Our school at a glance
Lowesdale Public School is situated on the Riverina Highway 18 km from Corowa.

Messages

Principal’s message
2011 was another wonderful year at Lowesdale Public School, full of interesting learning opportunities for the students. Each student has made progress in their learning across the six Key Learning Areas of the curriculum.

Lowesdale Public School is a terrific place to learn and teach. The students are eager to learn and are well behaved. Parents and members of the wider community are supportive of our activities. The staff are caring, experienced and dedicated to their various jobs. Our aim is to provide ‘quality education in a rural environment.’ We are fortunate to have spacious classrooms and attractive grounds to learn in.

We hope that you enjoy reading about some of our school activities in this Annual School Report.

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.

Mrs Barbara Strachan

P & C message
This was my first year at being part of the P & C at our little school. For our school being so small, we always have a lot going on.

The P & C has been involved with various activities including: helping with funding for school camps and excursions. The trip to Melbourne to experience Tutankhamun was enjoyed by not only the children but by staff and parents as well.

We meet approximately every 1 to 2 months and at all our meetings we always have full support from all the families attending school.

Other activities that the P & C has been involved in, is helping provide sandwiches for community activities such as tree planting at the Buraja Truck stop and the annual Christmas Concert. One of our school’s most famous events that is looked forward to is the Mother’s Day Luncheon. This is a great chance for everyone to get together.

These are just a few examples of what’s been going on over the year and what P & C has been doing. Thank you to everyone involved.

Mrs Revee Northey P & C President

Student Representative’s message
This year our school leaders were Broughton Underwood (captain) and Charlotte Robb and Amy Mottram (vice captains). As well as providing a positive role model for younger students, they filled leadership roles at school events and on excursions.

SRC stands for Student Representative Council. It is where students have the opportunity to have a say. At SRC we discuss what is happening and we decide on class jobs and dates for special events.

One of the activities that everyone wanted to do in 2011 was to have a school camp at school. We asked some of our parents if they could sleep at school with us. We planned the menu and the shopping list. We thought of games that we could play. Our parents came along to join us for tea.

Broughton Underwood, Charlotte Robb & Amy Mottram (School Leaders 2011)
School context

Student information

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

Student enrolment profile

There were 10 students enrolled in 2011, 5 boys and 5 girls.

Student attendance profile

The Lowesdale Public School student attendance was again above the state and region average, with the exception of one grade level.

Student Attendance

Management of non-attendance

The majority of students attended school regularly and positive feedback was given to students and parents to promote this. Students with attendance issues would be monitored and referred to the Home School Liaison Officer (HSLO).

Class sizes

Primary class sizes are included in the annual school report in order to provide parents with as much local information as possible. The following table shows our class sizes as reported at the 2011 Class Size Audit conducted on Monday 21 March 2011.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Total per year</th>
<th>Total in class</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>K</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
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<tr>
<td>5</td>
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<td>10</td>
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<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>10</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Structure of classes
The class was taught with separate infants and primary groupings for literacy and numeracy for three mornings per week. Additional staff were employed to support literacy, numeracy, art and music programs. This meant there was a small pupil to teacher ratio for lessons.
Two community members came weekly to listen to students read and a parent assisted each Friday morning with literacy activities.

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</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Classroom Teachers</td>
<td>0.084</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher RFF</td>
<td>0.042</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher Librarian</td>
<td>0.084</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Teacher Entitlement</strong></td>
<td><strong>1.21</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School Administrative Manager</td>
<td>0.496</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>General Assistant (G.A.)</td>
<td>0.18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Non Teacher Entitlement</strong></td>
<td><strong>0.676</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The National Education Agreement requires schools to report on Indigenous composition of their workforce.

At the present time, the school does not have any Indigenous members of staff.

Staff retention
The school retained the same teaching staff in 2011 as it had in 2010.

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>
<tr>
<td>Postgraduate</td>
<td>66</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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

A full copy of the school's 2011 financial statement is tabled at the annual general meeting of the P & C. Further details concerning the statement can be obtained by contacting the school.

School performance 2011

Achievements

Arts
- Students designed and created themed artwork for the annual Mothers’ Day Luncheon. Mothers, grandmothers and school helpers are invited along to a meal prepared and served by the students.
• An exciting excursion to view Tutankhamen in Melbourne, saw students, parents, staff and some community members travelling to Melbourne.

• Students won prizes in the Chambers Winery Art Competition.

• The school had displays of artwork at the ‘Corowa Festival of Fun for Kids’ and the Corowa Show.

• All students K-6 performed several items at the annual school concert.

**Sport**

• All Lowesdale Public School students completed the Premier’s Sporting Challenge in 2011, earning a gold or silver award.

• We practiced our skipping for ‘Jump Rope for Heart’.

• Dougal Robb and Charlotte Robb progressed to the Riverina Cross Country Championships held at Deniliquin.

• The PP6 relay team comprising Alex Lavis, Charlotte Robb, Dougal Robb and Broughton Underwood ran at the Riverina Athletics Carnival held in Albury.

• All students K-6 attended the swimming scheme at Howlong Pool in December. The students learnt about water safety and swimming stroke development.

• Students from Years 2-6 joined with other schools for the ‘Super 8 cricket’.

**Other Activities**

• ‘Live life Well @ School’

As part of this grant, the school purchased some equipment to develop the school vegetable garden and also a worm farm to help teach the students about composting food scraps. Students were involved in cooking activities using the garden produce.

The students grew beetroot, cauliflowers, peas, radishes, broad beans and herbs.

School Camp- eating our homemade hamburgers.
• “Get Hooked Fishing- It’s fun to Fish!”

Students in Years 3-6 participated in lessons designed to teach them about sustainable recreational fishing. They then had the opportunity to participate in a fishing workshop at Lake Mulwala. They joined with students from Corowa South to learn about casting their fishing line, tying knots and fishing laws.

In the afternoon, the group visited Brimmin Lodge Murray Cod Hatchery and saw how Murray Cod are farmed for sale.

Charles Sturt University Speech Program

During Term 3 Speech Pathology Students training at Charles Sturt University visited the school weekly to devise and trial lessons based on the students’ needs.

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 these 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)
Yr 7: from Band 4 (lowest) to Band 9 (highest for Year 7)
Yr 9: from Band 5 (lowest) to Band 10 (highest for Year 9)

Literacy – NAPLAN Year 3

Where there are fewer than 10 students sitting for the NAPLAN tests, schools report in the narrative form to ensure due consideration to privacy and personal information policies. Parents have been provided with reports and the school will use results to identify areas of strength and need.

In 2011, two students sat for the Year 3 Literacy NAPLAN test.

Numeracy – NAPLAN Year 3

In 2011, two students sat for the Year 3 Numeracy NAPLAN test.

Literacy – NAPLAN Year 5

In 2011, two students sat for the Year 5 Literacy NAPLAN test.

Numeracy – NAPLAN Year 5

In 2011, two students sat for the Year 5 Numeracy NAPLAN test.

Progress in literacy and numeracy

As only a small group of students sit for the NAPLAN tests, their results cannot be reported in detail as this would enable individual students to be identified.
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.

### Minimum Standards data

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Percentage of Year 3 students achieving at or above minimum standard (exempt students included)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reading</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Writing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spelling</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grammar &amp; Punctuation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Numeracy</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Minimum Standards data

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Percentage of Year 5 students achieving at or above minimum standard (exempt students included)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reading</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Writing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spelling</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grammar &amp; Punctuation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Numeracy</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Significant programs and initiatives

**Aboriginal education**

Aboriginal perspectives were incorporated into lessons where appropriate. For example Aboriginal poetry and literature was included in learning programs. Additional Aboriginal resources were purchased for use in different Key Learning Areas.

**Multicultural education**

Harmony Day was celebrated in March with a focus on Japan (because of the recent tsunami).

Students enjoyed researching about Japan and trying different origami projects.

Students watched ‘Behind the News’ and read newspaper articles to find out more about local, national and international topics.

Senior students visited Bonegilla Migrant Camp near Wodonga to learn about the lives of the migrants who settled in the area and some of the difficulties that they experienced.

**Other programs**

- All students completed the Premier’s Reading Challenge. Dougal Robb received a Gold Certificate for completing the challenge for four consecutive years.
- **Environmental Education**

Primary students were involved in Clever Climate Energy Savers and successfully applied for funding to purchase new blinds for the library to reduce heating and cooling costs.

Students and some parents planted trees at the Buraja Truck stop using plants purchased through a Murray Catchment Authority Grant.

Students also planted native plants in the school grounds.
Students in 5/6 participated in the Creative Catchment Kids Program. They attended workshops and completed landscaping projects at school.

CleanUp Australia Day-Students collected rubbish along the streets of Lowesdale.

- University of NSW Competitions

Primary students are given the opportunity to enter these optional competitions. In 2011, students received the following results:

**Computer**- Broughton Underwood (Credit)

**Science**- Dougal Robb (Distinction), Broughton Underwood (Participation)

**Mathematics**-Dougal Robb (Credit) Broughton Underwood (Participation)

**English**- Broughton Underwood (Participation), Charlotte Robb (Credit), Dougal Robb (Distinction)

- **Musica Viva**- students were taught from the program at school and attended two performances.

- **Gifted and Talented Education**

Students are able to be extended in areas where they show talent or academic ability within the day to day classroom teaching and learning program.

- **Virtual Classroom Project**

In 2011, Broughton Underwood, Charlotte Robb and Dougal Robb joined with other students from Riverina schools in the ‘Gifted and Talented Virtual Classroom Program’. After attending an initial face to face extension day in Albury, the students were sent three virtual assignments that they completed through research at home and at school. These ranged from art activities through to creative writing tasks.

- **Science in the Bush**

Primary students travelled to Charles Sturt University for a Science Day. Students had the opportunity to experiment with computer programming of Lego robots, learn about lasers, fossils and the science displays.

Science in the Bush at Charles Sturt University

**Progress on 2011 targets**

**Target 1**

To improve student performance in reading, particularly in comprehension.

Our achievements include:

- Improved student results in both external and internal reading assessments.

- Mrs Strachan participated in the Professional learning course ‘Focus on Reading 3-6’. Implementation of lessons focusing on the six comprehension strategies.

- ‘Springboard into Comprehension’ resources used by students in Stages 1, 2 and 3 during modelled, guided and independent reading activities. These were used to focus on the different reading comprehension strategies at various ability levels.
Target 2

Evidence of computers used in classroom lessons as an effective support tool and strategy for teaching and learning.

Our achievements include:

- Teaching staff attended a variety of Professional Learning activities focusing on the use of different computer programs, including:
  - Introduction to Photoshop, Introduction to Audacity, Google SketchUp, Web 2 tools, Adobe Acrobat 9 Pro extended. These were then introduced to students in the classroom.
  - Email project started to practice the use of email and to learn more about students in several Sydney school communities.
  - During 2011 a wider variety of computer programs were used by teaching staff and students, including those taught at the Professional Learning sessions for staff. ‘Sunshine Online’ and ‘Mathletics’ subscriptions were purchased for the whole school to use.
  - Parent information session held following the official opening of the new library building. Students demonstrated some of the different programs used at school.

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 2011 our school carried out evaluations of school planning and English.

Educational and management practice

School Planning was the area reviewed in our cyclic review program.

Background

A survey from School Map was given to students, parents and staff to gauge their opinions about planning at Lowesdale Public School.

Findings and conclusions

Students in Years 2-6 were surveyed and responded that they felt included in decision making in the school, knew what was happening in the school and that school events were well planned. Parents indicated that they were well informed about school planning and had input into school activities. Staff felt that they were involved in developing plans and programs. One staff member expressed an interest in finding out more about the school budget.

Future directions

The newsletter is an important means of communication to parents, students and school community, so it will continue to be distributed weekly. The school website is also updated regularly.

Curriculum

English

Background

English is an important Key Learning Area. Students need to develop positive attitudes and excellent communication skills, both verbal and written to be prepared for life and future schooling.

Findings and conclusions

All of the parents who returned surveys indicated that they understood how spelling, reading and writing are taught at Lowesdale Public School. They recognised that their child had improved in the different skills taught within English and felt that they were provided with useful reports about their child’s progress in English. All students agreed that it was important to learn English and that they are given extra help in English when they need it at school. Teaching staff indicated that they would like additional professional learning to support their planning and teaching in English. They agreed that the school has suitable resources for teaching
English. One staff member indicated that they would like more training to utilise the Smart board in their English lessons.

Future directions

75% of parents indicated that they would attend training to assist their child with reading at home if it was available. This will be offered in 2012. With the introduction of the new National Curriculum in the next few years, money will be budgeted to enable staff to attend professional learning activities to help familiarise them with the new teaching syllabus. Parents will also need to be kept informed of changes in this Key Learning Area.

Parent, student, and teacher satisfaction

In 2011 the school sought the opinions of parents, students and teachers about the school. Their responses are presented below.

The majority of students surveyed responded that they really enjoy school. Some of their comments were “We get to do a variety of activities.” “I like lots of individual attention with my work.” “The sports are fun.” Parent surveys were positive, with parents strongly agreeing that Lowesdale Public School has caring staff who cater for individual learning needs and the school is well-resourced, with attractive classrooms and grounds. It was agreed that the school students have strong technology programs and good access to computers. Staff commented that it is a “wonderful place to teach.” “It is very rewarding working with the kids, they want to learn.”

Professional learning

Staff attended activities relating to:

- Leadership, including Principal’s Conferences and Essential Training, Local Schools, Local Decisions, New Maintenance and Cleaning Contracts,
- CPR, Child Protection and Keep them Safe
- Focus on Reading 3-6, Persuasive writing
- Musica Viva
- Live Life Well @ School (2 days), Climate Clever Energy Savers
- Count Me in Too (Mathematics)
- Technology Courses- Photoshop, Introduction to Audacity, Google SketchUp, web 2 tools, Adobe Acrobat 9 Pro extended,
- Financial Management for SASS Staff, SASS Network Professional Development LMBR Riverina, Annual Financial Statement & OASIS Finance Rollover, Riverina SASS Reference Group Conference (2 days),

Training took place during school hours and also after school hours.

The total cost of professional learning in 2011 was $6085.75. $2349.94 came from DET Tied funds and $3735.81 from school funds.

Lowesdale Public School has one teacher who is working towards gaining new scheme teacher accreditation.

School planning 2012—2014

The school planning policy provides direction for the preparation and implementation of school plans including the identification of priority areas, intended outcomes and targets that are consistent with the NSW State Plan and the Department’s planning documents.

School priority 1

Outcome for 2012–2014

To improve student achievement in writing across all KLAs.

2012 Targets to achieve this outcome include:

- Measureable individual growth in writing skills for students.

Strategies to achieve these targets include:

- Assess student’s current individual and collective writing strengths and weaknesses using available rubrics.
- Explicit teaching of writing skills during literacy sessions and all other KLA programs.
- Staff professional learning meetings to discuss writing strategies.
- Purchase of PM Writing resources to support the teaching of writing lessons.
School priority 2
Outcome for 2012–2014
Improve student achievement, knowledge and understanding of the Patterns and Algebra strands.

2012 Targets to achieve this outcome include:

- Measureable individual growth in knowledge and understanding of the Patterns and Algebra strand for all students.

Strategies to achieve these targets include:

- Explicit teaching of Pattern and Algebra skills during Mathematics sessions.
- Benchmarking all students’ knowledge, understanding and application of Patterns and Algebra with ongoing assessment as part of the teaching and learning cycle.
- Purchase of appropriate resources to enhance the teaching and learning of Patterns and Algebra.
- Math Activity Day focusing on the practical application of Patterns and Algebra activities with students.

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.

Mrs Barbara Strachan - Principal
Mrs Debbie Francis - Teacher
Mrs Pam Fredericks - Teacher
Mrs Leeanne Koschitzke - School Administrative Officer
Mrs Revee Northey - P & C President

School contact information
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Email: lowesdale-p.school@det.nsw.edu.au
Web: www.lowesdale-p.school@det.nsw.edu.au

School Code: 2429
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:

Students in Years 5/6 joined with students from eight nearby schools for a camp at Howman’s Gap in Victoria. They had the opportunity to canoe, try the high ropes course and the giant swing. Snow play and a bushwalk to Wallace’s Hut (pictured) were other activities.