Towamba Public School
Annual School Report 2013
Our school at a glance

Towamba Public School is an inclusive, welcoming and friendly school, supported by a close-knit community where students receive a dynamic education and are provided with opportunities to foster individual talents and interests. Our talented, motivated and caring staff inspire children to have a love of learning by using innovative and challenging educational programs including: a comprehensive creative and performing arts program, community radio, technology, garden and cooking clubs and physical education. Strong emphasis is placed on the skills of literacy and numeracy with advanced technology used as an integral part of all subjects. We pride ourselves on developing social conscience in students in partnership with a vibrant and forward thinking Parents and Citizens Association and local community groups.

Principal’s message

Towamba Public School is a thoroughly rewarding place to work and I feel privileged to be the educational leader of this wonderful institution. I really value and appreciate the on-going support, encouragement and involvement from parents and the wider community, and this ensures the school continues to provide rich head and heart connected experiences for our students.

I am so fortunate to have a professional and caring staff committed to improving student outcomes. Towamba Public School is seen as having “Best Practice” in numerous areas, but especially in our individualised and targeted support for every student in our care.

Small schools are great schools and nowhere is that more evident than here at Towamba, where every student is treated like a member of a large and caring family.

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.

Kathryn Davis

Principal

P & C message

Sometimes you can learn a lot by looking over the fence. Not to envy what you see there but to realise what you already have. The local High School is now on its third and final attempt to form a committee or their P & C will fold. This is in a school of nearly 700 students. Towamba Public generally has between 25-35 students and, although not large, has always managed to have enough enthusiastic parents who are willing to contribute for the benefit of the school and their children. Not only parents, but there has been more than one community member who has volunteered by attending meetings, fundraising events and working bees. Our meetings are enjoyable with a cuppa, biscuit and a chat and everyone’s point of view considered. They take longer than they should but no-one complains. It’s good to appreciate what you have and not wait till you lose it! The past year has mostly been quiet with the normal running of the weekly school ‘lunch order ‘day, some working bees for general repairs and fundraising raffles/ events. For the first time the P & C hosted a lunch for a visiting tour coach of senior citizens which was quite successful. At the end of year concert we also collected a donation for another small P & C school in the Blue Mountains that was severely affected by bushfire at the start of summer. We know it could have been us! Donations to the school included funds for a dance program called Hip Hop that the kids loved ($2000) and $1000 contribution to the cost of purchasing more ipads for classroom use. Many thanks to everyone for their efforts throughout the past year and the many years preceding that.

Ken Connell, P&C President
Student representative’s message

There has been a lot going on throughout this year but the favourite activities would have to be the Canberra excursion because the Year 5 and 6 students had the opportunity to stay in cabins with other children from other schools. We visited some amazing places such as the Mint, Questacon, The Australian Institute of Sport, Parliament House, Old Parliament House, the War Memorial and we went night bowling. Another experience would have to be the Movie Making camp at Tanja. Only four Stage 3 students were lucky enough to be picked. We went to a big lodge that was surrounded by lovely trees and a beautiful beach and we were taught how to make simple movies. A Towamba tradition, Crazy Hair Day, is always a hit, and everyone had fun because you get to dress up and wear crazy hair, but the main reason it’s held is to collect donations for the research of Cystic Fibrosis. After seeing the devastating damage caused by a Typhoon Haiyan in the Philippines on, “Behind the News”, the students organised a pop up market which was so much fun and all the things for sale there were really well thought out - but the main reason was to raise money for the children made homeless by the typhoon. We donated $165.00 to UNICEF. Every year we are lucky enough to have an Art and Craft day when adults come and share their talents to help us create and learn new skills. Some Stage 3 students were chosen to do wood work with Mr. and Mrs. Macey. We made a chair in one day and I love it, I reckon I will keep it forever.

Stage 3 students: Mabel and Alicia

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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gender</th>
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Student attendance profile

Towamba Public School enjoys a high level of

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Region

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<td>94.4</td>
<td>94.3</td>
<td>94.2</td>
<td>94.7</td>
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</table>
student engagement and attendance. Non-attendance is handled as per the school policy which requires parents to provide a valid reason for student absence. If necessary, students can be referred to the Home School Liaison Officer for further support.

**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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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Principal</td>
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<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>
<tr>
<td>Classroom Teacher(s)</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher of Reading Recovery</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learning and Support Teacher(s)</td>
<td>P/T</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher Librarian</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher of ESL</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School Counsellor</td>
<td>P/T</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School Administrative &amp; Support Staff</td>
<td>5 P/T</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The Australian Education Regulation, 2013 requires schools to report on Aboriginal composition of their workforce.

Towamba Public School does not have any Indigenous staff members at this time.

**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>
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**Financial summary**

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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date of financial summary</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>30/11/2013</td>
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</table>

**Income**

- Balance brought forward: $113110.73
- Global funds: $45607.76
- Tied funds: $76316.00
- School & community sources: $6084.93
- Interest: $2900.02
- Trust receipts: $3202.05
- Canteen: $0.00

**Total income**: $247221.49

**Expenditure**

<table>
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<th>Category</th>
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<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>Library</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tied funds</td>
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<tr>
<td>Casual relief teachers</td>
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<tr>
<td>Administration &amp; office</td>
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<tr>
<td>School-operated canteen</td>
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<td>Utilities</td>
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<td>Maintenance</td>
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<td>Trust accounts</td>
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<tr>
<td>Capital programs</td>
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</table>

**Total expenditure**: $143317.99

**Balance carried forward**: $103903.50

A full copy of the school’s 2013 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 2013

Academic 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)
Year 7: from Band 4 (lowest) to Band 9 (highest for Year 7)
Year 9: from Band 5 (lowest) to Band 10 (highest for Year 9)

Ten or more students must complete the NAPLAN for individual school skill band data to be publicly reported. At Towamba Public School, 6 Year 3 and 6 Year 5 students sat the NAPLAN assessment tests in 2013. Therefore their results cannot be provided in this report. All parents have been advised of their child’s achievements.

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.

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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.

Science and Technology

Towamba school students participated in an exceptional range of hands on scientific activities during 2013. The emphasis this year was on investigations and experiments involving data collection, observation and the use and understanding of the ‘scientific method’.

The School Garden was a feature of the year’s Science program. Students collected data and analysed the soil in order to plan and undertake a successful planting regime. This was an ongoing project throughout the year with the students harvesting their produce and preparing healthy and delicious creations.

Students carried out water quality evaluations through the participation in the Bug Watch program which is always a favourite with them. They then entered the collected data on the NSW Waterways website.

Questacon visited the school carrying out a highly entertaining and educational workshop encouraging interest in all aspects of science.

The whole school also participated in an excellent video conference with the EEC Field of Mars, looking at Arachnids and their habitats. It entailed the students collecting samples to observe, being familiarised with the methods for arachnid identification, and carrying out observational drawings with the highlight being the use of the digital microscope.

The Sapphire Coast Marine Discovery Centre, with the assistance of the Australian National University undertook two programs at the school. The first being, “Inside a Fish”, in which the students carried out a dissection and identification of a fish. The second, “Murder in the Depths”, had an emphasis on forensic investigation and observation. These programs were a wonderful opportunity to put into practice their scientific skills.

Other achievements
Creative and Performing Arts
2013 was a very creative year for the students of Towamba Public School. The year saw an emphasis on craft with the students creating and participating in a wide range of craft activities. This culminated in the annual Art and Craft Day. Students were able to undertake workshops carried out by skilled community members in the areas of woodwork, leatherwork, tie dye, felting and mosaic, producing pieces such as a wooden chair, key-rings, bookmarks, t-shirts and hair ties. The school also participated in a Video Conference with EEC Field of Mars, where the students were given demonstrations in creating ceramic totems.

Once again the senior students participated in the Lions Club International Peace Poster competition, with one of our students being chosen to progress to the next level.

The Music program at Towamba School continued to maintain a high level of participation and success. Students were involved in the annual SCLC concert with one student chosen to attend the annual SCLC music camp. The children were able to experience a range of musical styles with performances by visiting groups through the Musica Viva program.

The students’ enthusiasm for the performing arts culminated in the end of year play, in which they included drama, musical items and dance items (Hip-Hop program). This is always an important and highly successful whole community event. Such a great way to complete the school year.

SPORT
2013 saw Towamba Public School pride itself in the high level of enthusiasm and participation by its students, in all sporting activities. The school continued to provide opportunities to participate in regular and varied physical experiences to promote healthy lifestyles and good sportsmanship. We have been very fortunate this year to offer a dance component into our program complimenting the other sporting activities offered. As always, our students maintained a level of enthusiasm and perseverance to improve their skills, indicative of the positive attitude to physical activity they have adopted.

The year began with the participation of seventeen Towamba students in the Towamba/Wyndham/Tanja Carnival at Candelo Pool. Seven students then represented Towamba School at the FSCSSC Swimming Carnival. Early in Term One, the students participated in a Hockey Skills Program, delivered by Bega Hockey Club, designed to introduce them to the skills and rules of the game.

During May, all our students participated in The School Cross Country Carnival. Nine students were then selected to represent our school at the Zone Cross Country held at Wolumla.

Once again Towamba School was fortunate to receive a grant through the Premier’s Sporting Challenge. This money was utilised to fund an athletics skills training day with Wyndham Public School and the upgrade and purchase of sporting equipment. Both the students and teachers were able to improve their knowledge and skills. This enabled the confidence for all students to participate in the FSCSSC Athletics Carnival held at Candelo. Many students were placed in the various events throughout the day, with one student being awarded the age champion, two students awarded runner-up and one student place third. Towamba’s efforts were recognised with the awarding of the Far South Coast Small Schools’ Athletics Award to the school. Six students then went on to represent the FSCSSC schools at the zone carnival in Bega. One Towamba student then progressed to the
regional athletics in Canberra, placing eighth in the event.

Term Three began with a weekly Hip-Hop dance program. These classes were designed to benefit the range of students K-6. The students were extremely motivated to participate, through the exuberance expertise of a qualified Dance instructor. They finished the term having learnt three dances, two of which we incorporated into our end of year school play.

Towamba School was also fortunate to participate in three sporting and games sessions under the expertise of a qualified Sports Educator sponsored by Campbell Page.

Finally, twenty one of our students participated in the week long Swimming School held at Pambula pool. This was a wonderful opportunity for the students to improve their swimming stroke and stamina as well as learn about basic water safety and rescue techniques.

Playground use of equipment continues to feature in Towamba’s day, with many games of hockey, tennis, netball, rounders and obstacle courses being made available.

It is always inspiring to see our students eager to participate, ‘have a go’ and persevere in all sporting activities.

Significant programs and initiatives

Aboriginal education

No Gap: No Excuse Towamba Public School is committed to enhancing its Aboriginal cultural awareness and, through improved student education attainment, helping to decrease the current life expectancy gap which exists between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal Australians. All staff members are participating in the No Gap: No Excuse professional learning modules. This year Module 3: Our Kids, Our Classroom, Our Community was completed. Towamba Public School is also closely linked to the development of the Bundian Way project. The Bundian Way is an ancient Aboriginal walking track that connects the highest part of the Australian continent and the coast, passing through Towamba on its way. It is the first Aboriginal pathway to be listed on the NSW State Heritage Register.

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. Harmony Day was celebrated throughout the day this year and an International Food Day is planned for next year.

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:

- Parent surveys and feedback
- Student surveys and feedback
- Community feedback

School planning 2012—2014: progress in 2013

Outcomes from 2012—2014

School priority 1

Literacy and Numeracy

Strengthened school-wide pedagogical understanding and deepened teacher capacity to improve student learning outcomes through analysis of SMART data trends and
targeted Professional Learning. 2013 Targets to achieve this outcome include:

Evidence of progress towards outcomes in 2013:

Literacy
We have assessed all K-6 using York Assessment for Reading (YARK), and the Wheldall Assessment of Reading Passages (WARP). These results have been collated and graphed to indicate trends. SMART data is used to analyse and respond to NAPLAN, Best Start and, recently, PLAN has been used to track students. Formal and informal observation, work samples, PM benchmarking and class assessment are used to track each student on the Literacy Continuum. All students who are receiving targeted intervention assistance (9 out of 24) have shown evidence of progress. Spelling Mastery will be the next program to support the initiative.

Numeracy
A K-6 Numeracy Coordinator was appointed at the beginning of 2013. SENA 1 and SENA 2 Testing, Nelson Numeracy Assessment Kit, SMART data, pre and post class evaluations and Numeracy Continuum indicate progress K-6. Timetabling of assessment and data collection for each term is in place on SENTRAL. TOWN (Taking off with Numeracy) baskets numeracy activities (supporting place value understanding) take place three mornings a week. The K-6 Numeracy Coordinator is able to monitor, plan and assess learning on an individual student basis.

Research and our data indicate that the programs we have implemented and the strategies we are using represent best practice for this group of students. All students K-6 are achieving expected growth levels.

Strategies to achieve these outcomes in 2014
- All students continue to be tracked on the Numeracy Continuum and PLAN
- Assessment for teaching and learning informs and individualises each student’s learning program
- Student goal setting
- Greater use of ICT to support the engagement of 21st century students
- Targeted professional learning, especially to support the implementation of the NSW K-10 Numeracy Syllabus.

School priority 2

Aboriginal Education
2013 Targets to achieve this outcome include:

The strength, diversity, ownership and richness of Aboriginal cultures and Custodianship of Country are respected, valued and promoted throughout all aspects of school life at Towamba Public School.

Strategies to achieve these targets include:
- Complete Module 3, “Our Kids, Our Classroom, Our Community,” of No Gap: No Excuse Aboriginal Cultural Awareness Program and professional understanding and dialogue deepened.

Evidence of progress towards outcomes in 2013:
- Module 3, “Our Kids, Our Classroom, Our Community,” of No Gap: No Excuse Aboriginal Cultural Awareness Program completed and professional understanding and dialogue deepened.

Strategies to achieve these outcomes in 2014:
- Complete Module 4, “Community Engagement and Journeys,” of No Gap: No Excuse Aboriginal Cultural Awareness Program and professional understanding and dialogue deepened.

School priority 3

Kids Matter: Social and Emotional Learning
2013 Targets to achieve this outcome include:
Participation of teaching staff, with the support of KidsMatter staff expertise, in: KidsMatter Primary: The Australian Primary School Mental Health Initiative over 3 years, commencing in 2012

Our achievements include:

- Component 2, “Social and Emotional Learning for Students completed
- The school has protocols and processes for recognising and responding to students experiencing mental health difficulties, including helping students to remain engaged in their education.

Evidence of progress towards outcomes in 2013:

- Timetabled weekly PD lessons utilising, “You Can Do It” and “Bounce Back” programs
- A growing school culture which acknowledges and values resilience and empathy.

Strategies to achieve these outcomes in 2014:

- Component 3, “Working with Parents and Carers” completed
- Towamba Playgroup at school begins in Term 2
- Ongoing daily focus on the strategies learned in weekly PD lessons.

Professional learning

All staff members were engaged in a range of school-based, external and online professional learning experiences throughout 2013. Weekly staff meetings included annual updates on Child Protection, CPR, Emergency Care and Code of Conduct as well as being used as opportunities for staff to share knowledge and understandings gained from other professional learning. The Principal attended both the Regional Principal’s Conference in Wollongong and the Primary Principals’ Association Conference in Canberra as well as participating in SEG and Principals’ Network Meetings. The Principal also led the school in the development of understandings of the new syllabus, attending both the Art of Leadership Conference and Regional Curriculum Leader Training and participating alongside other teaching staff in the on-line training modules ‘The Learner and the New Curriculum,’ and ‘Your School and the New English Syllabus.’ With our continuing focus on building capacity in school leadership to support student outcomes in literacy and numeracy, training in Implementing the Numeracy Continuum, PLAN for Leaders, Teaching Dot Points English, Best Start and ‘A Process for Programming English’ was undertaken by teaching staff throughout 2013. The Principal, along with Teaching and Support staff attended Online Training for Understanding Hearing Loss. The Principal also facilitated the delivery of Module 3 of No Gap: No Excuse for all staff at an end-of-year staff development day. SASS specific training included workshops on Excel and an Introduction to OASIS Library. The Principal and SAM attended a workshop run over three sessions on Family Law Pathways.
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.

Kathryn Davis  Principal
Louise Hopson  Teacher
Nicci Grant  Teacher
Nancy Blindell  School Admin Manager
Ken Connell  President P&C

Stage 3 2013 students

School contact information

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Ph: 64967159
Fax: 64967059
Email: towamba-p.school@det.nsw.ed.au
Web: www. towamba-p.schools.nsw.ed.au
School Code: 3252

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: