Our school at a glance

Blackett Public School has been serving the local community since 1971. The school community shares high expectations of student achievement and growth in literacy and numeracy. Blackett staff focus on providing a quality education for every child. The Positive Behaviour for Learning strategy introduced in 2009 provides a strong emphasis on high standards of student behaviour with staff, students and community working together to create a safe and happy school environment.

Students

In 2009 the school had a population of approximately 310 students, coming from a variety of socio-economic backgrounds. This included 13% Aboriginal students and 22% from non-English speaking backgrounds (mainly Pacific Islander). The school had 15 classes including three support classes for students with disabilities.

Staff

The staff at Blackett Public School are committed to quality education and come from a wide range of backgrounds and experience. There are newly appointed teachers beginning their accreditation process, as well as staff with a depth of experience. All staff work collaboratively to support each other and the students in their care. They have high expectations of themselves and the students they teach.

All teaching staff of Blackett Public School meet the professional requirements for teaching in NSW public schools.

Significant programs and initiatives

Blackett School is able to offer a wide range of programs and strategies supporting literacy and numeracy growth. These include:

- Count Me in Too
- Accelerated Literacy
- Quick Smart
- Reading Recovery
- Best Start

Student achievement in 2009

Students at Blackett School have demonstrated significant growth in their learning as they move from year 3 to year 5. In particular the improvements in reading, writing and numeracy are impressive. The reading results from 2007 to 2009 show growth above the state average. Student growth in writing and spelling is also above the state average.

In 2010 the school will support continued growth through a range of programs and initiatives.

The school will target Years 1, 2 and 3 to ensure that these students are able to replicate the success of the work of year 5 in 2009.

Results in numeracy are also above state average in Bands 5 and 7 and just below in Band 6.

Literacy – NAPLAN Year 3

More students at Blackett School demonstrated a growth in their skills in spelling by achieving placement in Bands 5 and 6.

In 2010 the school will work on improving the overall writing skills of students across the stages.

Numeracy – NAPLAN Year 3

Students in Year 3 were able to make practical application of their knowledge in Time and Chance skills with several items showing scores above state average.

Overall, in Year 3 there was growth in the number of students achieving in Band 6. There are opportunities to improve particularly in the area of Measurement, Data, Space and Geometry.

Literacy – NAPLAN Year 5

Students in Year 5 were able to locate, sequence and connect information at or above state average achievement levels.

The results in grammar and punctuation indicate an opportunity for improvement. This will be one focus area in 2010.

Numeracy – NAPLAN Year 5

There was positive growth in Year 5 overall, but particularly in Measurement, Data, Space and Geometry.

In 2010 we will focus on improving computations in the areas of Division and Fractions.
Messages

Principal's message

2009 was a year of change for Blackett PS. Mrs Jenny Ruge, Principal for four years, was farewelled, and took up a new appointment as Principal of Wallacia Public School. Parents and students alike wished her well and celebrated her contribution to Blackett. Ms Carrie Bishop relieved as principal during Semester One ably supported by the experienced executive staff. The handover in Semester Two proceeded smoothly and congratulations go to Ms Bishop for her leadership during this time of transition.

2009 saw a vigorous focus on literacy and numeracy with pleasing growth in student achievement in both areas. Students were given the opportunity to participate in a wide number of excursion experiences with students from Blackett school behaving in a way to make both parents and staff extremely proud.

Blackett PS is supported by equity funding, including the Priority Action Schools Program – PAS, and Priority Schools Funding Program – PSFP.

Positive Behaviour for Learning is a strategy to empower students, staff and parents with planning for 2010 started in Term 3 2009. Be Safe, Be Respectful, Be a Learner were chosen as the rules to underpin all the Blackett community expectations.

In 2010 the school community will examine all settings and identify the positive behaviours that all Blackett children will work towards.

Two playgroups operated in 2009 – one supported initially by Families First and the other by our own parent helpers. Their work and support has been highly valued as the link between the Blackett community and school is strengthened.

The Blackett Parents and Citizens Association supported the school throughout the year and raised enough funds to assist with the installation of air conditioners in our Kindergarten rooms. As always our P&C work tirelessly to make learning environments more comfortable and enjoyable for our students.

We look forward to another exciting year at Blackett Public School and celebrate the achievements of 2009.

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.

2009 saw the commencement of Blackett’s new assembly hall and a full library refurbishment thanks to Building the Education Revolution (BER) funds. Classrooms were also refurbished, with 13 in all being re-carpeted, old cupboards removed, whiteboards and noticeboards installed as well as new furniture and new cupboards being provided. Funding from National Schools Pride allowed this much needed initiative to proceed. Three Interactive Whiteboards (IWB’s) were also installed in shared learning spaces.

Susan Bywater – Principal. Blackett PS.

P&C and/or School Council message

Our P&C work tirelessly to support our school and our students. In 2009 we had volunteers in classroom parents on merit selection panels and a variety of fundraising activities. They held guessing competitions, Mothers’ day and Fathers’ Days stalls, ran a very successful min-fete as well as a number of barbeques.

They met on the second Tuesday of each month and managed to keep a committed core group of supporters who continually encouraged others to join them.

Carol Trevarthen – Community Liaison Officer (CLO) for

Sue Cornish, President Blackett Parents and Citizens Association

Student representative’s message

In 2009, the two captains and vice-captains were elected for the whole year. There were many students who wanted to be prefects, so it was decided to give new students the opportunity to put themselves up for election for each semester. This allowed for a larger number of students to experience the role of student leadership within the school.

Positive Behaviour for Learning was introduced to our school and we are very excited to have Bluey guide us towards becoming safe, respectful learners.

Kristina Kiliona

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.

Student enrolment profile

The number of students enrolled has remained stable in the last year. However there has been a flow of population with students leaving the school, yet being replaced in equal numbers. This high mobility rate has been a trend over the past few years. Many of our families have links to
country areas and as a result some of our families often re-enrol when they return to the area.

The following table represents student enrolment trends over the last five years.

**Student Enrolment**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2005</th>
<th>2006</th>
<th>2007</th>
<th>2008</th>
<th>2009</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>179</td>
<td>173</td>
<td>161</td>
<td>150</td>
<td>155</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>179</td>
<td>173</td>
<td>154</td>
<td>149</td>
<td>143</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Student attendance profile**

Student attendance continues to be a significant challenge for the school. Our attendance for all grades from Kindergarten to Year 6 is below the region and state levels. In 2009 there has been a steady improvement in attendance. It is hoped that Blackett School community can work together to build on this positive change.

Our Community Liaison Officer, Home School Liaison Officer and Principal meet regularly to monitor attendance and support families who experience difficulty in getting their children to school on a regular basis. Blackett continues to develop positive home-school partnerships.

**Student Attendance**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2006</th>
<th>2007</th>
<th>2008</th>
<th>2009</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>School</td>
<td>90.9</td>
<td>87.7</td>
<td>87.9</td>
<td>90.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>K</td>
<td>93.5</td>
<td>93.8</td>
<td>94.1</td>
<td>93.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>93.9</td>
<td>94.0</td>
<td>93.4</td>
<td>92.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>94.0</td>
<td>93.9</td>
<td>94.1</td>
<td>92.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>94.3</td>
<td>93.7</td>
<td>94.1</td>
<td>93.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>94.0</td>
<td>94.0</td>
<td>94.1</td>
<td>92.1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Management of non-attendance**

Non-attendance is managed by all class teachers, Assistant Principals and the Community Liaison Officer and is overseen by the Principal. If students are absent from school and have not provided a letter to explain why they were away, the class teacher sends home a reminder note. If the note is not returned the class teacher will follow up with a phone call home to discuss the absences. The class teacher monitors the absences and liaises with the Assistant Principal if there are a number of absences or late arrivals. If necessary a meeting is held with the parents to discuss the absences. If there is a high rate of unexplained or explained absences, or late arrivals continue, a referral is completed for the Home School Liaison Officer.

The Principal, Community Liaison Officer and Home School Liaison Officer meet weekly to examine attendance data and identify students who are at risk of falling below an attendance rate of 85%.

In 2009 Blackett was identified as one of the schools in the region with an attendance rate considered to be critically low. An Attendance Action Plan was developed with the assistance of regional personnel in consultation with staff. Formal procedures and guidelines were developed for implementation in 2010.

**Class sizes**

In March 2003 the Government commitment to publish primary class sizes in annual school reports in order to provide parents with as much local information as possible; the following information about Blackett School is included.

The following table shows our class sizes as reported at the 2009 class size audit conducted on Wednesday 18 March 2009.

<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>1 BOND</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 KING</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 GRAHAM</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 HATHORN</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 BLYTON</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 PATTERSON</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 DAHL</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4-5 LEWIS</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4-5 LEWIS</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5-6 LAWSON</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5-6 LAWSON</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5-6 ROWLING</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5-6 ROWLING</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>K FOX</td>
<td>K</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>K OLIVER</td>
<td>K</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>K/6 DADDO</td>
<td>IO</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>K/6 FRENCH</td>
<td>IO</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3/6 BAKER</td>
<td>IM</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Structure of classes
There were 15 roll classes throughout 2009 including three multi-age classes to accommodate the unevenness of student numbers which were not able to be supported through single grade structure. Our Support Unit classes are multi-age. The Priority Action Schools Program provided the opportunity for the school to employ an additional class teacher and a teacher to support the Kindergarten Literacy Project and provided targeted support for Stage 2 and 3 boys in Numeracy.

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
Most of the staff positions in 2009 were filled by permanent teachers. Two teacher positions funded under the Priority Action School Program were filled by temporary teachers. Four temporary teachers were employed to cover permanent teachers on various types of approved leave.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Position</th>
<th>Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Principal</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deputy Principal(s)</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assistant Principal(s)</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assistant Principal (Support)</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Head Teachers</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Classroom Teachers</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher of Emotional Disabilities</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher of Mild Intellectual Disabilities</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher of Reading Recovery</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Support Teacher Learning Assistance</td>
<td>1.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher Librarian</td>
<td>0.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher of ESL</td>
<td>0.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assistant Principal, Learning Assistance-Regional</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Regional Support Teacher Learning Assistance (STLA)</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Counsellor</td>
<td>1.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School Administrative &amp; Support Staff (SASS)</td>
<td>7.022</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>30.278</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The staff at Blackett School includes 13.21% of teachers and School Administrative Support Staff who identify as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islanders.

Members of the teaching staff were supported by a School Administration Manager, one full time School Administration Officer and one part time School Administration Officer, three full time Learning Support Officers – for the Support Unit, five School Learning Support Officers – part time, an Aboriginal Education Officer, a Community Liaison Officer and a part-time General Assistant. Some of these positions were funded by the Priority School Funding allocation and the Priority Action Schools Program.

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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Qualifications</th>
<th>% of staff</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Degree or Diploma</td>
<td>91%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Postgraduate</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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>
<th>30/11/2009</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Income</td>
<td>$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Balance brought forward</td>
<td>135355.92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Global funds</td>
<td>206505.21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tied funds</td>
<td>236576.34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School &amp; community sources</td>
<td>18035.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interest</td>
<td>6134.44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trust receipts</td>
<td>19610.14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Canteen</td>
<td>55629.54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total income</td>
<td>542490.68</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Expenditure</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Teaching &amp; learning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Key learning areas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Excursions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Extracurricular dissections</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Library</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Training &amp; development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tied funds</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Casual relief teachers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Administration &amp; office</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School-operated canteen</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Utilities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maintenance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trust accounts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Capital programs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total expenditure</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Balance carried forward</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A full copy of the school’s 2009 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 2009
Achievements
Students at Blackett School have demonstrated significant growth in their learning as they move from year 3 to year 5. In particular the improvements in reading, writing and numeracy are impressive. The reading results from 2007 to 2009 show growth above the state average. Student growth in writing and spelling is also above the state average.
In 2010 the school will support continued growth through a range of programs.

The school will target Years 1, 2 and 3 to ensure that these students are able to replicate the success of the work of Year 5 in 2009.

Results in numeracy are also above state average in Bands 5 and 7 and just below in Band 6.

**Numeracy groups** are organised to offer students the best access to learning. The boy’s numeracy group has been continued following the successful outcomes in 2009. Other students are grouped according to their numeracy skills and supported by class teachers and the Support Teacher Learning Assistance.

**Quick Smart** is numeracy program which started in 2009 with the training of staff and will continue in 2010.

QuickSmart increases fluency in basic mathematics skills. Students were selected from years 5 and 6 depending on past NAPLAN and school based data. Students’ progress is tracked individually, over a 30 week program. The aim of the program is to narrow the gap between regional and state performances. This is done by collecting data throughout the year. This program is implemented by trained SLOs who work with pairs of students of similar ability.

**Count Me In Too** is a numeracy program to support the students in Kindergarten – Year 4. Past NAPLAN results indicate that many students have difficulty with the language of mathematics, and the ability to transfer knowledge from concrete to abstract forms. CMIT lessons are language based which support students learning by providing explicit teaching within a specific learning framework.

**Arts**

The school participated in the Mt Druitt Music Festival with both dance and choir participating in 2009. The dance group also performed on special occasions and the choir added richness to special events.

Recorder group students learned new skills under tutelage of Ms Moraitis. The group’s repertoire will be expanded in 2010

Mrs Davies led the Aboriginal dancing group which performed on special occasions throughout the year. The dance group will continue in 2010 to build on its successful beginnings.

In 2010 the arts will expand to include Indian dance under the tutelage of Mrs Mukherjee. We look forward to their inaugural performance.

**Sport**

2009 was a successful year for Blackett Primary School Sporting Association teams. During summer PSSA, Blackett entered teams in Newcombe Ball, Volleyball and Junior and Senior Cricket. We were very excited when our Newcombe Ball team made it to the grand final. Ms Leyton also coached our keen swimmers in a regular swim squad during the summer months.

The Annual Swimming Carnival saw some impressive results with some students going on to represent at Regional events. The annual Learn to Swim school provided opportunities for beginning and developing swimmers to improve their level of skill. Rugby League, Soccer and Netball were popular choices for the winter competition and all teams put in a competitive performance each week. Blackett PS hosted an extremely successful Athletics Carnival with the majority of students in years 3-6 competing in all events. Individual students gained success at district, regional and state levels in various events and were commended highly for their exemplary behaviour whilst representing our school.

Ms Cavanagh, Mr Ure, Mrs Moraitis, Miss Ladkin, Miss Stilgoe and Miss Layton coached our teams with enthusiasm.

**Other**

**Debating** - Mrs Date led our very successful school debating team which consisted of four students who demonstrated high levels of skill and commitment. For a second consecutive year the team reached the final round in the district competition. Debating activities in 2010 will consolidate and build on previous successes under Mr Moraitis.

**Excursions** - Early Stage 1 and two Support Classes for students with moderate intellectual disabilities experienced Kindy Farm Exhibit which visited Blackett. Children were studying farms as part of the “Our Needs” unit.

They also visited Sydney Aquarium where they were able to study at close hand the variety of sea life that they had discussed as part of their “Living Things” unit.

**Excursions - Stage 1**. In 2009 four classes from Stage 1 visited the Powerhouse Museum in Sydney. This excursion was linked to the connected outcome groups (COGS) unit “Powering On”. This setting provided the students with opportunities to explore toys and games from the past and present and to reflect on how things work. The practical component of the excursion ensured that everyone had a fun day with “hands on” opportunities to learn.

**Excursion - Stage 2**, including the Support Class for students with mild intellectual disability travelled to Blackheath where they were guided
on a bushwalk and studied the flora and fauna of
the Blue Mountains National Park as part of the
unit on “National Parks”.

**Excursion - Stage 3** planned to participate in a
camping experience as part of their unit on “Gold
Fields”. Unfortunately there were insufficient
numbers to proceed with the plan. Similarly the
“Lessons Afloat” was cancelled.

**Community Engagement** – was a focus in 2009
as it will be in 2010. Pre-school aged children
have participated enthusiastically in playgroups on
Thursday and Friday. The Thursday playgroup
was supported with funding from Families First –
Mission Australia. This facilitated the purchase of
additional resources to supplement materials
available in the school. The groups are now self
managed as a result of the support provided by
professionals from this organisation.

Planning commenced for the introduction of
“Bluey’s Stars”, a program for pre-school aged
children to commence in 2010 as an extension of
building positive experiences for children entering
school for the first time. A staff member trained in
Early Childhood will oversee the program in 2010.

It is anticipated that the experiences of these
young children will assist their smooth transition
into Kindergarten in the coming years.

Parent participation in the P&C increased during
2009 and the growing interest of parents was
reflected in the number of parents supporting the
school on special occasions and at the regular K-6
assemblies.

We look forward to many more parents directly
participating in the series of events and decision
making processes as part of the planning for
2010.

**Aboriginal Community** – During 2009
members of the local Aboriginal Community
participated in regular discussions regarding the
education of their children at Blackett School.
These discussions also included establishing a
community space with an Aboriginal identity.

Planning commenced in 2009 for the introduction
of a Doorways Project which will begin with the
painting of Dharug story on the community room
door. The story can then be passed on to the
students and teachers of Blackett School who as
the years go by will become the oral historians of
Blackett school. The extension of this project is to
have a Dharug story or a story of other Aboriginal
Nations on all our classroom doors which in turn
will become the oral tradition of that classroom.

The community is also investigating an
appropriate Dharug name which reflects the
establishment of a meeting place within the
school.

School celebrations of NAIDOC week included
forums run by Aboriginal Elders and some
Aboriginal students in years 7 to 10 from Chifley
College, Mt Druitt Campus also contributed by
running a traditional games session and the
sharing of Aboriginal food.

A performance by Aboriginal and Torres Strait
Islanders allowed all students to experience some
aspect of the traditional Aboriginal and Torres
Strait Islander including dance, history and the
use of weapons for hunting.

In 2010 a community artist will paint panels in the
refurbished library depicting Aboriginal stories and
symbols. An Aboriginal Learning Area will be
created in the Library in 2010.

**Academic**

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

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

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

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

**Literacy – NAPLAN Year 3**

Year 3 had 47% of students in the lower 2 bands
with a further 23% in band 3. In 2010 the need is
to move these students into the next bands, with
current students in band 5 achieving band 6.
Blackett students had more students in band 5
than Like School Groups.
Year 3 Writing results showed that 60% of students were in bands 4 or higher. In 2010, there will be an intensive focus on increasing students' capacity by the implementation of Accelerated Literacy in Stage 2. Students from bands 1 and 2 should move on to bands 3 and above.

Only 20% of students achieved bands 5 or 6. 30% of students achieved band 4 which was 7% above State Average. In 2010 students will be supported in their efforts to move from the lower bands to the middle and upper bands.

**Numeracy – NAPLAN Year 3**

Close analysis of Year 3 results indicated that most items presenting difficulty were word problems or two step problems, which were word based. In 2010 teachers will concentrate on presenting lessons which examine the language of mathematics. Blackett will participate in the regional initiative of Examining Data to Inform Quality Teaching Practice.

In 2010 there is a need to move students from the lower bands with 55% of students currently in band 3 or below. In bands 5 and 6 Blackett had more students than those in Like School Groups.
Literacy – NAPLAN Year 5

Blackett had 8% of students in band 3 which was well below Like School Group figures of 26%. In 2010 there will be a focus on increasing the capacity of students in this band and the middle bands in order to move them along and increase numbers in bands 7 and 8. Intensive Teacher Professional Development will support this plan.

In Writing, Blackett students out-performed the state in band 5. With this sound starting point in 2010 it is hoped to move the 69% of Blackett students from the lower bands into bands 6, 7 and 8. Writing Rescue is the strategy which will be used to support the growth of these students in Stage 3.

Year 5 spellers 57% of students in the middle bands compared to 48% in the Like School Group. In band 3 and 4 we had approximately the same percentage of students as the State. A literature based approach to spelling in 2010 should support the development of spelling growth.

In 2010 there is a need to concentrate on the aspects of Grammar and Punctuation which have only 13% of students in band 6 and 7. Item analysis will allow the appropriate curriculum links to be made and thus appropriately planned remedial teaching will support future growth.
The boys’ maths groups were significant in supporting the upward growth of the boys’ results with significant value added growth, the result. Girls were unable to match the achievements of the boys and as a result there will be single sex maths groups in 2010 to address these issues. The target is to have 80% achieving.

**Progress in literacy**

Average progress in Reading between Year 3 and Year 5 continues to be above state and Like School Group.

**Minimum standards**

The Commonwealth Government sets minimum standards for reading, writing, grammar and punctuation, spelling and numeracy for years 3, 5, 7 and 9.
The performance of the students in our school in the National Assessment Program – Literacy and Numeracy is compared to these minimum standards. The percentages of our students achieving at or above these standards are reported below.

The percentage of Year 3 students in our school achieving at or above the minimum standard in 2009 is displayed in the table below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Percentage of Year 3 students achieving at and above minimum standard</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
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Significant programs and initiatives

There was a focus on Literacy and Numeracy with School Learning Support Officers being employed to support the delivery of these programs in the classroom. The Boys Numeracy Initiative, which targeted boys in Stage 2 and 3 and their learning styles saw sound growth in numeracy, which was reflected in the national testing program, NAPLAN results.

Our Community Liaison Officer coordinated a range of school based activities which resulted in the engagement of community members in school based programs. The Kindergarten Orientation Program provided an opportunity for parents of new students to gain a valuable and positive introduction to their child’s school life.

Reading Recovery will resume in 2010. Blackett School has been allocated a position equivalent to two and a half days a week for 2010. Staff attended information sessions to prepare for the reintroduction of Reading Recovery into Blackett School. Reading Recovery targets student in Year 1 who will benefit from intensive, daily sessions with the Reading Recovery Tutor.

Best Start for Blackett commenced in 2009 with the proposed Kindergarten teachers for 2010 undergoing training in the screening process. Best Start provides information about individual students beginning kindergarten so that the school can address individual learning needs. The assessment is undertaken by the class teacher in consultation with parents, before the kindergarten students enter class.

Aboriginal Education

Personalised Learning Plans (PLPs) were developed in consultation with parents and students. The aim of PLPs is to ensure that every Aboriginal student has maximum opportunity to achieve regional and state targets in literacy and numeracy.

The executive of the school have worked in close collaboration with regional Aboriginal personnel resulting in positive educational outcomes for students at Blackett PS. In 2010 all Blackett Staff will be formerly trained in the Aboriginal Education and Training Policy.

The staff and community at Blackett School are working towards ‘Closing the Gap’ in the educational achievements of Aboriginal students and all diverse learners.

Accelerated Literacy (AL) will be a focus of the school in 2010. Blackett School is able to offer this program through the Priority Action School Program. Staff commenced training in 2009. AL originated in the Northern Territory as was developed to improve student outcomes particularly those experiencing difficulties with literacy. The success of this program, particularly with Aboriginal students, led to its implementation throughout schools in Mt Druitt. Planning commenced in 2009 with the allocation of funds from PAS funds, targeted for 2010.

Count Me in Too is a method of teaching mathematics to all students to better develop their understanding of mathematical processes and concepts. The school was allocated $5000 in 2009 from Western Sydney Region to facilitate the training of staff in theses strategies in 2010.

Quick Smart is an intensive mathematical program delivered one on one to students experiencing difficulties. Tutors work with students using a computer based program in an effort to close the gap between current student performance and state expectations. Training for the tutors commenced in 2009 and the school was allocated $23000 to support this initiative.

Aboriginal Students and NAPLAN Results

In Year 5 Numeracy there were no students in Bands 3 and 4 which represented an upward movement from previous results. In Numeracy students moved from Bands 3 and 4 into Bands 5 and 6 with a particular spike in Band 5.

Year 5 Reading took from the bottom Bands and increased numbers in Bands 5, 6 and 7.
Year 3 student achievement was tempered by being a cohort with high mobility and achievements in Literacy and Numeracy reflected the interrupted nature of the students’ education.

**Multicultural Education**

Students from non English Speaking background are supported by an English as a Second Language teacher (ESL) allocation equivalent to two days a week. This teacher works collaboratively with all staff to achieve better outcomes for our students from other countries and backgrounds. All ESL students presented to school with functional levels of English.

There were no students from a refugee background at Blackett School in 2009.

In 2010 the school will seek to increase the engagement of our Multicultural Community. The Side by Side Writing Program will recognise the significance of the student’s first language as well supporting their growth in the use of the English language. The Principal, CLO and Multicultural personnel from region began planning this initiative in 2009.

Initial links have been made with the Pacific Islander Community to participate in this initiative. The program will expand to other cultures as it evolves.

**Respect and responsibility**

In 2009 the Executive Team and the staff member nominated as the data manager undertook initial training in preparation for the introduction of Positive Behaviour for Learning at Blackett School in 2010. Be Safe, Be Respectful, Be a Learner are the key focus rules for the whole school in any setting or activity. These are the practical applications complementary to the Values of Public Education which underpin all of Blackett’s student welfare practices.

**Other programs**

Blackett Public School receives funding from Equity Programs specifically, the Priority Schools Program and the Priority Action Schools Program in addition to the Global Budget allocation. The intention of the additional funding is to achieve equitable outcomes for all students.

Under PSP the school received an allocation equivalent to a teacher 2 days a week and a grant of $41,700 and $145,718 from the PAS program. These monies are included in the budget as Tied Grants. The combined funds allowed Blackett to employ a classroom teacher to create an additional class, as well as a classroom teacher to support the Kindergarten Literacy Project, Professional Learning in the introduction in Interactive Whiteboards, as well as targeted support in numeracy for Stage 3 boys.

Five School Learning Support Officers were engaged to support Literacy and Numeracy programs for targeted students and a Community Liaison Officer was employed on apart time basis to work with staff, students and community members.

PAS and PSP funding allowed student numbers to be more evenly distributed amongst stages which facilitated more opportunities to provide individual attention to all students.

A direct result of the intervention in the Numeracy Project was a defined upward movement in the achievement of Year 3 boys in NAPLAN. Implications for 2010 are the provision of gender based groups for Numeracy instruction.

More than half the Kindergarten students achieved at or above Regional Targets for Reading Recovery levels by the end of the year, indicating the success of the Kindergarten Literacy Project.

Overall student achievement levels reflect the benefit of the school’s ability to provide additional teacher and SLSO support which enables a greater focus on student engagement and learning outcomes, as a direct result of the Equity Funding.

The expectations of students, staff and parents/carers increased. This was demonstrated through increased positive communication between school and community. In 2010 this will be further developed with specific programs provided by the school to engage parents and community members in all aspects of school life. Our continuing focus is to develop and sustain a positive and increasingly inclusive school culture.

There have been a sequential series of professional learning opportunities provided for all staff to increase their capacity to deliver and support quality Literacy and Numeracy Programs in Blackett School.

**Progress on 2009 targets**

**Target 1** - 80% of students K-2 to achieve regional targets in Reading.

In Kindergarten 51% of the students were at or above regional targets. In Year 1, 45.9% of students were at or above the targets. In Year 2, 70.5% were at or above the targets.

The implications for 2010 are further professional development and support for staff particularly in the area of literacy learning. Study of the syllabus and support documents will build the capacity of staff to deliver effective, efficient programs that cater for the diverse needs of learners at Blackett School.
**Target 2** - 80% of all students achieve stage outcomes in Literacy and Numeracy.

In Year 3 80.5% of students were at or above regional targets in Literacy. In Year 4, 78.3% of students were at or above regional targets. In Year 5, 76.9% of students achieved at or above regional targets. In Year 6, 95.8% achieved at or above the regional targets.

In 2010 our intention is to build on these improving results through increasing professional capacity of the staff, specifically in Literacy. Accelerated Literacy Program for Stage 2 and the Writing Rescue Program for Stage 3 will have a positive impact on future achievements.

In Numeracy, data indicated that 50% of students were working at or above regional targets. The implication for 2010 is that the teaching focus needs to be on the understanding of the language of mathematics. This will be achieved by intense professional development, collaborative planning and team and modelled teaching opportunities. The capacity of the staff to deliver appropriate numeracy instruction will increase as a direct result of these interventions.

**Target 3** - student attendance rate exceeds 91%

Overall school attendance rate was 88% in 2009. A range of strategies were developed based on the need to increase the attendance of students to state and region averages of 93.3%. The target for 2010 is 95%. This will be achieved by closely following the strategies developed in the Attendance Action Plan.

**Target 4** - 95% of Year 3 and Year 5 students meet or exceed the national minimum standards on all measures of Literacy and Numeracy.

Target 4 will be achieved in 2010 by the interventions outlined in targets 1 and 2. Currently, 55% of students meet or exceed these national minimum standards.

**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 2009 our school carried out evaluations of educational and management practice.

**Attendance and its links to the Quality of School Life**

**Background**

Quality of School Life Survey was chosen in conjunction with the development of the School Attendance Action Plan. There was a need to identify any underlying reasons for poor attendance which the school could subsequently address.

**Findings and conclusions**

An evaluation involving the project manager of Blackett’s Attendance Plan, was conducted amongst Stage 3 students and their parents. The Quality of School Life Survey involved surveying 75 students. 79% of those interviewed expressed a high level of general satisfaction with Blackett PS. 29% expressed a negative feeling about their personal state of mind in regards to attending school (unhappy, lonely, worried, upset and restless). 91% of students recognised being treated fairly by teachers and staff. 87% of students recognised success as an individual learner. 91% of students acknowledged that school work was good preparation for the future. 76% of students recognised the need to get along with others. 70% of students indicated they liked to do extra work. In summary the quality of school life was rated 92% overall satisfaction.

The parent component of the survey returned an overall high level of satisfaction with the school, its practices and the expectations held for its students. The survey indicated that the reasons for lack of attendance did not lie with the school and students lack of satisfaction with the school as a place of learning. It did indicate that some students suffered from varying levels of anxiety (29%) for undisclosed reasons.

**Future directions**

In 2010 the school needs to target the students who are anxious about attending school and support them in overcoming their anxieties about school. This will be achieved as part of the welfare support strategies of the school. Other reasons for lack of attendance include family mobility, illness of family members, and family perceptions about school. Only 3 students were long term school refusers and the school addressed these issues with a variety of strategies and support mechanisms with positive outcomes. (Refer to Target 3 – School Management Plan 2009 – 2011). Such practices will continue in 2010.

**Curriculum**

**Numeracy**

**Background**

An evaluation of the effectiveness of the numeracy programs at Blackett school in 2009, was conducted involving parents/carers, staff and students. There was a need to collect data on students’ achievement in order to plan effective teaching and learning programs in 2010. Input from parents was sought to determine their level of understanding of the mathematics curriculum and current teaching methodologies in order to support each student’s learning at home. Teachers were surveyed to determine their depth of knowledge and understanding of the both the
standards in all areas of mathematics (Targets 2 and 4 of the School Management Plan 2009 - 2011)

**Findings and conclusions**

Student data collected included NAPLAN, SENA testing analysis and diagnostic testing. Results indicated that the boys outperformed the girls, in year 5. Boys achievement in this cohort can be attributed to the forming of a boys only maths group. All other data revealed that only 50% of other students were achieving at or above regional targets.

The conclusion can be drawn that single sex maths can be more effective for our cohort of students in stages 2 and 3. In Early stage 1 and Stage 1, there is a need to provide professional development for our teachers and support them in delivering high quality programs. This will be achieved by team teaching, grouping students appropriately and demonstrating Best Practice. It will also be supported by intensive examination of the curriculum during Teacher Professional Learning (TPL) during 2010.

All teaching staff were surveyed to determine their level of confidence in delivering appropriate numeracy lessons, their understanding of the curriculum and their willingness to participate in the Lesson Study model. Findings indicate that only 25% of staff expressed confidence in their ability to deliver appropriate lessons. The same percentage expressed willingness to share and participate in the Lesson Study model to increase the capacity of themselves and their colleagues. In general, the understanding of the curriculum and the implications for the teaching of mathematics require a major focus for 2010. This should directly impact on school Targets 2 and 4, with far greater students reaching identified standards at the end of 2010.

**Future directions**

Data will be closely analysed at the commencement of each year, and continually monitored throughout the year to determine student progress and effectiveness of teaching and learning programs.

Teaching staff will continue to participate in sequential professional learning to increase their knowledge of the curriculum and their capacity to deliver appropriate programs.

**Parent, student, and teacher satisfaction**

In 2009 the school sought the opinions of parents, students and teachers about the school.

Their responses are presented below.

Parent responses were sought by a variety of means in 2009.

The HSLO managing the development of the school Attendance Action Plan took the opportunity to formally talk to parents at the Annual Athletics Carnival where a far broader cohort was accessible. The response was overwhelmingly positive in their support of the school and in their level of satisfaction with the majority of school practices.

**The Quality of School Life Survey** of student similarly indicated a high level of satisfaction with school (79% of students stated that they “really liked going to Blackett Public School”).

When teachers were surveyed, results indicated that 50% of teachers felt that improvements needed to be made in 2010. These improvements will focus on Student Welfare and Discipline as well as increasing the capacity of teachers to interact with parents and communicate with their colleagues in a productive manner.

**Professional learning**

In 2009 all staff participated in a range of professional learning opportunities. The staff professional learning is closely linked with the school management plan and also allows staff to choose their own professional learning priorities. The following professional learning opportunities were provided in 2009:

- Child Protection
- Examining the Quality Teaching Framework
- An Introduction to Positive Behaviour for Learning
- Basic First Aid and CPR
- Accelerated Literacy – an Introduction
- Hands on Literacy activities throughout the school
- Sporting Activities for primary aged children
- Best Start training

Support staff was also provided with opportunities to increase their capacity and understanding in the areas of Literacy, Numeracy and Best Practice with students.

**School development 2009 – 2011**

In 2009 staff met to examine the School Management Plan 2009-2010, and to identify targets that had been met, as well as identifying the strategies that had been implemented to achieve these targets.

Literacy, Numeracy and Aboriginal Education were the focus of these meetings.

As the result of collaborative discussion, areas of concern were identified as well as areas of strength. New initiatives for 2010-2011 were written into the new DRAFT version of the School
Management Plan. Staff agreed that there is an ever evolving need to review existing strategies and review programs.

Regional funding for CMIT ($5000) and the Regional Initiatives for examining Data to Drive Numeracy Programs ($3000) as well as the need to implement Accelerated Literacy (PAS funding) and Quick Smart ($23000). Regional funding made these changes necessary.

Analysis of NAPLAN data and school based data led to changes in the Management Plan. The Draft format will be available for staff and community consideration in 2010, and complies with the audit requirements.

School executive collaborated in the construction of the New DRAFT version of the School Management Plan.

**Targets for 2010**

**Target 1 - Literacy**
Increase the literacy levels of Kindergarten to Year 2 students to 85% of this cohort achieving regional targets.
More than 85% of students in Years 3 to 6 will reach regional targets.

**Target 2 - Numeracy**
Increase the performance of students K to 2 to equal or better the growth rate of the students in Years 3 to 6.
85% of all students will achieve Stage outcomes in Numeracy.

**Target 3 - School Attendance**
95% of students will attend school.

**Target 4 - 95% of Year 3 and Year 5 students meet or exceed the National Minimum Standards of Literacy and Numeracy.**

**Target 5 - Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander student meet or exceed state targets in Literacy and Numeracy.**

**Target 6 - There will be an increase of at least 50% in the number of parents actively involved in all aspects of school life, compared to 2009.**

**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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Sharon Cavanagh – Assistant Principal
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Melissa Date – Assistant Principal
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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)