Rydalmere East Public School
Annual School Report 2013
School context

Our school is a Preschool – Year 6 school, including two support classes for students with autism.

We are a school where all stakeholders work collaboratively to achieve the best possible outcomes for every child.

The high level of professionalism, dedication and commitment by our staff members, combined with strong support from our parents, ensures that all students are provided with opportunities to maximize their potential.

Our achievements

Outstanding NAPLAN results included:

* 78% Year 3 students scored in top 3 bands (60% of these in top 2 bands) in reading

* 75% Year 3 students scored in top 3 bands for spelling

* 75% Year 3 scored in top 3 bands (33% in bands 5 and 6) for writing

* The percentage of Year 3 students achieving in the top band for grammar and punctuation exceeded state average with 90% of students achieved band 4 or higher

* 50% students scored in band 5 and 6 for numeracy with no students performing in the lowest 2 bands

* Year 5 students exceeded state growth in reading spelling and writing.

* School growth in spelling was the third highest in the school education group

* Year 5 students achieved above state performance in Numeracy, spelling and reading

Principal’s message

What a busy and eventful year it has been for our students and community. Our strong community partnership has contributed to the many highlights of 2013.

- Outstanding performance and growth for students in NAPLAN.

- Our school was selected to host the Regional Academically Gifted class. We welcomed the teacher, Mr Jack Sierra, and the nominated students from many schools into our school community. The focus of this class was sustainability. The students were encouraged to look at the definition of sustainability across many aspects of life and the environment. At the celebration at the completion of the program the students showcased their research and recommendations for the future.

- Involvement in many extra-curricular and interschool events and competitions such as the choir performing at Celebrating the Arts concert, interschool Premier’s and friendly debates. Chess club was formed, we competed in the Bennelong Cup table tennis competition, participated in the tip rugby gala day and REPS hosted the first ‘community of schools’ gala day involving two other local schools

- Installation of 29 new computers in the computer lab and updating the wifi to ensure fast reliable service for our expanding range of technology
- Purchasing 20 iPads for classroom use and for student organised learning groups that promotes collaboration and negotiation amongst the students.

- Some exciting changes in the physical environment of the school included; the construction of our huge new COLA providing an expansive wet weather and shade area in the playground; the total refurbishment of the Block E classrooms with a covered outdoor sensory area for the two support classes for students with autism.

- A most successful education day with activities for parents and students promoting health and fitness as well as maths.

- Promoting sustainability and developing some wonderful life skills through cooking lessons using the produce harvested from our own vege gardens. The results were thoroughly enjoyed by class members!

- Gloria Kells, a most valued community member, was recognised for over 54 years of her loyal service to the school. Gloria received her Australia Day Award for Volunteer of the Year at a ceremony at Parramatta Town Hall on Australia Day. To acknowledge her commitment to volunteering, an annual scholarship awarded at Presentation Day was named in her honour.

- Dr Geoff Lee MP for Parramatta addressed the students in Years 4 and 5 after he tabled letters in parliament from four students regarding funding for the Guide Dogs Australia.

- Continuing our strong links with our school community and local businesses. On the last day of the school year Bunnings Rydalmere donated goods and time to work with our community to beautify the gardens and construct a mural at the Spurway Street entrance to the school.
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.

Keryn Hinchcliffe
Principal

P & C and/or School Council message
2013 has been another successful year for the P&C at REPS. Special thanks to those who have regularly attended and supported P&C meetings and events. Having such a dedicated and supportive school community is an important part of providing a quality school environment to the students of Rydalmere East Public School.

The P&C have continued in their financial support of the school having held a number of very successful fundraising events such as the regular Bunnings and election day BBQs.

Special thanks also goes out to our Canteen Committee, uniform shop and the dedicated gardeners of our school community. All of these activities are important to our school and the wider community.

Unfortunately some of our committed P&C are moving on as their children finish year 6. On behalf of all the parents of children still at REPS we want to thank you for all your time, energy and support and wish you and your children well for the future. Those of us who are left embrace new challenges for 2014, namely the continuing the stability and growth in our membership and building greater visibility in all aspects of our school community.

Chris Lummis
P&C President

Student representative’s message
This past year at REPS, everything went from good to incredible.

Sportwise, the school has been given four table tennis tables that have been great for wet or extremely hot days. We also got to participate in loads of interschool sport competitions, such as PSSA soccer, a touch football tournament and the Bennelong Cup table tennis tournament as well as an interschool gala day hosted by REPS. Our school had some fantastic successes at the cross country and Athletics carnivals.

In terms of music, the school choir had the opportunity to perform at The Riverside Theatre. In addition the school hosts after school guitar and dance lessons. High schools and other groups have also come to our school to perform.

Technology has been extremely big this year. We have over 15 iPads which are used every day by the classes, 30 new computers have been installed in the computer lab and the laptops are used regularly.

This year we have started many more clubs as well as keeping current ones for students to join. These include the debating team, the chess club, the environment group, the REPS reporting crew, dance groups, recorder group, string ensemble and the choir which have been marvelous for exposing us to new things.

Our school hosted the Western Sydney Academically Gifted Class for 2013. Four students from REPS were successful in gaining a position in this class and they enjoyed it greatly.

Overall REPS offered a bundle of incredible opportunities this year.

Jonathon Aylward and Destyni Ding
School Captains 2013

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

[Graph showing student enrolment by year and gender]

Enrolments

Students

Year

Male Female

2007 2008 2009 2010 2011 2012 2013

0 50 100 150 200

2007 2008 2009 2010 2011 2012 2013

0 50 100 150 200
Student attendance profile

Management of non-attendance

Student attendance is closely monitored. In event of poor or non-attendance, the school works with each family on strategies to assist and improve regular attendance. Home School Liaison Officers provide assistance when necessary. Students with outstanding attendance are recognised at the end of each term and on Presentation Day at the end of the year.

Workforce information

Workforce composition

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Position</th>
<th>Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Principal</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assistant Principal(s)</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Classroom Teacher(s)</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Special Education (autism)</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Preschool teacher</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher of Reading Recovery</td>
<td>.21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learning and Support Teacher(s)</td>
<td>.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher Librarian</td>
<td>.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher of ESL</td>
<td>.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School Counsellor</td>
<td>.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Primary teacher RFF and part-time</td>
<td>.804</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School Administrative &amp; Support Staff</td>
<td>5.206</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>17.92</td>
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</table>

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

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

In 2013, there were no staff members who identified as being of Indigenous background.

Teacher qualifications

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

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 30/11/2013

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Income</th>
<th>% of staff</th>
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<tr>
<td>Balance brought forward</td>
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<tr>
<td>Global funds</td>
<td>127957.60</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tied funds</td>
<td>247799.42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School &amp; community sources</td>
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<tr>
<td>Interest</td>
<td>8488.50</td>
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<tr>
<td>Trust receipts</td>
<td>42084.75</td>
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<tr>
<td>Canteen</td>
<td>0.00</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total income</td>
<td>750969.65</td>
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</table>

Expenditure

| Teaching & learning                        | 14471.40  |
| Key learning areas                         | 4817.57   |
| Excursions                                  | 44469.08  |
| Extracurricular dissections                 | 4411.29   |
| Library                                     | 554.09    |
| Training & development                      | 204710.63 |
| School-operated canteen                     | 50652.14  |
| Administration & office                     | 31616.63  |
| Utilities                                   | 2773.47   |
| Maintenance                                 | 32854.90  |
| Trust accounts                              | 60000.00  |
| Capital programs                            | 492050.70 |
| Total expenditure                           | 258918.95 |

Tied funds includes teacher professional development, $60000 of DEC money for joint funding program for a playground all weather
shelter and approximately $62000 of DEC funds to pay for a replacement teacher for a staff member who took on the role of Regional Numeracy Consultant for second semester.

The school matched the DEC for the all weather shelter which is reflected in expenditure. Expenditure in extracurricular includes monies spent on updating technology.

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)

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

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

NAPLAN Year 3 - Literacy

Year 3 literacy results were very pleasing

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Average score, 2013</th>
<th>School</th>
<th>SSG</th>
<th>State DEC</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>436.7</td>
<td>424.1</td>
<td>418.7</td>
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Skill Band Distribution

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<tr>
<th>Band</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
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<td>3</td>
<td>7</td>
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<tr>
<td>Percentage in Bands</td>
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<td>9.5</td>
<td>14.3</td>
<td>28.6</td>
<td>14.3</td>
<td>33.3</td>
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<tr>
<td>School Average 2009-2013</td>
<td>2.0</td>
<td>10.8</td>
<td>25.5</td>
<td>22.8</td>
<td>19.6</td>
<td>19.6</td>
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<tr>
<td>SSG % in Bands 2013</td>
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<td>9.8</td>
<td>16.4</td>
<td>25.4</td>
<td>18.9</td>
<td>26.9</td>
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<tr>
<td>State DEC % in Bands 2013</td>
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<td>11.2</td>
<td>17.3</td>
<td>24.3</td>
<td>17.7</td>
<td>26.0</td>
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NAPLAN Year 3 - Numeracy

Year 3 Numeracy results were excellent

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Average score, 2013</th>
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<td>406.9</td>
<td>402.4</td>
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Skill Band Distribution

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<tr>
<td>Number in Bands</td>
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<td>31.6</td>
<td>23.5</td>
<td>11.2</td>
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<tr>
<td>SSG % in Bands 2013</td>
<td>2.9</td>
<td>7.8</td>
<td>22.0</td>
<td>29.4</td>
<td>25.4</td>
<td>12.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>State DEC % in Bands 2013</td>
<td>3.5</td>
<td>9.7</td>
<td>22.7</td>
<td>27.8</td>
<td>23.0</td>
<td>13.3</td>
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NAPLAN Year 5 - Literacy

Reading

Although reading performance was lower than state average achievement, growth for the Year 5 students exceeded average state growth. Reading is a school target.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Average score, 2013</th>
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Skill Band Distribution

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<td>7</td>
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<td>2</td>
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<tr>
<td>Percentage in Bands</td>
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<td>25.0</td>
<td>29.2</td>
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<td>8.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School Average 2009-2013</td>
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<td>31.5</td>
<td>24.1</td>
<td>7.4</td>
<td>12.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SSG % in Bands 2013</td>
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<td>9.5</td>
<td>22.3</td>
<td>30.2</td>
<td>22.9</td>
<td>13.7</td>
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<tr>
<td>State DEC % in Bands 2013</td>
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<td>11.2</td>
<td>24.3</td>
<td>28.2</td>
<td>20.3</td>
<td>13.8</td>
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### Skill Band Distribution

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<tr>
<th>Skill Band Distribution</th>
<th>Number in Bands</th>
<th>Percentage in Bands</th>
<th>School Average 2009-2013</th>
<th>SSG % in Bands 2013</th>
<th>State DEC % in Bands 2013</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Band</td>
<td>3</td>
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</tr>
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<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>6</td>
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<tr>
<td>Number in Bands</td>
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<td>Percentage in Bands</td>
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<td>School Average 2009-2013</td>
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<td>26.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SSG % in Bands 2013</td>
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<td>4.6</td>
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<td>11.6</td>
<td>21.7</td>
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<td>12.9</td>
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### Average progress in Reading between Year 3 and 5*

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<td>83.9</td>
<td>83.7</td>
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<tr>
<td>69.9</td>
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<td>69.4</td>
<td>80.6</td>
<td>79.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>88.6</td>
<td>83.3</td>
<td>85.7</td>
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### Average progress in Spelling between Year 3 and 5*

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<th>School</th>
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<th>State DEC</th>
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<td>95.4</td>
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<tr>
<td>101.4</td>
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### NAPLAN Year 5 – Numeracy

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>493.9</td>
<td>491.8</td>
<td>490.1</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

### Other school based assessments

The best start data was analyzed used to help determine differentiated activities to support the learning of all Kindergarten students.

Student achievement K-6 was mapped on the literacy and numeracy continuums and monitored for sustained progress.

### Other achievements

**Sport:**

Students in Years 3 – 6 learn and develop Fundamental Movement Skills through a range of sport and fitness activities including skipping, throwing and catching drills, striking games and locomotor movement activities. Major emphasis and expectations are placed on participation, team spirit and good sportsmanship. Through utilising concepts and ideas from the ‘Live Life Well’ program students realise the importance of developing healthy attitudes towards leading a physically active lifestyle now and in the future.

Students in Kindergarten to Year 2 participated in sport and fitness programs to develop specific sports skills, physical endurance and an understanding of teamwork and cooperation. Activities included: gross motor circuits, modified team games (soccer, softball and cricket) and dance. K-2 students also participated in the K-2 annual athletics carnival, the whole school cross country carnival and K-2 water fun day.

The school participated in Winter PSSA for soccer where we managed to field two Junior and two Senior teams. There was also a number of gala days this year which allowed the students to compete against, and work cooperatively with other schools. Our school hosted a Gala Day competing against two other schools in newcombe ball, volleyball and basketball. Some senior students attended a touch footy Gala Day at a local sporting ground. Years 3, 4 and 6 attended a Sports Skill Gala Day at a local high school.

Representatives from the sports of AFL and Rugby Union visited and talked to classes from Kindergarten to Year 6. They gave information to the children about the games and practised some skills appropriate to the sport. Year 6 also participated in a Rugby League skills program over a number of weeks.

This year our school was presented with four new table tennis tables, and a number of bats and balls. A large group of enthusiastic primary students practised at lunchtimes throughout Term 3. Six students were selected to compete in the Bennelong Cup Interschool Table Tennis Competition. The introduction of table tennis enables students to develop new skills and keep active in all weather conditions.
Three students succeeded in gaining entry to compete at two of the Western Sydney Area carnivals. This included two students in cross country events and one boy in 11 years long jump. The long jumper then proceeded to compete at State level which is a remarkable achievement.

Debaters attending a two day debating Camp in Katoomba

Library and ICT

Rydalmere East Public School library is a vibrant and constantly evolving centre of 21st century learning and education. It supports the development of our all our learners through curriculum integration of technology and innovative programs. Creative timetabling and additional school based funding ensures that all our students enjoy the opportunities offered by the library five days a week, a situation quite unique for a school our size.

The library continues to be a popular place for students during lunchtimes and caters to approximately 30% of the school population during lunch time. The library’s appeal is due in part to the many activities on offer. Not only do students have access to an extensive and current variety of print, electronic and web based resources but they also get access to computers and a variety of other activities as well.

Technology is central to everything we do at REPS and integrating it into the curriculum is just par for the course. Here are just some of the highlights for the year. Probably the most exciting highlight for the students was the upgrade of all the desktop computers in the Multimedia Technology Centre (MTC). The students were very excited to have newer and faster computers to use and work on. The improved capacity of the new computers meant that students were now able to use both Adobe Photoshop Elements 11
and Adobe Premiere Elements 11. Stage 1 and 2 created their own digital dot paintings using Photoshop Elements after learning about Aboriginal symbols and Dreamtime stories and in class. Stage 3 used Premiere Elements to learn about editing video, creating transitions, adding titles and a lot of other video editing techniques to use in the videos they created.

With the growing popularity and use of Edmodo (an educational online sharing program) throughout the school, lessons on responsible digital citizenship were an important part of the lessons delivered in the MTC throughout the year and across the stages. Incorporating Edmodo in the classrooms has provided the classes a variety of benefits including the ability to access and submit homework online as well as providing an online space for classes to share work, ideas, websites and writing. The great advantage of a program such as Edmodo is that it fits the brief of 21st Century learning by providing students the opportunity to learn anytime and anywhere.

With our commitment to 21st Century learning, the school partnered together with the P & C and decided to future proof our school by upgrading the school wireless network. The school organised and co-ordinated all the works and the P & C provided the funding to update our wireless access points and to increase the capacity of our wireless network. The works began at the end of the year and will be completed early in the New Year.

**Significant programs and initiatives**

**Aboriginal education**

All students have the opportunity, through syllabus content, to learn about Aboriginal culture both historically and in today’s society.

The school proudly flies the Aboriginal flag alongside the Australian and School flags daily. The traditional owners of our land are acknowledged at the fortnightly assemblies and all school events.

Foyer display by Year 6 using techniques learnt at Brewongle Environmental Education Camp

**Multicultural education**

Multicultural Education and perspectives is integrated into all class programs.

Approximately 44.5% of Rydalmere East Public School students are from language backgrounds other than English. The school has an allocation of 2 days a week for English as a Second Language (ESL) teacher. This teacher works with and supports the classroom teachers in providing quality literacy and numeracy programs across the week as the school supplements the cost of extra ESL time. Students newly arrived from overseas with minimal English also receive individual instruction.

The school proudly promotes the values of our multicultural society and creates an atmosphere of acceptance, significance and respect for each other. Teaching and learning activities are culturally inclusive and develop understanding of cultural, linguistic and religious difference.

**Respect and Responsibility**

Rydalmere East Public School values respect, responsibility and effort.

Our welfare and discipline policy recognises and promotes appropriate behavior in all settings.

