Our school at a glance

Students
Barwon Learning Centre (BLC) is a School for Specific Purposes (SSP) designated to provide educational programs for students in Years 2 – 8. BLC caters for students who are identified by the Regional Placement Panel (RPP), as having significant behavioural challenges that cannot be met through a traditional school setting. We are committed to providing a balanced and meaningful approach to educational programs with particular focus on literacy and numeracy, as well as meeting the personal, social and cultural needs of all students.

Staff
In 2012 our staff included a Principal, Assistant Principal, three classroom teachers, three School Learning Support Officers, an Aboriginal Education Officer, an Aboriginal School learning Support Officer and a School Administrative Manager. All teaching staff meet the professional requirements for teaching in NSW public schools.

Significant programs and initiatives
Barwon Learning Centre participated in a range of educational programs and initiatives in 2012. The school continued to access the Country Areas Program. Funding was allocated for professional learning in the areas of behaviour management, curriculum development and adjustment and cultural activities.

The school played host to Emeritus Professor Judy Atkinson who ran two school development days for staff, parents, caregivers and community members which focused on Intergenerational Trauma and Healing.

BLC underwent a significant philosophical change in terms of the best practice in behaviour management the school should adopt. Instead of a consequence based approach that heavily relied on punitive measures to coerce appropriate behavior, BLC adopted a more holistic approach where inappropriate behavior was identified as being a symptom of a larger social discomfort felt by the student, and that a more effective way of engaging students who were not self-regulating appropriately, was to embrace their challenges and model the correct behaviour for them, rather than punish them for their inability to behave as expected. The reparative model is underpinned by modalities of Indigenous healing promoted by the Healing Foundation, and of peer reviewed best practice of behaviour management, as documented in the Calmer Classroom initiative which was commissioned by the Victorian Child Safety Commissioner. These approaches are reparative and restorative.

This philosophical point of departure from past practice forms the basis of a whole of school social skills teaching matrix, that distills all of these elements into a program called ‘educare’ which has transformed the way in which negative behaviour is managed at BLC.

As well as the ‘Educare’ program, which has proved significant in boosting attendance at Barwon, the other significant programs and initiatives the school focused on in 2012, were the implementation of the following programs:-

- Closing the Gap in Literacy and Numeracy
- ‘Fun Safety and Respect’ Day
- Back to Base - Schools Transition
- Drum Beat
- Thinking Brain
- Aboriginal Artist in Residence

Student achievement in 2012
Students at Barwon Learning Centre had significant gains in attendance, and improvement in literacy and numeracy. Student attendance for the year was 82%. This was a significant 12% improvement on our planned goal to improve attendance from 50% to 70%. Students at BLC showed on average a 20% improvement in literacy and numeracy over their pre - BLC assessment results.
Principal’s message

Acknowledgement of Country

We, the staff of Barwon Learning Centre acknowledge the continual custodianship of the land, the waterways and the North West Plains by our Elders and community members.

We thank and pay respect to our Elders and community members who are the keepers of our tradition, cultures and lore and acknowledge our children who are our future leaders.

2012 has been a year of positive change at Barwon Learning Centre as we actively embraced the concept of ‘educare’. A range of strategies were developed and initiated which resulted in significant improvement in attendance.

Attendance of students was seen as a crucial component for gains to be made in improving each student’s personal, social and learning outcomes. Parents and caregivers are valued as equal partners in each child’s learning, and were encouraged to participate in two of our school development days on ‘Intergenerational Trauma and Healing.’

Evaluations undertaken on the value of these days by staff, parents and Community members were extremely positive, and the Barwon Learning Centre is currently continuing to work with Emeritus Professor Judy Atkinson and her Foundation (We Al-li: Healing People, Sharing Culture and Regenerating Spirit) to address trauma at an individual, family and community level.

Regular transition of students to their base school was negotiated, with staff from Barwon Learning Centre supporting the child in their base school classroom throughout this process. Reparative methods are used at Barwon Learning centre, and an inclusive approach to all activities.

Regular Friday, ‘Fun, Safety and Respect’ days were commenced, and have been highly valued by all students, staff and parents. The partnership with Miyay Birray has been crucial to this initiative.

Barwon Learning Centre has valued the ongoing support provided by the local Aboriginal Education Consultative Group, our School Education Director, John Charles, and district consultants.

I appreciate the flexibility and professionalism of the entire school staff in being prepared to adopt reparative approaches in dealing with challenging behaviour. I feel proud to be a member of a team so dedicated to meeting the many and varied needs of all our students.
We look forward to 2013, and the opportunity to continue to make a positive difference in the lives and learning outcomes of our students. In the words of Bundjalung Elder, Uncle Harry Walker, “Some trees need more water than others.”

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 achievement and areas for development.

Margaret Hayes
Principal 2012.

Parent representative’s message

During my association with Barwon Learning Centre I have witnessed a transition amongst the beautiful children. Initially I saw a lot of hurting little people reacting and lashing out at everyone, now it is a place where these same children smile and say hello as they have learnt to see value in themselves.

I can only ascribe the changes I have seen to the commitment and dedication of the wonderful team of educators currently at Barwon Learning Centre. Instead of using exclusion and punishment as educational tools—love, inclusion, understanding and praise are used and have led the children to begin to feel a sense of self they had previously never had.

The positive atmosphere at Barwon gives the children the courage to take the tools they learn there and to use them to successfully transition back into mainstream schools. Tools that will help them for the rest of their lives and hopefully help them to achieve their goals.

Kim Lawson.
Parent.

Student representative’s message

I have enjoyed my time at Barwon Learning Centre, where we learn to pull on our personal handbrakes and invisible mouth zippers. I have been able to be a school leader and assist with the younger students. My teachers value me as a student. When I return to my feeder school, I now hope to successfully complete Year 12.

Anthony Hagan.
Student Yr 8.
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
In 2012 students were organized into three classes based on their ages and needs.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2007</th>
<th>2008</th>
<th>2009</th>
<th>2010</th>
<th>2011</th>
<th>2012</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Student attendance profile
Most students who participated in the Barwon Learning Centre program have demonstrated significant increases in their individual attendance rate.

Students referred to Barwon often had significant absences from schooling prior to attending BLC. Throughout 2012, a range of new initiatives targeting attendance were introduced, with significant improvement in attendance and subsequent learning engagement.

Management of non-attendance
It is a major focus of BLC to increase the attendance of students participating in the program. As placement is for 20 weeks, it is vital that students attend daily to maximise the benefit of their placement at BLC. Barwon Learning Centre implements a range of strategies for students who are not regularly attending the program.

These have included home visits by the Principal, parent communication meetings and phone calls, inter-agency support and referral to the home school liaison program.

Our Aboriginal Education Officer transports parents to BLC for meetings and school functions as needed.

Post-BLC destinations
During 2012 two students returned to Moree Secondary College. Two Year 6 students have been involved in a transition program initiated by Moree Secondary College to facilitate their enrollment in Year 7. Ten students will be returning to their base school full-time to commence the 2013 school year.

Staff information
Mr. Richard O’Connor relieved as Principal until the appointment of Margaret Hayes at the commencement of Term 2, 2012.

Mrs. Amber Lucas relieved as Assistant Principal until the end of Term 2, and was replaced by Mr. Steven Sampson, who is also relieving in the position.

In Term 2, BLC welcomed Miss Kylie Smith, a recent graduate from Southern Cross University.
BLC has a relieving Aboriginal Assistant Principal and four Aboriginal Support Staff who proudly identify and are accepted as being Aboriginal. An experienced Aboriginal teacher has been at BLC on a Special Project.

**Staff establishment**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Position</th>
<th>Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Principal</td>
<td>1.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deputy Principal(s)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assistant Principal(s)</td>
<td>1.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Head Teachers</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Classroom Teachers</td>
<td>2.52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher of Emotional Disabilities</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher of Mild Intellectual Disabilities</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher of Reading Recovery</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Support Teacher Learning Assistance</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher Librarian</td>
<td>0.368</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher of ESL</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Counsellor</td>
<td>0.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School Administrative &amp; Support Staff</td>
<td>5.326</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>10.114</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Staff retention**

The principal’s position has been filled since Term 2, 2012. A permanent School Learning Support Officer Position is being filled through merit selection to commence at the beginning of Term 1, 2013.

**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>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Financial summary**

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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date of financial summary</th>
<th>30/11/2012</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Income</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Balance brought forward</td>
<td>168,497.70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Global funds</td>
<td>45,849.37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tied funds</td>
<td>35,567.60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School &amp; community sources</td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interest</td>
<td>6,877.07</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trust receipts</td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Canteen</td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total income</td>
<td>256,791.74</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Expenditure</strong></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Teaching &amp; learning</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Key learning areas</td>
<td>5,711.81</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Excursions</td>
<td>415.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Extracurricular dissections</td>
<td>12,239.15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Library</td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Training &amp; development</td>
<td>1,605.29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tied funds</td>
<td>30,086.21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Casual relief teachers</td>
<td>3,064.39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Administration &amp; office</td>
<td>12,871.90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School-operated canteen</td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Utilities</td>
<td>13,737.84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maintenance</td>
<td>5,655.32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trust accounts</td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Capital programs</td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total expenditure</td>
<td>85,386.91</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Balance carried forward</td>
<td>171,404.83</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A full copy of the school’s 2012 financial statement is available at the school. Further details concerning the financial statement can be obtained by contacting the school.
School performance 2012

BLC continued its focus on improving literacy and numeracy skills of students in 2012 as well as better equipping students to access the curriculum in a mainstream school environment.

Achievements

Arts

BLC has continued with its Artist in residence program in 2012. A beautification project centred on a mural at the school entrance involved students at Barwon being mentored and supervised to add their own input to this distinctive project.

Sport

The boxing program previously introduced in 2011, has not continued, but in 2012 sport in the form of organized physical activity has become a daily part of the routine at Barwon.

Students play Newcombe Ball, Cricket, T-Ball and Badminton as a regular part of daily activities. A popular weekly program was the Zumba dance fitness program run by Sandra Farmer.

The ability to have fun and be active while listening to popular dance music ensures the involvement by all students.

Other

Respect and Responsibility

BLC students are supported to gain confidence in their ability to learn and take charge of their own behavior. They also learn to become more responsible for and respectful of themselves, and others in their different environments.

Our students learn from the modelling of all staff, and our school’s diverse program of engagement, particularly our weekly, ‘Fun, Safety and Respect’ program. Students are taught to “pull on their personal handbrakes” and “invisible mouth zippers.”

Environmental Education

Environmental education was offered as a Monday afternoon interest elective and was a popular choice with students. Part of the activities centred around the Calm Garden where students were taught general gardening skills such as planting, watering and weeding of the garden.

Academic

BLC supported eligible students to sit NAPLAN Tests in their base school. Due to the small cohort of students at Barwon Learning Centre privacy protocols prevent disclosure of specific student data from the NAPLAN Tests.

Significant programs and initiatives

Attendance and the implementation of the ‘Educare’ model to improve attendance

Improving attendance was identified as a primary means to positively impact behavioural outcomes. Traditional consequence based models of behaviour management meant that children were being regularly sent home if their behaviour escalated past a point of no return and then consequences had to be implemented in order for the model to retain its legitimacy. The consequence based model resulted in the students most needing support being sent away and not being able to positively benefit from the school’s education programs in place. Once the ‘educare’ model with its reparative focus was implemented and student’s poor behaviour acknowledged as a cry for help, the threat of consequences was replaced with words of care and understanding. This change in behavior management strategy led to a dramatic
improvement of attendance, which far surpassed the targets previously set for the school.

**Closing the Gap in Literacy and Numeracy**

Closing the Gap in Literacy and Numeracy is a program that helps engage students improve their learning outcomes. It uses standardised tests to benchmark improvements in student outcomes.

**Fun, Safety and Respect Program**

BLC is a place for TLC (Tender Loving Care). We have incorporated a fun day and social skills program to connect and engage students and community into our school. The ‘Fun, Safety and Respect’ Program revolves around linking students to activities typically not on offer in a traditional school environment.

The basic difference with this program is that students are not denied entry to any of these special activities based on previous behaviour.

The purpose of the ‘Fun, Safety and Respect’ days is to help bond the students to the school in a positive way. Behaviour is subtly influenced by observing the calm attitudes their teaching staff constantly model.

Students are then better equipped to participate productively in normal learning activities as a result of their normalised experiences during each and every ‘Fun Safety and Respect’ day.

**Transition Programs**

2012 marked the year that the Transition Program was implemented. The goal of the program was to continually return the student to their base school, supported by BLC staff, until they were ready to leave Barwon and be integrated back into their home school. This year students achieved improved academic and behavioral goals as well as a high level of attendance.

**Drum Beat**

Students discovered the world of DJEMBE (Drum Beat) in early 2012. This ten week program under the guidance of Dani Perry allowed students and staff who participated to learn the art of DJEMBE. As a group, students learnt the foundations of team work, respect for themselves and others as well as demonstrating confidence and creatively without judgment.

All participants performed at Moree TAFE in front of students, staff and community members as a finale. Students were awarded with a t-shirt and a DJEMBE (small drum) for completing this course.
It was a great pleasure to see the students perform and to be a part of this special journey. A huge thank you goes to Jocelyn Cheetham, Kenny Wright and Janelle Boyd of Links to Youth and Dani Perry for inviting students to be part of this fantastic opportunity.

**Thinking Brain**

Barwon Learning Centre participated in the Country Areas Program, ‘Thinking Brain.’ The purpose of ‘Thinking Brain’ is for students to learn about the workings of the human brain, including sections of the brain, what makes the brain work effectively and how harming your brain can affect daily life.

Students were given the opportunity to dissect a sheep brain and discover the importance of individual parts of the brain. As part of living a healthy lifestyle participants discovered the affects that abusing your body has on the brain, as well as how to strengthen your mind through ‘Brain Gym’ activities and exercises.

**Aboriginal education**

The Barwon Learning Centre has strived to implement the recommendations of *The National Aboriginal Education and Training Policy - Turning Policy Into Action*. The school continues to use this policy directive to adapt existing practice by embedding Aboriginal perspectives and incorporating pedagogies suitable for Aboriginal students into all Key Learning Areas.

The school is focused on fostering strong links between itself and the local community by being the hub around which many aspects of local lived experience connects to the school. The school actively works with the following programs, initiatives and organisations:

- Aboriginal Teaching and Learning Professional Development
- Miyay Birray Youth Services Inc
- Moree Community Support Services
- Moree Catchment Management Authority, Border Rivers-Gwydir
- Bush Tucker Program
- Pius X Aboriginal Medical Centre Hearing Program
- Kamilaroi Language Program
- Northcott, Northern NSW Region Moree-Supporting Choice & Opportunity
- NAIDOC Day– 40 Years of the Tent Embassy.
- Sorry Day Commemorations
- Apology Anniversary
- Aboriginal Artist In Residence
Closing the Gap in Literacy and Numeracy

Closing the Gap in Literacy and Numeracy is a program that has helped students improve on their learning outcomes. The program gives the whole school the opportunity to:

- Develop a Professional Learning Program supported with Regional Consultants ensuring Aboriginal perspectives are being developed in teaching programs
- Develop a Professional Learning Program in the delivery of teaching and learning in numeracy
- Utilise a SMART board in every classroom and provide every student with a computer to enhance the use of technology in the classroom

Aboriginal Teaching and Learning Professional Development

The Barwon Learning Centre staff and community members have welcomed the professional development of this program. Some of the participating parents and community members have also volunteered to attend the courses offered at Barwon Learning Centre.

- Develop a Professional Teaching and Learning program to support teachers to incorporate pedagogies for Aboriginal students to engage in the classroom
- Increased parent and community engagement through working with Associate Professor Judy Atkinson utilizing the Intergenerational Trauma, and Healing Program

Community Partnerships

Working with partnerships in the community and building relationships with the wider community have been a priority in building capacity in and around our school life.

Miyay Birray Youth Services Inc

Miyay Birray Youth Services Inc has been a strong partner in driving our ‘Fun, Safety and Respect’ Program. The Youth Service has provided support and transport in this program. Our ‘Fun, Safety and Respect’ day programs would not have been as successful without the support their staff and transport provided.

Miyay Birray Youth Services Inc:-

- Provides transport at an affordable rate
- Provides human support on outings
- Helps foster better relationships with children & young people
- Provides a range of holiday activities for children

Moree Community Support Services

Ms Jaye Underwood from the Moree Community Support Service has engaged our school in various activities throughout the region. The activities the students participated in are Bush Tucker Program, Cooking, Nursery and Gardening. We are connecting community services to our school by:

- Increasing community awareness of our school and its purposes
- Engaging in community programs
- Teaching and Learning in the wider community
Moree Catchment Management Authority, Border Rivers-Gwydir

The Border Rivers and Gwydir catchments are rich in Aboriginal cultural heritage and there are a number of recorded objects and places, including:

- Artefact scatters and rock art
- Burial sites
- Scarred and carved trees
- Grinding grooves and middens
- Mission and reserve sites

The Border Rivers-Gwydir Catchment Management Authority (CMA) is working to raise awareness of the importance of protecting Aboriginal sites and artefacts that may be present on private and public property.

BLC has been involved with seed gathering, collection and propagation, and been invited to the Terry Hie Hie recreation site, for the Sticks and Stones book launch.

Bush Tucker Program

Students have been working on sustainable methods to grow and replant vegetation. These projects included:

- The School Calm Garden
- Vegetable Patch from the garden to the kitchen
- Fruit and citrus trees

Corey Crench from The Purple Goanna in Redfern demonstrated cooking modern Indigenous cuisine for parents and children in an outdoor setting at our school.

Moree is a region with a significant Indigenous population and the program empowered young Aboriginals to take responsibility for their health by growing what they eat.

Pius X Aboriginal Medical Centre Hearing Program

Pius X Aboriginal Corporation strives to be a welcoming, community focused organisation delivering culturally appropriate service programs aimed at improving the health and wellbeing of the Aboriginal community.

Students at Barwon Learning Centre were part of two hearing test programs conducted by Pius during the past year. The results of the tests indicated that student hearing had improved while they were at BLC and participating in our daily fruit program. Some of the other programs that were of benefit to the students were:

- Eating Healthy Eating Wise:
Daily Fruit Program
Monday Big Breakfast Program
Nutrition Program
Sports and Recreation Program

Kamilaroi Language Program
During 2012, Walgan (Aunty) Noeline Briggs-Smith, an Aboriginal Historian, volunteered her time and expertise to bring her wealth of knowledge and experience to the future generations of the Kamilaroi mob. Noeline has been a driving force in:

- Kamilaroi Language Lessons
- In getting recognition and acknowledgement for the Kamilaroi Diggers
- Aboriginal Family History and Research

Aboriginal Family Services Northcott, Northern NSW Region Moree-Supporting Choice & Opportunity
Northcott is an innovative and dynamic not-for-profit organisation that provides support to more than 11,400 people with a broad range of disabilities and their families and carers across NSW and the ACT by providing a range of services which promote a genuinely inclusive society. Some people with rare or lesser known disabilities find Northcott to be the only provider of appropriate support and services. We have welcomed Northcott’s friendly staff and services in:

- Attending BLC Staff Meetings to negotiate ways of supporting our families and inter-agency case conferences
- Aboriginal Intensive Crisis Management
- Diagnostic Early Services
- Support Network Program

NAIDOC
2012 National NAIDOC Week Theme

This year’s theme was selected by the National NAIDOC Committee to celebrate the 40th anniversary of the Aboriginal Tent Embassy and acknowledge the key contributors to its long history. The theme for NAIDOC Week 2012 is *Spirit of the Tent Embassy: 40 years on.*

At Barwon Learning Centre this year we took the event to acknowledge the local people in Moree who were the key players in changing history forever. We celebrated the event with:

- Step back in time to the Tent Embassy assembly
- Personal journeys
- Specialised Aboriginal Cuisine

Sorry Day 26th May
Barwon Learning Centre is involved in the Bringing The Children Home process, by initiating and acknowledging the wrongs of the past with many activities in the classroom and community. We address the processes by:

- Stolen Generations Education in our curriculum.
- Consultation with the community.
- Commemorative events.

Apology Anniversary 26th May
BLC celebrated the Anniversary of the former Prime Minister’s Apology to the Stolen Generations. BLC’s involvement in the event was a way to establish a space where personal and community journeys could be acknowledged and reflected upon. In this way BLC is helping to provide a point of connection to the community where the following exchanges occur and can take place:
- Utilising and implementing the Aboriginal Education Policy.
- Consulting the community and stakeholders.
- Acknowledging and celebrating a significant moment in Australian reconciliation.

Aboriginal Artist in Residence

The Barwon Learning Centre identified a talented local artist, Chris Roberts, to create a calmer environment through the painting of wall murals and other artistic projects that depict iconic Aboriginal imagery. This has helped students feel more secure and confident about the learning of Aboriginal culture within their environment, and promoted students’ sense of ownership and belonging.

Multicultural education

At Barwon Learning Centre we endeavor to have children accept and celebrate difference and diversity. This has involved creating an awareness of cultural differences and learning about other cultures.

Food and cooking have been used to create an understanding of different cultures. Our students enjoyed eating Chinese food on an excursion to a local Chinese Restaurant.

National partnership programs

Barwon Learning Centre is a low Socio – Economic Status school and received National Partnership funding in 2012.

Funding was allocated to support the achievement of outcomes in BLC’s five identified priority areas:

- Literacy and Numeracy
- Engagement and attainment
- Aboriginal Education
- Leadership and Teacher Quality
- Student Engagement

Significant funding was allocated to release the Assistant Principal from classroom teaching to work individually with students requiring extra assistance in literacy and numeracy. National Partnership funding also facilitated the employment of a School Learning Support Officer two days per week to assist with literacy and numeracy programs.
Progress on 2012 targets

Target 1
Increase the number of students attempting the NAPLAN tests to increase the amount of data available to the school for human and systems improvement.

All eligible students in Year 3 and Year 5 were supported by Barwon Staff to sit for their NAPLAN tests in their feeder schools.

Target 2
Develop a standard testing program to provide literacy and numeracy data for each student entering and leaving Barwon Learning Centre.

Developing a uniform, whole of school testing and reporting regime has proved problematic during 2012, because of rapidly changing executive personnel. While every student’s literacy and numeracy was assessed, only one third of all students at B.L.C were assessed using objective standardized literacy tools.

Target 3
Increase student literacy levels by a minimum of 20% from their census school scores during their time at BLC.

A demonstrated 95.5% improvement by those students engaged in the PM reading program over their entry, census school reading level.

Target 4
Increase student attendance rates from an average attendance rate of 53% to 70% by November 2012.

Attendance data reveals significant gains have been made with average attendance up to 81.72% an improvement over target by 11.72%

School Evaluation

Educational Management Practices

Leadership

Background

Barwon Learning Centre had experienced many changes in Leadership, with a succession of Relieving Principals, until the appointment on merit of Ms. Margaret Hayes at the commencement of Term 2, 2012. B.L.C underwent a school self-assessment with the purpose of gathering information in relation to Leadership and management at the school to determine needs, future directions and strategies for improvement. All staff members attend daily debriefing sessions, and a weekly staff meeting. All staff members participated in the process, which involved surveys, individual interviews and daily attendance and discussion at debriefing sessions.

Findings and Conclusions

Results of surveys and interviews were examined, and staff responses in debriefing sessions analyzed to find trends and patterns which included the following:

- A strong philosophy exists in the school that affirms students are the main priority
- Throughout 2012 respectful relationships have been developed with all parents and caregivers
- Weekly ‘Fun, Safety and Respect’ Days are highly valued by all staff and are perceived to have improved the quality of relationships with students and helped foster a ‘team’ approach to working with students
- Staff are supported to attend professional learning to enhance their effectiveness
- There are varying staff views in relation to leadership and management
- There is a lack of consistency in following policies
- Disharmony exists between some members as a result of frequent changes in leadership and previously unaddressed personal and professional conflicts
- All staff support the change to reparative methods
• All staff acknowledge the benefit of the daily debriefing session as a way of de-stressing

Future Directions

Recommendations and future directions resulting from the school self-evaluation, which have begun to inform practice, included:

• Staff meeting on ‘Code of Conduct’
• Need for a clear definition of roles and responsibilities of all staff
• Team building exercises to be an ongoing focus at the whole school level
• Develop BLC ‘Core Beliefs and Values’ with all stakeholders and develop policies and procedures for placement, assessment, transition and sharing of information
• Ongoing professional learning for all staff in ‘Calmer Classrooms’ and trauma recovery
• BLC continue to work with Emeritus Professor Judy Atkinson to address intergenerational trauma and healing at an individual, family and community level
• Efforts be made to have all short-term positions filled by permanent staff
• Reverse transfer of duties be negotiated in 2013 to feeder schools to support integration of BLC students and develop partnerships and improve professional linkages between BLC and census schools
• Develop professional learning plans for teachers and support staff based on mutually identified areas for development

Curriculum

Information Communication Technology.

Background

Interactive Whiteboards (IWB’s) have been installed in each of the 3 classrooms, plus the Multi-Purpose Centre. Professional learning facilitated all teachers to regularly utilize technology as a teaching and learning tool in their daily classroom practice.

Findings and Conclusions

• IWB technologies are being effectively used in all classrooms to enhance the teaching of Literacy and Numeracy
• Observational data indicates an increase in student engagement and learning
• Observational supervision indicates BLC students capably and competently using IWB’s and classroom computers during literacy and numeracy activities
• A collegial approach was taken to professional learning, with weekly professional learning provided by a classroom teacher
• All classroom teachers indicate that technology has been a valuable tool in enhancing student learning outcomes
• All students reported positively on the power-point presentation of Friday ‘Fun, Safety and Respect’ Days- as an integral part of weekly school Assembly. BLC students now head our weekly assemblies and competently use the IWB

Future Directions

• Continue to incorporate the interactive classroom as an important component of teaching and learning
• Continue professional learning as technologies evolve
• Continue to identify technology capabilities in individual professional learning plans

Parent, student, and teacher satisfaction

In 2012 the school sought the opinions of parents, students and teachers about the school. Of the 14 parents surveyed, they unanimously responded as being comfortable about contacting
the school and whether they thought their child was happy coming to BLC. The next most common response to the question of what they saw as the best aspect of BLC, was the way they saw their children’s behaviour improve.

In terms of the changes they would like to see at Barwon, most parents indicated none were needed at present, but of the few that suggested change, one parent thought there needed to be a greater academic focus, another thought there should be some outdoor play equipment (like in a park), two parents thought that the Aboriginal Artist in Residence should become a permanent member of staff, but in general the overall impression of the parents being surveyed was that their children’s needs were being met, and that they were content to have a school where they felt welcome to approach staff and have their concerns answered.

The results of the Quality of School Life survey taken by nine of Barwon’s students tell a similar story about BLC as their parents. The 40 questions were answered using a likert scale that ranged from agree to disagree. They were analysed and grouped into seven categories according to their similarity. The results, given in terms of percentage agreement for BLC were as follows :-

- General Satisfaction – 100%
- Negative Affect – 47%
- Achievement – 97%
- Teachers – 93%
- Relevance of Schooling – 98%
- Social Integration – 89%
- Adventure – 98%

Students were generally positive about their schooling experience at Barwon. The category that surveyed students personal feelings (Negative Affect) scored 47%, which indicates that most did not see themselves as being unhappy, lonely, worried, upset or restless. It is no wonder then that given the right environment, where they are understood and their difficulty in behaving well is compensated for, these students rate their school experience in a very positive way.

Frequent changes in leadership had impacted on the buoyancy of staff morale. Throughout 2012 a number of previously unaddressed issues emanating from lack of a shared vision regarding best practice in behaviour management have resolved, with a resultant positive improvement in collegiality. There now exists a shared sense of purpose amongst staff.

**Professional learning**

During 2012 Barwon Learning Centre staff attended a number of varied professional learning activities. A significant focus was work with Associate Professor Judy Atkinson on ‘Intergenerational Trauma and Healing.’ This has been extremely beneficial in developing Staff’s understanding of the impact of trauma in children, families and our Community, and has led to significant changes in the management of inappropriate behaviour.

The introduction of strategies relating to ‘trauma recovery’ has led to significant documented changes in attendance, behaviour and learning outcomes.

**Other Professional Learning activities included:**

- Live Life Well
- Ten - Numeracy intervention
- Rediscovering Grammar workshops
- Thinking Brain
- Small Schools Conference
- Involvement of District Consultants and Aboriginal Education Team meeting individually with all class teachers
- Financial Rollover Training
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

Literacy and Numeracy

Outcomes for 2012–2014

- Increased levels of literacy and numeracy for all students in line with BLC targets
- Increased level of parent participation in supporting the education of their children
- Enhanced Quality Teaching practices to improve student learning outcomes

2013 Targets to achieve this outcome include:

- Increase NAPLAN test participation to increase the data pool available to the school for human and systems improvement
- Increase student literacy levels by a minimum of 20% from their census school scores during their time at Barwon Learning Centre
- Increase student numeracy levels by a minimum of 20% from their census school scores during their time at Barwon Learning Centre

Strategies to achieve these targets include:

- Provide in class mentoring and team teaching by A.P to support the implementation of effective literacy teaching across the school
- Increase the use of interactive whiteboards in all classrooms to improve student engagement in literacy
- Analysis of assessment information on student entry to plan teaching and learning outcomes to meet the student’s needs, monitor progress and reporting
- Shared partnerships with feeder schools

School priority 2

Engagement and Attainment

Outcome for 2012–2014

- Increase the use of ICT across Key Learning Areas
- Increase the amount of on task learning time
- Increase attendance and punctuality of students

2013 Targets to achieve this outcome include:

- Improve the range of subjects available to students at Barwon Learning Centre by a minimum of 20%

Strategies to achieve these targets include:

- Development of strategic and systematic sharing of data and assessments between shared schools, on all students attending Barwon
- Review the student reward system that is focused on positive behaviour, enhanced links with home schools and high engagement in learning
- Continue Friday ‘Fun, Safety & Respect’ Days
- Provide students with stimulating and active learning experiences while also providing appropriate breaks
- Develop a school based teaching and learning framework “The Seven Elements of Teaching and Learning: A classroom guide” based on the NSW Model of Pedagogy (Quality Teaching in NSW Public Schools)
School priority 3
Aboriginal Education
Outcomes for 2012–2014

- Diminish the gap in performance between Aboriginal students and all students based on school assessments
- Increase the capacity of teachers in utilising the Quality Learning Framework in their teaching and assessment practice
- Increase parent participation in supporting the education of their child
- Increase in Aboriginal Community involvement

2013 Targets to achieve this outcome include:

- Increase the number of students attempting the NAPLAN test to increase the amount of data available to the school for human and systems improvement
- Increase student literacy levels by a minimum of 20% from their census school scores during their time at Barwon Learning Centre
- Increase student numeracy levels by a minimum of 20% from their census school scores during their time at Barwon Learning Centre

Strategies to achieve these targets include:

- Implement the Quality Teaching Framework in all teaching areas
- All parents and guardians involved in Personalised Education Plans and school decision making
- Utilise a component of the part time staffing allocation to provide tailored literacy and numeracy programs reflecting an indigenous cultural perspective
- Increased inclusion and participation by parents, carers, elders and community members in school activities and programs
- Implementation of ‘Special Schools as Centres of Expertise’ project with BLC project ‘Listening with, Working with Parents and Community’
- Shared partnerships with feeder schools

School priority 4
Leadership and Teacher Quality
Outcomes for 2012–2014

- Strengthen teacher capacity in the Quality Teaching Framework
- Improved use of data to track student achievement
- Increase the evaluation and reporting of student progress in all Key Learning Areas

2013 Targets to achieve this outcome include:

- Develop a testing and reporting program to provide literacy and numeracy data for each student entering and leaving Barwon Learning Centre

Strategies to achieve these targets include:

- Support early career teachers through links with mainstream Head Teacher Mentors and Professional Development programs
- All new scheme teachers are assisted in achieving accreditation with the N.S.W Teachers Institute
- Implement systems and practices in the school culture that enhances staff feelings of being valued, appreciated and professionally accountable
- Develop units of work that implement aspects of the ‘hidden curriculum’ to promote formal curriculum outcomes
- Investigate ‘transfer of duty’ days of CT’s to base school of Barwon students
- Develop BLC ‘Core Beliefs and Values’ with all stakeholders and develop policies and procedures for placement, assessment, transition and sharing of information
- Return to Base School
School priority 5

Student Attendance

Outcomes for 2012–2014

- Increased achievement with literacy and numeracy
- Reduction in classroom behaviour incidences linked to poor attendance and engagement

2013 Targets to achieve this outcome include:

- Increase student attendance rates from approximately 53% to 70% by November, 2012
- Increase student attendance rates from approximately 81% to 88% by November, 2013

Strategies to achieve these targets include:

- Phone intervention program for absenteeism
- Consistent timely follow-up of student absences both by teaching and administration staff.
- Review of school practices and procedures and staff training on the encouragement of attendance.
- Improved links with the Home School Liaison program
- Incorporate ppt presentation of Friday ‘Fun, Safety and Respect’ day at weekly Monday Assembly
- Staff, Parent and Community Professional Learning on Intergenerational Trauma & Healing
- Investigate funding options to implement and research a five year project addressing Intergenerational Trauma and Healing
- Creation of ‘calm classrooms’ using trauma recovery processes
- Focus on appropriate diagnosis and referrals for individual students and families

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.

Margaret Hayes, Principal
Belinda French, Teacher Special Project
Kenneth Barendse, Teacher on Secondment
Elizabeth Murdoch, Classroom Teacher
Mari Wikstrom, School Administrative Manager
Kim Lawson, Parent
William Walker, Community member

School contact information
Barwon Learning Centre
Lot 269, Carol Avenue, Moree NSW 2400
Ph: (02)67511573
Fax: (02)67511579
Email: barwlonlc-s.school@det.nsw.edu.au
Web: www.barwlonlc-s.schools.nsw.edu.au
School Code: 5762

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: