated with reference to the new syllabi requirements. Teachers and parents provided feedback on the existing report structure.

**Recommendations**
Sentral report templates will be reformatted to reflect the outcomes and objectives of the new curriculum.

Professional learning will be provided for staff to enable them to accurately assess and report against the new syllabus outcomes and objectives.

The ‘sound achievement’ statements for each outcome in English and Mathematics will be reviewed to allow faster and more efficient set up of each semester’s report template in Sentral.

Additional staff will be trained in the set-up of reports on Sentral to allow faster and more efficient creation of each semester’s report template.

The capacity of Sentral to automatically import student activities into reports will be investigated.

The timing of mid-year parent teacher interviews will be reviewed to better serve communication between school and home.

**School planning 2012—2014: progress in 2013**

**School priority 1**
All students access rigorous, meaningful and dignified learning programs that recognise diverse learning needs.

**Outcomes from 2012–2014**
- A strong Learning and Support framework is developed for meeting the diverse needs of all students in our school.
- Sustained high quality professional learning and support for teachers to understand and address the adjustments that will support individual learning needs.

**Evidence of progress towards outcomes in 2013:**
- The Disability Standards in Education documents have been reviewed by the whole staff through an online training package offered by DEC. This has enabled us to confirm that we are meeting legal obligations to students with disability.
- All staff are able to access a Learning and Support Toolkit which was developed to outline the procedures and functioning of our Learning and Support Team at Castle Cove.
- The Toolkit includes a package to assist staff in assessing learning, and strategies to address learner diversity.
- Many of our staff have successfully completed an online Autism awareness and understanding course. It is anticipated that an online Dyslexia course will be offered in 2014.
- In collaboration with staff and families personalised learning and support plans have been developed and implemented for students will individual learning needs.
- Our Learning and Support Teacher regularly visits classrooms, the playground and meets with teachers to assess and advise on meaningful, rigorous and dignified learning for every student.
- Our teachers continue to have high expectations for every student and regularly adjust the curriculum to support individual learning needs.
- Our Wednesday Lunch Club was developed and is open to all students. It offers a smaller and “safer” play option where social skills can be modelled and has been successful in meeting the needs of individual students who are experiencing social difficulties on the playground.
- Staff have expressed greater confidence in making reasonable adjustments to the student’s learning program and/or learning environment.

**Strategies to achieve these outcomes in 2014**
- Professional learning to increase the capacity of staff in catering for the needs of students with learning difficulties and disabilities in the mainstream classroom will continue to be provided. Online training programs such as the Autism online course will be made available to all staff. Strategies such as team teaching will be developed across the school.
- Teachers will be trained in the administration of appropriate diagnostic assessments to identify student learning and support needs.
• The K-10 literacy and numeracy continuums will be used to plot student progress and to set goals for intervention and support.

• Learning plans for students requiring significant support will be reviewed regularly and stored on the Sentral database.

• Regular reviews of student progress will occur including term reviews of students requiring learning plans, and annual reviews of students accessing support programs.

• The Sentral database will be used to house all diagnostic information about students, including specialist reports. Teachers will be required to access this information at the start of each year.

• A school tracking coordinator will be appointed to manage the tracking of student information and the handover of information each year.

**School priority 2**

The new Board of Studies Mathematics & English Syllabus K-10 for the Australian Curriculum is successfully implemented into the school.

**Outcomes from 2012–2014**

All staff members develop a thorough understanding and knowledge of the NSW English and Mathematics K-10 Syllabus in readiness for its full implementation in 2014 and 2015 respectively.

**Evidence of progress towards outcomes in 2013:**

• Staff were given support through professional learning and time to engage with and understand what changes were required before starting to plan and program with the new English Syllabus

• Professional development sessions throughout the year were focused on the implementation of the new curriculum and the General Capabilities and Cross Curriculum priorities.

• All staff are able to identify the key changes to the new BOS syllabus English document. All teachers demonstrated a growing capacity to understand aspects of the syllabus that were new or challenging and how the needs of 21st Century learners are to be met.

• School executives and team leaders led stage based learning projects that were written to aid in the implementation of the English syllabus. Early Stage One wrote a unit of work which can be found on the NSR Units for Australian Curriculum website.

• Staff were trained in the use of the BOS programming tool. Staff express confidence in utilising the NSW BOS Programming tool in conjunction with new Syllabus for planning and programming

• Teacher/Librarian sourced library resources and presented to staff. Stage teams requested resources to assist in writing new or modifying units of work.

**Strategies to achieve these outcomes in 2014:**

• Opportunities to access further professional development in English will continue throughout 2014. However, the greater focus will move to the implementation of the new Mathematics curriculum.