Expectation signs have been installed in the relevant areas of the school and students were
explicitly taught what our expectations ‘look like’ in each setting.

Students receiving Ozzie Mozzie and principal level awards as well as our ‘playground heroes’ are acknowledged in the school newsletter.

The “Playground Hero” award recognise students who, by their actions spread the anti bullying message and are outstanding role models. These students displayed outstanding citizenship skills, by stepping in to help resolve playground conflicts, for assisting peers or younger students, for showing kindness towards others. The positive impact of their actions is discussed at the school assemblies to reinforce the school’s values.

We encourage development of a sense of community by participating in school and community events such as ANZAC Day, Remembrance Day and cultural and religious celebrations.

**Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) support classes**

Rydalmere East Public School has two support classes that cater for children with Autism. Each of these classes is staffed by a class teacher and full time School Learning Support Officer (SLSO).

Class teachers work with mainstream staff to plan units of work and attend all staff and professional development meetings.

This year the students were integrated into mainstream reading and maths groups as well as sport and creative arts programs. The support class students were involved in all school events and performances. The primary students attended the excursion to Old Government House and Experimental Farm and the K-2 students visited Casula Powerhouse Museum. Both classes celebrated the Special Children’s Christmas Parties at Rosehill Gardens and Darling Harbour.

This year all students participated in a life skills program. This involved the students visiting the local shops and learning how to buy and pay for their lunch. On the way to and from the excursions the students learnt road safety skills.

In April we were very fortunate to move into our brand new classrooms. The classrooms have been thoughtfully designed to be appropriate for students with an Autism Spectrum Disorder. This has helped the staff to better meet the needs of the students.

*Students in K-2L and 3-5R enjoyed doing Science experiments. In this experiment they watched the chemical reaction as bicarb was added to vinegar.*

This year we also received a very generous donation from the Ryde Eastwood Leagues Club. This money has helped us to buy new equipment such as, iPads, sensory equipment, classroom supplies and playground equipment. The donation has been greatly appreciated by the students and staff.

In August our school actively promoted an ‘Awareness for Autism’ day. Activities were run throughout the school to help all students develop a greater understanding of Autism.

**Preschool**

Rydalmere East Public School is fortunate to have an onsite preschool. The preschool is for the prior to school year and preferences for placement are given to students with siblings at the school and families in our local area.

The preschool offers two sessions, a three day and two day a week program. A program is determined by the individual interests of the students and by the philosophy that children
learn through play, *No play, no learning, Know play, Know learning*. Preschool teachers attend professional development sessions about the Early Years Learning Framework (EYLF) to ensure that the preschool meets the criteria in all of the standards.

An effective transition program has been developed to ensure a smooth progression into their first year of school. This includes several sessions of mini kindy in term 4 and participation in many special school events making transition into our kindergarten class stress free.

Rydalmere East supports sustainability and recycling and the preschool offers opportunities for the children to learn about composting, worm farming and growing vegetables and flowers. The children have been delighted eating the produce from the garden.

The preschool was given a grant of $15,000 from our region which was used outside to develop the garden and a new sand pit aiming at promoting numeracy and literacy in outside play.

The preschool students enjoyed being involved in the local community, having the local fire brigade and the police in to talk. The children have also been to the Ermington library where the children were enthralled with all the activities.

We have an interactive whiteboard in the preschool which enables us to use many of the interactive programs offered by library. We have ipads which we use for in our individual educational program. We were fortunate enough to take part in the Hatch and Grow Duckling program which involved watching ducklings hatch from their eggs and caring for them for the remainder of the two week program. The whole school community bonded with the ducklings when they came down to play with them. This was a very enjoyable, educational program.

**Environmental Education for Sustainability/Community Partnerships**

In 2013, Rydalmere East Public School continued meeting significant environmental outcomes through the implementation of the School Environmental Management Plan and the Carbon Kids Action Management Plan. Students in partnership with parents and teachers, participated in a number of environmental initiatives.

This year saw the continuation of the ‘School Commitment Program’ where the responsibility of environmental issues within our school were shared by primary students (Years 3-6) and their teachers. Classes regularly went out to care for their school environment. Students would busily plant, weed, spread bark, water, fertilise and tidy to keep their gardens healthy and attractive. They often worked on other projects, depending on the time of year or what specifically needed to be done. The ASD classes care for their own two re-established vegetable gardens which are situated adjacent to their classrooms. This student / teacher involvement creates a wonderful feeling of school pride and ownership. Such experiences increase environmental awareness and knowledge for a ‘greener’, more sustainable future.

Other specific environmental projects which children have continued to engage in this year include the compost bins, vegetable gardens and the replanting of the rainforest garden. The Stage 2 class introduced a recycling crate to collect plastic containers and bottles which were used by students during recess and lunch. Each primary class took on the project of establishing a class garden adjacent to the verandah outside their
classroom. Many classes grew plants from seeds as part of their Science units. Another vegetable garden was built to extend the quantity and variety of vegetable produce. The frame of the garden bed was constructed with plastic lumber. This sustainable product is made from recycled, plastic milk bottles and it is long lasting and durable. Students became industrious and potted vegetable and other plants to be sold to parents and visitors on Election Day.

Gardening Club continues on Thursdays before school. Students, parents and teachers are all welcome to visit, and many are happy to lend a hand. There is a great deal of discussion and sharing of ideas and experiences, between adults and students. Children have learnt so much about biodiversity simply through the observation and participation in garden activities.

Discovering eggs and bugs on produce, and earthworms under the soil have created some very mixed reactions amongst the students. There is an increasing group of enthusiastic, committed students who have been regularly involved. Many Year 5 students have developed a great deal of knowledge and expertise due to their commitment over the last few years. They will have the experience to take on important student leadership roles with the establishment of the Environment Club for K-6 in 2014.

Gardening Club continues to be driven by Margaret who has been our incredibly motivated and knowledgeable, community volunteer for a number of years. She is a wealth of knowledge and explains things so clearly to the students. Under her guidance children fertilise and prepare the garden beds, plant seeds, and care for them whilst they grow into healthy, organic produce. Harvesting produce remains one of the most exciting experiences in the garden. Watermelon, pumpkins, red cabbage, shallots, cabbage, sugar snap peas, beans, cherry tomatoes, roma tomatoes, corn, shallots, living lettuce, rocket, parsley, coriander are just some of the local produce. The surprise of pulling out a root vegetable (parsnip, spring onion, red or white onion, carrot, turnip, radish, potato, beetroot) never ceases to amaze the children! Actually it is really hard to pull out a cabbage too! The trees in the citrus garden are thriving and this is greatly contributed to the regular water they receive from the timed irrigation system which was constructed by the school’s general assistant.

Preschool has now established their own worm farm, compost bin and vegetable garden. This has greatly encouraged the children’s interest in growth and change. Purposeful, hands-on activities nurture their sense of belonging and responsibility for a more sustainable future. They feed the worms, add compost to the bins and explore the vegetable garden to see how plants grow and change. A great deal of time and effort has gone into establishing a garden that is aesthetically appealing and child friendly. Primary students have willingly assisted the preschool, through delivering barrow loads of bark and weeding.

Children understand the concept of collecting rain water and see the benefits of using tank water on the gardens. They understand why it is a cheaper and more sustainable option. This year some of the water tanks ran dry so children were unfortunately forced to use piped town water.

Many students are aware of what can and can’t be recycled and all rooms have a recycling box. The recycling is collected fortnightly by Stage 2 students and they tip it into the yellow lidded bins before putting it out for council collection.
The rainforest garden remains an area which needs further bush regeneration. The ‘frog plants’ which the children now call bromeliads are slowly growing.

The school continues to harness the Sun’s energy through its twenty-eight solar panels. This renewable energy is sold back to the electricity companies and as a result, the school saves money by receiving a reduced energy bill. Year 5 students have been developing more sustainable habits by saving energy in the classroom. Opening and closing windows and blinds, and using fans rather than the air conditioner are often sufficient methods to create a comfortable classroom environment. Closing windows and doors when using the air conditioner is more efficient and saves energy.

Students in all classes continuously incorporated environmental education in their class programs. They also participated in a number of national environmental celebrations including Clean Up Australia Day, National Tree Day, National Walk to School Day and Earth Hour.

Primary students attended excursions which further enhanced their knowledge and awareness of the importance of a sustainable lifestyle now, and in the future. During Term 3, Year 4 and 5 students visited the Western Sydney Parkland at Abbotsbury where they assisted by planting shrubs and trees.

This major project aims to re-forest a large strip of land, largely for the benefit and survival of native animals. Many Year 5 and 6 students attended the Youth Eco Summit at the Newington Armory in Sydney Olympic Park. There was an abundance of workshops, activities and displays associated with environmental practice and awareness.

School planning and evaluation 2012—2014

School evaluation processes
NSW public schools conduct evaluations to support the effective implementation of the school plan.

Evaluation of the effectiveness of the school plan is ongoing. Monitoring of progress towards meeting the outcomes and specific targets is continual throughout the year. The K-2 and 3-6 teams analyse class assessment, best start and NAPLAN data to measure outcomes against the continuums and determine students’ skills and to inform teaching strategies.

School planning 2012—2014: progress in 2013

School priority 1

Literacy

Outcomes from 2012—2014

Increased levels of literacy achievement for every student

Increased growth in spelling in NAPLAN particularly for middle and higher achieving students

Strengthen literacy achievement through the effective use of a full range of assessments

Diminished gap in literacy achievements between Aboriginal and all students

Improved outcomes through targeted strategic early interventions for students experiencing difficulty or value adding for gifted and talented students in literacy

Evidence of progress towards outcomes in 2013:

- 80% year 3 students performed in top 3 bands for reading. 33.3% achieved the top band in NAPLAN
• 75% year 3 students performed in top 3 bands for spelling with an increased number in the top band in NAPLAN
• school growth exceeded state in reading, spelling (100.6 compared with state 84) and writing ( 62 compared with 55.4) in NAPLAN
• growth of 70% of Year 5 students was greater than or matched state in NAPLAN
• 100% of year 3 students met or achieved above minimum standard in NAPLAN for all areas of literacy
• early intervention programs including reading recovery and multilit implemented for targeted students and those identified as requiring extra support by the learning support team
• effective use of the literacy continuum for mapping student achievement and monitoring student progress

Strategies to achieve these outcomes in 2014
• train staff and implement Focus on Reading program
• expand multilit program
• Use PLAN software for monitoring and tracking student progress and for informing programming
• Identifying and sharing effective evidence based teaching practices for high achieving students

Evidence of progress towards outcomes in 2013:
• 50% year 3 students achieved in the top 2 bands for numeracy
• 100% of year 3 students met or exceeded the minimum standard for numeracy in NAPLAN
• school growth for numeracy exceeded state ( school 95.9, state 88.5)
• full implementation of TEN program in K-2 classes
• Delivery of professional development in the use of numeracy continuum and use of the continuum by teachers to monitor and track student progress
• Extra support for students identified as requiring extra support in Mathematics by the learning support team
• extra support, funded by the school for Years 3-6 maths groups

Strategies to achieve these outcomes in 2014:
• Regular analysis of school and external assessment data to inform programming
• Use of PLAN software for monitoring and tracking student progress
• TEN program maintenance K-2
• Targeted support for numeracy groups K-6
• Identifying and sharing effective evidence based teaching practices for high achieving students

School priority 3
Curriculum and assessment

Outcomes from 2012–2014
Staff familiarization with relevant syllabuses for mandatory implementation
Increased attainment of students in NAPLAN as indicated in literacy and numeracy plans
Full implementation of National Quality Framework in preschool

Evidence of progress towards outcomes in 2013:
• National Quality framework fully implemented in preschool
• Professional development in understanding the English syllabus. Trialing units of work
including new English and science before mandatory implementation.

- Commenced familiarisation with the maths syllabus using the expertise of the regional Numeracy Consultant

**Strategies to achieve these outcomes in 2014:**

- Regular review of preschool quality improvement plan
- Staff access online learning courses for working through the maths and science syllabus
- Regular monitoring and adjusting of preschool quality improvement plan
- Trialing science units
- Working with former regional numeracy leader to ensure staff is fully prepared to implement Mathematics syllabus at the beginning for 2015

**Professional learning**

Staff engaged in a range of professional development opportunities aligned to the school targets and DEC priorities.

All teachers completed the on-line training for implementation for the English syllabus, attended school development days on the first day of Term 1, 2 and 3 and the last 2 days of Term 4, participated in all mandatory compliance training and attended whole school professional learning after school.

Teachers also identified areas for individual development and engaged in professional learning in those targeted areas.

Preschool staff attended several conferences and network meetings providing support for the implementation of the National Quality Framework and understanding the accreditation process.

Other targeted professional development included PDHPE and learning, effective integration of iPads into the classroom, understanding the numeracy continuum, best practice for special education, and attendance at technology conferences.

As well as the new English syllabus teachers elected to trial units from the new Mathematics and Science syllabuses, incorporating the Australian curriculum. Team meetings were held to discuss and share their findings and then presented at executive meetings.

**Parent/caregiver, student, and teacher satisfaction**

In 2013, the school sought the opinions of parents, students and teachers about the school.

Student leaders surveyed parents asking parents to nominate what the school does well and what areas we should continue to develop.

The majority of parents nominated the following as school strengths

- community building and team work
- Promoting Healthy lifestyles with crunch and sip, healthy food choices, exercise (Live Life Well at school)
- Our strong environmental focus
- Literacy and numeracy teaching
- Extra curricular including music and sport
- Recognizing and rewarding students demonstrating expected behavior
- promoting a positive inclusive culture
- supporting learning
- communicating with parents and the wider community

Parents indicated that they would like a continued focus on

- Literacy and numeracy skills
- Live life well@school program for overall health and wellbeing
- Social skills, especially for playground interactions
- Several parents indicate that they could not identify any area they felt needed developing

Students are able to raise any issues with their class teacher or any other as well as use their SRC to present ideas. This year, by student request the SRC met every week. The school leaders are able to make suggestions and raise any issues on
behalf of the student body at the weekly prefects’ meeting with the principal.

Teachers’ opinions and suggestions are sought continually throughout the year in weekly staff meetings, individual and team meetings. A culture of open communication and collaboration is a priority and actively promoted in the school.

**Program evaluations**

**Background**

Our school has a focus on healthy lifestyles and elected to implement the Live life well@school program.

Teachers attended professional development days, a nutrition policy and action plan was then developed and ongoing information about activities that supported this focus were reported in the fortnightly newsletter.

Education week activities revolved around being active and healthy food.

*Foyer display by 4B promoting healthy eating*

All canteen ‘red’ days and other school fundraisers involving food were healthy days and students ate fruit and vegetables and participated in physical activities.

Parents, students and staff were surveyed to ascertain level of knowledge and understanding, the effectiveness of our promotions and any impact on their buying habits and lifestyle.

**Findings and conclusions**

The majority of parents had heard of or were familiar with the live life well@school program that had been implemented through school

Most indicated that their children talk about healthy food choices at home. The majority indicated that their buying habits had changed as a result of supporting the schools focus on a healthy lifestyle and many indicated they already made healthy lifestyle choices and this program reinforced and confirmed those choices.

All students were able to articulate that the LLW@S program was about healthy eating, being physically active and a healthy lifestyle.

The majority of students K-6 indicated that they had often or sometimes discussed healthy food choices / healthy eating at home with the family. A small number indicated that healthy eating was not talked about in the home.

The majority of children indicated that their understanding of healthy eating had had an impact on the choice of food they bring to school. 99% of the students agreed that they were active every day, engaging in outdoor physical activity.

All staff were familiar with the LLW@ school program and that it was an integral part of school life. They were all familiar with the school LLW@S action plan and future focus. Staff indicated that the effects of this program were reflected in full participation in crunch and sip, our vegetable gardens, cooking lessons in class using harvested vegetables from the school garden, promoting healthy choices and physical activity on special event days and through promoting the healthy canteen.

There had been regular updates in staff meetings and professional learning afternoons so all staff were familiar with the school action plan and were actively promoting the values.

After consulting the staff the coordinators of the LLW@S program purchased cooking utensils for use in classrooms when delivering life skills lessons on preparing healthy food.

**Future directions**

The school will continue to actively promote healthy lifestyles by embedding it into everyday school life.
Nude food day will be introduced in 2014 as part of the school action plan.

The school will promote the positive impact of healthy choices through:

- special event days with healthy food themes,
- taking students on mini excursions to the supermarket to buy fruit for crunch and sip,
- supporting for our healthy canteen
- regular updates for the community in the school newsletter.

**About this report**

In preparing this report, the self-evaluation committee has gathered information from evaluations conducted during the year and analysed other information about the school's practices and student learning outcomes. The self-evaluation committee and school planning committee have determined targets for the school's future development.

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


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**An airship visit at George Kendall Park**

**Attending the Youth Eco Summit**

**Supporting Walk to School Safely Day**