MIDDLE HARBOUR PUBLIC SCHOOL
Annual Report 2013
Middle Harbour Public School is an outstanding school with high expectations achieved for our motivated students through the strong partnership our school and teachers have with the parent and wider community. All stakeholders work collaboratively and harmoniously together ensuring the best possible outcomes for our students.

The school enjoys a well-deserved reputation for academic achievement. This fine academic achievement can be attributed to our dedicated and committed teaching staff. The teachers in conjunction with a well-resourced learning environment provide high quality teaching and learning for our students in a positive and enjoyable climate.

Opportunities for all students to enjoy, and experience, triumphs in cultural, artistic, environmental and sporting areas are many, and this report highlights a number of these fine achievements.

Due to our continued increase in student enrolments, this year our school celebrated Mrs Carole Jaye being appointed as MHPS’s first deputy principal. At the end of the year the school farewelled Mrs Christine Walker who had been a much admired and respected teacher at our school for over 18 years.

The Parents and Citizens Association (P&C) continues to work extremely hard. This year through a lot of energy and creative fund-raising, the association has continued to enjoy some fantastic results, as highlighted in their report contained in this Annual School Report. Special thanks to Christina Watts, and her Carnivale fair committee, for an outstanding effort in coordinating this extremely successful major school fund-raising event.

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.

Judith Smith

Mrs Judith Smith
Principal
The Mothers’ Day and Fathers’ Day stalls are always enjoyable. It brings a smile to see some children giving serious thought to which gift their parent would like, or need the most. August saw the Bold Archy cocktail evening, which was pleasurable for year 4 - year 6 parents and staff, and we were fortunate to be joined by artist, Ann Cape as our guest judge for the evening.

2013 provided the opportunity to run an Election Day BBQ and Cake Stall. This was a success providing delicious treats for voters. Shortly after, the P&C ran a working bee, which was fun and a very successful day. It highlighted the fantastic teamwork performed by our parent volunteers helping to nurture and tidy the school gardens and grounds.

The School Carnivale in October was our main event and P&C highlight for the year successfully raising close to $75000 for the school. The capable Christina Watts, and a Committee of energetic and enthusiastic Middle Harbour parents ran this event. Twenty-two decorated stalls, a centre stage showcasing back-to-back entertainment, Dodgem Cars and the ever-popular Dunk Tank are only a few of the many treats that provided enjoyment for both the children and adults. It was inspiring to see it all come together and it could not have been done without the energy and enthusiasm of our parents.

A morning tea was also set up to welcome the new Kindergarten parents joining the school in 2014. Working collaboratively with the Kids Cottage, the P&C coordinated the end of year school disco, which was a great success. It assisted in funding the Year 6 farewell which was enjoyed by the teachers and Year 5 and Year 6 children.

This year the P&C also introduced Flexischools, an online shopping platform enabling parents to purchase our school uniform online, as well as items related to the various school events.

A selection of P&C Wish List items is in the process of being implemented and will continue into 2014. We are pleased that we can continue the support of the school’s three educational programs: The Reading Support Program, two days funding of the school’s ICT Coordinator and a floating teacher for two mornings a week to help with differentiation of the curriculum, as well as both enrichment and learning support.

The P&C has also provided funding to the School Band.

Special thanks must go to the supportive, energetic and involved parent community as well as to the dedicated teachers who have volunteered through the year to provide the children with such wonderful opportunities.

Equally, thanks must also go to the P&C committee members for their dedicated support to oversee the running of the school’s Canteen, Uniform Shop, The Kids Cottage, String Ensembles and Bands. Additionally, special thanks must go to the committee members representing Helping Hand, Grounds Liaison, Capacity in Schools and Sustainable Schools.

Danni Griffiths
P&C President 2013

A full copy of the school’s 2013 financial statement is tabled at the annual general meeting of the School Council and/or the parent body. Further details concerning the statement can be obtained by contacting the school.
MESSAGES
School Council

In 2013 the School Council continued its pivotal role of providing support to the principal and teaching staff. The overall purpose of the School Council is to help the school to become the best it can be, from both an educational and infrastructure perspective. The decisions overseen by Council are driven by achieving the best possible outcomes for the school and its students. Additionally the Council acts as a sounding board and has input and offers advice on the development of key policies and initiatives relating to the school. The School Council also provides a forum for parent representatives to present their views and thoughts on matters happening within the school. It encourages all members of the school community to engage Council Members with any concerns which they would like raised at the school. It encourages all members of the school and the associated increased infrastructure requirements.

In 2013 the School Council comprised:
- Judith Smith – MHPS Principal
- Nadia Tobia – Teacher Representative
- Bronwynne Hesketh – Teacher Representative
- Richard McCarthy – Parent Representative
- Michele Baric – President (Parent Representative)
- Jacquie Naher – P & C President
- Jim Reid – Mosman Council Representative. (Unfortunately Jim passed away during the year and Council did not appoint a replacement representative.)

During the year the School Council provided advice and feedback on the following areas:
- Sports in School – with Mr Mitchell’s departure at the end of 2012 MHPS trialled Sports in School. There were a range of responses across the school community regarding the trial. The trial highlighted both positive and negative aspects regarding the use of an external provider.
- Upgrades to the school facilities.
- The growing enrolments of the school and the associated increased infrastructure requirements.
- Release from Face to Face teaching subjects.
- Additional subjects to be brought into the class room i.e. Science, Mandarin, recorder.
- The Camphor Laurel Tree.
- Stage 3 (year 5 and year 6) class formation policy.

2013 has been a great year for Middle Harbour Public School and the School Council would like to thank Danni Griffiths, P & C President, Christina Watts Carnivale Co-ordinator and her committee for their outstanding efforts staging a very successful Carnival this year.

Michele Baric
President School Council 2013

SCHOOL CONTEXT
2013

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

Student Enrolment Profile
In December 2013, our enrolment was 544 with 110 enrolled in Kindergarten. The anticipated total MHPS enrolment figure for 2014 is 574 including 95 Kindergarten students.

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

Structure of Classes
In 2013, there was a total of 22 classes. The school continued having parallel stage 3 classes this year, however following consultation with teachers and the parent community, a decision has been made to have 2 straight year 5 and 2 straight year 6 classes in 2014.

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

Staff Establishment
Teaching staff at MHPS in 2013 totalled 31, including 4 Assistant Principals (AP) and a non-teaching Deputy Principal (DP). This year we welcomed Ms Nadia Tobia as the school’s new assistant principal who was appointed through merit selection due to the vacancy created by Mrs Carole Jaye being selected by merit to fill the position of MHPS’s first DP. Four classes operated as job-share classes. In addition, we had specialist teachers for learning support, science, dance/music, gymnastics, library, PE and technology.

Staff Retention
Staff retention at MHPS continues to be high although some of our permanent teaching staff have been on maternity leave or part-time maternity leave. Mrs Christine Walker who had been a permanent teacher at MHPS for over 18 years retired at the end of the year.

Teacher Qualifications
All teaching staff meet the professional requirements for teaching in NSW public schools, with 80% of staff having a degree or diploma and 20% having a post graduate degree. Our teachers are committed to ongoing professional learning, with many undertaking additional teaching qualifications in their own time.

Non Attendance
Attendance is monitored on a daily basis. If parents do not send a note in a follow-up letter is sent to parents.
Academic

In the National Assessment Program (NAPLAN), 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.

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)

The My School website provides detailed information and data for NAPLAN http://www.myschool.edu.au/

This report includes some highlights from our NAPLAN results. These graphs represent our school’s results compared to the state DEC (Department of Education and Communities), the school’s average 2009-2013 and the Statistically Similar Group (SSG).

The year 5 graphs below do not have the SSG displayed because our SSG includes 3 schools that have Opportunity Classes (OC). This means that our 57 mainstream Year 5 students would be compared with a cohort that includes 180 top performing OC students.

Year 3

Spelling - Year 3

Year 5

Spelling - Year 5

Writing - Year 5
PROGRAMS AND INITIATIVES 2013

Professional Learning

Professional learning for the staff is closely aligned to the school’s management plan and targets. This professional learning is school-focused, site based and long term. Every Wednesday afternoon, at least 1.5 hours is scheduled for whole teaching staff professional learning which is aligned to the school’s targets. In addition, school development days are scheduled by the DEC to support the school’s focus.

This year, three School Development Days were devoted to the new English Syllabus. Kathy Rushton, an English lecturer at the University of Sydney, provided professional learning in Literature and the new English syllabus. Sophie Honeybourne, Assistant Principal from Beauty Point Public School conducted two workshops: Developing literature units: Part 1 and Part 2. Michael Murray an independent English Consultant conducted four sessions on the second last day of the school year:

- Implementing the English K-10 Syllabus;
- The implications of the new syllabus for teaching and learning;
- Considerations in programming for the new syllabus; and
- Using a process to develop quality units of work.

Other sessions throughout the year were led by personnel from within the school. Some of these included:

- maths, pre-tests;
- programming and differentiation;
- Your School and the New Curriculum – English Modules;
- Developing and sharing units of work, and
- Science and the New Curriculum – using Primary Connections units of work.

In addition to these sessions, training courses in areas such as child protection, anaphylaxis, CPR and emergency care are conducted for the whole staff, including administrative personnel.

MHPS staff was part of The Northern Sydney Demonstration School’s Annual ‘Teach Talk’, demonstrating how our Maths Treasure Boxes are incorporated into our daily teaching and learning programs and presenting our K-6 Spelling Program.

Grade, stage and individual teachers’ professional learning needs are addressed as identified through the Teacher Assessment and Review (TARS) process and stage meetings. Grades/stages are also released for half day sessions each term to plan cooperatively.

Kindergarten, year 1 and year 2 teachers continued to participate in on-going training and implementation of the ‘Best Start’ assessment program.

Mandarin

2013 has been an exciting year at Middle Harbour with the continuation of a Mandarin Program for some classes and the formation of a partnership, initiated by the Department of Education and Communities, with a sister school in Shanghai Pudong. In semester 1, Year 2 students experienced Mandarin through weekly Connected Classroom sessions. In semester 2, some year 2 and year 3 classes also experienced weekly lessons delivered by a Mandarin Teacher, Miss Frances Lee where they learnt simple greetings and basic writing structures to form Chinese characters.

Due to the success of the Mandarin program at Middle Harbour it will be expanded in 2014. Middle Harbour will also hopefully be welcoming our first exchange students from Shanghai Pudong for a short intensive English exchange.

Environmental Education

Through Environmental Education the students should acquire knowledge, skills and attitudes which will enable them to form judgments about sustainable lifestyles and to participate in environmental decision making. The staff and interested parties manage school resources, grounds and curriculum so that our students become proactive in sustaining their environment into the future.

Environmental education achievements for 2013 were:

- establishment of a partnership with the Student Representative Council (SRC) to determine student directed initiatives through a democratic process;
- maintaining ongoing partnerships with MHPS After School Care (The Cottage), Mosman Council, Mosman Community Gardeners, NSW DEC Environmental Centres, Aboriginal Discovery Officer, Taronga Zoo, Sustainable Schools Network and local schools;
- participation in awareness raising activities such as Schools’ Clean-up Day, Earth Hour, Walk to School days, Composting Day, World Environment Day and Green Day;
- fund raising on Green Day to purchase indigenous plants for gardens;
- introduction of a composting initiative led by the SRC to improve student understanding of good composting habits, with composting promotions (including a composting rap) delivered at a whole school level;
- promotion of good composting habits through student participation in a composting poster competition;
- purchase of Water save Smart Meter System, enabling daily reporting of water usage;
- provision of adequate facilities in each classroom and in the playground for effective composting throughout the school through the purchase of a range of compost bins;
- ongoing paper recycling, ink cartridge recycling, green canteen which supplies freshly cooked products, water usage monitoring and solar panels;
- an analysis of water usage data in the school by the maths enrichment program students to determine strategies for the reduction of water usage in 2014;
- maintenance, and establishment, of vegetable gardens;
- ongoing encouragement of the use of lunch boxes with no wrappings, and
- Green Team recycling focus on Friday afternoons.

Student Representative Council

The Student Representative Council (SRC) allows children to have a voice in the school. Each class elects two students to represent their class within the SRC. At both a class level and within the SRC, students discuss problems, share ideas and propose possible solutions. It is of importance that all decision making is democratic. Students consider matters relating to the classroom, the playground and the whole school. SRC initiatives focus on both short and long term projects.

Throughout the year the SRC developed a close partnership with the Environment Committee which led to an authentic whole school ownership of environmental initiatives. (See the Environment Report on this page.)

In addition the SRC identified concerns with playground rostering, and designed changes in cooperation with teaching staff, to enable all students within the school to have fair and equitable access to the oval and play equipment. The SRC’s contribution to the democratic processes within the school is highly valued and continues to facilitate positive change for the benefit of all students.
Library

Since its major refurbishment in 2011, the library has continued to evolve to become a more effective information and resource centre for students, parents and teachers. Changes to the organisation of the library in 2013 have increased the accessibility of resources, particularly from the non-fiction collection, with the creation of a Junior Non-Fiction section and a Fairytales, Myths and Legends corner. Creation of these two new areas has enabled students from K-2 to more readily access non-fiction texts appropriate to their reading level and ensured some of the wonderful traditional tales are not lost in the greater non-fiction collection. Additional signage also made navigation of the library much easier, with large, bright, colour-coded signs clearly visible when entering the library.

2013 signalled the start of the implementation of the new English syllabus for teachers in New South Wales. With quality literature, (including traditional stories, located in our new Fairytales, Myths and Legends corner) being a stronger focus of the new syllabus, the importance of our fiction collection has grown. The teacher librarians continue to play an important role supporting teachers to embed quality text more deeply into teaching and learning programs K-6.

In Term 1 Grand Friends’ Day brought many visitors to the school and of course to our library. Grand friends purchased books for their ‘younger’ friends and also donated books to our library, for which we were most grateful. The generosity of the Middle Harbour community plays a large part in the size and quality of our collection.

The library is always open before and after school for families to visit but Education Week saw an influx of students, parents, grandparents and siblings reading and exploring together. The bright modern space is used for recreational reading, borrowing and leisure activities as well as formal library sessions. It is also popular for meetings, workshops and celebrations for staff and visitors to our school.

“Read across the universe” was the theme for Book Week 2013 and the children enjoyed reading and working on displays around the shortlisted stories; highlights included The Terrible Suitcase by Freya Blackwood and Emma Allen and The Coat by Julie Hunt and Ron Brooks, which captured the hearts and minds of students and teachers alike and inspired our major library display and Book Week mascot. It was certainly no surprise when The Coat was awarded Picture Book of the Year. Stage 3 students enjoyed Steven Herrick’s hilarious verse novel Pookie Aleera is not My Boyfriend and were highly entertained by his wonderful performance later in term 3.

A highlight of Book week this year was the progressive story which classes K-6 contributed to. Starting with Stage 3 classes, the story was passed around for classes to add a paragraph and it was finally read over the school PA system by Mrs Smith, as a serial over a week. Even parents in the playground enjoyed listening to the story of the once vicious bear ‘Max Middle’ who Mrs Smith managed to tame! Students and teachers also thoroughly enjoyed the annual Book Tasting afternoon, listening to some old and new favourites with teachers in various locations around the school.

Middle Harbour students were again active participants in the Premier’s Reading Challenge with all students K-2 completing the challenge with their class teachers and many from years 3-6 in their own time.

The success of the Middle Harbour Public School Library as an information and resource centre is made possible because of the commitment and support of our Principal, Judith Smith as well as the families who have donated books throughout the year. As always the assistance of our Library Technician, Estelle Laybutt and a team of volunteer parent helpers has been invaluable to the efficient management of the collection and organisation of special events.

The future of our Library looks exciting as we work closely with a supportive staff and parents to expand our collection and introduce new pedagogies and relevant technologies.

K - 2 Public Speaking Competition

In Term three, every kindergarten, year one and year two student participated in the K-2 public speaking competition for the second consecutive year. This year, the theme was ‘Looking after Our Environment’. Children spoke about topics such as: Why we need trees, Endangered animals and How to save water.

The students learned a lot about public speaking skills and breathing techniques for effective voice production. The speeches were prepared at home with plenty of guidance at school.

Kindergarten and year one students spoke for one minute to their class while year two students spoke for two minutes. Teachers then chose two students to represent their class in the year group finals. The teachers where impressed by the confidence and ability of our young speakers. Once again our three judges had a very difficult job choosing only one winner from each year group in the finals.

Due to all the hard work from students to prepare their fabulously presented and interesting speeches, the K-2 public speaking competition was, once again, a success enjoyed by all.

Premier’s Debating Challenge

The main aim of the Premier’s Debating Challenge is to develop the public speaking and reasoning skills of students in NSW from Years 5 to 12. This year our school entered one team led by Mrs Gray. The team of eight Year 6 students comprised 3 speakers, a silent speaker, a chairperson and a timer. Team members’ positions were rotated to give each member the opportunity to further develop public speaking skills and to work collaboratively within a team.

Teams in the Premier’s Debating Challenge are handed the topic one hour prior to the actual debate to prepare for their argument depending on which side of the debate they won or lost according to the coin toss. Following the preparation time, the 3 speakers take turns to speak with the fourth speaker remaining silent as he/she only acts as an assistant during the preparation and the actual debate. A nominated adjudicator from the Arts Council judges the debate and later discusses the finer points of the debate to further enhance the students’ public speaking skills. This year, the Year 5/6 competition was the largest division of the challenge with NSW public schools entering more teams than ever before. MHPS encourages all students to participate in all public speaking opportunities and the Premier’s Debating Challenge is just one of many successful public speaking programs undertaken by our talented students.
Band
Middle Harbour PS is very grateful to have an outstanding and successful band program. There are two bands within the program, a Training Band for students just beginning to learn to play an instrument and a Senior Band for students who have been playing an instrument for at least one year. Both bands practise twice a week at school together as well as attending individual weekly lessons with their tutors.

Some of the events that occurred this year were:
- assembly performances throughout the year;
- the Band Workshop for the whole band on a Sunday afternoon in March. This enabled smaller tutorial sessions to take place where students met with tutors and focused on their part of particular pieces that they were learning;
- performing at Grand Friends’ Day;
- Music Camp (together with the String Ensemble) at Elanora Uniting Venues. This overnight weekend event gave students many opportunities to rehearse and perform as a band, learn individual parts in their instrument tutorials and develop friendships with other children in different classes and grades. Students were even treated to a special guest singer as their evening entertainment;
- Yamaha Schools’ Band Festival where both bands received an award: the Senior Band received a Silver Award and the Training band was awarded Gold. The bands also partook in an on-stage workshop session with adjudicators;
- the NSW School Band Festival. The Senior Band was awarded a Gold Award and the Training Band received a Silver Award;
- Performing Arts Twilight performance sharing their talents with parents from the school;
- Mosman Festival allowed students to showcase their skills for their families and the local community as a part of Middle Harbour’s biennial school carnival;
- Year 3 and Year 4 band students, as well as the Strings Ensemble, ended the year with a visit to Taronga Zoo where they performed at an informal concert, went on walks through the zoo and spent the night with all the critters in the Education Centre;
- Year 5 and Year 6 students celebrated the end of the year with a trip to Luna Park, and Band Information Evening and Recruitment Drives enabled band students to visit classrooms and share their instruments with their peers and explain what happens in the band. Students and parents were invited to attend an information evening and listen to the Senior Band play some of their pieces and a few students played some solos to showcase their instrument. It was a successful evening with many families keen to enrol in the program in 2014.

The Band Program at Middle Harbour School is an important program for the children and the school. The benefits music offers in terms of enrichment, teamwork and enjoyment is an asset to the school community. 2013 was very eventful with many of the activities occurring on weekends. Parents have played an important role in the planning and implementation of the events. We have been very lucky to have two wonderful band masters, Rebecca Fitzpatrick and Ray Hampton, who teach and inspire the students at all rehearsals. We appreciate the hours of dedication, initiative and sacrifice made by so many parents and Miss Catherine Thomson who supported the band programs and liaised with parents and band masters. Without this considerable input of time and effort the band program would not be possible.

String Ensemble and Junior Strings
A revamped Strings Program was introduced at the beginning of 2013. The students are now split into two groups; the String Ensemble which is comprised of students from Year 1 to Year 6 who have been playing and reading music for a minimum of one year and the Junior Strings, which is a new initiative for beginners from Kindergarten and Year 1. This group gives the younger students an opportunity to play a cello or violin for the first time. The objective for the Junior Strings members is to ultimately have an opportunity to join the String Ensemble. The String Ensemble and Junior Strings group were both led by conductor Ms Kathryn Crossing this year. She is trained as a classical Violinist and has a Bachelor of Music from the Sydney Conservatorium of Music and ATCL and AMusA performance diplomas.

Highlights for the year include:-
- performing at Classical Cocktails in Term 2 and Term 4;
- attending MHPS Music Workshop;
- participation in the MHPS Music Camp at Elanora Campus;
- performing and winning Silver at the Yamaha Competition;
- hosting a Cake Stall fundraiser;
- participating in the MHPS Performing Arts Showcase;
- performing at the ASOF Music Festival and winning a Silver Award;
- attendance at a ‘Zoo Snooze’ fun event for members from age seven;
- an end of year celebration event held at Luna Park for Year 5 & Year 6 members;
- performing at Kindy Orientation Day, and
- opportunities to perform at various school assemblies throughout the year.

Bold Archy
The Middle Harbour “Bold Archy” competition was held again this year in Term 3. Following class lessons on portraiture, students in year 4, year 5 and year 6 produced outstanding portraits of their choice of character on canvases during their class art lessons. A dedicated team of parents worked tirelessly to convert our hall into a gallery to hang and show the amazing portraits in preparation for viewing by the rest of the school students, teachers and parents. Classes from Kindergarten to Year 6 went to view the pieces and vote on their favourite. As a highlight, parents and teachers attended a cocktail party to view the students’ work and vote for a variety of prizes. Our special guest artist this year was Ann Cape, who also judged the portraits and addressed the crowd of parents. Prizes for the winners were presented to the students at our special whole school assembly the following week.

Once again the Bold Archy was a highlight on the school calendar and the students should be congratulated for their incredible artworks.
Student Welfare

At Middle Harbour PS we continue to maintain a safe, happy and harmonious environment where students are treated with respect and are provided with opportunities to achieve their personal best. We are committed to our school pledge: I will be honest with myself. I will respect others. I will be loyal to my school. I will care for my world. A strong student welfare program underpins our school. A reward system of merit cards is maintained across the school K-6 and is supported by all teachers and support staff. An award system of mentions and banners operates throughout the school. Students receive a coloured banner at a Banner Assembly, after earning 9 mentions, culminating in a special school Medallion of Achievement after 17 Achievement Awards.

In 2013 students participated in the following programs:

- Stage 3 buddies: Kindergarten students are partnered with Year 6 students;
- SLIPS (Student Leadership in Primary School) Program – Year 5;
- SRC (Student Representative Council);
- election democratically of school captains, prefects and house captains;
- visiting school performances to provide support to policy;
- Child Protection Lessons;
- Personal Development (from the PDHPE syllabus) lessons;
- Moving into adolescence – Year 6;
- Surf Safety;
- Year 2 swim school;
- Fire Safety;
- Walk to School Safely Day;
- Peer Support program;
- Peer Mediation training for Year 5 students;
- class buddy system K-6;
- Wrap with Love charity supported by students, teachers, parents and community members;
- support of Moshi (see next page of this document);
- positive reinforcement through a comprehensive reward system including house cards;
- values modelled by adults who work within our school; and
- membership of various school teams and groups such as choir, drama groups and PSSA sport teams.

This year the PBEL (Positive Behaviour Engaging Learners) team introduced the third phase of the program aimed specifically at targeting problem behaviours in the classroom and playground. These interventions provide students with positive strategies to help them to achieve their goals based on the three core expectations of Respect, Responsibility and Personal Best. The program aims to enhance student engagement with school and learning, promote student competence and provide consistent support for academic and behavioural standards and expectations. Through establishing a need and identifying goals, targeted students are given increased opportunities for self-management.

The PBEL committee has:
- developed school-wide core expectations;
- reviewed classroom and playground expectations with all staff;
- delivered a training module for targeted intervention to all staff;
- developed the ‘Hoot’ card for targeted students providing the structure for identifying goals and providing positive feedback;
- revised the classroom minor incident folder and communicated with each stage regarding the use of the folder;
- modified the PBEL decision trees for minor and major incidents;
- presented the program to parents at class information sessions;
- provided feedback to parents, and
- introduced ‘Hootabel’ – the PBEL message delivery mascot for weekly announcements to address one issue or expectation.

Moshi

The small community called Kaloleni, at the foothills of Kilimanjaro, in a sleepy little town of Moshi Tanzania, is supported by the Middle Harbour families.

Our little ‘MHPS’ blue building is now a community centre and the school has moved to rented premises. At present there are 300 children receiving education and one meal a day. With the support of the Middle Harbour community, $4,500 was raised this year through:
- the sale of artwork and cards;
- the generous giving of both pocket money and birthday money from the children;
- a mufti day;
- children selling cakes on the weekend, and
- children busking throughout the year.

In the July school holidays, accompanied by Mrs Kerr Anne Frost, a group of students, one from Middle Harbour PS and one from Mosman High School and their parents visited the community and met their sponsored children. A great time was had by all travelling on a safari, working in the Team Vista Nursery School as well as the Primary School and High School. Middle Harbour student Ella Fraser was able to present $2,000 from our students to the Primary School. We thought that they might purchase some books however the Head Teacher, Rachel said that the children were coming to school starving and unable to concentrate so we gladly handed over the money for bags of rice and beans which was enough to feed the 700 students for 12 months.

Our goal now is to find more families to sponsor the children. There are more children being abandoned in the community. Team Vista has rented a house on the outskirts of the community, one of the teachers is now living there and some abandoned children (4 small boys that Mrs Frost sponsors for boarding school) have somewhere to live during the school holidays.

Thank you to Mrs Frost (Team Vista) and the Middle Harbour families for their continued support of such a worthy cause.

Aboriginal Education

Middle Harbour Public School continues to recognise and embed Aboriginal education throughout its curriculum programs. The underlying premise in our activities, assemblies and curriculum is that Aboriginal history belongs to us all and we are all responsible as Australians to recognise, educate and acknowledge our role. Our school recognises and is sensitive to the spiritual and cultural beliefs of the local Aboriginal community. The “Acknowledgement of Country” which recognises the original owners of the land, the Guringai people, is always an integral part of our introduction and welcome at school assemblies and other formal school gatherings. This reflects our sensitivity to Aboriginal beliefs and customs. Sensitivity to Aboriginal perspectives is also a priority when studying Australian history and democracy through the HSIE syllabus and when studying science as it is built in to the science teaching and learning programs increasing non-Aboriginal students’ and teachers’ awareness and understanding of Aboriginal perspectives.
Performing Arts
We have an exceptional amount of talent in the performing arts area here at Middle Harbour Public School. As educators, we continually strive to challenge our students during their lessons by providing a good balance of music, singing, drama, movement and performance.

Our annual school show in term 3 provides all students with an opportunity to perform on stage with their class and this year every class excelled in their performances. Families and friends were thrilled to see students give their personal best and ‘shine’ on stage as they were taken on a cruise around the world with ‘Welcome Aboard’. The journey for the students started very early in the term as each class researched a country of their choice and studied the traditional dance styles unique to that part of the world. The final result was amazing. Our students always rise to the occasion when the lights go up!

Other opportunities included performances for Grandfriends’ Day, Education Week, The Manors Retirement Village, Kindergarten for Grandfriends’ Day, Education Week, The Smith and Mrs Jaye. “House Ed” program is extremely professional in performing their choices and even the seniors saw, year 3 and year 4 experienced, The Nutcracker, year 2, Wolf. The pre and post visit notes provided an asset to the experience. Every aspect in relation to the “House Ed” program is extremely professional and age appropriate.

Finally on a spine tingling note, all students were once again involved in singing a selected song, along with 600,000 other students from across Australia. This was made achievable by a program called “Music Count us In” which celebrates the benefits of music education in Australian Schools. Mrs Dooley and Mrs Robertson prepared the students. When the students finally came together to sing via a live webcast from Canberra it was awe-inspiring.

Glen St Dance Group
The year 6 students had the opportunity to join the Senior Dance group choreographed by Mrs Frost. This group performed at Glen Street Theatre as part of the “Sydney North Dance Festival”. The standard of their performance was so high that the group was selected to also perform at the “Children’s Festival of Music”, held at the new Concourse at Chatswood. Mrs Frost was a busy lady that evening as the choir also performed.

Drama Team
The drama team at Middle Harbour Public School continued to thrive in 2013. The group nearly doubled in size due to an overwhelming amount of students who demonstrated a keen interest and attended the audition process. Under the supervision of Miss Sarah Cartwright, three performance groups rehearsed weekly during lunch hours. As a result of their hard work, they were invited to attend the prestigious Arts North Drama Festival at NIDA with each group receiving rave reviews.

Our very talented actors performed at the school on a number of occasions to the delight of both students and parents. In October, the original piece “Bus Stop Ponderings” (written by Miss Cartwright) was chosen to be a part of the NSW State Drama Festival at the Seymour Centre. This was quite an honour for the entire drama team as well as the school with hundreds of people watching in the audience, including Mrs Smith and Mrs Jaye.

Skipping Team
Our Middle Harbour Whipper Skippers continue to impress and inspire other schools in becoming involved with the Jump Rope for Heart campaign.

Our school is proud to announce that we have been involved with Jump Rope for the past six years, having raised over $60,000 for the Heart Foundation with the added bonus of improved fitness levels in all students.

The students’ enthusiasm is second to none and each year the bar is raised a little higher in terms of skipping expertise. During recess and lunch breaks, the playground replicates a sea of ropes; looping, twisting and turning as students strive to improve their skills.

Our team has also impressed parents and the local community during Open Day, Grandfriends’ Day and our Carnivale.

Thanks to our team organiser Mrs Carole Jaye, our coach Mrs Di Robertson and our fundraising co-ordinator Miss Sarah Cartwright, we continue to support the Heart Foundation and keep our hearts healthy.

Choir
We are all very proud of our choir’s dedication and achievements in 2013.

As a part of our Year 4 Creative Arts program, the Middle Harbour Choir met once a week led by Miss Catherine Thomson and Mrs Kerry Frost. In their choir sessions, students experienced a dynamic singing repertoire. Students developed skills in singing with pitch, tone and expression in both unison and parts.

The Middle Harbour Choir had the chance to perform at our Showcase Night, Senior Friends Day and at regular assemblies. They were given the important task of performing an item at Presentation Day, taking particular pride in singing our national anthem in Indigenous and English languages.

Thirty students from our choir were also selected to perform at the Festival of Children’s Music in October, held at the Chatswood Concourse. They performed as a part of a combined choir of around 300 students from schools on Sydney’s North Shore. Students had a busy day rehearsing and then singing in a matinee and evening performance. They attended rehearsals at Pymble Primary School in the lead up to their fantastic performances.
Science

This year science remained a specialist program where every class from K-6 had a science lesson once a week in our dedicated science room.

‘Primary Connections’ units from the Australian Academy of Science were used as a basis for the teaching/learning program. They link science with literacy and span all years of primary school. The units develop students’ skills of working scientifically as they undertake investigations and communicate their understanding about science. Science concepts covered throughout the year were described in four conceptual strands:

- Earth and space sciences;
- Physical sciences;
- Biological sciences, and
- Chemical sciences.

Science Week was celebrated in Term 3. Students were engaged in a series of scientific investigations.

Other highlights for the year included:

- A Night Sky Viewing Picnic

With telescopes, binoculars and picnics in hand, over sixty excited parents and students arrived for a night picnic at Balmoral Beach one Wednesday evening in April. It was a relatively clear night giving us an excellent view of Venus and the constellations in our magnificent Milky Way. Scientists from CSIRO guided and informed us about the night sky as well as bringing a large Dobsonian Telescope.

- CSIRO Scientist in Schools Program

MHPS has been involved in the ‘Scientist in Schools’ program since its inauguration in 1997. This program, run by CSIRO allows schools to engage in science with a scientist. We are partnered with Dr Kaydy Pinetown a Geologist who is a specialist in Coal & Unconventional Gas with CSIRO Earth Science & Resource Engineering. Kaydy acts as mentor, role model and inspiration for our students. Kaydy is able to provide staff and students with access to new ideas and fresh perspectives in science.

As a result of this successful partnership, Mrs Carole Jaye was approached by CSIRO Media division to be part of a series of videos that the board of CSIRO were producing to highlight the many programs CSIRO are involved in - education being one of them.

To celebrate Science Week, Dr Kaydy Pinetown and Dr Naomi Metzl visited our school. They showed some year 2 students that it only takes one drop of detergent onto food colouring in milk to turn the milk into a swirling colour wheel. Students in year 5 and year 6 were given the opportunity to dissect sheep hearts and cow eyes. Hopefully through our extensive science programs and activities like this, MHPS will produce future scientists!

Technology

2013 was a very exciting year for technology as the teachers came together to compare their findings in regard to iPads, apps and their uses in the classroom. After a successful trial it was agreed that the school would add to the 12 iPads purchased late in 2012 with 12 more iPads in 2013, to be used in the classroom to support quality learning and teaching through differentiation of lessons. The iPads were also used in the Science Mentoring program with Mosman High and proved to be a great success.

Work commenced early in 2013 to ensure every classroom as well as the library, hall and administration building had wireless access. This proved very timely with the purchase of the iPads as well as the purchase of 30 new laptops to be used in Stage 2.

The beginning of the year also saw the new MHPS website up and running featuring important dates, newsletters and permission notes as well as information about the school.

Sport

Sport and participation in physical activity has continued to be a focus for Middle Harbour throughout the year, with a strong level of support and commitment by the wider school community.

Students participated in weekly Physical Education (PE) lessons run by an external provider, Sport in Schools Australia. These lessons focused on the fundamental movement skills. Students were also involved in physical education lessons run by classroom teachers, involving cross country and athletics skills, fitness skills, game sense activities and dance lessons. Each class had a term of gymnastics lessons with Rumen, a specialist gymnast. A physical activity schedule was also established to ensure that students received the recommended two hours of weekly physical activity.

Successful annual carnivals in swimming, cross country and athletics were held, with some outstanding results, including representation by students in zone and area competitions for each sport. Middle Harbour also had two representatives attend the state swimming competition.

Students from year 4 to year 6 participated in the North Shore Zone Primary School Sports Association (PSSA) competition in record numbers. All Stage 3 students who wished to play in competitive sport were able to be accommodated, including the introduction of boys’ netball and girls’ soccer teams.

Finally, a number of students were put forward to try out for Zone PSSA teams, with one student being selected to represent Sydney North at the State PSSA Tennis Competition.

Multicultural Education

Cultures is one of the strands in the Human Society and Its Environment syllabus from early stage 1 to stage 3. Students investigate the cultural backgrounds of families, customs and practices important to students, the diversity of groups within a community and the traditions and belief systems of other cultures. All students annually participate in Harmony Day activities which assist their understanding of the contributions made to our national identity by people from culturally diverse backgrounds. As well as celebrating our multicultural culture and promoting harmony our school implements policies and practices that counter racism and intolerance.

In 2013 our teachers incorporated multicultural perspectives into teaching and learning programs, particularly Mathematics and English. To investigate the diversity of our school community, Year 4 students designed and implemented an online survey for students from Year 2 to Year 6 to complete. The students then presented their findings to the whole school assembly on Harmony Day in March. In English, Year 2 students read, discussed and compared quality texts about Australian and Asian cultures. Year 2 students also took part in Chinese (Mandarin) language and culture lessons this year.

Our school English as a Second Language (ESL) program includes children from K-6 and supports the classroom English curriculum for students who are new arrivals in Australia and those who, although born here, use their first language at home almost exclusively. As a result of an increase in the school’s population of phase one ESL students, the school’s ESL teacher allocation increased to 3 days from 2 days per week this year. The ESL students were supported by withdrawal lessons and in-class support, with priority given to New Arrival students.
School Evaluation 2013

NSW public schools conduct evaluations to support the effective implementation of the school plan. In 2013 our school carried out an evaluation of our physical education (PE) program.

Physical Education (PE) Evaluation

Background:
The school evaluated the effectiveness of the school’s PE program to gain an understanding of how MHPS students and parents feel about specialist physical education programs.

Our school’s Personal Development, Health and PE (PDHPE) committee developed a teacher and parent survey. Our school’s year 3 and year 4 maths enrichment team, led by Mrs Martina Petersen, in consultation with executive teachers and the principal, developed a student survey. The surveys were worded differently for staff, parents and students. Surveys were distributed electronically.

The students’ survey included the following questions:
- Do you spend more than 1 hour each day doing physical activities?
- What physical activities do you enjoy at school?
- Please rank physical activities at MHPS.
- What do you enjoy most about sport at MHPS?
- What do you like least about sport at MHPS?
- Do you do dance or sports outside of school hours?

Results for the 283 year 1, 3 and 5/6 student population revealed that:
- 98% of students spend more than 1 hour doing physical activities each day;
- 91% like or love gymnastics, 87% love or like Music/Dance and Drama, 85% like or love Monday PE with specialist teachers and 93% like or love sport with class teachers; and
- 33% chose gymnastics as their favourite, 24% listed Music/Dance/Drama as their second choice, followed by 22% Monday specialist program and 21% sports with teachers.

The parent survey included the following questions:
- In 2013, what grade/s is your child/children in?
- Sports in Schools Australia (SiSA) has been providing specialised sport lessons for all students K-6 in 2013. As this has been a trial, we would appreciate feedback to guide our planning for 2014. Have you observed a SiSA lesson?
- When did you observe the lesson?
- SiSA is responsible for delivering the games and sports strand of the PDHPE syllabus. This includes development of the 12 fundamental movement skills (including overarm throw, sprinting, catching, two-hand strike, kicking and dodging). How well do you believe they have covered this?
- It is important that the children enjoy physical education. Please rate your child/children’s enjoyment of the SiSA sessions.
- Primary school teachers are trained to teach all key learning areas which includes PDHPE. Please rank the following options for how you would like sport taught in 2014: the classroom teacher; program delivered by specialist personnel, or one dedicated teacher.

Results:
- When observing lessons 40% of parents felt that the teaching of the 12 fundamental movement skills was good or excellent.
- Only 28% of parents felt that their children enjoyed the SiSA sessions.

The results from 149 Parents were overwhelmingly in support of having one dedicated specialist PE teacher in preference to outsourcing PE to a company such as SiSA.

The staff survey included the following questions:
- SiSA is responsible for delivering the games and sports strand of the PDHPE syllabus. This includes development of the 12 fundamental movement skills (including overarm throw, sprinting, catching, two-hand strike, kicking and dodging). How well do you believe they have covered this?
- Please rate the children’s enjoyment of the SiSA sessions.
- How valuable to you was outsourcing the teaching of physical education? Did you use the time effectively for planning?
- Primary school teachers are trained to teach all key learning areas which includes PDHPE. Please rank the following options for how you would like sport taught in 2014: the classroom teacher; program delivered by specialist personnel, or one dedicated teacher.

Results:
- 100% of teachers believed that SiSA covered the games and sports strand on the PDHPE syllabus.
- 94% of staff rated great enjoyment of physical education as important.
- All staff overwhelmingly agreed that having the time to meet as a grade team during the PE time was invaluable. The majority felt that the lessons were relevant and supported their physical education teaching and learning program.

Conclusions and Future directions
- MHPS students are very active and healthy with most students doing more than 60 minutes of exercise each day.
- Our students spend more time doing dance and sports outside school than most Australian children.
- MHPS students enjoy the physical activities they do at school.
- Majority of respondents agreed that PE with a specialist teacher would be the most popular followed by gymnastics and music, dance and drama.
- Comments show that MHPS students like to be active and involved in team activities but don’t like waiting around.
- The most preferred option for PE delivery in 2014 is by a dedicated PE teacher.
Parent/Caregiver, Student and Teacher Satisfaction

In 2013 through interviews, focus groups and written communication the school sought the opinions of parents, students and teachers about the school. Their opinions and responses indicated high levels of satisfaction experienced by all stakeholders at MHPS. Comments such as those below were mirrored in the majority of opinions:

I cannot tell you how impressed we are with MHPS. My child is developing into such a happy, well-rounded, kind, bright boy and so much of this is because of the reinforcement of your beautiful school's leadership, teachers, values and community.

Middle Harbour has surpassed any expectations that we may have had, which is a big call because I am a teacher myself. We have all loved every aspect of the school - the academic rigor, the caring teachers, the cohesive parent community and the firm guideline which are kindly encouraged by all the leaders.

I am continually amazed at what a wonderful primary school Middle Harbour is.

Thank you again for having such wonderful teachers and for giving our son such a great start to his life.

My school is like my extended family so I am very proud and excited about the year ahead. I have surprised myself in the challenges I have come across and am eager to start my next journey at high school.

My school is awesome.

We wish there was a Middle Harbour High School.

The high levels of satisfaction in the school are also reflected in the high enrolment patterns and high involvement of parents and community in the school.
The school planning policy provides direction for the preparation and implementation of school plans including the identification of priority areas, intended outcomes and targets that are consistent with the NSW State Plan and the Department’s planning documents.

School Priority 1

Outcome for 2012-2014

To develop teaching and learning programs in mathematics that focus on differentiation and working mathematically.

2014 Targets to achieve this outcome include:
- all teachers use Planning, Literacy and Numeracy (PLAN) software to monitor and track students on the numeracy continuum to show growth and inform planning, creating differentiated learning and teaching programs;
- effective implementation of the new Mathematics K-10 Syllabus;
- the development of rich learning and teaching programs in mathematics that focus on differentiation in all strands, using the new Mathematics K-10 Syllabus;
- rich pre and post assessment tasks for each strand of the curriculum developed and implemented across stages to inform learning and teaching programs, and
- teacher capacity and expertise enhanced by facilitating classroom-based numeracy improvement processes based on the lesson study approach.

Strategies to achieve these targets include:
- professional learning on the similarities and differences of the new Mathematics syllabus and developing an understanding of the implications of both when and how to teach mathematical concepts;
- provision of half day grade/stage planning days each term for teachers to cooperatively program and plan maths learning and teaching strategies to ensure differentiation as well as creating rich assessment tasks;
- teachers K-6 engaged in using the numeracy continuum at whole school professional learning sessions to assist in tracking and monitoring students’ learning and for creating differentiated learning and teaching programs, and
- teachers partnered up with a colleague on the grade to create math lessons to be taught with the purpose of reflection, modification and evaluation.

School Priority 2

Outcome for 2012-2014

To improve student outcomes in literacy, with a focus on reading and the study of English using the new NSW Syllabus (for the Australian Curriculum):

2014 Targets to achieve this outcome include:
- effective implementation of the new NSW English syllabus across K-6;
- a seamless progression of learning across stages;
- improved student growth in NAPLAN reading results, particularly from Year 3 to Year 5, and
- enhancement of NAPLAN writing results in year 3 and year 5.

Strategies to achieve these targets include:
- continued provision of professional learning opportunities for staff to become familiar with the new NSW English syllabus and develop the skills and strategies required to teach programs that improve students’ conceptual understanding;
- collaborative development of teaching programs that meet new syllabus requirements and improve students’ conceptual understanding in English, demonstrating elements of the Quality Teaching Framework;
- establishment of an organised collection of quality texts that support the teaching of the NSW English syllabus K-6;
- development of a system of ongoing evaluation of resources and ability to support learning needs;
- organisation of shared records of programs, work samples and assessment to enable easy access to all programs;
- provision of professional learning for staff, focusing on the scope and sequence of grammar and the literacy continuum, and other documents that support the implementation of the new NSW English syllabus;
- facilitation of regular transition meetings across grades/stages to discuss continuums of learning and to share programs and work samples;
- development of a whole-school scope and sequence for English concepts;
- provision of professional learning on the use of SMART data for analysing NAPLAN results to identify areas of limited growth;
- facilitation of observations of guided reading lessons across grades/stages;
- provision of professional learning focusing on teaching reading (including guided reading) through quality literature and other reading resources;
- sharing and celebration of writing programs across stages that engage students in quality literature and explicitly teach writing;
- provision of professional learning focusing on teaching grammar through quality literature, and
- facilitation of ongoing evaluation and Quality Assessment of all English programs and resources.
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 evaluation
committee has determined targets for the school’s future
development.

Members of the school self-evaluation committee included:
Judith Smith - Principal
Carole Jaye - Deputy Principal
Alex Miles - Assistant Principal
Nadia Tobia - Assistant Principal
Wendy Duckworth - ICT Co-ordinator
Danni Griffiths - P & C President
Michele Baric - School Council President