• Staff will be given time to engage with the available support, such as the DEC on-line learning modules, and understand what changes are required before starting to plan and program the new syllabus

• Review current school practices, considering what is done well and areas for improvement including student achievement data, the learning needs of students and reporting practices.

• School executives and team leaders will lead stage based action learning projects on specific content within the Mathematics Syllabus and incorporating mobile device learning.

• Staff will be trained in the use of the Literacy Continuum K-10 and Numeracy Continuum K-10

**School priority 3**

Parents and students will understand pathways in which to report incidents and teachers will have clear action plans for managing any bullying situations.

**Outcomes from 2012–2014**

To address this target area we wanted to redevelop our student welfare Anti-bullying policy in accordance with the new DEC Anti-bullying policy and the Castle Cove parent community. Our goals were to make the identification and reporting process clearer for parents and teachers.
Evidence of progress towards outcomes in 2013:

- The establishment of a welfare committee that contains a stage / grade Anti-bullying Contact Officer (ABCO) who receives notification of incidents through our Sentral reporting system. This staff member aids in the management of cases that are deemed to be bullying.
- A revised Anti-bullying plan was created by the members of the Anti-bullying Team which included a shared definition of bullying; addition of specific details on the reporting and management of cyber-bullying cases; responsibilities of the staff and community, protection of students, prevention, early identification and reporting of bullying protocols.
- The provision of a flow chart that guides the management of bullying reports at school and ensures all cases are investigated thoroughly by an ABCO.
- The addition of specific details on the reporting and management of cyber-bullying cases.
- The revised Anti-bullying plan was presented to staff. Feedback was given and amendments were made.
- The Anti-bullying plan was presented to a group of parents at a P&C meeting. Positive feedback was given around the clarity of the new plan.

Professional learning

The school receives funds from the DEC to provide for teacher release from class and course fees. The amount of funding is based on the number of permanent staff at the school. Additional funding comes from the DET to support development of beginning teachers and the school also provides further discretional funding. Twenty-five teachers participated in professional learning over the year at a cost of $22725 (average of $909 per teacher). An additional $6930 was allocated by the DEC for the implementation of the Australian Curriculum.

Professional learning is related to areas identified in the school management plan and DEC target area and is provided through weekly professional learning meetings, staff development days and external courses.

The North Harbour Learning Community also organised professional learning across the community of schools which took the form of a TeachMeet and film-making.

Castle Cove currently has five teachers working towards accreditation with the NSW Institute of Teachers. In addition, our aspiring leaders are participating in professional learning to build their leadership capacity.

In 2013, funds were expended in the following areas:

- ICT and 21st Century Learning
- Beginning Teachers
- Multimodal texts
- ESL
- Learning and Support
- Quality Teaching in Numeracy 3-6
- Gifted and Talented Education
- Australian Curriculum
- Best Start Training
- Science K-6
- Career Development
- Student Welfare, Every Student Every School
- Autism
- Aboriginal Education

Strategies to achieve these outcomes in 2014:

- The revised Anti-bullying Plan and methods for reporting bullying to be posted on school website and publicised via school newsletter.
- All school staff provided with training in the Anti-bullying Plan.
- A flow chart developed to assist teachers respond appropriately to reports of bullying.
- Units of work created and anti-bullying lessons taught in every class, focusing on how students can identify and respond to bullying.
- Anti-bullying Contact Officers (ABCOs) appointed from school staff and trained in the process for investigating and responding to complaints of bullying.
- A bullying report section to be added to the Sentral Welfare Database to allow for improved tracking of bullying reports, investigations and responses.
• North Sydney Region Network conferences
• Leadership forums and conferences

In 2013 a significant proportion of teacher professional learning time was dedicated to the implementation of the new English K-10 syllabus. Staff participated in a range of modules developed by the DEC and additional opportunities were available through workshops and Regional network meetings.

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 and school planning committee have determined targets for the school's future development.

Jeanette Cope
Principal

Corinne Campbell
Assistant Principal

Margie Byrom
Assistant Principal

Susie Jacobs
Assistant Principal

Trent Moses
Assistant Principal

Peter Gallagher
P&C President

School contact information

Castle Cove Public School
Kendall Road
CASTLE COVE
NSW 2069
Ph: (+612) 9417 1039
Fax: (+612) 9417 4377

Email: castlecove-p.school@det.nsw.edu.au
Web: www.castlecove-p.schools.nsw.edu.au

School Code: 3919

Parents can find more information about Annual School Reports, how to interpret information in the report and have the opportunity to provide feedback about the report at: