2009 Annual School Report
North Sydney Demonstration School

NSW Public Schools – Leading the way
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.

Sophie Melton, Principal (Relieving)
Myra Wearne, Deputy Principal (Relieving)
Ashley Grimmond, Deputy Principal (Relieving)
Mystie Smith, Assistant Principal
Denise Kingsmill, Assistant Principal
Nigel Pearn, Reading Recovery & Drama Teacher

School contact information

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School Code: 2766

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:
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Principal's message

I would like to begin the 2009 Annual School Report by acknowledging the Kameraigal people who are the Traditional Custodians of the land upon which North Sydney Demonstration School (NSDS) is located.

2009 was a year of change and renewal. At the conclusion of Term 1, Jennie Fogarty, the school’s long standing and well-regarded principal took up a senior leadership position within the NSW Department of Education and Training. I relieved as principal for the remainder of 2009 working alongside a wonderful executive team. I was delighted on the final teaching day of the 2009 year to announce that Myra Wearne had been appointed as the new principal for 2010.

In 2009 academic results were strong across all Key Learning Areas reflecting the passionate commitment of our teachers to improving student outcomes. The school continued to provide a rich set of opportunities for students to demonstrate excellence outside of the classroom: from our student leadership program to a wide range of extra-curricular, sporting and creative activities.

A particular highlight of 2009 was the implementation of our Healthy Active program under the supervision of Ashley Grimmond. The dynamic program of events energised staff and students around a common cause: securing a healthier future for our children. Many activities were integrated with the school’s ongoing commitment to environmental sustainability and it was a pleasure to watch the gardens grow as much as the children.

A team of teachers worked through the year to develop a model of conceptual programming for implementation in 2010. Their work places us in line with leading educational research regarding the design of meaningful and sequential learning experiences for children.

In 2009 the introduction of a National Partnerships agreement between State and Federal Governments to improve Australian students’ educational outcomes provided the school and the University of Sydney with an opportunity to clarify the nature and operation of our partnership. With the support of the university, our teachers were involved in a variety of collaborative inquiry projects focussed on improving student outcomes.

Our P&C have continued to be a bedrock of support – both financial and emotional – for staff and students in 2009. It is their involvement in the school and the shared sense of the educational enterprise that makes NSDS a very special place indeed.

The Annual School Report for 2009 documents the specific achievements at the school.

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.

Sophie Melton
Principal (Acting.)

P&C message

2009 was a busy yet very rewarding year for the P&C at the Dem. Our key objective never changes: ultimately we exist to benefit the children who attend this school, support their families and widen the school community.

We are in a privileged position to be able to contribute at such a high level to our school. In 2009 we continued our commitments and responsibilities to:

- The School Tuck Shop
- The School Uniform Shop
- Fundraising and Social Events
- The School’s “Wish-list”
- The School’s “Working Bees”
- The Dem Directory
- Advertising in the school’s weekly newsletter
- P&C School Surveys
- The management of parent financial contributions
Collaboratively working with the school to achieve common goals

In 2009 the P & C raised over $145,000 and spent almost $124,000 for the benefit of the school community. Working together as a team we successfully achieved the following outcomes:

- $52,000 to support the provision of classroom teaching and learning resources
- $45,000 to provide technology infrastructure in classrooms
- $5500 for furniture for outdoor learning centres in the playground
- $6000 to fund the Mathletics program for every child at the school
- $8500 towards teachers’ classroom budgets
- $750 for working bees
- $6000 for glazing the windows in Pacific Building
- the installation of new storage cabinets in the Uniform Shop
- refurbishment of the cabinets in the Tuck Shop

PLUS we co-ordinated the acquisition of many more resources for the school through our well-received and extremely successful Wish List.

Through our co-ordination of external grants we were able to install ceiling insulation in all our buildings and solar panels on our roofs.

We conducted two additional school surveys that sought feedback from the community on key learning areas in the school and determined general satisfaction levels regarding the operation of the Uniform Shop.

I believe that our P&C continues to be a good forum for liaison with the school, for the exchange of ideas between parents and the school and for creating opportunities that enable all parents to participate and contribute.

Andrea Roberts
P&C President

Student Representative Council (SRC)

Student voice is valued at North Sydney Demonstration School. In 2009, the Student Representative Council (SRC) was coordinated by Miss Norrie, Miss Derrig, Miss Machuca and Miss Wall and led by the Student Executive. Each semester, two representatives from Kindergarten to year 5 were chosen to represent their class in the SRC meetings.

All members of the student executive team were trained in their respective roles and meeting procedures and adhered to them during SRC meetings.

Our school leaders had roles and responsibilities throughout the course of the year that included fundraising, leading primary assemblies and speaking at Kindergarten Orientation Days. Our SRC leaders were actively involved in a wide range of fundraising activities. These were as follows:

- Bake for Bushfires: raising money for families affected by the bushfires in Melbourne
- Funds for Nikko: the school’s World Vision sponsorship
- Switch Day: raising funds for the School Of St Jude
- Talent Fest: raising funds for Stewart House

In addition to actively promoting fundraising events (for the school community), the SRC met weekly to discuss school issues and how the group could help improve the school. These opportunities allowed the students to not only demonstrate an interest in their school and community life, but to also develop and foster leadership skills.

B. Norrie & D. Machuca

Towards 2010

“If you are leading and no one is following, then you are only taking a walk.” This was said by an Indian president, Mahatma Ghandi, and is completely true. In 2010 we see our school as a place with open arms and when locked doors appear the student executive are going to be there to help. We have a vision where every student has a voice and we are looking forward to making this happen.

Angela Smith & Griffin Cant

2010 Student Executive Members Elect.

School context

Student information

Student enrolment profile

In 2009, 639 students were enrolled at North Sydney Demonstration School. 52% of students

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1 It is a requirement that the reporting of information for all students must be consistent with privacy and personal information policies.
came from language backgrounds other than English.

Student attendance profile

In 2009 average student attendance rates at North Sydney Demonstration School exceeded both the state and region.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
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<td>94.0</td>
<td>94.1</td>
<td>92.1</td>
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Management of non-attendance

By law parents and caregivers must give an explanation for any student absences. The school has several ways that caregivers may notify the school of a child’s absence including; by phone, fax or email or by delivering a note to the teacher on return to school. For longer absences of more than 15 days of leave in a year (excluding sickness) caregivers must apply several weeks in advance for an exemption from attendance at school. All absence notes, faxes and emails are filed and kept for examination and monitoring by the home school liaison officer. Any phone calls to the office are also logged and kept.

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 class sizes at NSDS as reported at the 2009 class size audit conducted on Wednesday 18 March 2009.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Roll</th>
<th>Class</th>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Total per Year</th>
<th>Total in Class</th>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>1</td>
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<td>22</td>
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<td>2MS</td>
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<td>2SH</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2TW</td>
<td>2</td>
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</tr>
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</tr>
<tr>
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<tr>
<td>4MW</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>31</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Staff information

North Sydney Demonstration School continues to attract high calibre and dedicated staff who demonstrate professionalism, dedication and an ongoing commitment to professional learning and professional achievement.

In 2009 our staff have remained committed to developing and evaluating innovative and evidence based teaching programs. Student welfare and the development of a well balanced curriculum that meets the needs of all students remains a priority with staff.

Staff establishment

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Position</th>
<th>Number</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Principal</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deputy Principal(s)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Assistant Principal(s)</td>
<td>4</td>
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<tr>
<td>Classroom Teachers</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher of Reading Recovery</td>
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<tr>
<td>Support Teacher Learning Assistance</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher Librarian</td>
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<tr>
<td>Teacher of ESL</td>
<td>1.4</td>
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<td>Specialist Teachers (Language, Art, Music, PDH, Drama)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Counsellor</td>
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<tr>
<td>School Administrative &amp; Support Staff</td>
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<tr>
<td>(SASS)</td>
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<td>Total</td>
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</table>

There were no Indigenous staff members in 2009.

Teacher qualifications

All teaching staff meet the professional requirements for teaching in NSW public schools. All teachers have as a minimum a degree or diploma and 42% of teachers have postgraduate qualifications.

The Advisory Committee (AdCom)

The North Sydney Demonstration School – University of Sydney partnership has endured for 34 years. The partnership is the framework that keeps the university in touch with schools and the school in touch with developments in pre-service teacher curriculum. In 2009 we began with the metaphor of tidal flow to describe the movement of knowledge between our two institutions along the long stretch of shared history and intellectual territory. In 2009 we:

- operated as a supported site for critical exchange between the DET and University
- used the university’s stock of cultural /educational capital to defend the widest definition of what excellence in education looks like.
- strengthened the flow of school based knowledge back to the Academy
- unpacked / made transparent / improved classroom teaching practice
- unpacked / made transparent / improved university teaching practice
- provided a training ground for educational researchers
- clustered and supported DET teachers doing higher degrees
- strategically deployed university and DET funding models to further support the original aims of the agreement

In 2009, the school worked with numerous university students undertaking professional experiences in our school. We supported three Honours level research projects, participated in Prof. Robyn Ewing’s and Dr Andrew Martin’s quantitative research project into reading gains and readers’ theatre, presented a paper at the national Australian Teachers Education Association (ATEA’ 09) conference, ran two school-based reading groups on mentoring and formative feedback, partnered the university to deliver its new Pilot Mentoring Program, ran three action research projects driven from within the school and coached / mentored by university staff, supported school staff to present and tutor at many undergraduate and graduate seminars at the University and supported those staff undertaking or interested in undertaking higher degrees from the school.

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

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

Date of financial summary: 30/11/2009

**Income**

- Balance brought forward: $194,642.87
- Global funds: $320,899.58
- Tied funds: $174,752.30
- School & community sources: $506,888.36
- Interest: $10,326.70
- Trust receipts: $86,594.30
- Canteen: $0.00

**Total income**: $1,294,104.11

**Expenditure**

- Teaching & learning
  - Key learning areas: $130,917.69
  - Excursions: $82,668.89
  - Extracurricular dissections: $164,738.60
- Library: $2,011.01
- Training & development: $23,894.83
- Tied funds: $221,140.00
- Casual relief teachers: $76,605.23
- Administration & office: $142,421.19
- School-operated canteen: $0.00
- Utilities: $52,212.78
- Maintenance: $80,412.85
- Trust accounts: $89,509.54
- Capital programs: $26,474.00

**Total expenditure**: $1,093,006.61

**Balance carried forward**: $201,097.50

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.

School performance 2009

Achievements

**Arts**

In 2009 a diverse and rich series of art opportunities were offered to students.

The school’s focus on music education saw teachers participate in percussion training on staff development day, which was then reinforced with an ‘artist in residence’ program for each student and class in Term Four. New instruments, funded by the P&C, increased access and the quality of music education delivered in classrooms. The schools bands, ensembles and choirs represented the school at the Choral Festival, Ryde School Spectacular, school assemblies and the Opera House. The school continued to participate in the nationwide ‘Song for a Day’ project which saw the Senior Choir perform live from the Opera House steps.

As part of a University of Sydney research grant which sought to examine the quantitative effects of Reader’s Theatre drama strategies on reading comprehension, students from stages one and two had the opportunity to appreciate, perform and share these skills with our partnership schools, Curl Curl North and Manly West Public Schools. The project culminated in a Creative Arts Festival celebrating the work and creativity of the students through drama and literacy.

Junior Rock Eisteddfod provided the opportunity for more than one hundred students from years three to six to share their love of dance and performance with the community and schools from around New South Wales. This year’s performance conjured the Aboriginal dreamtime story of ‘Tiddalik’. The incredible work, effort and performance of students and staff earned the school awards of excellence for realisation of concept, costuming and set design and function.

Students’ excellence in Visual Arts was also recognised in 2009 with stage three students attending the Gifted and Talented Visual Arts Camp and an exhibition of students’ work at the Art’s North Visual Arts Festival. Professional development opportunities for teachers in the Visual Arts continued to diversify the range of techniques, skills and subject matter offered to students in their ongoing arts education.

**Healthy Active**

In 2009 NSDS was awarded $172,000 from The Federal Department of Health & Ageing, as part of their Healthy Active Children initiative.
As a result fourteen projects were conducted at NSDS including Fitness for Fruit, lunchtime games, a healthy breakfast bar, class sport sessions and a Cooking for Buddies program. We also grew a basketball program and now have five school teams competing in a local competition.

Preliminary and accumulative data has been collected across all projects and will inform the final reporting phase in 2010. Students have experienced an increase in fitness options and have an increased awareness and appreciation of healthy eating options. The program has allowed students, staff and the wider NSDS community to make important connections between physical activity, healthy food and improved, healthier lifestyles. Sustainability was an important feature of our program, and important infrastructure and systems have been established, providing a solid framework for continued growth in the areas of health and fitness for our school community.

Conceptual Planning

In 2009 a team of teachers implemented an innovative model of collaborative programming in their respective grade teams. This model focused on increasing student’s conceptual understanding in the areas of Human Society and its Environment and Science.

As part of this initiative, teachers designed units of work that promoted intellectual quality and engaged students in meaningful and authentic learning experiences based around concepts including; identity, heritage and representations. A number of these learning programs were shared with other schools in the Northern Sydney Region.

At the end of 2009, a whole school scope and sequence based on conceptual programming was designed with the aim of a full implementation in 2010. This scope and sequence will allow students to develop concepts throughout their school journey and is aimed at enhancing the quality of student outcomes through a focus on promoting intellectual quality.

NAPLAN

In 2009, 78 year three students and 75 year five students participated in the National Assessment Program for Literacy and Numeracy. Once again North Sydney Demonstration School has exceeded both the state and like school groups in the average growth achieved by year 5 students. These average growth figures consider the growth experienced by those students who sat the test at North Sydney Demonstration School in both 2007 and 2009. As North Sydney Demonstration School experiences high mobility in student numbers this is an important statistic for the school when evaluating the success of teaching and learning programs.

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)

NAPLAN Year 3

Year three performed well in the 2009 NAPLAN with 68% of students achieving in the top two bands in literacy, 71% of students achieving in the top two bands of numeracy and approximately 98% achieving the minimum standard.
Literacy – NAPLAN Year 3

Percentage of students in bands:
Year 3 reading

<table>
<thead>
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<th>Percentage in band</th>
<th>School average 2007 - 2009</th>
<th>State average 2009</th>
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Percentage of students in bands:
Year 3 spelling

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<tr>
<th>Band</th>
<th>Percentage in band</th>
<th>School average 2007 - 2009</th>
<th>State average 2009</th>
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Percentage of students in bands:
Year 3 writing

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<th>School average 2007 - 2009</th>
<th>State average 2009</th>
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Percentage of students in bands:
Year 3 grammar and punctuation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Band</th>
<th>Percentage in band</th>
<th>School average 2007 - 2009</th>
<th>State average 2009</th>
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</table>
Year five performed well in the 2009 NAPLAN with 59% of students achieving in the top two bands in literacy, 50% of students achieving in the top two bands of numeracy and approximately 92% achieving the minimum standard.

Literacy – NAPLAN Year 5

Numeracy – NAPLAN Year 3
Progress in literacy

Average progress in reading for matched students*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2005 – 07</th>
<th>2006 - 08</th>
<th>2007 – 09</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>School</td>
<td>93.9</td>
<td>95.5</td>
<td>95.5</td>
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<tr>
<td>LSG</td>
<td>87.5</td>
<td>86.4</td>
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<tr>
<td>State</td>
<td>86.6</td>
<td>87.5</td>
<td>88.4</td>
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</table>

Average progress in writing for matched students*

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<th>2005 - 07</th>
<th>2006 - 08</th>
<th>2007 – 09</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>School</td>
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<td>71.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LSG</td>
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<tr>
<td>State</td>
<td>76.1</td>
<td>69.3</td>
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Progress in numeracy

Average progress in numeracy for matched students*

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<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2005 – 07</th>
<th>2006 - 08</th>
<th>2007 – 09</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>School</td>
<td>95.9</td>
<td>108.7</td>
<td>118.9</td>
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<tr>
<td>LSG</td>
<td>87.9</td>
<td>84.4</td>
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<tr>
<td>State</td>
<td>80.4</td>
<td>77.3</td>
<td>93.4</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Percentage of Year 3 students achieving at and above minimum standard</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reading</td>
<td>97</td>
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<tr>
<td>Writing</td>
<td>99</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spelling</td>
<td>99</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Punctuation and grammar</td>
<td>97</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Numeracy</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Percentage of Year 5 students achieving at or above the minimum standard in 2009

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subject</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reading</td>
<td>90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Writing</td>
<td>90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spelling</td>
<td>94</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Punctuation and grammar</td>
<td>92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Numeracy</td>
<td>95</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

International Competitions and Assessments for Schools (ICAS)

ICAS provides an opportunity for students from Year 3 – 12 to gain a measure of their academic achievement in an external testing situation. The assessments provide teachers, parents and students with comprehensive reporting of results in the areas of Computer Skills, English, Mathematics, Science, Spelling and Writing.

This year North Sydney Demonstration School continued to invite parents of students in Years 3, 5, 6 to self-nominate entrance into the ICAS competitions. The school also undertook to enrol all grade four students in the ICAS Maths / English / Science assessments to give us valuable educational growth data for children in the year between the Year 3 and Year 5 National Assessment Programs in Literacy, Numeracy and Scientific Literacy (NAPLAN, NAP-SL).

UNSW certificates are awarded for each year level as follows:

- High Distinction (HD) to the top 1% of entrants
- Distinction (D) to the next 10% of entrants
- Credit (Cr) to the next 25% of entrants
- Participation (P) to all other participating students.

Our school results were as follows:

- English: 172 students: 5 HD, 19 D, 53 Cr
- Maths: 187 students: 2 HD, 40 D, 61 Cr
- Comp Skills: 111 students: 1 HD, 3 D, 46 Cr
- Science: 156 students: 4 HD, 19 D, 52 Cr
- Writing: 109 students: 2 HD, 18 D, 29 Cr
- Spelling: 113 students: 2 HD, 11 D, 27 Cr

This summary includes the Year 4 whole cohort (96 students) enrolment which achieved:

- English: 5 HD, 8 D, 22 Cr
- Maths: 1 HD, 19 D, 29 Cr
- Science: 3 HD, 12 D, 27 Cr

Significant programs and initiatives

Environment

Environmental education continued to be a priority focus at NSDS throughout the year.

An environment committee was formed to develop a School Environment Management Plan (SEMP) and report back to the executive on its implementation. The Eco ambassador student leadership model continued this year drawing upon the model introduced in 2008.

The objective of this year’s management plan was to change the school culture in relation to waste and through this to develop an understanding of ecology.

The school applied for and won North Sydney Council’s Eco Grant of $3000 to develop a plan to achieve these objectives.

The grant enabled Eco ambassadors to attend a training session on composting and ecology run by Peter and Alison Rutherford. Students learnt how to start compost, maintain it and why it is so useful.

The North Sydney Council’s Eco grant funded our School Compost Recycle and Win! competition. Eco ambassadors from each class ran composting and recycling depots that collected and recorded the number of articles composted and recycled. Students collected and recorded over 7000 items during Terms 3 and 4. This represents an estimated 0.5 – 1 tonne of waste that did not end up in landfill.

The competition culminated in Term 3 with the two winning classes going on an excursion to Kimbriki Eco Garden in Terry Hills. Here classes were able to see where recycling ends up and some of its uses. Students were also engaged in activities that explored ecology and the part that composting can play in creating a more sustainable society. The excursion was then reported back in the school newsletter and discussed at school assemblies.

Environmental focus days were celebrated by the whole school throughout the year. These included National Schools’ Tree Day, Earth Hour and Clean Up Australia Day.

In conjunction with the school’s Healthy Active Grant the Environment Committee established 10
raised herb and vegetable gardens, which were planted and maintained by students and teachers. The produce has been used in the classroom for cooking activities.

In addition to our new gardens this year, a Waste-free Wednesday was trialled with outstanding results. Students were encouraged to use reusable items to store their food or take their wrapping home. All bins were removed from the playground and at the end of day there was almost no waste to be seen. Response from the parent community was overwhelmingly positive. For example, parents working in the uniform shop are looking for options for waste-free lunch wraps and lunch containers to be sold.

While continuing compost and recycling programs, established this year, the environment committee aims to strengthen the teaching of sustainability and ecological awareness in 2010.

Aboriginal education

Where possible, Aboriginal perspectives have been incorporated into classroom teaching programs giving students the opportunity to learn about Aboriginal history, society and cultures.

The term Aboriginal perspectives refers to Aboriginal points of view on particular issues and events and includes specific syllabus content.

Boori Monty Pryor, an indigenous Australian, visited The Dem in June and September to enrich the school’s teaching and learning programs about Aboriginal Australia. Students were engaged in a range of traditional and contemporary stories about Aboriginal life, Aboriginal storytelling, dance and music.

During Semester 1, over 100 students engaged in telling the Dreamtime story of ‘Tiddalik’ through dance. This culminated in the J Rock performance at Castle Hill’s Performing Arts Centre and gave students the opportunity to participate in an ongoing creative arts project with an Aboriginal perspective.

The school community continued to acknowledge the traditional custodians of the land at school and stage assemblies, whole school events and staff meetings.

Multicultural education

Multiculturalism continued to be celebrated in the school and the global community. Students K-6 explored and learnt about multiculturalism in a multitude of ways. Students from Years 2-6 were engaged in multicultural speech writing sessions and presentations. The school community continued to celebrate diversity of culture through our annual ‘Multicultural Barbeque’ held in February.

New families continued to be supported by the school holding a Families in Cultural Transition (FICT) seminar. This involved members of the school community, translators and the local police.

Respect and responsibility

This year the Student Welfare Committee undertook the process of revising and restructuring the NSDS Student Welfare policy in order to integrate:

- mandated DET school discipline / behaviour policy
- current best-practice in school behaviour policy: Positive Behaviour for Learning (PBL)
- NSDS’s existing anti-bullying policy
- NSDS’s commitment to William Glasser’s Choice Theory / Reality Therapy (CTRT).

The restructure of the Student Welfare policy will provide K-6 students, staff and parents in 2010 with a core curriculum of positive learning experiences that focus on teaching children how to establish and maintain good relationships. An explicit bank of skills and strategies addressing positive communication, effective relationships, resilience and positive self-talk is an integral part of this. NSDS encourages students to make appropriate choices and employ problem solving skills and strategies which satisfy their needs, while not depriving others of the same right.
Where necessary, children were supported to help modify inappropriate behaviour choices, to build resilience and confidence and to develop more effective communication skills. The Families in Cultural Transition (FICT) course was delivered with the assistance of translators. Parents involved in these sessions have reported increased confidence in their responses to children’s needs.

**Information and Communication Technology**

In 2009 a number of ICT initiatives and investments occurred aimed at supporting students to achieve outstanding educational results.

These investments and initiatives focused on:

- ensuring equitable access to technology,
- the provision of timely technical support,
- the professional development of staff, and
- the development of strategies that ensured that technology was integrated into instruction in a meaningful way promoting higher order thinking.

Investments included:

- Nine Interactive Whiteboards
- 21 PCs (T4L )
- 3 data projectors,
- An upgrade of ISDN cables and the electrical network, and
- Connected Classroom video conferencing facilities (DET funded)

Initiatives included:

- The ALTRIS Remote Management Project. In 2009 North Sydney Demonstration School became remotely managed by Northern Sydney Region. This change created a standard operating environment for all technological systems within the school and has resulted in timely technological support for staff and students.
- Professional learning opportunities for staff in the use of technology. In 2009 Staff participated in the following professional learning opportunities for ICT;
  - Best practice workshops with staff from Hunters Hill Public, Gladesville Public, Greenwich Public and North Sydney Demonstration School. Staff presented workshops demonstrating how technology could be embedded into teaching and learning programs so that student outcomes could be increased.
  - Workshops that instructed teachers in the use of Notebooks and in the designing of Web Quests.
  - 4 staff attended the Macquarie ICT centre to learn about how LAMS could be used at North Sydney Demonstration School to meet student needs.
  - Two members of staff participated in an action learning project that studied how technology could be authentically embedded into teaching practice.
  - 2 members of staff attended a workshop at Macquarie ICT centre to learn how to use Stop Motion Pro to enhance student skills in digital literacy.

**Support of Students with Additional Needs**

In 2009 North Sydney Demonstration School continued to monitor each student’s progress and through the Learning Support Team (LST) provided additional learning support or learning extension when required. Learning is monitored through classroom assessments, teacher interviews, and state and national testing programs.

Our school uses learning programs and specialised staff where needed and we work in partnership with parents and carers to assist students who have special learning needs.

The Learning Support Team (LST) is made up of the Principal, the Learning Support Coordinator, the Reading Recovery Teacher, the English as a Second Language Teacher, the School Counsellor and a Support Teacher: Learning Assistance (STLA). The LST meet weekly. Students are referred and monitored. Recommendations are provided, and strategies are put in place to support teachers, students and parents.

In 2009 parent volunteers continued to provide additional daily support for K-2 students in reading and writing. The Australian Business and Community Network through the SPARK Project provided mentors from AMEX for 18 Stage 2 students in Semester 2. In 2009, 10 year one students were given the opportunity to improve reading and writing skills through the Reading Recovery Program.

Teacher Aides, Itinerant Support Teachers and a member of the Regional Behaviour Team provide ongoing support for our students with special needs.

In 2009 the school redesigned its Gifted and Talented Students (GATS) policy and in 2010 a
representative of the GATS working party will join the Learning Support Team.

**Progress on 2009 targets**

**Target 1: Numeracy**

For 45% of year three and five students to achieve in the top two bands in numeracy in the 2009 NAPLAN.

**Our achievements include:**

- 50% of Year 5 students performed in the top 2 NAPLAN skill bands.
- 71% of Year 3 students performed in the top 2 NAPLAN skill bands.

In addition to these results, students who were matched from year three to five achieved an above average growth of 118.9 points compared to the like school group average of 108.6 and a state average of 93.4.

Professional learning of staff has continued to focus on strategies to develop mental computation skills and on developing programs that deliver authentic and differentiated tasks.

**Target 2: Literacy**

To increase the percentage of Year 5 students in the top 2 NAPLAN skill bands for reading from 49% to 53%.

**Our achievements include:**

- 59% of Year 5 students achieved in the top 2 NAPLAN skill bands.
- 68% of Year 3 students achieved in the top 2 NAPLAN skill bands.

Increased professional learning has resulted in greater consistency, confidence and understanding amongst staff with regard to how students learn to read, including ‘learning to’ and ‘learning about’ reading. This is evidenced by teaching programs, staff presentations on Literature Circles and Guided Reading, student reading levels and staff surveys.

Staff members analysed the NAPLAN data and provided Year 3 and Year 5 teachers with resources and teaching strategies in areas for development.

**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 in the focus area of Learning and the curriculum area, PDHPE.

**Educational and management practice**

**Learning**

In 2009 the school evaluated ‘learning’ within the school. Learning was viewed as a general area that linked student outcomes with teacher professional development.

**Background**

Data was collected from the following sources;

- NAPLAN 2008 & 2009
- School based assessments including; Best Start assessments, Running Records (reading assessments), SENA (numeracy assessments) and moderated grade tasks.
- Online surveys of parents, students and staff.
- Professional learning logs.

**Findings and conclusions**

The findings of the school evaluation were as follows;

- Learning in literacy and numeracy was above the state and like school average as measured by the National Assessment Program in Literacy and Numeracy in 2008 and 2009. This finding was based on the average growth in performance of matched students. A matched student is a student who sat the NAPLAN test at the same school in 2007 (year 3) and 2009 (year 5). This data is used by schools to assist in evaluating learning within the school and is an important tool in schools with high student mobility rates such as North Sydney Demonstration School. 67% of students who sat the National assessment in 2009 were at the school in 2007. These students experienced above average growth when compared to the state
and like schools in both literacy and numeracy.

- Regular classroom assessments measuring growth in student understanding of important concepts in literacy, numeracy, science, human society and health reflected significant growth. Students not achieving minimum growth were referred to the learning support team for additional assessments.

- Surveys of parents, staff and students revealed high levels of satisfaction in the following areas;
  1. What is taught and learnt
  2. the environment in which learning occurs, and
  3. the expectations for students to do their best when learning.

- Some feedback revealed a need to further cater for the needs of gifted and talented students.

- NAPLAN data revealed relative weaknesses in space, geometry and measurement for numeracy and grammar, punctuation, vocabulary and cohesion for literacy.

**Future directions**

As a result of this evaluation the school will implement the following strategies;

- An increase in hands on activities in space, geometry and measurement across the K-6 continuum.

- The forming of a Gifted and Talented Committee to evaluate how gifted and talented students are catered for and to report back with findings and recommendations.

- Increased professional learning in the use of effective teaching strategies for language, grammar and vocabulary to inform future teaching practices.

**Curriculum Renewal**

**PDHPE**

**Background**

In 2008 the school identified the need to develop activities that increased students’ participation and commitment to healthy eating and regular exercise. A working party was formed and a grant application made. In 2009 we were awarded a large grant from the Federal Government’s Department of Health and Ageing to implement a series of curriculum interventions.

A healthy eating breakfast program, education on growing healthy food and cooking lessons were provided to improve the eating habits of the school community. Professional consultants were employed to speak to students, staff and community to enhance their knowledge and understanding of healthy lifestyle choices. The program also encouraged the school community to be physically active through the provision of a morning fitness program, a lunchtime sports competition, a dance program, structures to build participation in local sporting competitions and a martial arts program.

**Findings and conclusions**

Surveys of students, parents and staff confirmed strong growth in levels of physical activity and community awareness of healthy eating choices. A growth of 57% was reported in the number of classroom lessons students experienced relating to healthy eating. All classes participated in healthy cooking sessions at school.

A significant increase in students reporting fruit breaks in class provided evidence for the impact that this project had on teachers and students. By the end of the project 98% of students were having fruit breaks in class (compared to pre-program data of 11% participation). The maintenance of this project was largely due to the benefits both students and teachers were experiencing during class time.

At the end of the program 75% of students had experienced growing vegetables and fruit at school. Of the 75%, 73% really loved or enjoyed the activity. The incidental exercise benefits of gardening - digging, planting, weeding, watering etc. – were made explicit to students many of whom had never conceived of gardening as a form of exercise before.

Results show that these significant increases were experienced across the school community, not just within the student population, presenting the NSDS Healthy Active program as a whole school commitment to healthy eating and healthy fitness.
Future directions
As a result of this evaluation the school has implemented the following strategies;

- Within the school’s organisation structure, the responsibility for the PDHPE curriculum has been moved to a major management committee, the Student Welfare Committee. The Student Welfare Committee becomes the oversight body responsible for sustaining the gains made in classroom programs around PDHPE.

- Some external funding (Premier’s Sporting Challenge grant, North Sydney Council, the P&C and local businesses) has been secured to continue to run the breakfast programs, martial arts and basketball programs.

- Through our University of Sydney partnership we have created a flexible and innovative PDHPE program in which pre-service teachers on professional experiences support and maintain the gains made through the Healthy Active Students grant.

Parent, student, and teacher satisfaction
Each year the school surveys parents, students and teachers on a range of school satisfaction measures: enjoyment, pride, perceived fairness and the presence of high expectations around learning.

The trend results for the 2009 surveys were overwhelmingly positive. All three groups believe that NSDS is a place where expectations were high, where learning was interesting and where values of social justice were upheld.

Professional learning
In 2009 North Sydney Demonstration School continued to focus on professional learning as the central means to improving student learning outcomes. The professional learning partnership with Sydney University led to the exchanging of ideas and practices around evidence based practice and mentoring. Staff at North Sydney Demonstration School provided professional learning for pre service teachers and participated in professional learning sessions facilitated by university academics. In addition to these forums staff participated in a number of action learning projects in collaboration with university staff and pre service students.

All staff at North Sydney Demonstration School participated in professional learning activities throughout the year with the average expenditure per teacher being $590. The school’s management plan detailed how school and regional priority areas would be supported by professional learning. Some examples of professional learning throughout 2009 include:

- Readers Theatre to improve literacy outcomes
- How to use authentic texts to teach writing
- Developing mental computation skills
- Open ended mathematics
- Conceptual programming and the QTF
- Building the field to improve writing outcomes
- Supporting phase one ESL students
- Supporting students with behavioural needs
- Literature Circles
- Guided reading in the younger years
- Visual arts in the class room
- Environmental education
- Digital literacy – Stop Motion Pro
- New technologies in the classroom – LAMS

School development 2009 – 2011
In 2008 staff at North Sydney Demonstration School collaboratively wrote the 2009-2011 school development plan.
The major three-year goals with outcomes for 2009 are;

**Improved outcomes for students through a relentless focus on literacy and numeracy.**
- Increased use of SMART data software to inform evidence-based teaching and learning projects
- Increased ability of students to articulate their understanding of mathematical concepts delivered through action learning project.

**Collaborative teaching and learning.**
- Development of the conceptual framework for Human Society & Its Environment and Science
- Quality Teaching Framework present in all Teaching and Learning programs.

**Students and staff will be active, healthy and involved in living.**
- Healthy Active program implemented and sustainable changes made to PDHPE teaching in the school.

**Targets for 2010**

**Target 1: Numeracy**
Increase the number of students achieving one skill-band’s growth in NAPLAN from 75% in 2009 to 80% in 2011.

**Strategies to achieve this target include:**
- Identify and track students reported to be at a limited/basic level in numeracy; using SENA assessments, other classroom assessments and anecdotal teacher notes.
- Implement Count Me In Too and Counting On strategies in conjunction with the Go Maths program to support students who are functioning at a limited or basic level.
- Professional development for staff on Gifted and Talented strategies.

**Our success will be measured by:**
- 2011 NAPLAN results

**Target 2: Literacy**
Increase the number of students achieving one skill band growth in NAPLAN - reading from 52.8% in 2009 to 62.8% in 2011 and for writing from 54.7% in 2009 to 64.7% in 2011.

**Strategies to achieve this target include:**
- Staff members to participate in Action Learning projects using Creative Arts to improve literacy outcomes.
- Quality children’s literature purchased by literacy committee for use in guided reading sessions K-6
- Staff take part in professional learning in guided reading given by trained Reading Recovery teachers and other accomplished teachers.
- A focus on data collection across the whole school to inform teaching and learning including; teacher anecdotal notes, classroom assessments, staff surveys and reading levels.

**Our success will be measured by:**
- 2011 NAPLAN results