

Gympie Central State School

School Annual Report: - 2007

 <p>Turning young children into LIFELONG LEARNERS</p>	PO address	20 Lawrence Street, Gympie, 4570.
	Phone	(07)54802111
	Fax	(07)54802100
	Email	svanw4@eq.edu.au
	Website	www.gympcentss.ed.edu.au

Principal's foreword

Introduction

Being Principal of this school in 2007 allowed me to share in the excitement of the introduction of Prep. We were blessed with a brand new, exceptionally spacious facility and an excellent Prep team to match. That worked well to ensure our first group of young people had an excellent start to what is now 13 years of schooling. Thank you to teacher, Sue Curran and Teacher Aides, Cynthia Van Rensburg and Kerri Laycock.

Throughout the year teachers have provided outstanding learning programs to guide all students towards achieving their potential. These Programs included a Year 5 camp to Barambah Environmental Centre, Year 7 camp to Luther Heights, Gifted and Talented Programs in I.C.T for the older students and Science for the younger students and countless extra-curricular and sporting activities that allowed different passions to be followed and enhanced in student learning. Our student leaders Kara Godwin, Tom Lade and Claire Sachs were commendable across the whole year for their dedication to their role of student leadership.

The mid-year departure of two staff who accepted the Career Change Program meant staff changes, one of which facilitated the introduction of a young graduate to our teaching ranks. This graduate left the school at the end of the year to teach overseas. The role of STLD / CCT was more difficult to replace and so a series of one off learning support programs occurred for the remainder of the year, self nominated staff undertook specific CCT projects.

The school enjoyed success with representatives in various zone and regional arenas and achieved high results musically, participating in both the Eisteddfod and Fanfare.

A program with a difference was created focusing on A.T.S.I. Education. This was led by Mrs Josephine Frost who occupied the role of Head of Curriculum / Support Teacher Learning Difficulties. With the support of I.E.S.I.P. Aide Carmel Hole, students were introduced to cultural myths and legends and the world of Indigenous Art.

Without exception, our students received rave reviews on the way they conducted themselves each and every time they left the school on excursions.

Mrs Stella Macklin's passion for the environment saw the school in print on multiple occasions and saw local areas, as well as the school grounds, benefit from the input of her students.

A consistent source of pride remains the level of parent support in classrooms. Parents (and some grandparents too) were always here, whether they were listening to children read, working in the tuckshop, helping with junior school activity sessions or organizing Book Club or book packs. The level of parent support that we received for every function we held was inspiring. Whether it was at the Leadership Presentation Ceremony, Anzac Day ceremony or Spring Fair, we always had a wonderful crowd. Many functions were only successful due to the wonderful support provided by our P and C.

A substantial Community Development Grant was received and Mr Andy Troy, (Schools Officer- new name for Groundscare position) facilitated a project that changed the face of the front of the school to a very aesthetic grounds area. A gazebo and substantial rainforest area was created and is currently growing in order to have a beautiful outdoor area where community members can meet, instrumental music lessons can occur and teachers can take their students to do D.E.A.R. time.

We were notified late in the year that we had lost our entitlement to our Business Service Manager (Registrar) position and so plans commenced for how the loss of this position would impact the least on office staff and school functioning in general.

The consistent loss of enrolments over ten years approximately finally meant that in 2008 we would reduce the number of classroom teachers as we would no longer have enough children to maintain the 12 classes that we had in 2006 and this year. To accommodate the loss of a teacher, a higher number of composite classes would eventuate in 2008. We avoided the need to address the loss of a teacher with staff as Mrs Gwen Huth (existing staff member) was reassigned to a Brisbane school on a temporary basis due to personal circumstances.

A very sad time for us occurred in August when a year 7 student, Alyssa Weir was accidentally killed at Borumba Dam. I was overcome by the care and compassion of our students, staff and community throughout this period. It was my honour and that of the child's teacher to be accompanied by 16 female students to Alyssa's Murgon funeral and furthermore that four of those students; Shannon Boyd, Monica Lilley, Claire Sachs and Zoe Hayslep played 'Abide With Me', both at the commencement and conclusion of the ceremony. They showed resilience and courage in what we all hope would only be an adult experience. A personal school service for the senior students was also held to commemorate Alyssa's death.

Highlights

Staff as a Team

Our staff was a unique combination of men and women/extremely passionate, capable practitioners. All students, regardless of ability were taken along a learning continuum to advance in all K.L.A. areas across the course of the full school year. This customized learning approach took students towards achieving their full potential.

Staff strengths were capitalized upon via a team teaching approach in I.C.T., The Arts, etc. The well-being of staff is an intrinsic element in our success. When needed, staff filled in for each other, taking extra duties, etc. The willingness to consistently share knowledge, skills and resources was a key feature towards achieving our aim of working smarter, not harder.

All staff valued their interactions with parents and the wider community as stakeholders who are instrumental in the success of our work. Time and energy was put into ensuring these relationships remained positive and thrived within our learning environment.

These advancements were an explicit reflection of the positive and productive partnerships that exist both internally within our school team and in the broader community.

School Opinion Survey Data reflected and confirmed this improvement.

Student Behaviour

Another key success continues to be the unified approach to behaviour. As staff we set standards and followed these through on every occasion. On a daily basis we reminded students that their attendance at this school insisted that they were consistently respectful, responsible and reliable and that whenever a Teacher, Teacher-Aide or volunteer parent asked them to do something they did it.

This has paid untold dividends as students' behaviour was channeled into a positive direction where co-operation was paramount.

This will be further enhanced in 2008 where we will extend our expectations further to include the Habits of Mind eg Persistence, Listening with Understanding and Empathy and Managing Impulsivity etc

Excellence in Music

As Principal it was awe inspiring to have not just a senior, junior and sacred choirs in our school but also a senior and junior band. They sang and played at various presentations and ceremonies throughout the year. Their talents were also shared at Fanfare and the Eisteddfod.



Our students who engaged in Instrumental Music demonstrated initiative, competence and dedication in their tasks, shared their abilities and allowed others to appreciate the fruits of their labours.

The enhancement and enrichment of all other learning has occurred through involvement in The Arts, such as Music, Art and Drama and all that it offers. Mrs Katherine Palm (Music Teacher) ended the year pregnant and as such that meant another departure of a Music teacher albeit for a limited period of time (ie. semester one 2008) Ken Wilkins fulfilled another year as Choir Master and as such we were again treated to the results of his musical expertise on multiple occasions across the year.

Key outcomes and goals achieved

The Learning Support section of our school operated well for semester one. In the later half of 2007 however it was difficult to find someone who wanted to occupy this role and as such multiple one off programs were generated that supported the education of specific student groups from given year levels for a specific period of time only.

Our Junior school staff conducted a program of excellence. Their weekly activities sessions, which incorporated all classes, engaged a large number of volunteer parents and grandparents. These productive partnerships generated across their daily routines, with parents being regular visitors in all classrooms.

A unit on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Island Culture was once again taught across year 6/7 level -with turtle shells (found on walks) and boomerangs made by my dad being real- life stuff to generate interest and excitement about this very important part of our culture .

Co-operative planning across year levels occurred to enhance existing integrated units developed throughout 2006.

Future outlook

A new person, Sally Rankine won the position of Head of Curriculum / Support Teacher Learning Difficulties (Learning Support Teacher), and as such we look forward to the structure returning to Learning Support and Curriculum Development in 2008.



Our school profile

School Profile



Situated in the heart of Gympie city, our 138 year old school provided a well balanced curriculum to our 288 students. Gympie Central is a co-educational facility.

A family atmosphere was fostered where parents feel welcome and valued and children and parents respect staff and what they consistently do for their children.

Our greatest asset was our exceptional staff, all capable and functioning at a high level. We also had visiting support personnel who regularly went above and beyond the call of duty in their daily interactions with our children.

Our curriculum was “integrated” via a blend of eight key learning areas (eg. Maths, English, Science etc) and the qualities of Lifelong Learners (eg. thinkers, communicators, reflectors, participators, etc).

Behaviour Management saw great improvements across 2006 and this provided further benefit in 2007 with the number of suspensions being greatly reduced.

Professional Development accessed by staff has been commendable with most staff undertaking the opportunity.

The “integrated curriculum” was enhanced in 2007.

School Opinion Surveys in 2007 sang our praise across the board.

Triennial School Review occurred in 2007 with the support and involvement of staff, students and community.

Parent involvement was high across the school.

Parents worked in classrooms and consistently provided support for, and at, all functions.

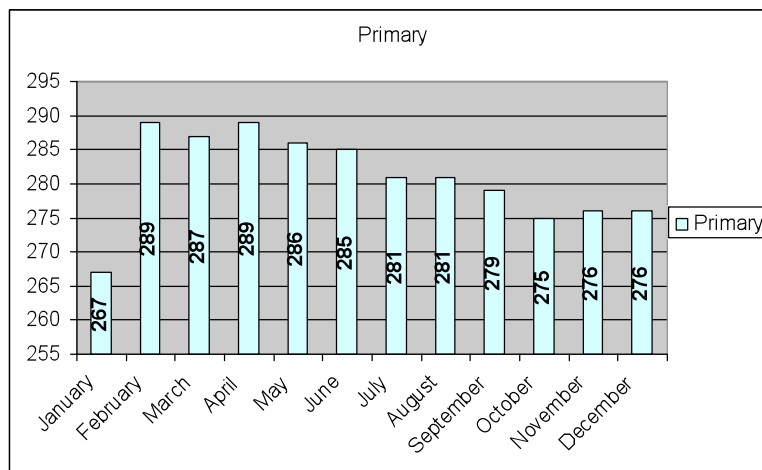
We had a P&C group that functioned well throughout the whole year led by President Vicki Hutley. Julie Jones, Stephanie Butler and Julie Austin comprised the remainder of the Executive.

We initiated an A.S.D. network in 2006 to invite parents into the school to discuss any issues or concerns they may have. This worked well with ten people consistently attending and continued throughout 2007.

Our children came from a range of backgrounds with a small number of A.T.S.I. students. A.T.S.I. education was a priority in 2007 with programs of Excellence occurring in semester one.

- *In 2007 we had the following class structure:*
- *1 x Prep group*
- *2 x year 1 classes*
- *1 x year 2 class*
- *1 x year 2/3 class*
- *1 x year 3 class*
- *1 x year 4/5 composite*
- *1 x year 5 class*
- *3 x year 6/7 composites*
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- *In 2008 we will have the following class structure:*
- *1xPrep class*
- *1 x year 1 classes*
- *2 x year 2 class*
- *1 x year 3 class*
- *1 x year 3/ 4 composite*
- *1 x year 4/5 composite*
- *1 x year 5 class*
- *1 x year 6 class*
- *1 x year 6/7 classes*
- *1 x year 7 class*
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- *All classes are co-educational*

Enrolment Summary 2007



Curriculum offerings

- *Extensive instrumental music program*
- *Senior and Junior choir*
- *Senior and Junior band*
- *Excursions- River Trips, Underwater World, Australia Zoo, Museum.*
- *Special Needs Withdrawal group each Wednesday- Life Skills, Project Work, experienced based.*
- *One classroom – digital*
- *Year 6/7 classrooms ran with a computer base*
- *Enhanced in-class inclusive approach to special needs*
- *A Resource Centre which supports teachers and compliments student learning*

Social climate

In 2007 the school climate and school-community relationships continued on a high with parents expressing satisfaction way above state and like school means. They acknowledged school staff are readily available to discuss their children, that they have multiple and consistent opportunities to participate in school life, that they have a voice in school operations and are always welcome and receive ample communication about their school and all that goes on within it.

Parents expressed satisfaction with behaviour management processes, the safety of their children while at school and the discipline strategies used when misbehaviour does occur. They also expressed approval in the fairness with which their children were treated.

Our partnerships are productive and serving to enhance the education of our students.

Parents and the community

Open communication stands out as a key operational success factor - while parents are invited to make appointments to see me, more often than not I am able to accommodate them immediately or within a short period of time after their arrival. This builds relationships and trust automatically.

If they phoned with a concern, same day appointments were made and this avoided issues festering and growing bigger.

Communication was also facilitated through a lengthy newsletter each week called the "Thursday Tidings". This painted a positive picture of what was happening at school and consistently provided invitations to presentations and events.

Another key strategy was acknowledging parent involvement via two "Thank You to the Volunteers" morning teas that occurred in terms 1 and 4. Individual certificates were presented and a photographic display of student items and their presence was shared via a foyer display.

Welcoming teachers who train parents as to what is required in their room and then access their support consistently created productive partnerships that remain for years and certainly serves to enhance outcomes.

The warmth and diligence of our P&C and our tuckshop convenor, Lesley Nissen continued to ensure that support in the tuckshop was maximized.

All school events achieved a high attendance where financial goals for further resources and facilities were consistently attained with purchases made to enhance our environment eg. Two water coolers

Our survey results confirmed our success with parents across the board and we worked consistently at building and maintaining this positive aspect of our school.



Our staff profile

Key outcomes in the early and middle years

Results in the Year 2 Diagnostic Net

Performance measures: percentage of students not requiring additional support	
Strands	Result (%) 2007
Reading	97%
Writing	91%
Number	85%

Our reading, writing and numeracy results for the Queensland Year 3, 5 and 7 Literacy and Numeracy Tests.

Strands	Measures	Results for 2007		
		Year 3	Year 5	Year 7
Reading	<i>School average on Queensland Test</i>	524	608	670
	<i>Queensland average</i>	527	606	672
	<i>Percentage of students at school above national benchmark</i>	2007 94%	78%	100%
		2006 95%	78%	87%
Writing	<i>School average on Queensland Test</i>	499	594	608
	<i>Queensland average</i>	523	600	681
	<i>Percentage of students at school above national benchmark</i>	2007 84%	94%	89%
		2006 97%	90%	100%
Numeracy	<i>School average on Queensland Test</i>	525	566	643
	<i>Queensland average</i>	521	588	648
	<i>Percentage of students at school above national benchmark</i>	2007 97%	81%	77%
		2006 87%	80%	84%

Competitions:

Westpac Maths Competition: 1 High Distinction (1 x year 5) and 16 Credits (across year 3-7)

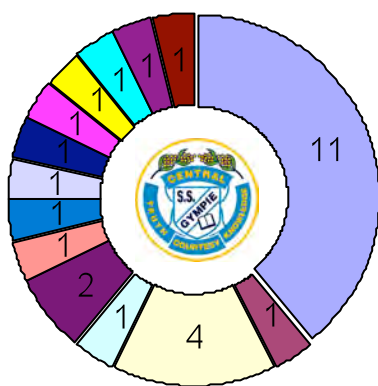
University of NSW Spelling : 4 Credits (2 x year 5, 1x year 6, 1 x year 7)

University of NSW English : 6 Credits (3 x year 5, 2 x year 7)

Professional engagement in 2007

- *Distinctive skills of the teaching staff*
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- *strong behavioural management*
- *one teacher highly skilled in Apple Computers*
- *one classroom teacher takes choir*
- *one teacher does sport at break times*
- *one teacher aide is exceptional using computers*
- *skilled Special Needs teacher aides in 2007*
- *one teacher organises teacher/student volleyball games*
- *one teacher organises teacher/student netball games*
- *several staff are talented musicians/singers (including groundsperson/registrar)*
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- *Staff development priorities for 2008*
-
- *Literacy development*
- *A.T.S.I. Culture- enhanced engagement of Indigenous students*
- *Queensland Curriculum and Reporting Framework (QCARF)*

Teaching Staff Qualifications



- Diploma of Primary Teaching
- Bachelor of Early Childhood Education
- Bachelor of Education
- Diploma of Education
- Bachelor of Arts
- Graduate Diploma in Primary Teaching
- Teachers College Diploma-Trained Teachers Certificate
- Graduate Diploma in Educational Administration
- Certificate of General Teaching High School
- Second Year Teaching Certificate
- Bachelor of Economics
- Certificate of Teaching
- Bachelor of Education - Secondary
- Australian Music Exam Board

Gympie Central State School - information at Feb 07

Staff involved in production of the S.A.R

Mrs Sue Curran	-	Prep Teacher
Ms Kay Skinner	-	Year One Teacher
Ms Jenny Thomas	-	Year Two Teacher
Mrs Ros Wilson	-	Year Two Teacher
Mrs Diane Perrett	-	Year Three Teacher
Mrs Gaye Martin	-	Year Three / Four Teacher
Ms Alison Lynch	-	Year Three / Four Teacher
Mrs Debby Garrett	-	Year Four / Five Teacher
Mrs Stella Macklin	-	Year Five Teacher
Mrs Sue Stephens	-	Year Six Teacher
Mr Victor Luck	-	Year Six / Seven Teacher
Mr Ken Wilkins	-	Year Seven Teacher
Ms Robyn Whitnall	-	Teacher Librarian
Mr Anthony Schofield	-	Physical Education Specialist

School Profile Summary

Co-educational Facility

Total School Enrolments for 2007	:-	276
Year levels offered	:-	Prep to Year 7
Expenditure on and Teacher participation in Professional Development:-		approx \$10 000
Percentage of Teachers involved in Professional Development	:	88%
Proportion of Teaching staff retained from the previous school year. ie. from the end of the 2006 school year	:	71% retained
Student Attendance ie. the average attendance rate as a percentage in 2007	:	95%
Average Teaching staff attendance in 2007	:	97%