Our school at a glance

Towamba Public School is a small rural school on the Far South Coast of New South Wales that provides quality education with the support of the Country Areas Program (CAP), Priority Schools Program (PSP) and a highly supportive community.

Messages

Principal's message

2008 is a year to be proud of for all those involved with Towamba Public School. A number of achievements, across all areas of school life, can be attributed to the hard work and dedication of high quality teachers and support staff; the valuable, vibrant contribution of parents and the wider community; and the positive attitude of students towards their school and personal learning.

School infrastructure to support the learning needs of students has been boosted with the opening of the Multipurpose Room, funded by the Investing in our Schools Program. The school has also enjoyed a new paint job, the inclusion of hot water and a substantial upgrade in computer cabling.

The further development of programs such as Towamba Valley Radio, the Garden Club, Art and Craft Day, combined excursions and sports days, NAIDOC celebrations, Peer Support and a number of charity fundraisers has contributed to the holistic education of students at Towamba and continued to be strongly supported by the P&C.

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.

Gareth Hockings
Principal

P&C and/or School Council message

The P&C continued to maintain its strong parental support with the welcome addition of several community members in 2008. With the changes in teaching staff this year the P&C played a role in ensuring that those teachers were well supported and links between parent/teacher/community were maintained. One outcome of this was the continuation of valued school events such as the art and craft day and the Christmas concert. 2008 saw the completion of our Multi-Purpose Room which has been used extensively throughout the year for music, assemblies, art, and cooking.

Parents and community members continued to be involved directly with the school through the gardening and cooking program, canteen duty, the community radio program, and assisting in the classroom. Fundraising has been successful with a Wine and Cheese night plus the acquisition of grants from FRRR and the Volunteer Grants Program. Money raised will be used to support a numeracy program, and to purchase musical instruments and cooking/gardening equipment. In 2009 P&C is looking forward to maintaining its strong partnership with the school and local community.

Ruth Hamilton
P&C President

Student representative's message

In 2008 the Student Representative Council (SRC) organised a lot of fun activities to raise money and awareness for a number of causes. They included Crazy Hair Day, mufti days and the disco. We also helped out in the Easter Hat Parade and UNICEF Soccer was than bigger than ever. Schools from the CAP cluster came to Towamba oval for a fun day of soccer (and we won!).

The new school welfare program was good and we enjoyed the positive aspect, with everyone trying hard to get awards for great work.

Everyone enjoyed these days and the SRC feels we have achieved a great deal and hope 2009 SRC will be just as productive.

Claire McKenna and Will Wiebe

School context

Student information

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

Please note that due to the small number of students in each year level, summary statistics and graphical representation that identifies individuals cannot be used in this report.
### Student enrolment profile

![Enrolments](image)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Male</th>
<th>Female</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2004</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2005</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2006</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2007</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2008</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Student attendance profile

![Student attendance rates](image)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Attendance rate</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2005</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2006</td>
<td>90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2007</td>
<td>80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2008</td>
<td>70</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Class sizes

In March 2003 the Government announced its commitment to publish primary class sizes in annual school reports in order to provide parents with as much local information as possible.

The following table shows our class sizes as reported at the 2008 class size audit conducted on Tuesday 25 March 2008.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Roll Class</th>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Total per Year</th>
<th>Total in Class</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3-4-5-6</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3-4-5-6</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3-4-5-6</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3-4-5-6</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>K-1-2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>K-1-2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>K-1-2</td>
<td>K</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Structure of classes

Classes have been structured to maximize the educational opportunities for all students.

- **Early Stage 1/Stage 1**: Kinder/1/2
- **Stage 2/Stage 3**: Years 3/4/5/6

### Staff information

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

### Staff establishment

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Position</th>
<th>Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Principal</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Classroom Teachers</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Support Teacher Learning Assistance</td>
<td>Part Time</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher Librarian</td>
<td>Part Time</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Counsellor</td>
<td>Part Time</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Staff retention

One staff member received a service transfer and was replaced using the merit selection process. All other staffing positions remain stable.

### Staff attendance

Staff have access to leave entitlements such as sick leave. In 2008 the average daily attendance rate for staff, as determined by the Department, was not available due to the small cohort.

### Teacher qualifications

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

100% of teachers have appropriate teaching qualifications.
Financial summary
This summary covers funds for operating costs and does not involve expenditure areas such as permanent salaries, building and major maintenance.

Date of financial summary: 30/11/2008

Income

Balance brought forward 195 893.72
Global funds 59 980.69
Tied funds 48 899.72
School & community sources 4 112.21
Interest 8 721.03
Trust receipts 3 045.55
Canteen 0.00
Total income 320 652.92

Expenditure
Teaching & learning
  Key learning areas 5 965.70
  Excursions 0.00
  Extracurricular dissections 4 649.58
Library 1 938.87
Training & development 1 028.39
Tied funds 161 885.81
Casual relief teachers 3 207.11
Administration & office 16 942.11
School-operated canteen 0.00
Utilities 4 152.06
Maintenance 11 866.81
Trust accounts 3 045.55
Capital programs 0.00
Total expenditure 214 681.99

Balance carried forward 105 970.93

A full copy of the school's 2008 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 2008

Achievements

Arts
Towamba Public School places great emphasis on the creative and performing arts. All students participate in a whole school music program including singing, guitar and keyboard instruction as well as having the opportunity to be part of the school choir.

Students developed confidence in performing in front of an audience and student engagement continued to improve.

Opportunities to display the school's growing strengths in creative and performing arts included:

- Art and craft day where teachers, parents and community members instructed students in the art of woodwork, copper work, mosaics, tie-dying and ceramics;
- Choir and musical performances both in and out of school, including the launch of the Sapphire Coast Learning Community;
- School musical performed in front of large community gathering;
- State-wide visual arts competitions and displays, including the Golden Paw Awards in which Towamba Students excelled.

Sport
Sport and Physical Education is a highly valued component of the curriculum and is supported by a daily fitness program. Throughout the year, students had the opportunity to participate in a variety of sporting events. Our major sporting event was the CAP Cluster Athletics Carnival in which our student achievement was considerable.
Academic

Literacy and Numeracy – NAPLAN Year 3 & Year 5

All school students across Australia sit for the National Assessment Program – Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN) in Year 3 and Year 5.

The performance of students is reported in skill bands ranging from Skill Band 1 (lowest) to Skill Band 5 (highest for Year 3) or Skill Band 6 (highest for Year 5).

The reporting of information must be consistent with privacy and personal information policies. Ten or more students must complete the NAPLAN for individual school skill band data to be publicly reported.

At Towamba Public School two Year 3 and four Year 5 students sat the NAPLAN assessment tests in 2008. Therefore their results cannot be provided in this report. All parents have been advised of their child’s achievements.

Should parents require more information about their child’s performance they are again urged to contact the school.

National benchmarks

The Commonwealth Government sets minimum desirable standards for reading, writing and numeracy at particular ages. These are referred to as national benchmarks.

The performance of the students in our school in the Year 3 and the Year 5 NAPLAN is compared to these benchmarks. The percentages of our students achieving at or above these benchmarks cannot be reported in this report, due to the small number of cohorts in those year levels.

Significant programs and initiatives

Aboriginal education

At Towamba Public School programs are delivered to raise awareness, understanding and appreciation of Aboriginal culture, history and contemporary Aboriginal Australia including Acknowledgment of Country at all assemblies and formal gatherings.

Celebrations were held during NAIDOC Week which included the NPWS and Bournda EEC as well as participation in a “Sorry Day” assembly and a talk from a local Aboriginal Elder.

Multicultural education

As part of the cultural diversity and community relations policy, the school recognises the need to focus on multicultural education as part of all curriculum areas. Students study and learn about other countries and cultures from around the world.

Respect and responsibility

Towamba Public School is respected by its community for providing a learning environment that is both safe and caring. This culture of respect for self and others has developed through the further development of the school welfare policy and philosophy, which encourages all school personnel to recognise the necessity to value others; stay focused and on task; learn with a sense of fun; and make appropriate choices.

The implementation of a peer support and SCR program also promote group work, resilience and respect.

Other programs

Priority Schools Program

The Priority Schools Funding Program (PSP) provides additional assistance to school communities to reduce the achievement gap for students in schools with high concentrations of students from low socio-economic status backgrounds. The PSP focuses on improving students’ literacy, numeracy and participation outcomes.

Towamba School will not receive PSP funds next year due to changes in the distribution of funding for the next 4-year cycle.

The following programs were supported by PSP funding in 2008 and supported significant improvement to student learning outcomes.

• Towamba Writers / Accelerated Literacy

A more explicit, holistic and individualised approach to the delivery of literacy lessons has resulted in deeper understanding for students.

• The Hills are Alive

Students continue to build on their confidence to perform in front of an audience. They are proud of their personal achievements and are regularly recognised by the community. The program provided opportunities for students to perform at school assemblies; on the local community radio; special school ceremonies; and at local and wider community events. This has enhanced school and community partnerships.

Country Areas Program (CAP)

Country Areas Program (CAP) is part of the Equity Directorate. Its objective is to help schools and school communities improve the educational outcomes and opportunities of students who are
educationally disadvantaged because of geographical isolation.


As a direct result of our participation in both PSP and CAP programs the school has achieved the following outcomes:

- An improved school culture;
- More effective use of technology across all curriculum areas;
- A consistent approach to quality teaching and learning.

**Progress on 2008 targets**

2008 was a year of change for Towamba Public School due to the appointment of a school principal and numerous changes in teaching staff. This situation has now stabilised resulting in a positive impact on schooling planning and direction.

**Target 1**

*Improve the writing and reading component of literacy, to advance student skills and understandings of the writing process.*

Our achievements include:

- Teachers received training in SMART data analysis
- Teachers evaluated school and individual student performance in writing using NAPLAN results, BEST START and class assessments; identify areas of need and programmed accordingly and collaboratively
- Purchase of resources to assist in compilation to teaching programs to address identified areas of need
- Utilisation of Teacher Aide to assist identified students raise literacy outcomes in senior classroom 2 mornings a week
- Review of K-6 Text Type Scope and Sequence
- Purchase of new reading material for students with a focus on different text types
- Purchase of new resources aimed at improving spelling outcomes K-6
- Utilisation of Teacher Aide to assist with raising literacy outcomes for students in K-2 classroom

**Target 2**

*Improve Working Mathematically strategies and skills for all students*

Our achievements include:

- Numerous professional learning and up skilling in numeracy for all teaching staff
- Revision of assessment procedures
- Integration of technology into maths lessons
- Purchase of appropriate resources to support concept of problem solving lessons

**Key evaluations**

It is a requirement for all NSW public schools to conduct at least two annual evaluations – one related to educational and management practice and the other related to curriculum. In 2008 our school carried out evaluations of Learning and English.

**Educational and management practice**

**Background**

Parent comments about learning from the satisfaction survey were combined with “School Map” surveys by staff and stage 3 students.

**Findings and conclusions**

Parent comments were positive about the many opportunities for individualised learning at Towamba. They were positive about the strength of the teaching staff. Parents liked the way students were encouraged to try different things and the way the school encouraged a love of learning.

Staff surveys were overwhelmingly positive about the opportunities for learning at Towamba. However, they identified that there was a need for students to have the opportunity to be guided in their learning by other adults, other than their class teacher. They also identified that there needs to be more opportunity for students to reflect on their learning and engage in student self reflection. Students need to have more opportunities to take responsibility for their own learning.

Students were overwhelmingly positive about their learning at Towamba.
Future directions
In 2009 students will be included in at least one
parent/teacher interview so that students are able
to demonstrate their learning to their parents. This
will also give teachers the opportunity to feed
back on student learning progress to both parents
and students. There will be more use of the
expertise of staff to cover a range of curriculum
areas through a more flexible timetable so as to
focus on teacher strengths.

Curriculum

Background
English was a target focus for 2008 (as per
Annual School Plan 2006-8)

Findings and conclusions
• Parent responses indicated a wide range
of opinions about the effective
implementation of the English curriculum.
• Aspects of English where students require
the most help include text structure,
orientation, spelling and punctuation.

Future directions
• English will be a key focus for 2009 (see
targets section below)
• Increased communication between school
and home about learning activities

Parent, student, and teacher satisfaction
In 2008 the school sought the opinions of parents,
students and teachers about the school.
Their responses are presented below.
• A survey was distributed in Term 4 to gauge
the opinion of parents on the activities that had
a positive influence on their child’s learning;
• Most responses were positive and reflected
the confidence the parental community has in
the school and the school’s personnel.

Professional learning
Towamba Public School staff was involved in
quality professional learning activities during
2007. They attended opportunities provided by the
Department of Education, Country Areas Program
and Priority Schools Program. They ranged from
technology to literacy and numeracy. Major
professional development for the year included
Accelerated Literacy and Best Start training.
School development days were utilised to provide
planning for the school year, and attend a
combined Sapphire Coast Learning Community
day.
PSP and CAP funding also provided professional
development opportunities.

School development 2009 – 2011
Towamba students will grow in literacy and
numeracy. They will experience quality teaching
that incorporates technology to support learning
while the staff has the opportunity to develop
Teaching and leadership skills through real
projects. The school will be safe, environmentally
sustainable and offer new student support
structures.

Targets for 2009

Target 1
Increased levels of literacy achievement for
every student in line with the State Plan
targets
Strategies to achieve this target include:
• Develop, implement and review
  • scope and sequence of spelling K-6
  • matrixes for all text types
  • a stage-levelled editing of writing
    matrix
• Engage students in a school reading program,
  tracking and monitoring progress
• Collate and share assessment tasks for
  Literacy K-6
• Engage students in a school spelling program,
  tracking and monitoring progress
• Streamed literacy groups utilising explicit
  teaching strategies
• Access CAP and regional professional
  learning
• Purchase appropriate and specific resources
to support literacy targets

Our success will be measured by:
• NAPLAN analysis indicates all students
  improved two skill band from Year 3 to Year 5
in
  • Reading (2008 baseline 66% of
    students grew by more than 2 skill
    bands)
  • Writing (2008 baseline 66% of
    students grew by more than 2 skill
    bands)
  • Language
• Students achieve ‘Sound’ or above in standard semester reports
• Pre- and Post-Test school data demonstrates improvement

**Target 2**

*Increased levels of numeracy achievement for every student in line with the State Plan targets*

Strategies to achieve this target include:
• Collate and share rich assessment tasks in numeracy
• Develop assessment rubrics
• Access CMI, CMIT and regional numeracy Professional Learning
• Develop, implement and review Numeracy Scope and Sequence K-6
• Individualised maths programs utilising explicit teaching strategies
• Engage students in a school maths program, tracking and monitoring progress
• Analyse Year 7 Numeracy NAPLAN data for students transitioning to feeder high school
• Access CAP and regional professional learning

Our success will be measured by:
• NAPLAN analysis indicates all students improved at least two skill bands in Numeracy from Year 3 to Year 5 (2008 baseline 66% of students grew by more than 2 skill bands)
• Students achieve ‘Sound’ or above and Pre- / Post-Test data demonstrates improvement
• Staff accessing CAP and regional professional learning to enrich student outcomes

**Community Involvement**

The school’s local community continues to support all school programs. Due to the strong partnership that exists between school and community all initiatives continue to be successful.

**Special Celebrations**

Students engaged in a number of successful activities in 2008, involving participation from the wider school community

*Easter Parade*

In 2008, aspects of Easter were celebrated with a hat parade, which captured the imagination of the students.

Parents and the wider community enjoyed an assembly which included the singing group, followed by the hat parade. After sharing their creative talents at the parade, the students enjoyed the sausage sizzle which was provided by the P & C.

**Art and Craft Day**

Due to the high level of commitment from local community members, the Art and Craft Day was extremely successful.

Students produced a variety of interesting pieces of art/craft including; wall hangings, mosaic designs, tye dyed shirts, wooden chairs, pottery pieces, lino prints and felting.

All students, community members and staff enjoyed the interactive day.

**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.

Gareth Hockings Principal
Trish Castillo School Admin Manager
Ruth Hamilton P&C President

**School contact information**

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Email: towamba-p.school@det.nsw.edu.au
School Code: 3252

Parents can find out more information about Annual School Reports, how to interpret information in the reports and have the opportunity to provide feedback about these reports at: [http://www.schools.nsw.edu.au/asr](http://www.schools.nsw.edu.au/asr)