2008 Annual School Report
Hill Top Public School

NSW Public Schools – Leading the way
Our school at a glance

Hill Top PS is situated in a bush setting in the northern most point of Shellharbour district. The school makes a conscious effort to make the motto “Truth and Honour” a key component in the everyday life of the school. The school is a major focal point for the wider community. It is of modern design, having being constructed in 2003. It offers a fully networked computer environment, modern teaching aids, shared work areas, a large covered outdoor learning area and a spacious playground.

Students

In 2008 Hill Top PS had an enrolment of 230 being 125 boys and 105 girls. This enrolment situation should remain with a slight increase in growth anticipated in the next few years. 93% of students attended school on average each day. This is consistent with the Illawarra South East Region but slightly less than the state average of 94%. In 2008 ten classes were formed.

Staff

Teachers at Hill Top are experienced and are dedicated to providing differentiated learning programs catering for a wide range of talents and abilities. Parents are encouraged to be involved with their children’s progress at every level. This includes involvement in classroom, sporting and social activities, as well as in policy and decision making through P&C and School Council. Parents support healthy food choices for children by running a successful canteen. The school is dedicated to providing quality teaching and learning programs to all students. All teaching staff meet the professional requirements for teaching in NSW public schools.

Significant programs and initiatives

Book Week Celebrations centred on the theme “Fuel your Mind”. A competition was held to construct a decorated coat hanger mobile representing a favourite book. Students and parents enjoyed reader’s theatre performances at the assembly. Staff presented one and the other was by 4/5/6G. A book fair was held which raised money for library books and multiple copies of guided readers for our senior students.

Best Start is a NSW government initiative designed to increase support for the teaching and learning of literacy and numeracy for our youngest students. HTPS was one of the schools invited to participate in this pilot program. A component of Best Start is a new state wide Kindergarten entry assessment. At the beginning of Term 1 teachers were trained to administer the Best Start Kindergarten Assessment. They were then able to identify the literacy and numeracy knowledge and skills that each student brings to school. This assessment informs the quality teaching and learning programs that HTPS will implement in the early years of schooling. During Term 4 all stage 1 teachers attended professional learning courses on Best Start programming and how to use a continuum to track their students’ progress throughout Kindergarten to Year 2.

Gold, Silver and Bronze Awards: In 2008 we trailed a new award system at HTPS. Its purpose was to continually reward students who consistently display appropriate behaviour and was based on perceived staff, parent and community needs as a result of our work on reviewing and developing the School Behaviour/Discipline code last year. It involves the students moving along a reward path throughout their school life by earning and collecting Good News Awards for positive behaviour as well as a possible Consistency Award at the end of each term. These are kept by the students and are valued numerically. A Bronze Award is attained at reaching five GNAs, a Silver at three Bronze Awards and a Gold at the attainment of three Silver Certificates. This system received positive feedback by staff, students, parents and the wider community and will continue to be further developed in 2009.

Student achievement in 2008
Principal's message

As 2008 draws to a close it is time to reflect upon our past year's achievements. Once again Hill Top PS has been involved in a myriad of academic, cultural, sporting and social events. All classes participated in our highly successful South-East Asian multicultural unit which culminated in our wonderful open day.

Our Naidoc celebrations also saw an excellent student/teacher/parent involvement where we deeply experienced Aboriginal culture.

Our focus continues to be on numeracy and literacy and staff have been involved in a series of new initiatives in this field which will form a major component of our 2009-11 Management Plan. I was particularly pleased to see the advancement of our students in our Student Teacher Learning Assistance and Reading Recovery programs. Many significant gains were made and Mrs Van der Meer and Mrs Wakeling should be proud of their student’s achievements.

We were a pilot school for Best Start – an initiative to better judge our enrolling Kindergarten. Well done to Mrs Griffiths and Mrs Caceres for their commitment in this area. Our Gold/Silver/Bronze Awards are now the envy of all students. These reward excellence in the classroom and Ms Leicester is to be congratulated on this initiative.

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.

Brian Reakes

P&C and School Council messages

2008 was a successful year for Hill Top P&C. There was an increase in attendance to our meetings that resulted in increased outcomes. The HTPS P&C was proud to assist in the students' development through the purchasing of resources like the sports/drama shed, Blue and Green Reading Box resources and the Kindergarten enrolment banner.

New ideas were trialed in 2008. We had a successful fundraiser with a chocolate drive. Also during Terms 2 and 3, staff and parents combined to participate in the weekend ‘Bunnings Sausage Sizzle Program’. On three occasions the combined effort raised money, which resulted in almost $3500 being directed into the purchase of reading resources for students’ use. The canteen co-coordinated a fruit and vegetable competition that provided additional nutritional choices for the children.

It takes the whole school community to provide the best education opportunities and Hill Top is blessed to have so many people willing to donate their time for our students. Thank you to the school community: for those who attended meetings, the P&C executive, the canteen workers and volunteers, the people who run the mothers’ and fathers’ day stalls, those who assist with fund raising and the uniform pool. We are very thankful for the generous donation from one of our parents of dictionaries and thesauri’ for each class in Stage 2 and 3. These will be put to great use during literacy lessons.

For whatever role you play thank you for your commitment to improving the quality of education at Hill Top. As 2009 approaches some of our dedicated parents will be moving on, their assistance and enthusiasm will be missed. Yet we strive forward in anticipation towards the changes that 2009 will bring.

Debbie Pearce (P&C President)

School council comprised of Brian Reakes, Cindy Wakeling, Sharon Doust (who finished two year’s service and was replaced by Paul Mallia), Andrew Whitelaw, Chloe Tortorella, Debbie Pearce and Dianne Pittman. This year council looked at its constitution and whether it was still fulfilling a necessary function in the school. As a result of this review it was still deemed to serve a purpose but a number of changes were proposed and put forward to the school community for consideration and these changes were adopted:

-To lengthen the period of time in which a representative can serve on school council and
-Reduce the number of times council meets from twice to once a term, with the option of calling special meetings when necessity calls for it.

The other main focus of the school council this year was the securing of the funding and installation of rainwater tanks. This has proved to present with some ongoing issues following their installation but we shall endeavour to persevere until a satisfactory outcome is achieved. Andrew Whitelaw is thanked for his time and effort regarding this project.

Di Pitman (School Council President)
Student Representative Council’s message

We were proud to represent HTPS at both of the Anzac Day services where we presented our prepared speeches. As a Student Representative Council we have enjoyed running the alternate weekly school assemblies and presenting awards to our fellow students. We collected the entry monies and ran components of the school discos and mufti days. We raised money for World Vision, Stewart House and Year 6 activities.

Joel Bottin-Nonnan, Carissa Anderson, Peta O’Connell and Rhys Hamilton

School context

Student information

Structure of classes

The following table shows our class sizes as reported at the 2008 class size audit conducted on Tuesday 25 March, 2008. In 2008 ten classes were formed consisting of four straight classes and six composites.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Class</th>
<th>Yr</th>
<th>Total per Yr</th>
<th>Total in Class</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>KG K</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>21</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KC K</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>21</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1S 1</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>20</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2/L 1</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>15 22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2D 2</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>22</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3/4M 3</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>25</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3/4H 3</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>25</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4/5/6G 4</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>24</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5/6H 5</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>25</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5/6R 5</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>26</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Student attendance profile

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.

Staff information

Staff establishment

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Position</th>
<th>Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Principal</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assistant Principals</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Classroom Teachers</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher of Reading Recovery</td>
<td>0.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Support Teacher Learning Assistance</td>
<td>0.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher Librarian</td>
<td>0.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Counsellor</td>
<td>0.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>12.6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Staff retention

Mrs Burton (acting AP) received a transfer and Mr Mallia was appointed AP. Mrs Holliday was appointed in term 2 but will be on leave for 2009.
Staff attendance
Staff have access to leave entitlements such as sick leave. In 2008 the average daily attendance rate for staff, as determined by DET, was 97.9%.

Teacher qualifications
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, Postgraduate or Diploma</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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

**Income** $556,902.06

- Balance brought forward: 175,569.74
- Global funds: 116,091.70
- Tied funds: 187,142.34
- School & community sources: 61,845.65
- Interest: 13,652.43
- Trust receipts: 2,600.20
- Canteen: 0.00

**Total income**: 556,902.06

**Expenditure**

- Teaching & learning:
  - Key learning areas: 21,852.47
  - Excursions: 11,134.71
  - Extracurricular dissections: 33,171.00
- Library: 7,373.99
- Training & development: 0.00
- Tied funds: 227,333.59
- Casual relief teachers: 18,548.53
- Administration & office: 35,601.00
- School-operated canteen: 0.00
- Utilities: 19,165.13
- Maintenance: 9,496.10
- Trust accounts: 2,034.14
- Capital programs: 5,000.00

**Total expenditure**: 390,710.66

**Balance carried forward**: 166,191.40

School performance 2008

Achievements

Arts
The Musica Viva music program offers children the chance to experience the excitement of live music first hand, the joy of making music and participating in dance, song and rhythmic activities. In Term 2 students explored the styles, rhythms and instruments of Latin America with the group ‘Tigramuna’. In Term 3 students experienced jazz and contemporary music played with piano, clarinet and cello with the group ‘Ensemble Troika’. It was an exciting and engaging experience for all involved.

Sport
HTPS is helping children and communities get active with the Active After-School Communities program. The structured physical activity is delivered to K-6 students on Monday and Wednesday afternoons. Our program provides increased opportunities for children to be physically active, improve motor skill development, experience new sporting games and provide opportunities for participation in quality, safe and supervised activities during latchkey hours. Our deliverers are Jo-Ann Leishman and Glenda McKay. The program started in Term 1, 2008 with student numbers at 38. In Term 4, 2008 student numbers have risen to 63. Term 3 brought the students to the “Journey to Beijing”, helping in the celebration of the 2008 Olympic Games. Our goal was to join thousands of children throughout Australia taking part in the virtual walk.

A full copy of the school's 2008 financial statement is tabled at the annual general meetings of the School Council and the P&C. Further details concerning the statement can be obtained by contacting the school.
Swimming champions of 2008 were: Jnr Girl - Ashley Wood, Jnr Boy - David Armstrong, 11 Yr Girl - Caitlin Watson, 11 Yr Boy - Jonathan Kolster, Snr Girl - Carissa Anderson, Snr Boy - Aaron Manson. Ashley Wood broke two school records: 10yr girls’ freestyle and junior girls’ backstroke. 36 students represented HTPS at the district swimming carnival. Students were wonderful ambassadors for the school but unfortunately no one qualified for the next level.

The school conducted its cross-country carnival on the school grounds in March. This course is routed through the school grounds, making supervision and spectator vision ideal. This was well supported by the students and parents alike. 63 students qualified at this carnival to attend the district carnival. The junior school conducted its own carnival in the afternoon. Three students proceeded to zone.

During Terms 1 and 2, students from Years 3-6 had the opportunity to improve their rugby league skills in preparation for the Hindmarsh and Noble Cup Challenges. Training sessions culminated in a full day round robin competition at Robertson in June, where they played against Highlands schools. Noble Cup Challenge senior team included: Joel Bottin-Noonan, Jay Callaghan, Josh Campbell, Dean Cassidy, Liam Cassidy, Jye Chandler, Jacob Fitzpatrick, Alexander Fitzpatrick, Rhys Hamilton, Jye Chandler, Scott Rohwer and Nathan Bishop. Overall this team came third. Hindmarsh Cup junior team included: David Armstrong, Sebastian Burgess, Lochlan Fraser, Joshua Harrison, Nathan Johnson, Daniel Leahy, Bailey McGilvary, Tim McCann, Mitchell Miles, Dylan Richardson, Nathan Thompson, Riley Wiltshire and Daniel Winnel. This team came third. All students were committed players and coaches Mr Chandler and Mr Hall received special thanks.

During Term 2 students from Years 3 and 4 participated in clinics run by development officers from the NSWCRL. During the clinics students participated in drills and minor games to introduce them to the sport and promote participation in rugby league in the local area. In August Cricket NSW visited stage 2 to promote cricket. Students from Years 2-4 were given the opportunity to learn cricket skills and play modified cricket games. All students actively participated and enjoyed the range of cricket activities. In September students from Stage 2 and 3 participated in the Southern Highlands Touch Gala Day. Each team was led by a parent leader and enthusiastically participated in a challenging day of games. In October all K-6 students participated in a Soccer Skills Clinic. Students were quickly organized into mini games and, as HTPS and community has a proud history in soccer, all participated with enthusiasm.

Years 3 and 4 attended an AFL Gala Day in November. The day started with skill development and then students broke into teams. HTPS had two teams: the Swans and the Saints. Each played three games against other local schools. All students played well and showed good sportsmanship. At the end of the day two students, Sebastian Burgess and Bradman Hawkins received AFL memberships. ‘Telstra Bush to Beach’ visited in November to speak to the students about Surf Safety. Lifesavers showed a DVD about how to keep safe when at the beach. They showed and explained the flags used. It was a very informative and entertaining session.

Enrichment
Following an exhaustive in school competition ten students were selected to represent HTPS in the Visy Interschool Chess Competition. Team A consisted of Tim McCann (c), Caitlin Watson, Todd Mellish, Brianna Steele and Daniel Winnel (res). Team B was made up of Eamonn Campion (c), Jay Callaghan, Jye Chandler, Scott Rohwer and Nathan Bishop (res). At the competition's conclusion Term A drew with St Michaels but was defeated in a hotly contested final. Tim and Jay were presented with chess sets for attaining 9 points (from a possible 10) throughout the competition. Throughout Term 3 HTPS participated in the inaugural Loopline Debating Program. Ryan Byrne, Scott Rohwer, Peta O’Connell (Opp) Brandan Parker, Eamonn Campion and Carissa Anderson (Gov) represented against Buxton PS. Alex Fitzpatrick, Jay Callaghan, Rhys Hamilton (G), Jacob Eccleston, Jarrod Zucchetto and Aaron Manson (O) challenged Colo Vale PS. Joel Bottin-Noonan, Ben Stead, Jamie-Lee Harrison (G), Austin Micalef, Kiara Whitehead and Cameron Kolster (O) completed the round robin against Mittagong PS. Despite all teams having narrow losses we learnt valuable debating skills and had the opportunity to speak in front of large audiences.
During Term 2 as a part of our gifted and talented program, seven students were selected to participate in a ‘G&T Science Workshop’ at Bowral PS. Students completed experiments and constructed models to appreciate the science behind everyday items. Participation in the workshop raised the profile of science as a way to extend students’ enquiry skills.

Loopline Masterminds was established in 2008 to offer enrichment opportunities to our students. Buxton, Colo Vale and Mittagong PSs were invited to participate. Students were given a dilemma to solve which involved literacy, numeracy and creativity. Our stage 2 team (Caelun Squires, Rachael Meadows, Ryley Wiltshire, Matthew Byrne, Sinead Campion and another student) thoroughly enjoyed the day and gave a rewarding presentation. Caelun, Rachael, Matthew, Rebecca Frank and two other students attended round two at Colo Vale PS.

During Term 3 six students (Tenaya Ewings and Lily Lacava from Stage 1, Dayle Kurousky and another student from Stage 2 and Scott Rohwer and Leanne Jackson from Stage 3), attended an enrichment day on the craft of fiction writing. A published writer led workshops and Mrs Caceres assisted with the presentation. Students were kept busy learning about using fresh imagery, structuring stories, using ‘strong’ verbs and creating a real voice. The final session provided the students with time to apply their knowledge and write a story of their own. It was a wonderful opportunity for HTPS students with a passion for writing to work and learn together with their peers from local schools.

Teams represented HTPS in the annual One Day Chess Tournament run at Tudor House in Term 3. Tim McCann, Daniel Winnel, Brianna Steele (Team A), Eamonn Campion, Nathan Bishop, Scott Rohwer (B) and Jay Callaghan, Todd Melish, Caitlin Watson (C) all performed well but did not gain a top three place.

As part of our program to meet the needs of gifted and talented students, six stage 3 students and six stage 2 students attended G&T Lego Robotics Workshops at Bowral PS. They had the opportunity to program robots to move in different directions and perform specific tasks. The day posed a series of motivating and thought provoking challenges that they had to work as a team to solve.

Five students entered a science project in the Southern Highlands 4th Annual Science Spectacular at Bowral HS. Lochlan and Jonathon Kolster, Stephen Jackson and Blake Gorrie were awarded prizes for their projects. Nathan Johnson received a cash prize for his entry in the Elastic Powered Car Competition.

During Term 3, students from stages 2 and 3 participated in the inaugural HTPS Premier’s Spelling Bee Competition. Class representatives competed in stage finals, with winners progressing to the next level. Eamonn Campion and Emily Marcocci (stage 3) as well as Sebastian Burgess and Nathan Johnson (stage 2) went on to represent HTPS, competing against other local primary schools. The competition raised awareness of spelling and promoted excellence in this area.

Academic

In the National Assessment Program, the results across the Years 3, 5, 7 and 9 literacy and numeracy assessments are reported on a scale from Band 1 to Band 10. The achievement scale represents increasing levels of skills and understandings demonstrated in the assessments.

Yr 3: from Band 1 (lowest) to Band 6 (highest)
Yr 5: from Band 3 (lowest) to Band 8 (highest)

Literacy – NAPLAN Year 3

The school average was below the state literacy average. 34% of students scored in the top 2 bands, compared with 42% in South Coast Region and 49% across the state. No Hill Top student scored in the lowest band, compared with 2% across the state. In the strand of reading alone, students were under-represented in the highest 2 bands.

Areas in which students performed significantly below the state were locating information, interpreting the use of pronouns and inferring character traits. Areas in which students scored significantly better than the state included locating literal information directly from a passage.
In the strand of grammar and punctuation, Year 3 performed significantly lower than the state and region, with only 21% of students performing in the top two bands compared with 38% in the region and 49% across the state. Areas in which students performed significantly below the state included the use of speech marks, commas, capital letters and full stops as well as the identification of verbs, pronouns, prepositions and conjunctions.

In spelling Year 3 performed only slightly below the state, however were under-represented in the highest band. Items in which Year 3 performed significantly below the state included the spelling of two syllable words and words ending in ed. Words containing diagraphs (eg ou, ai) and the identification of correct homophones also presented a problem.
In the strand of writing no Hill Top student scored in the lowest two bands, compared with 9% for the region and 6% for the state. 52% of students scored in the highest 2 bands, compared with 48% in South Coast Region and 54% for the state. Areas in which Year 3 performed significantly lower than the state included structuring a piece or writing with an introduction, body and conclusion, as well as using paragraphs, correct simple sentence structure, using punctuation (including capital letters) and using compound sentences.

Trend data show that Year 3 results have improved since 2005 to become more comparable with regional and state performance.

**Numeracy – NAPLAN Year 3**

Numeracy programs have been based on syllabus outcomes, targeting students’ individual needs. Ongoing assessment through observations, outcomes based assessment tasks and external tests and NAPLAN results guide the school in the development of teaching programs.

The school average was 0.1% below the state numeracy average. 37% of students scored in the top 2 bands, compared with 35% in South Coast Region and 40% across the state. No Hill Top student scored in the lowest band, compared with 35 across the state. Boys performed significantly better than girls in numeracy. In the strands of Measurement, Data, Space and Geometry Year 3 boys performed significantly above the state average.

Year 3 performed significantly better than the state in the areas of Space 2D and 3D shapes, as well as multiplication. The school performed significantly below the state in questions relating to data, problem solving involving money, angles and chance. Trend data shows that there has been significant improvement since 2005, with students now achieving at levels comparable with state and region.

**Literacy – NAPLAN Year 5**

Year 5 students performed at significantly below the state average in Literacy. They were under represented in higher bands, with only 27% scoring in the top three bands, compared with 56% for the region and 63% for the state.

The strand of reading mirrors the results of overall literacy, with under-representation in the higher bands. Areas in which the school
performed significantly lower than the state included locating and connecting information, interpreting headings and main ideas of texts, comparing texts, interpreting and synthesising information form texts. Students performed significantly better than the state in identifying the purpose of the text.

In the strand of grammar and punctuation Year 5 are also noticeably under-represented in the higher bands. Areas in which the students performed significantly below the state included knowledge and correct usage of capital letters, speech marks, question marks, commas and apostrophes, as well as the correct use of a/an. Areas in which the Year 5 students performed better than the state included the identification of prepositions.

Spelling also produced similar results with students under-represented in higher bands. Only 13% of Year 5 students scored in the highest two bands compared with 27% for the region and 37% for the state. Students performed significantly below the state when asked to identify errors in 2 or 3-syllable words or words that had uncommon spelling patterns. Words containing long vowel sounds and double letters presented as most difficult.
In the strand on writing students were clearly under-represented in the higher bands with only 14% scoring in the top two bands (no student in the top band) compared with 23% for the region and 30% for the state.

Areas in which students performed significantly below the state included the use of only simple verbs, adverbs, nouns and adjectives as well as writing in mostly simply sentences, compared with more skilled writers across the state who used more compound and complex sentences. They also displayed a lack of awareness in using paragraphs and accurate punctuation.

93% of the school’s Year 5 students sat for the basic skills test at this school in Year 3. Growth rates for these students were as high as 135 points. The average literacy growth rate for the school was 80.4 points compared with 80.7 points for the state. There was a significantly greater growth for girls than boys.

In the strand on reading the average growth rate for the school was 78.8 points while the state grew at an average of 85.6 points. Boys grew significantly greater than girls. In the strand of writing Hill Top showed pleasing growth, with the average growth rate for the school at 71.9 points, while the state grew at an average of 68.6 points. There was a significantly greater growth for girls than boys. Trend data shows that literacy at Hill Top has consistently been below state and regional performance in past years and, that in Reading and Writing, the gap between Hill Top and state and region is continuing to widen.

**Implications**

In all strands of literacy, current programs need to be reviewed to enable students currently performing in middle bands to move into higher bands. Support programs need to be implemented to allow students in lower bands
and experiencing difficulties with literacy to move into middle bands. Higher order comprehension activities need to be included to enable readers to understand text at inferential and evaluative levels. Structured scope and sequences for grammar and language as well as spelling will ensure that all areas have been covered in explicit and systematic teaching.

**Numeracy – NAPLAN Year 5**

Year 5 students at Hill Top performed at 10.5% below state average in Numeracy. 5% of Year 5 students were in the top 2 bands for Numeracy, compared with 18% in the South Coast Region and 26% state-wide. Year 5 students were over represented in the lower bands.

Year 5 students performed better than the state in questions relating to patterns and Algebra. Students scored significantly below the state in questions relating to fractions and decimals, whole number, addition, division, length, chance, position and 2D space. Boys performed significantly better than girls across all strands of numeracy. Analysis of these question shows that students experience difficulty in interpreting questions that require higher levels of reading comprehension, not necessarily concept knowledge.

Growth rates for these students were as high as 161 points. The average growth rate for the school was 67.7 points compared with 79.7 points for the state. There was a significantly greater growth for boys than girls.

Trend data shows that numeracy levels in Year 5 have, after being comparable with the region and state for recent years, has now fallen. Results indicate that, while few students score in the lower bands in Year 3, those students in middle bands require further support to enable them to attain results in a top band.

**Implications**

In Year 5, students are over represented in lower to middle bands and under represented in higher bands. Students in middle bands require targeting to allow them to attain results in top bands and therefore greater growth. Boys in both Year 3 and Year 5 are performing better than girls, indicating that a further focus needs to be placed on the improvement of girls. Many of the questions on which the school performed significantly below the state average were lengthy and required higher levels of reading comprehension. A focus needs to be placed on the reading of instructions, vocabulary and the language of mathematics.

**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.
Significant programs and initiatives

Aboriginal education

In June Mr Alby Schultz (Federal Member for Hume) attended a special assembly to activate our two federally funded flagpoles. Ben Steed, Cameron Kolster, Jamie-Lee Harrison and Shania Forster proudly attached and raised our Australian and Aboriginal flags.

Students were invited to attend the Woonjeegaribay Aboriginal Film Festival at the Bowral Cinema. Following an overwhelming response, students enjoyed the series of short films. Students’ awareness of Aboriginal culture was greatly enhanced and complemented class programs in HSIE.

In October, students from K-1 went to Bowral for an Aboriginal Art Day. They studied the art and culture of our ancient and modern day Aborigines. They learnt about the culture by integrating Art and English and how the Aboriginal people remembered their ancestors by painting a stone and carrying it with them as they moved from place to place. Bradley Grose, Amber Tingay, Briyahn Luck, Erin Stephens and Dylan Errington participated on the day.

Multicultural education

Parents and students travelled around the Asian region all in a matter of hours, as they toured each of our classrooms, which presented an impressive display about the countries as part of our South East Asia multicultural unit. Art and craft, maps, flags, artefacts, information about language, culture and religion were some of the items proudly arranged for the much-anticipated day. Students carried specially prepared passports in which they recorded drawings and facts as they explored each country’s ‘stop-over’ on the tour. Much was learnt and the day was thoroughly enjoyed by all.

In Term 3 1/2L & 3/4H went on a Sunnataram Forest Monastery excursion to Bundanoon to learn about aspects of Buddhism as part of our HSIE Multicultural units on Thailand and Vietnam. The monastery is a Theravada Buddhist one in the Thai forest tradition. The students thoroughly enjoyed the day as they learnt many interesting facts from the Monks. Highlights of the day included observing the monks building a map of the world in the garden, walking through the tranquil setting, seeing a variety of Buddhist statues and temples, meditating with the monks and enjoying a sumptuous Asian inspired vegetarian feast. Many of our students have since returned there for another visit with their families as a weekend outing.

In late Term 4, K-2 attended Sydney and Darling Harbour excursion as part of their learning in HSIE. The highlights of the day for the students included visiting the Opera House, the Botanical Gardens, cruising Sydney Harbour and visiting Sydney Wildlife World. It was an extremely informative, engaging and exhausting day.

Drug Education

Life Education visited Hill Top in Term 4. It is a whole school program to complement our school’s health and drug program. All classes visited the van for a lesson, appropriate to their stage. Students enjoyed seeing Harold again, had follow up classroom discussions and completed workbooks.

Respect and Responsibility

The Hill Top community held its annual Anzac Day service at the local hall on 25 April. Captains Joel Bottin-Noonan and Carissa Anderson and vice captains Peta O’Connell and Rhys Hamilton were key contributors to a very moving service. The School’s SRC and staff members who laid a wreath attended the ANZAC day dawn service. A special end of term assembly was also conducted at school, with representatives from both the Navy and the Air force from HMAS Albatross. Together with a member of staff from the Army Reserve, this made it a tri-service affair and generated coverage in the local news. This was an occasion to use our new flagpoles to fly the national and Aboriginal flags.

Before Easter most of the students, teachers, some scripture teachers and some parents walked to the Community Church for the Easter Service. The students sang songs and participated in the Easter presentation given to us by the St Stephens Youth Minister. Scott Rohwer, read us a passage from the Bible. After the service we were served a drink and a cake which had been donated by the Community Church.

On Schools’ Clean Up Day every class was involved in cleaning up the school environment, both inside and outside the school grounds.
Each class was assigned an area of the school and armed with gloves and plastic bags they enthusiastically collected much rubbish.

A disco was held in Term 2 to raise money for our World Vision child, Alpha Diallo. The P&C ran a canteen and students danced and played games to win prizes. Students sponsor Alpha with donations raised through fundraising. A Mufti Day held in Term 3 raised $100.00 towards this worthwhile cause.

Carissa Anderson, Peta O’Connell, Joel Bottin-Noonan and Rhys Hamilton attended a Young Leaders’ Workshop at Berrima PS in Term 2. Yr 10 students led the course from Moss Vale HS and they undertook group work and developed team-building skills.

Early in Term 3 we had an extremely informative and engaging visit from our local SES, which was organised, by one of our parents, Mrs Cassidy, a volunteer with the SES. All students learnt about the important role of our local SES and the services they provide to our community. The highlights of the visit were an informative power point presentation, meeting some of our local SES members, viewing the tools used on their highly equipped vehicles and having a special visit from their mascot, Platty the Platypus who kindly distributed information brochures, bookmarks and SES bags.

In Term 4, two representatives from each class planted a tree in the school gardens following a demonstration by Mrs Van der Meer. The native plants were kindly donated by Wariapendi Plant Nursery.

The P&C held a ‘Halloween’ Disco in Term 4. It was a huge success with a high percentage of students attending. The P&C decorated the hall. The teachers had fun supervising the children and running the activities. The students were all dressed up as wizards, witches and ghosts. It was very scary! The money raised was given to the P&C to help buy readers for the school.

Brainstorm’s production of ‘The Human Race’ challenged the students to find out what qualities we need to create positive relationships at school, in the community and ultimately globally. The students learnt simple strategies for building skills in conflict resolution, problem solving, appropriate assertiveness and having empathy for others.

Progress on 2008 targets

Target 1: To continue the school’s commitment to improving student outcomes in numeracy

Our achievements include:

- Measurement was the core part of the RFF program in stage 1 classes using hands on experiences and activities.
- Parent helpers photocopied and laminated CMIT games and activities for classroom programs. The collection of Count Me In games available to classroom teachers is continuing to grow.
- HTPS was a pilot school in Best Start and all kindergarten students were assessed in numeracy.
- Maths equipment has undergone a major stock take and all resources are to be stored in our new maths storeroom.

Target 2: To continue the school’s commitment to improving student outcomes in literacy- focus on writing

Our achievements include:

- Developing a whole school writing Scope and Sequence based on the social purpose of texts and identifying the grammar language structures of each of these.
- Purchasing good quality resources for the development of guided reading and writing. This involved a large amount of fundraising by P&C and staff members.
- HTPS was a pilot school in Best Start and all kindergarten were assessed in Literacy. This then lead to staff members plotting students across the literacy continuum and informing their teaching and learning practise.

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 2008 our school carried out evaluations of: Relocation of teaching resources and teacher programing.
Educational and management practice
Relocation of Teaching Resources

Background
School teaching resources were stored at the eastern most buildings at the greatest distance to the classrooms were the material was to be accessed.

Findings and conclusions
Staff determined to undertake a review of resources and storage areas and plan for a relocation of resources. An existing laundry and cleaner’s storeroom were detected as being appropriate storage areas but they contained a huge volume of play props and redundant equipment. The P&C purchased an 8m by 4m colour bond shed. A parent (Mr Chad Malby) and our General Assistant (Mark Farrell) erected it allowing us to move bulky PE materials and drama props adjacent to the hall and oval. The two storerooms are in the process of being fitted with shelving.

Future directions
All reading, big book, maths and science resources will be stored in appropriate tubs in the laundry. All computer resources will be based in a fortified ex-cleaner’s store. Emptied storerooms will be better utilised.

Curriculum
Programeing

Background
In Term 4, 2007 a review team was set up to review and develop guidelines for whole school programming with a specific focus on literacy development across the key learning areas. Our current individual programming ideas and structure were discussed at whole school staff meetings to review current practices and successful programming ideas and proformas used.

Findings and conclusions
The school has clearly articulated a vision for programming guidelines across the school and has developed a variety of organisational structures and management practices to support the implementation.

Resources and tolls have been gathered eg. Programming CD roms and have been distributed to staff and since utilised in developing effective, informative teaching programs.

Organisational strategies such as time management, collaborative programming and collegial discussions to develop and shared programming strategies have been implemented.

Many effective data collection and assessment strategies related to more collaborative programming have been developed e.g. rubrics for assessment and reporting and have contributed to improve student outcomes based on a stronger understanding of where individual students are at on the learning continuum.

Future directions
To organise more collaborative planning meeting times so that teachers have time to develop stronger shared understandings, knowledge and skills to inform their classroom practice.

To further develop a shared bank of useful programming tools: CD roms, electronically shared resources, etc.

To provide further programing support by reviewing and developing supervision and mentoring opportunities.

Parent, student and teacher satisfaction
In 2008 the school sought the opinions of parents, students and teachers about the school.

Their responses are presented below.

In 2008 the school sought the opinions of parents, students and teachers in establishing priorities within eight areas of school management and organization. These areas included Literacy, Numeracy, Connected Classrooms Technology, Aboriginal Education, Gifted and Talented Education, School Promotion, Student Welfare and School Organisational structures. An information gathering tool by Langford called a Lotus diagram was used to gather ideas and prioritise areas of need from the Executive team, whole staff K-6 the P&C, the School Council and the students which will inform strategic directions and targets in our School Management Plan for
the next three years.

62% of parents strongly agreed that the Bronze, Silver & Gold Award Path system was enjoyed by the children for being consistently rewarded for positive behaviour.

48% of parents strongly agreed that the new system was a stronger sense of valuing positive behaviour at Hill Top PS.

52% of parents would like to see this system of awards continued to be used in 2009.

Professional learning
The key focus in 2008 was training in Best Start for kindergarten, stage 1 teachers and supervisors. All staff received training in CPR.

School development 2009 – 2011

Targets for 2009

Target 1: Literacy – Achievement of Quality teaching and Learning in Literacy
K-6 student writing achievement will measurably improve. Classroom reading programs will include a wide variety of quality teaching strategies and resources. K-6 student achievement in reading comprehension will measurably improve.

Strategies to achieve this target include:
- Develop school scope and sequence K-6 based on the social purpose of texts. Develop school scope and sequence K-6 for spelling. Implement Best Start in line with DET guidelines. Teacher Professional Development of Best Start practices, documentation and on-line resources.
- Trial new support documents eg: Phonemic Awareness. Review guided reading resources and practices. Replace big books. Build sets of levelled texts and support material.

Our success will be measured by:
- All teachers implementing writing scope and sequence based on social purpose. An increase in the number of students in top 3 NAPLAN bands for writing. An increase in the number of students in top 3 NAPLAN bands for Spelling.
- Increased number of students spelling at age appropriate levels in South Australian Spelling Test. Students plotted across Literacy continuum. Increase students in top 3 NAPLAN bands for Reading. Collection/collation of reading record data incorporating comprehension. Teachers using a variety of quality resources and strategies. Presentations by students in line with social purpose continuum.

Target 2: Numeracy – Achievement of Quality teaching and Learning in Numeracy
Student learning outcomes in all strands of the Maths syllabus will measurably improve. Teachers knowledge in quality teaching and assessment of numeracy will increase. Improved assessment of numeracy.

Strategies to achieve this target include:
- Teachers collaboratively review implementation of syllabus/programming and assessment / quality teaching practices. Develop a school scope and sequence K-6 with clear grade / stage expectations. Focus on Language in Numeracy planning. Implement ‘Count Me in Too’ as well as "Counting On’ strategies to provide a “hands on” focus. Contract games to support syllabus. Organise CMIT activities in storage area. Show and Tell of new activities. CMIT training in school Counting On Training in school. Cooperative planning in stages to make use of DET resource publications. Provide resources to support Scope and Sequence. Purchase resources to fulfil areas of need. Establish network with other schools. Implement Best Start in line with DET guidelines K-2. Professional Development of staff in Best Start practices, documentation and on-line resources. Develop ongoing assessment tools and practices.

Our success will be measured by:
- Increase in the number of students in top 3 NAPLAN bands in all strands. Teachers have increased skills / knowledge in teaching / assessing and reporting of all maths strands. Teachers planning and assessing together more effectively using a school designed scope and sequence. Effective bank of CMIT resources constructed and available in Maths resource room for teacher use. Increased number of staff with CMIT and Counting On training. Teachers are using DET resources in collaborative planning and teaching. Students plotted across Numeracy continuum. Teachers consistently use and monitor student progress.
**Target 3:** Technology & Connected Learning.

Enhanced access to digital educational resources for learning and teaching. Increased access and use of digital technology for teacher professional learning and productivity. Improve student access and capacity to use information and communication technologies to enhance their learning.

**Strategies to achieve this target include:**


**Our success will be measured by:**

All classes using multimedia equipment as an integrated part of teaching and learning programs. Student access streamlined, with less login or software access difficulties. School resources available from fileserver for use by all staff. Increased confidence in teaching of computer skills in class projects.

**Target 4:** Gifted and Talented.

To identify Gifted and Talented students and develop appropriate strategies that provide a range of challenging opportunities to meet their learning needs. To meet the needs of gifted and talented students allowing them to fulfil their potential by monitoring and evaluating effective programs for Gifted & Talented students. To provide Professional Learning opportunities to all staff.

**Strategies to achieve this target include:**

Formulate guidelines for the identification of gifted and talented students in particular curriculum areas. Gifted and talented policy planning matrix at a SDD. Conduct identification survey for teachers, parents and students. Implement differentiated curriculum in classrooms to meet the needs of gifted and talented students. Investigate the development of a differentiated curriculum based on the Quality Teaching model. Collegial planning of teaching units, action plans and monitoring strategies in stage and staff meetings.

**Our success will be measured by:**

Staff and School Community are aware of School Gifted & Talented Policy and student identification process. Students are identified using explicit criteria and an appropriate action plan implemented that includes teaching and learning activities, monitoring, assessment techniques and program evaluation. Improved student engagement in challenging activities through established monitoring processes. Strengthening of home school partnerships.

**Target 5:** Environmental Education

Gas and electricity energy usage reduction across the whole school.

**Strategies to achieve this target include:**

Conduct an energy audit on lighting, photocopiers, computers, zip heater, etc, using a ‘cent-o-meter’. Introduce ‘Power Ranger’ students.

**Our success will be measured by:**

Energy costs are reduced. Increased staff, student and parent satisfaction and pride.
Target 6: Aboriginal Education
Improve curriculum, teaching and assessment programs to ensure they are challenging and culturally appropriate, within a supportive learning environment.

Strategies to achieve this target include:
Whole school exploration of teaching units to ensure Aboriginal cultural perspectives are appropriate.

Our success will be measured by:
Aboriginal perspectives included in all areas of curriculum and resources utilized in quality teaching and learning programs.

Target 7: School Promotion
Raise the awareness of Hill Top Public School in the wider community as a quality local Public School. Increased links with the local community.

Strategies to achieve this target include:
Design, upload and regularly update a school website. Produce an updated school brochure and distribute in the local community. Produce DVD showcasing positive aspects of Hill Top School. Actively involve the media in promotion of special programs and events. Update Foyer design.

Our success will be measured by:
Website updated and accessed by community. Parents accessing electronic forms of school newsletter. Brochure available and distributed in the local community. Increased number of school events and achievements reported in local media. Improved foyer environment reflecting school achievements and events. Community satisfaction with school uniforms. Involvement of pre-schools/playgroups in school events. Increased communication and liaison between organizations.

Target 8: Student Welfare
School culture and practice that respects and responds to every student's aspirations, culture, gender and learning potential. Improved social and emotional wellbeing and skills for life for students.

Strategies to achieve this target include:

Our success will be measured by:
Staff implementing discipline procedures as per policy. Common understanding by all stakeholders of procedures and consequences. Tracking system monitoring and providing evidence of improved behaviour.

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.

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Parents can find out more information about Annual School Reports, how to interpret information in the reports and have the opportunity to provide feedback about these reports at: