2009 Annual School Report
Empire Vale Public School

NSW Public Schools – Leading the way
Principal’s Message

I am pleased to present the Annual Report for 2009 which highlights our achievements and initiatives over the past twelve months and targets specific areas for future development.

Empire Vale Public School has a unique place in the community and serves very much as a focal point for our community. The positive culture of our school is carefully nurtured by our staff and is maintained by supportive parents.

The small school environment has always been a special attribute and this environment has enabled us to continue providing a wonderful and varied program for our students including public speaking, debating, sport and creative arts. All these ensure a balanced, well rounded education is provided to our students.

The staff deliver quality educational programs and endeavour to present these in a stimulating environment. Professional learning opportunities provide our staff with the skills and knowledge to deliver these programs. I would like to thank all teaching and administrative staff for their commitment throughout the year to our students and to our school.

This year students enjoyed the high and lows of Bootcamp and we were all impressed with our students’ commitment and perseverance in sometimes very trying conditions. It was very rewarding to see the students set themselves challenges and continue to meet their goals week after week.

The Southern Cross Community of Small Schools network has again provided students with a great array of activities and opportunities for students to mix with their peers from other small schools.

During the year the school has received Federal Government funds to upgrade certain areas of the school. Some of these developments are outlined later in the report.

Parents and community members have assisted the school greatly in many activities which have been undertaken. Thank you all for your support and the contributions that you have made. I look forward to working with you in 2010.

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.

Bonita Avery
Principal

P&C message

The P&C Association has been very active during 2009 with many fundraising initiatives conducted. These included raffles and BBQ's.

Parents also provided canteen facilities for students and initiated a Green Canteen Day to promote healthy food choices. Other support was given at small schools carnivals and other school activities including Carols Night, Uniform Shop and the Biggest Morning Tea.

The Parent Directory was a new initiative this year and has proven to be a valuable resource. It has been very well received and we hope this will become a yearly publication.

On behalf of the office bearers I would like to thank the parents and community for their support and assistance during 2009 and look forward to our achievements in 2010. Thank you also to the other office bearers who have taken up these positions and who have been a great support.

Mrs Toni Caesar President

Student representative’s message

Being a small school, the school captaincy is rotated during the year to give as many students as possible the opportunity to develop leadership skills. In 2009, there was only one Year 6 student and so leadership opportunities were extended to other senior students. These students represented their peers and the school in a variety of areas. They were also involved in a number of community events and fundraising activities.

Some of these included:

- Casual for a Cause Days held each Term raising funds for Stewart House, Asthma Foundation, Victorian Bushfire Appeal, Breast Cancer and others.

The students also participated in their own fundraising initiatives to raise money for their excursion to Sydney and the Central West.

Our students were also involved in numerous environmental initiatives such as Clean up Australia and Tree Planting.
Senior students were also given the opportunity to participate in Altitude Day which seeks to give leadership development opportunities to the many potential young leaders within our schools. This is what some of the students had to say about their experience:

I had a great day. I came home and did what I learnt. I really liked The Hero Within.

Jack G-J

I would like to go again. It was good watching the movies. It taught me a lot about leadership.

Jordan A

One student also had the opportunity to attend the Impact Leadership Day on the Gold Coast where speakers talked about different types of leadership strategies.

The first day back at school I had the opportunity to attend the Impact Leadership Day on the Gold Coast. We had approximately 5 speakers who talked about different types of leadership strategies. We even received tips on public speaking which I intend to use for my preparation in my multicultural speech. They also spoke about prioritising our responsibilities as a student, a leader and our own responsibilities.

Kiani H

School performance 2009

Achievements

Students at Empire Vale School continue to be provided with a wonderful, wide variety of opportunities. Outlined below are some of the activities and achievements across a range of program areas in 2009.

Science and Technology

National Science Week

The students celebrated National Science Week with lessons in sizzling, melting, evaporating, fair testing and experimenting.

Student Teachers from the School of Education, at Southern Cross University used National Science Week to launch a sequence of science lessons, which were designed to complement our school’s extensive science program.

The senior students’ focused on chemistry, developing their understanding of how materials can change from solids, liquids or gases.

Other National Science Week lessons involved anatomy, pharmacology, marine habitats, food production, robotics and caring for our local environment.

Buoyancy Challenge

As part of their studies about buoyancy in science, senior students explored boat designs and were challenged to create a boat which could successfully carry up to 1kg of cargo. Designs were innovative and the challenge was enjoyed by all who participated.

Starry Night Planetarium

To celebrate the Year of Astronomy a school sleepover/starry night planetarium incursion was held in term 4. This event was a huge hit with students.

The Cosmic Couple Marie & Philip set up their large Planetarium in the library. Students were given the opportunity to gaze at the stars through their big telescope and to learn about our night skies.

Life Education

The whole school had the opportunity to visit the Life Education Mobile Classroom, exploring the science of the human body. The senior classes learnt about harmful chemicals and substances which can alter the health condition of a person.

Supermarket Safari

The K/1/2 class enjoyed a Supermarket Safari, where they were given the grand tour of the Ballina Fair Woolworths Supermarket. The K/1 students were working on a science unit about familiar environments and the Supermarket Safari was a wonderful opportunity to enhance their learning. The students explored behind the scenes and visited the bakery, delicatessen and the fresh produce section. They even managed to sample a variety of fresh foods as they toured the store.

Creative Arts

Drama

The school performed the play ‘The Wizard of Oz’ at the Mid Year Concert.
Students explored the use of lighting, shadows, data projection and computer audio visual equipment to enhance the school mid-year performance.

**Dance**

The Kindergarten and Year One Class learnt a choreographed dance routine, which they performed in the school performance of 'The Wizard of Oz'.

The Senior Class, created their own dance routines to mathematical times tables music, which they performed at a school assembly.

Movement to simple percussion was explored in Year 2 and 3, whilst performing Samba Rhythms and presenting Dreamtime Stories.

**Art**

The Senior Class took out first place in the ‘Picasso Cow’ Art Experience at The Sydney Royal Easter Show. This experience brought considerable community support and media opportunities to our school. The school received a $3,500 Sports Prize. The Picasso Cow was placed on exhibition at Alstonville’s Heritage House and The North Coast National Show.

Students of all ages, exhibited work at The North Coast National Show, where they were awarded four highly commended prizes.

One student was presented with a Photography Award, for photographic work that was completed in her senior years.

The Senior Class completed Major Art Works, using mixed media on canvas. The art pieces were exhibited at the annual Carol Evening.

Students also won numerous colouring in prizes, including competitions from a national competition run by Life Education and local competitions such as Ballina’s River Festival.

The school was also advised that a former student was a finalist in the 2009 Moran Contemporary Photographic Prize, Primary Section. She entered the competition while a student at EVPS and was one of 33 finalists from 130,000 entries. Another student was also a semi finalist. A wonderful result for our school and the high standard of entries from EVPS was mentioned by the judges.

**Music**

The annual Carols Evening, took on a new format, where community participation and a movement away from the central stage was explored. The students performed a variety of modern and traditional carols.

Stage One students enjoyed percussion lessons using the Multicultural Rhythm Sticks resource.

Ukulele playing was introduced with assistance from members of the community.

South American music was explored by the Year 2 and 3 classes, during creative arts lessons.

**Creative Writing**

Students were awarded ‘Runner Up for the Best Newspaper Story’ in the Northern Star’s Newspapers in Education program.

Our year 6 student, Kiani, was selected by the Northern Rivers Family Magazine as the new Kids Page Editor of the Northern Rivers Family Magazine for 2009. Kiani was nominated by the school in recognition of her literary ability and her passion for writing.

**Creative Arts Camp**

Two students were chosen to attend a week long Creative Arts Camp at Lake Ainsworth. They enjoyed a fabulous week filled with singing, art, music and recreational activities like rock climbing. They made new friends and this experience will add a new dimension to their creative arts studies.

"I loved being there, I made lots of new friends and hope to go again next year."

"The most important thing I learnt was NO CONFLICT NO DRAMA!"

**Sport**

In 2009 our students achieved and participated in many sporting areas. Some of these are covered below.

**Swimming**

Students from Years 3-6 participated in the small schools carnival. Ten students represented the school at Ballina’s River Festival.

**Cross Country**

All students participated in the Small School Cross Country held at Teven Tintenbar Public School.

Seven students advanced to the District Cross
Country held in Lennox Head, with one progressing to Zone level.

One student qualified all the way to the State Cross Country held in Sydney where she finished a very respectable 42nd position out of 89.

Athletics

During Term 2 all students had intensive skills training with a Little Athletics Coach. The LAPS program aims to introduce primary school children in years 2-6 to Athletics in a fun, non-threatening environment.

The students developed basic running, jumping and throwing skills by participating in highly active, fast moving activity sessions.

All students competed at the Small Schools Athletics Carnival held at Wardell. Sixteen students went on to participate at the District Athletics carnival. Three students made it to the Zone Carnival held in Murwillumbah. One progressed to the Regional carnival held at Lismore and gained a spot in the North Coast PSSA Athletics team.

PSSA Trials

Students from Years 5 & 6 have had the opportunity to attend trials for a variety of district teams e.g. soccer, rugby league, AFL, cricket and netball. Some students were selected for the district AFL team where they travelled to Mullumbimby for matches against other districts.

Soccer

In 2009 a school soccer competition was held at lunch times with students from years 3-6. Our school team was selected from these games.

The school soccer team joined five other teams in a gala day for the Small Schools Knockout Competition. An eventful day of soccer where the teams played 5 games each. EVPS finished third overall on the day.

AFL

Stage 2 students participated in the ‘Plateau Cup’ held in Wollongbar. Students learnt AFL skills and then competed in a round robin against other schools. EVPS entered two teams which were very competitive on the day.

Stage 3 students from other schools in the area attended two skills day hosted by Empire Vale Public School. The schools then competed against each other in a round robin competition over numerous weeks finishing a very commendable third.

Swimming School

All students participated in the swimming scheme held at Alstonville. Students ranging from non-swimmers to swimmers needing stroke correction and strengthening were taught the skills required by them to be safe in the water.

Students in the higher levels (Royal Life Saving Swim & Survive) participated in a variety of life saving and survival activities including CPR training, a lengthy clothed survival swim and a written test to complete their award.

ARL Skills Clinic

Our entire school participated in the National Primary School in-school Rugby League Program called ‘Joey League’ run by Kelvin Melchin.

The program was aimed at introducing our students to the basic skills of Rugby League and to give them the opportunity to participate in modified games including League Tag. The clinic was a great success and enjoyed by everyone who participated.

Other initiatives

Junior Bootcamp

Thanks to a grant secured at the end of 2008, the year 4/5/6 class participated in a 10 session ‘Junior Bootcamp’ fitness program. Each week the program engaged the children in exciting team and individual fitness activities such as boxing, running and skipping that aimed to build fitness and self esteem.
The Junior Bootcamp was a wonderful success with the students pushing themselves and showing what teamwork can do. The students loved Bootcamp and it was great watching their fitness and confidence improve over the program.

**Mathletics**

This program continued to be a winner with the students. During the year our senior students answered correctly 137,862 mathematics questions.

The senior class entered the Gold Coast Titans Mathletics Challenge which was held in Term 2. The challenge involved students answering questions correctly online over the duration of the Challenge at school and at home.

**Southern Cross Community of Small Schools**

- Local small schools including, Empire Vale, Cabbage Tree, Wardell, Newrybar, Fernleigh, Rous, Broadwater, Pearces Creek & Tregeagle Public Schools joined together in 2006 to form the Southern Cross Community of Small Schools.

- In 2009 the group again participated in a number of events throughout the year. These included a Spelling Bee (term 1), General Knowledge competition, debating competition and chess competition throughout the year. As in previous years, students really enjoyed these activities as well as meeting new friends.

- The Southern Cross Community of Small Schools also held a CAPA challenge in Term 2 in which 4 students were selected to attend. Students were asked to bring a glass jar with a lid and enjoyed a fun day with lots of interesting challenges.

**Debating**

- Seven students participated in a debating workshop held in Alstonville which helped them develop their debating skills.

- One senior student was chosen to attend a workshop for the selection of North Coast Debating Team which was held in Grafton.

- Four students were selected to represent the school in the Premier’s Debating Challenge in Term 3. Students were given the opportunity to debate against other local teams from Alstonville, Bangalow and Southern Cross K-12 Schools.

**Other**

**Academic**

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 the assessments.

**Yr 3:** from Band 1 (lowest) to Band 6 (highest for Year 3)

**Yr 5:** from Band 3 (lowest) to Band 8 (highest for Year 5)

**Literacy – NAPLAN Year 3**

Sixteen students sat all the components of the NAPLAN assessment tasks for literacy. Results were as follows:

- **Reading** – 62% of students were in Band 4 or higher, with 93% in Band 3 or higher.
- **Writing** – 81% of students were in Band 4 or higher.
- **Spelling** – 49% of students were in Band 4 or higher.
- **Grammar and Punctuation** – 68% of students were in Band 4 or higher.

Students performed better in Grammar and Punctuation and Writing but were below state averages.

**Numeracy – NAPLAN Year 3**

Sixteen students also sat the NAPLAN numeracy assessment tasks.

Students equalled the state average (405) in numeracy and were well above the average for like school groups (395).

Seventy five per cent of students were in Band 3 or higher with 37% in Band 5 and 6.

**Literacy – NAPLAN Year 5**

Nine Year 5 students sat all components of the NAPLAN assessment tasks. Due to the small group size it is not possible to report on actual results without identifying individual students. However results have shown that:

- students performed better in reading and writing than in spelling and punctuation and grammar.
- the average reading and writing results for students in Year 5 at Empire Vale were higher than the average state result. All students in Year 5 were in Band 5 or higher for reading and writing.
students did not perform as well in spelling compared to the state average although 89% of students were in Band 5 or higher.

Numeracy – NAPLAN Year 5
Nine students also sat the numeracy component of NAPLAN. All students were in Band 5 or higher. The school’s average numeracy result of 511 was higher than the like school average of 490 and the state average of 503.

Progress in literacy
The tables below show the progress for students from Year 3 to Year 5 in reading and writing. As can be seen the progress in these areas has been very significant and is well above the state progress and like school groups (LSG) by a considerable number of points.

In reading our students’ progress was 56 points higher than the state average and 61 points higher than the average for like schools.

In writing our students’ progress was 33 points higher than the state and like school averages.

These results reflect the new initiatives which have been introduced into the literacy program over the past three years.

Reading

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Writing

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<td>State</td>
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Progress in numeracy
As can be seen from the table below the students have also made excellent progress in numeracy with progress well above the state and like school groups. With many new initiatives in our maths program and with more focus on working mathematically, the students’ enthusiasm for maths is reflected in their excellent results.

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<td>State</td>
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Minimum standards
The Commonwealth Government sets minimum standards for reading, writing, grammar and 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 below.

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

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reading</td>
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<tr>
<td>Writing</td>
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<tr>
<td>Spelling</td>
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<tr>
<td>Punctuation and grammar</td>
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<tr>
<td>Numeracy</td>
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Percentage of Year 5 students in our school achieving at or above the minimum standard in 2009

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<tbody>
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<td>Reading</td>
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<tr>
<td>Writing</td>
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<tr>
<td>Spelling</td>
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<td>Punctuation and grammar</td>
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<tr>
<td>Numeracy</td>
<td>100</td>
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Major Excursions

Sydney and the Central West

Senior students enjoyed the city of Sydney and Central West NSW as the major excursion this year. We were joined by students from Rous Public School. The excursion offered a large range of experiences including a visit to Circular Key, a guided Rocks tour, Ocean World, 3 Sisters Echo Point, Jenolan/Lucas Caves, Bathurst Gold Fields, Dubbo Goal and Dubbo Zoo. The excursion aimed to promote leadership skills, responsibility and getting along with others. It also covered activities relating to the senior class’ study of Gold.
Get Hooked on Fishing

In 2009 students from years 2-6 were given the opportunity to participate in the ‘Get Fishing Program’ which was conducted over six weeks.

This program was run by volunteers through the Environment & Fishing industry. The children had hands-on activities that promoted good fishing practices. The program aims to teach responsible resource management.

Younger students had the opportunity to explore the ‘dry touch tank’ where they looked at and felt interesting creatures from our waters such as sponges, shells, and fish moulds. Other topics covered included Junior Fishing Codes, learning to tie fishing knots and casting.

Students from Years 2 to 6 had a chance to put into practice what they had learned as part of the Get Hooked on Fishing Program.

They all enjoyed a wonderful day with many catch and releases. The program was important as it taught students about sustainability as well as how to enjoy fishing as a recreational activity.

Supermarket Safari

The K/1/2 class experienced a Supermarket Safari as part of their science unit on familiar environments, where they were given the grand tour of the Ballina Fair Woolworths Supermarket.

Students explored behind the scenes and visited the bakery, deli catessen and the fresh produce section. They also had the opportunity to sample the fresh produce.

Significant programs and initiatives

Aboriginal education

We continue to include aboriginal cultural perspectives across all curriculum areas. Below are some of the initiatives for 2009.

- Celebrating NAIDOC Week, with a collection of small schools at Cabbage Tree Island.

- Student’s performance of a local Bundjalung Dreamtime Story – ‘Wanja the Echidna’ and a Western Australian story called ‘How the Birds got their colours.’ Students participated in a variety of cultural workshops on the day.

- The respect for our Aboriginal Heritage has been extended by the acknowledgment of the traditional owners of the land, at all formal ceremonies within the school.

Multicultural education

Many multicultural perspectives were incorporated into our school curriculum throughout 2009. The highlights were:

- Students in Stages 2 and 3 prepared for the Multicultural Public Speaking Competition, held at Southern Cross School.

- South American music was explored by the Year 2 and 3 Class, during creative arts lessons.

- Art studies with a multicultural focus included French Impressionism, Japanese Art and African Crafts.

- Students enjoyed a story telling performance of an African folk story called ‘The Mermaids Daughter’. This show used traditional art designs in their creation of shadow puppets. The story was complimented by music performed on Middle Eastern instruments.

- This year’s ‘Book Week’ theme was ‘Book Safari’. The students explored the many types of safaris, highlighting cultures around the world.

- Stage One students enjoyed percussion lessons using the ‘Multicultural Rhythm Sticks’ resource.
Respect and responsibility

During the year various activities were undertaken by the school to promote respect and responsibility. Students were involved in a number of community service activities. Some of these included:

- showing respect to the ANZAC Spirit, through the hosting of a school memorial ceremony. Members from the Korea, South East Asia Vietnam Veteran’s Association attended the ceremony along with other special guests.
- participating in Clean Up Australia Day;
- participating in numerous charity fundraising days such as Bushfire Appeal, Stewart House, Westmead Children’s Hospital, Cystic Fibrosis, Asthma Foundation and Casual for a Cause Days which were held each term;
- celebrating Harmony Day, with all the students receiving orange ribbon pins to help us remember that we all belong and to celebrate Australia’s diversity.

The school continues to promote the Peer support/Buddy system with the Kindergarten students and Year 6. This initiative is well supported by our students and is a key element of our respect and responsibility outcomes.

Other programs

Environmental Education

- National Parks presented their Cane Toad Education Program to students in years 2-6. Students and teachers had a great time learning identification techniques to help us ensure the survival of our native species while trying to halt the spread of the cane toad.
- Rous Water conducted the ‘Every Drop Counts’ program at the school. This program encourages student participation in water conservation at school and at home This year our senior students undertook a water audit to help better understand our water use and how we can improve it.
- As part of our Environmental Management Plan, the school purchased 4 Bokashi Bins for use in the lunch area. The hygienic and visually pleasant bins breakdown all foodwaste products (except bones) into exceptionally good compost for flowers and vegetables. The liquid compost was shared around all students.
- Students participated in Earth Hour on Friday March 27th. At lunchtime all lights and computers were turned off to do our part for global warming. Earth Hour was also promoted so that students go involved at home.
- MobileMuster is the official national recycling program of the mobile phone industry in Australia. Families were encouraged to bring in old mobile phones, batteries, chargers and accessories for delivery to a mustering station.
- The school has now been accredited under the SunSmart program through the Cancer Council NSW. This program aims to increase skin cancer awareness, and to develop and implement effective sun protection strategies in the school community. We now have a sign on the school fence and a certificate stating we are a SunSmart School.
- Our senior class participated in Plant a Tree Day and planted more trees around the school boundary.

Safety Programs

Students participated in a range of programs and activities which looked at how to keep them safe. Some of these included:

- SPOT Program – K/1 students participated in the SPOT program which is a unique schools program about pet care and kindness and respect for all animals. It also incorporates a specific module about safe behaviour to reduce the incidence of serious dog bites in children.
- Walk Safely to School Day - parents and students were encouraged to be active by walking to school. This also gave parents the opportunity to discuss road safety and other important safety messages,
- Evans Head SLC – the club visited the school and talked to the students about surf safety and the club.

School context

Empire Vale Public School is situated in a rural environment south of Ballina.

The school is the focal point for the area and provides both educational and social opportunities for the community. Our students come from a range of home environments which include cane farms as well as rural, residential and rented properties in the Empire Vale and South Ballina areas.

The school provides a wide range of educational experiences in the six key learning areas (KLAs) catering for the intellectual, physical, social and emotional development of our students.
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

Student enrolments have been relatively consistent over the past five years with enrolments between 50 and 60 students.

In 2009 the school enrolled slightly more boys than girls which has been the case in previous years.

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Student attendance profile

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Management of non-attendance

Student attendance is well above the region and state averages. Non attendance is monitored and discussions are held with parents and carers where appropriate. Regular items are placed in the school newsletter outlining expectations in terms of student attendance.

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.

The following table shows our class sizes as reported at the 2009 class size audit conducted on Wednesday 18 March 2009.

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</table>

Structure of classes

Classes were formed to best suit the needs of students not only in terms of class size but also in addressing the learning stages of the curriculum.

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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Position</th>
<th>Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Principal 1 (teaching)</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Classroom Teachers</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Support Teacher Learning 0.1 (3hrs p/wk)</td>
<td>0.156</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher Librarian</td>
<td>0.168</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>3.562</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

During 2009 there was no staff member who was of indigenous heritage.

Teacher qualifications

All teaching staff meet 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>
</tbody>
</table>

School Improvement

During the year additional funds were provided by the Federal Government for a number of building initiatives. These include:

- As part of the school pride money provided by the Federal Government, the inside of the library/resource room and toilets have been painted and the rising damp in the library has been treated. The library also benefitted from the replacement of its overused carpet.
- The Kids Kitchen/Canteen has been enlarged and had some upgrading with new linoleum etc. also from Federal Government funding through National Pride Program.

Other school improvements include:

- New lighting and electrical outlets were installed in the COLA.
- The new water tank that was won in the Tank a Day promotion was installed. Students also received temporary tattoos, stickers and a shower timer courtesy of BlueScope Steel.
- The large fig tree behind the Yr 2/3 classroom was removed. The uneven pavers outside the office area were removed and replaced with concrete and some issues with raising damp in the library block have been addressed.
- New storage container placed at the back of the school. This container was purchased by the P&C for the school for some much needed storage of school furniture etc.
Financial summary

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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date of financial summary:</th>
<th>30/11/2009</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

**Income**

- Balance brought forward: $89,304.18
- Global funds: $52,829.74
- Tied funds: $21,844.89
- School & community sources: $24,072.56
- Interest: $3,407.12
- Trust receipts: $2,032.75
- Canteen: $0.00
- **Total income:** $193,491.24

**Expenditure**

- Teaching & learning
  - Key learning areas: $9,410.24
  - Excursions: $7,699.06
  - Extracurricular dissections: $6,480.92
- Library: $361.66
- Training & development: $1,936.49
- Tied funds: $45,104.94
- Casual relief teachers: $4,417.74
- Administration & office: $25,061.99
- School-operated canteen: $0.00
- Utilities: $6,241.66
- Maintenance: $5,932.00
- Trust accounts: $2,002.75
- Capital programs: $0.00
- **Total expenditure:** $114,649.45
- **Balance carried forward:** $78,841.79

Balance carried forward to 2010 includes committed funds of:

- Unpaid orders/invoices: $13,229.39
- Unpaid staffing account: $3,892.54
- Tied Funds: $51,540.44
- Staffing Contingencies and: $2,039.35
- Provision for additional assets: $16,500.00
- Asset replacement: $14,000.00
- General purposes funds remaining: $870.12

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.

Progress on 2009 targets

**Target 1**

*To review and improve formal and informal assessment tasks.*

Our achievements include:

- some staff participated in Best Start Coordinator training;
- staff completed online training NAPLAN writing assessment certification to provide more consistency in assessment across stages;
- commenced development of an assessment strategy which outlines mandatory, optional and suggested assessment tasks across all stages;
- programs being reviewed to include assessment tasks as outlined in our strategy;
- parents provided with advice on Best Start and NAPLAN assessment initiatives; and
- ongoing reviews undertaken by staff of their lesson plans to ensure results from assessment tasks are reflected to improve student learning outcomes.

**Target 2**

*To continue to improve student outcomes in literacy.*

Our achievements include:

- all staff attended specialised training in areas of literacy and English;
- guest speaker and avid poet Mr Lyn Lockery was invited to talk to students in the senior class about poetry;
- staff attended training in NAPLAN writing certification to gain an increased understanding of broader literacy issues;
- considerable improvement in NAPLAN literacy results for students from Year 3 to Year 5;
- the senior class had a visitor from the Northern Star who spoke to them about the Newspapers in Education Program;
- the senior class performed a wonderful interpretation of two poems called “The Witch and the Wizard” and “The Spangled Pandemonium” at assembly; and
- review undertaken of NAPLAN results for 2009 which provided focus areas for 2010. These include spelling and punctuation and grammar.
Key evaluations

It is a requirement for all NSW public schools to conduct at least two annual evaluations – one related to educational and management practice and the other related to curriculum. In 2009 our school carried out evaluations of

Educational and management practice

Culture

Background
Empire Vale Public School is not only an educational centre but with its small population base it is also a focal point for the Empire Vale community. As such the school has a very important role.

Findings and conclusions
A regular review of programs and activities ensures that the culture of the school is very positive and is very inclusive of all community members. Many activities are undertaken to utilise the skills of community members and to foster community spirit. Some of these activities include:

- Parents conducting sessions at Education Day;
- Mid Year Concert;
- Carols Evening.

Future directions
We will continue to explore new avenues for fostering community relationships and utilising the skills within our school community. All community activities assist students to understand the importance of their local community and the role they have in it.

The school has a very positive culture and we will continue to look at new activities which support this.

Curriculum
Creative and Practical Arts (CAPA)

Background
The CAPA program at Empire Vale Public School is very diverse and students get opportunities to participate in activities that are not readily available to students at larger schools. A review of our program has provided the opportunity for an integrated approach to be taken across a range of areas.

Findings and conclusions
As part of the planning process, staff held discussions on the current CAPA program to determine how activities could best be fitted into the teaching program from a time management perspective. General discussion and decisions were also made on separation of roles under the CAPA program to ensure there was no duplication across other key learning areas. The review also ensured that dedicated responsibility could be allocated for certain CAPA program areas.

Two students were also selected to participate in a Regional Arts Camp to provide them with opportunities for higher level outcomes in CAPA.

SXCS conducted a CAPA challenge for participating schools.

Anecdotal feedback from staff and the community on the current CAPA program has been extremely positive with many recognising the benefits of the diversity of the program.

Future Directions
CAPA program will be regularly reviewed to ensure best student outcomes are achieved within the school’s budget and management processes.

Other evaluations

BEST START – 2009

Background
- Ten Kindergarten children participated in the Best Start Assessment Program. The class teacher participated in Departmental training which addressed conducting, assessing and reporting the Best Start Program.
- All students were assessed in areas of literacy and numeracy.
- The information collated was shared with parents in the form of a report. This also included suggested activities to encourage and develop skills with their child.

Findings and Conclusions
- The information was valuable in accurately establishing a starting point for each individual child.
- It was also a requirement of the Program that children be reassessed at the end of the year with progress being recorded. All children showed a marked increase in understanding and skill development.

Future Directions
- The Department aims to make the Best Start Program a national initiative with all schools eventually participating.
Parent satisfaction
In 2009 the school sought the opinions of parents, about the school on Education Day.

Some responses are presented below.
“Empire Vale is the best school on the North Coast. We use what we have to its full potential – meaning our children and community members and staff make it unique”

and

“The best families can experience”.

Student Satisfaction Year 6

“It’s a small school and I get heaps of opportunities. My favourite - The school sleepover because it is an experience you can’t get everyday to sleep in a tent with your friends. I get to go to all the spelling bees. I like these because it gives me the chance to meet people from other schools.

I would recommend EVPS. They would have loads of fun here. The atmosphere is really nice and everyone is friends.

The mid year concert, everyone gets a part in it, the sleepover, movie, bootcamp, picasso cow, I loved it all. I loved the Picasso Cow and getting to go to the Royal Easter Show, it was so much fun especially doing it with all my friends.

It’s ALL AROUND GREAT! It's also good because you know all the teachers, it's like no one is a stranger.”

Kiani H Year 6

Professional learning
The average expenditure per teacher on professional learning was approximately $1,400. Courses for 2009 included:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course</th>
<th>Staff</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Numeracy teaching strategies for indigenous students</td>
<td>All</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CPR</td>
<td>All</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Best Start Coordinator training</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NAPLAN writing certification</td>
<td>All</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Australian Education Development Index training</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Occupational Health &amp; Safety</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Computer Coordinator Training</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TAFE Course in Photoshop</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Senior First Aid</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Early Intervention training</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Training in various aspects of literacy and English</td>
<td>All</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

School development 2009 – 2011

Targets for 2010
During 2010 we will continue to build on targets which were commenced in 2009. Focus areas will be assessment and various components of literacy such as spelling, writing, punctuation and grammar.

Target 1
To ensure assessment tools are in place and are consistent across all stages

Strategies to achieve this target include:

- continuing to ensure all parents are aware of formal testing requirements such as NAPLAN and Best Start and the benefits for such assessment;
- annual review of Best Start process to see if improvements can be made;
- staff training in assessment techniques;
- development of a scope and sequence for informal and formal testing regimes within the school; and
- regularly reviewing assessment tasks to ensure assessment information provides adequate feedback on student performance.

Our success will be measured by:

- development of scope and sequence strategy for informal and formal assessment processes;
- staff provided with additional assessment training where required;
- establishment of benchmark information for new students from the Best Start Program; and
- consistency of informal and formal assessment tools across all stages.

Target 2
To continue improving student outcomes in literacy.

Strategies to achieve this target include:

- explore ongoing professional development opportunities for staff to increase and improve classroom methodology and practices for teaching literacy particularly with regard to spelling, grammar and punctuation.
- continuing to provide budget resources where possible for the purchase of new materials and resources to enhance learning opportunities in literacy, spelling and grammar;
- review of NAPLAN results for 2009 and 2010 and identifying any changing areas of need; and
Our success will be measured by:

- staff teaching programs and strategies to reflect new training methodology and practices in the area of literacy;
- resources purchased where necessary to assist in improving literacy outcomes particularly in spelling, grammar and punctuation;
- programs and strategies reviewed on a regular basis with modifications made as required; and
- improvement in NAPLAN results in literacy particularly in the focus areas of spelling, grammar and punctuation.

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.

Ms Bonita Avery, Principal
Mr Michael Spencer, Staff Representative
Mrs Meg Potter, Staff Representative
Mrs Annie Roberts, Staff Representative
Ms Karen Hinrichsen, Staff Representative
Ms Toni Caesar, Parent Representative
Mrs Vicki Milne (ASR assistance and editing)

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Parents can find out more information about Annual School Reports, how to interpret information in the reports and have the opportunity to provide feedback about these reports at: http://www.schools.nsw.edu.au/asr