School context statement

Millers Forest Public School is located in the Maitland District in a quiet rural setting. It is part of the Gateway Learning Community of Schools. Staff and parents work closely together to ensure students feel happy and safe while nurturing lifelong learners and resilient citizens.

At Millers Forest Public School we provide opportunities for every student to achieve their full potential, with an emphasis on achieving your best. Our school is committed to encouraging its students to participate in a balance of learning experiences, including cultural, physical and social. The teaching staff worked very hard to provide a wide variety of opportunities in and out of the classroom to enhance learning outcomes.

We work in close partnership with parents and the wider community. Encouraging parents to be active participants in our school’s activities and value their input in children’s education.

Student Information

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

Student enrolment profile

The number of enrolments for 2014 continued the trend of recent years

Student attendance profile

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>2009</th>
<th>2010</th>
<th>2011</th>
<th>2012</th>
<th>2013</th>
<th>2014</th>
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<tr>
<td>K</td>
<td>92.0</td>
<td>92.7</td>
<td>91.9</td>
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<td>84.2</td>
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<td>90.9</td>
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<td>6</td>
<td>85.8</td>
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<td>94.2</td>
<td>97.2</td>
<td>95.7</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>89.3</td>
<td>90.6</td>
<td>92.4</td>
<td>92.5</td>
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<td>94.0</td>
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Workforce information

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

Workforce composition

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Position</th>
<th>Number</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Principal</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deputy Principal(s)</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assistant Principal(s)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Head Teachers</td>
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<tr>
<td>Classroom Teacher(s)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Teacher of Reading Recovery</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learning and Support Teacher(s)</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher Librarian</td>
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<tr>
<td>Teacher of ESL</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>School Counsellor</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School Administrative &amp; Support Staff</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>4.4</td>
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The National Education Agreement requires schools to report on Indigenous composition of their workforce. We have no Aboriginal staff at Millers Forest Public School.

Teacher qualifications

All teaching staff meet the professional requirements for teaching in NSW public schools.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Qualifications</th>
<th>% of staff</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Degree or Diploma</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Postgraduate</td>
<td></td>
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</table>

Professional learning and teacher accreditation

Areas for focus in the School Management Plan for 2014 were Literacy, Numeracy and Integrated use of Technology. Staff also attended weekly staff meetings which focused on areas from the school plan or to cater for mandatory training. Some examples of the Professional learning that took place in 2014 include:

- All teaching staff were trained in an online curriculum programming suite to assist with the use of a more effective programming tool.
- All new staff members attended the introductory training for (P.B.L.) to implement on-going programs within this area of student well-being.
• The Principal and (SAM) attended a Strategic Financial Management for NSW Public schools course which will assist in developing a strategic focus in managing school financial resources and accountability.

• Three staff members updated the Asthma training during the 2014 year.

• All teaching staff participated in the Lexia Core5 Reading training and development. This program is being trialed in 2014 and is to be implemented during 2015

• The Principal attended a training workshop on Teacher Accreditation during term four 2014.

• An information day was attended by the Principal during term four on aspects and information on Instructional Leaders.

• A two day training was completed by the Principal on the Best Start for 2015.

• Small school Principals attended an additional training day for the new Strategic Plan hosted by the Principal Support person.

• Three staff members and a community representative had a planning day to work on the new Strategic Plan.

We have no teachers undergoing accreditation this year.

Beginning Teachers

We have no beginning teachers.

Financial summary

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

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date of financial summary</th>
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<td>Tied funds</td>
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<td><strong>Total income</strong></td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Expenditure</strong></th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Teaching &amp; learning</td>
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<td>Key learning areas</td>
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<td>Excursions</td>
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<td>Extracurricular dissections</td>
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<td>Utilities</td>
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<td>Maintenance</td>
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<td><strong>Total expenditure</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Balance carried forward</strong></td>
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</table>

A full copy of the school’s 2014 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 2014

Activities held during 2014 to engage the students and encourage further learning and enrichments were:

• Life Education
• Choir
• Recorder
• Guitar
• Harmony Day
• Merit Award Assemblies
• Easter Hat Parade
• Book Week Celebrations
• Knockout Soccer Team
• NAIDOC Week
• Education Week
• Zone Representations
• Clean up Australia Day
• Opera House Recorder Group
• Quality Monthly Awards from the Kiwani’s Club
• Debating Competitions
• Creative Art Carnival Workshops

• Achievements

Arts
Our school has a strong commitment to creative and performing arts. These activities are important as they develop student’s self-esteem, confidence and provide a well-rounded school curriculum. Highlights of the 2014 program include:

Recorder
Students from year’s two to six learn to play the recorder with a dedicated music teacher. Our recorder group performed at Education Week activities, the end of year Presentation Night and at the Festival of Instrumental Music 2014 Combined Recorder Ensemble at the Opera House. All players received fantastic reviews from their peers, teachers and community members and should be very proud of their achievements.

Choir
In 2014, Millers Forest Public School Choir performed at numerous events and always represented the school with pride.

The choir performed at Presentation Night, Education Week celebrations and at school assemblies.

We are very lucky to have an extremely motivated and charismatic choir in 2014.

Guitar
All Millers Forest Public School students are given the opportunity to have weekly guitar lessons with our dedicated guitar teacher Paul Nickerson. Students from
grades one to grade six can elect to learn to play the guitar. Students showcase their talents at various school functions including the End of Year Presentation Night.

Sporting

Millers Forest Public School was well represented on the sporting field in 2014. All three major carnivals swimming, cross country and the small schools athletics carnival were held successfully. As a result we were able to send a relay team to the regional finals and many students to zone carnivals.

Congratulations to all our competitors who worked hard to achieve their personal best in their events.

Millers Forest Public School competed in the Small Schools’ Soccer Knockout Competition. Unfortunately, our team was knocked out in the first round, but our students gained valuable soccer skills in the training sessions leading up to the game and enjoyed playing against another school.

Five students went through to the Zone track and field events our largest team ever to represent the school.

Nicholas Bourke represented our school at the Rugby League trials.

The whole school participated in the Premier’s Sporting Challenge. The program had a very positive impact as students endeavoured to increase their physical activity during play times at school. The students also participated in the Hot Shots Tennis Program for eight weeks in term four.

Tennis

The whole school participated in the Premier’s Sporting Challenge. The program had a very positive impact as students endeavoured to increase their physical activity during play times at school. The students also participated in the Hot Shots Tennis Program for eight weeks in term four. Students thoroughly enjoyed this program and developed their tennis skills. We had many other sporting activities at our school in 2014, such as a whole school fun run, a rugby league clinic and a visit from the Jets W-League team members.
Our school also participated in two additional sporting challenges against our neighboring small schools Mount Kanwary and Glen William Public Schools. We competed in t-ball and soccer.

**Other**

**Blackbutt Excursion**

In term three the whole school attended an excursion at Blackbutt Reserve. The students had a formal lesson by the rangers and then toured the grounds. This excursion was to support and celebrate a K-6 COG’s learning unit in ‘Exploring Growth and Change’. To complement this unit of learning students participated in focused lessons on ‘The Living World’. Students investigated the features of different plants and animals as well as discussing growth and change in plants and animals.

**Create Art Carnival**

This year in semester two ten students attended the Create Art Carnival held at Gresford Public School. Workshops included photography, drama, and print making magic, book making, 3D paper art, clay work, manga-style comic book art and Lego movie making. All students reported an outstanding day, where they learnt new and exciting skills.
FACE – Art Exhibition

During October and November 2014 six students across the grades were selected to exhibit their artwork at the FACE in an Urban Landscape K-10 art exhibition at cstudio at Newcastle West.

Students who exhibited were:
Malcolm Green and Katie Burton from kindergarten, Charlotte Gillette from grade one, Tyrone Roche from grade three, Lauchlan Davis from year four and Alex Johnston from grade six.

Other

Peer Support Program

Our successful Peer Support Program was used again in 2014 and will be extended and reviewed for 2015. This program reinforces our Positive Behaviour for Learning (PBL) focus in the school.

Positive Behaviour for Learning

2014 saw the successful continuation of the (PBL) program. The proactive approach to behaviour highlighted our values of Be Safe, Be a Learner and Be Respectful.

Results from this program continue to drive the positive culture of our school including a 33% decrease in playground referrals and a 50% decrease in our suspension rate. Negative classroom incidents have decreased by 25% which has supported improvements in student learning outcomes.

One staff member attended the Tier Two training component of the (PBL) program. This was then delivered to staff members as a series of presentations in staff meetings.

“Q” Awards – Quality Awards

2014 saw the introduction of a new award. This is in partnership with the Kiwani’s Club East Maitland. Each month a student is chosen for the Q Award. The student receives a medal and a certificate.

Transitional Equity Funding

Millers Forest Public School was delighted to be included in Transitional Equity Funding program in 2014 receiving $12 400 in funding with 0.1 (half a day a week) staffing allocation. This was to support the learning outcomes for students. The focus was to increase quality teaching across the school and has continued to demonstrate success through key strategies implemented throughout the year as outlined below.

- Developing quality assessment tasks to monitor student progress.
- Planning and professional cooperative dialogue.
- Observation of teaching strategies and embedding quality teaching practices across all curriculum areas.
- Examining data to identify areas of focus and ongoing assessment areas.
- Individual one on one support provided on a weekly basis in literacy and numeracy.

Public Speaking

A whole school public speaking competition was held this year and all students gave a speech to their class. Two students from each stage were then selected to represent Millers Forest Public School in the Regional Public Speaking Competition which was held at Nulkaba Public School. Our students had a very positive experience in the competition and represented the school with pride.

Harmony Day

Harmony Day was celebrated at Millers Forest Public School in term one. Orange is the Harmony Day colour, so students wore orange clothes to school and were treated to a special orange theme lunch organised by the P&C. Students participated in activities in their classrooms that celebrated Australian’s diverse culture and values.

Academic achievements

At the close of the 2014 school year, the annual Millers Forest Public School Presentation Night was held and celebrated the academic, leadership, citizenship and sporting achievements of the students.

Major award winners for 2014 were:
Kevin Mann Environmental Award:
Phoebe Humphreys and Alloriah Lee
Sportsperson Award: Nic Bourke
Citizenship Award: Lauchlan Davis
Premier’s Sporting Challenge Award:
James Green
Dux Award: Alex Johnston
Most Improved – Primary – Lacey Franks
Most Improved – Infants – Malcolm Green
Kiwanis Perpetual Award for Quality Work 2014 – Tyrone Roche
Art Award Primary – Blake Lee
Art Award Infants – Katie Burton

Achievements

NAPLAN

In the National Assessment Program, the results across the Years 3, 5, 7 and 9 literacy and numeracy assessments are reported on a scale from Band 1 to Band 10.

The achievement scale represents increasing levels of skills and understandings demonstrated in these assessments.

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

The My School website provides detailed information and data for national literacy and numeracy testing (NAPLAN).

Click on the link http://www.myschool.edu.au and enter the school name in the Find a school and select GO to access the school data.

Alternatively:

NAPLAN Year 3 - Literacy (including Reading, Writing, Spelling and Grammar and Punctuation)
NAPLAN Year 3 - Numeracy

NAPLAN Year 5 - Literacy (including Reading, Writing, Spelling and Grammar and Punctuation)
Significant programs and initiatives – Policy and equity funding

The school was involved in, or conducted a number of programs to give students extra educational support and enhanced learning opportunities throughout 2014.

These included:

- Positive Behaviour for Learning (PBL)
- Best Start (Kindergarten)
- The continuation of improvements to the delivery of literacy and numeracy to cater for individual students
- Participating in Debating Competition
- Drug Education Program
- Premier’s Sporting Challenge
- Guitar Tuition
- Dedicated music and art program
- Math’s Online
- Developing a closer working relationship as the Gateway Learning Community
- Knockout Soccer Competition.

This year equity funding was allocated as teacher time working with intensive groups. An intensive instructional early stage one and stage one group was set up to increase outcomes in all aspects of English with concentrated lessons in reading.

Additionally an accelerated group was formed from stage one to further advance outcomes in all aspects of English. Weekly reporting to parents was a feedback feature of these programs.

Results have been extremely promising with all students increasing their PM levels by two to three levels.

The Gateway Learning Community

Our Local Management Group the Gateway Learning Community worked extremely hard on targeted initiatives during 2014. To enable and forge strong partnerships between the schools,
all staff from Francis Greenway and its primary partner schools jointly attended professional learning in implementing the new English Syllabus during development afternoons’ across all stages during 2014 to ensure a deep understanding of the new National English syllabus.

During 2014 the GLC provided staff training and development for the new Mathematics and Science and Technology syllabus’.

Aboriginal education

The programs that support our Aboriginal students are designed to educate and inform all students about Aboriginal culture and history, including contemporary Aboriginal issues.

All Aboriginal students have Personalised Learning Plans (PLP’S) which are developed between the classes teachers, parents and students. These include targets and goals for the school year in literacy and numeracy. The plans also identify a cultural goal to enhance students understanding and involvement in cultural activities with the school and wider community.

N.A.I.D.O.C. activities were celebrated at school. Leigh Ridgeway gave a talk on cultural matters and awareness.

Johnny Robinson worked with students to create a totem pole display. Students from across the school contributed to the painting of the poles and designing the artwork.

Multicultural education and anti-racism

There were no enrolled students who received English as a Second Language support. Multicultural studies are incorporated across the stages into many aspects of the curriculum. These range from studies of another country, to learning about global citizenship, celebrations around the world or studying different religions or cultures.

Aboriginal background

At Millers Forest Public School we presently have two Aboriginal students. In 2015 we will have four Aboriginal students enrolled.

Socio-economic background
During 2014 Millers Forest Public school attracted Transitional Equity funding calculated on figures and information supplied by parents from a socio-economic background perspective. This funding employed an additional support teacher for one day per week.

English language proficiency

During the 2014 funding cycle we received no additional funding to support English language proficiency.

Learning and Support

Learning and support was provided for students from kindergarten to grade three during 2014. A specialist literacy program operated every Monday with Mrs. Avery. This focused on increasing literacy outcomes for students below grade level. 100% of students increased their PM levels by two to four levels within this timeframe. A Gifted and Talented extension group was formed with students during semester two. This operated three days a week. The focus was on literacy outcomes including comprehension, oral reading, phonic extension and fluency.

School planning and evaluation 2012—2014

School evaluation processes

NSW public schools conduct evaluations to support the effective implementation of the school plan. The processes used include:

- A survey conducted with students, staff and parents on the curriculum area of English.
- A survey conducted on the strengths, weaknesses and needs of the school with students, staff and parents. This survey will also determine directions for the new Strategic Plan for 2015-2017.

English Background

The staff at Millers Forest School have implemented the new English Syllabus this year and have participated in various professional development sessions relating to the English Syllabus. Teachers have developed engaging, differentiated English programs to meet the needs of all students and have integrated technology to support these programs.

Findings and Conclusions

Staff, students and parents completed a survey about the teaching of English at Millers Forest Public School. The parent survey results indicate:

- 96% parents believe their child has developed improved skills in English this year and they are interested in English.
- 95% of parents think the main purpose of
school targets is to improve students’ learning outcomes in English and that the school’s planning processes are responsive to emerging literacy needs. Parents identified the school's strengths in relation to English to be differentiated programs to cater for all students and innovative teaching techniques.

The staff survey results indicate:

85% of staff members believe that students are interested in aspects of English and have developed improved skills in English this year. They believe that the main purpose of school targets and planning is to improve students’ learning outcomes in English. Also that the Annual School Report identifies the reasons for school targets. It is recognised that school planning documents are developed with the support of staff, students and parents and that the school’s planning processes are responsive to emerging literacy needs.

The staff identified the school’s strengths in relation to English as being the dedicated teachers at the school, the integrated and differentiated English programs that cater for all students, as well as the use of technology and staff collaboration.

The student survey results indicate:

95% of students believe that they have improved their English skills in English this year and are interested in aspects of English. Students identify the school’s strengths in relation to English as the online programs used and listening activities.

Future Directions

Areas for development identified by staff included increasing reading resources and home support as well as incorporating an online, systematic reading program.

Areas for development identified by parents included more consistency with teachers and increased resources.

Areas for development identified by students included more literacy games and the use of iPad. Students believe that we could raise money to buy new resources.

School planning 2012-2014:

School priority 1

To improve student performance in literacy with particular emphasis on a range of skills that develop spelling proficiencies, guided writing and reading.

Outcomes from 2012–2014

- Staff continue to teach quality programs which cater for different literacy styles plotting across the new literacy curriculum.
- Continue to increased staff, student and parent understanding and awareness of the literacy requirements across the curriculum including the use of the literacy continuum within classes.
- Quality Teaching Framework is consistently implemented across all syllabuses to facilitate at or above minimum standards.
- 75% of Year Five students will achieve or exceed expected growth in the spelling aspects in the NAPLAN assessment for 2015.

Evidence of progress towards outcomes in 2014:

- Teachers implementing a variety of quality teaching strategies and embedding teaching for all learning styles in Teaching/Learning programs to enhance student outcomes.
- Students continue to demonstrate enhanced skill development in reading, writing and spelling.
- Teachers continue to demonstrate application of the NSW Quality Teaching Framework in Teaching/Learning programs across all Key Learning Areas and in daily classroom practice.
- Best Start initiative and training leads to all teachers using the Literacy Continuum.
effectively to plot the progress of students and plan future learning.

- Introduction of Lexia Core 5 Reading Program K-6 to further develop literacy and technology skills and improve results.
- All teachers continue to demonstrate increasing familiarity, confidence and skill development with the new English syllabus through addressing outcomes and objectives in Teaching/Learning programs.
- All students K-6 are entered onto (PLAN) and the data is reviewed by all staff.

**Strategies to achieve these outcomes in 2014**

- Effective continuation of the plotting of all students on the Literacy Continuum K-6 to monitor student achievement.
- Use of class based literacy continuums and teachers plotting students within Sentral.
- Staff professional learning will focus on developing spelling proficiencies, guided reading and writing skills and using the Literacy continuum to track and monitor student progress.
- Target and intervene with additional support teaching strategies for students in need of additional learning and support.
- An increasing emphasis on the teaching of literacy as a whole across K-6.
- Staff will continue to build on and use best practice knowledge from the Australian English Curriculum.
- Provide on-going training and support for all aspects of the English Syllabus.

**School priority 2**

To improve student engagement in all aspects of numeracy.

**Outcomes from 2012–2014**

- Ensure pre and post tests for each outcome taught, ensuring the use of mathematical language is regularly identified and used in the classroom to target identified student needs.
- Continued purchasing of quality resources to support teaching and learning programs and to assist student understandings of mathematical concepts.
- Teachers tracking student progress and targeting and catering for students showing higher levels of understanding. Teachers will have high expectations of all students coupled with students working at their individual levels.
- An increase of five percent of students accurately answering the one and two step mathematical problems in NAPLAN.
- Teachers continue to implement a greater range of effective teaching and learning activities for all students in numeracy including Sena one and two games.
- Participation of students in the technology based program Symphony Maths including training and development by teachers.
- Learning and Support Teacher to target areas of need and work with teachers and students to improve and lift outcomes where appropriate.
- Continuing analysis of the NAPLAN results to identify the strengths and weaknesses in numeracy.
- Track all student progress through three testing online assessments linked to Symphony Maths.

**Evidence of Progress towards outcomes in 2014:**

- Quality K-6 Teaching/Learning programs that demonstrate a range and depth of Numeracy learning experiences responding to needs, strengths and weaknesses, as identified in the analysis of Best Start, NAPLAN and other assessments used within the school.
- Explicit teaching of Numeracy concepts and strategies and ongoing assessment to collect and analyse data to inform the Teaching /Learning cycle, evident in all teaching programs.
• Students demonstrating increasing understanding and improved strategy and skill development in Numeracy.

• Students’ progress plotted on the Numeracy continuum to ensure monitoring of students progressing at their individual rates.

• The use of class based and electronic continuum tracking throughout the year.

Strategies to achieve these outcomes in 2014:

• Staff will continue to use the Numeracy Continuum K-6 and the data collected will be used to inform programs and groupings of students.

• Increased focus on targeted intervention strategies K-6 using the LAST expertise.

• Increased staff focus on the teaching of the Number strand and Working Mathematically.

• Staff will continue to build awareness and knowledge of the Australian Mathematics Curriculum.

• A focus on the Number Strand through the use of Symphony Math in 2015.

School priority 3

To more effectively integrate our use of IT within classroom practice and the use of school-wide technology.

Outcomes from 2012–2014

• Developing units of work that reflect aspects of technology framework scaffolding. Staff up skilled by the Computer Coordinator;

• Continued provision of a dedicated Computer Coordinator to enhance and drive technology teaching and learning, coupled with connected learning outcomes;

Evidence of progress towards outcomes in 2014:

• Teachers embedding technology across Key Learning Areas to enhance student learning experiences and outcomes.

• Teachers working with the computer teacher to improve their skills and capacity to implement technology for meaningful purposes.

• Students engaged in using technology for meaningful tasks to complement learning in a variety of Key Learning Areas.

• A school based wireless system is installed and being used on a daily basis.

• Students use iPads in groups across the school as a learning tool.

Strategies to achieve these outcomes in 2014:

• Every classroom and teaching program will demonstrate the use of Information Computer Technologies.

• Continue to employ a dedicated Computer teacher one day per week.

• Homework will reflect class learning in technology and provide opportunities for differing learning styles including the use of a classroom blog for the three to six class.

• Parents, students and staff will play active roles in the planning processes of technology for the school.

• A focus on teacher use of technologies including increased use of video conferencing for both classes.

• The introduction of Airplay technology to instantly edit, display and enhance examples of student work on the Smartboard.

Parent/caregiver, student, and teacher satisfaction

In 2014, the school sought the opinions of parents, students and teachers about the school. Their responses are presented below.
In 2014 the school sought the opinions of parents, students and teachers about the school. These are the responses to our surveys:

- 95% of the parents and the community feel the school has strong communication, only 25% of parents and caregivers access the school website, newsletters online and information.
- 91% of parents agreed that their children are motivated to achieve their best and that they are happy at school most of the time.
- 96% of parents and 100% of teachers agreed that the P&C are a great support to Millers Forest Public School, and 100% of students agreed that the new canteen on Fridays was a fantastic success.
- 98% of parents found the staff friendly and approachable, including office and support staff.

**Future Directions**

**2015-2017 School Plan**

NSW DEC is implementing a new school planning process for 2015-17. The new plan will be published on the school’s website from the beginning of Term 2 2015.

During semester two 2014 a working committee was formed consisting of staff and parents. In term four we completed work on the school vision statement, the school context and school planning process. The school’s three strategic directions are:

1. To Seek a High Level of Student Achievement.
2. Develop a High Level of Professional Practice.
3. Enhance Community Partnerships and Strengthen Participation.

Initial work has been completed using the 5P planning process to further develop the strategic directions. The first five weeks of milestones are completed to begin the 2015 school year.

Our cover was designed by a parent Nicole Edwards using photographs reflecting our three strategic directions.

**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.

Christyne Phelps - Principal
Catherine Bray – Teacher
Gillian Manning – Computer Coordinator
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Parents can find more information about Annual School Reports, how to interpret information in the report and have the opportunity to provide feedback about the report at:
