BEN VENUE
PUBLIC SCHOOL
Annual School Report 2014
School context statement

Principal’s Message

Ben Venue Public School is the largest primary school in Armidale. In 2012 the school had 583 students but has grown to 635 in 2014. The school has excellent facilities and is well resourced with the Parents and Citizens and the Parent Club contributing generously each year to programs, excursions and the purchase of resources and equipment to enhance teaching and learning for students. The school has a proud tradition of offering challenging programs of excellence for team and individual sports as well as participation, performance and state wide representation in performance areas. Many teachers are involved in coaching, rehearsing and developing student talents across many areas. The school community supports the high quality education provided by the school with students excelling in academic, cultural and sporting pursuits. Ben Venue is committed to providing high quality programs for students in a calm, well-organised school environment. It is a modern, well-presented school in the north of Armidale, with new classrooms, library, multi-purpose hall, special programs room, outdoor learning area, large shade shelter, sporting facilities and up to date technology and resources. All classrooms, the creative arts room, school hall and library are equipped with interactive panels or whiteboards.

The school enjoys a balance of teachers who have been at the school for a significant time, with other executive and teachers new to the school. In 2014 a number of retirements led to the employment of experienced temporary teachers and newly appointed teachers and it is expected that a further number of retirements will lead to further changes in staff at the school in 2015.

Late in 2014 the popular Deputy Principal Wally O’Hara retired from his position. He worked tirelessly for students and staff at Ben Venue and we wish him a healthy active retirement. This position will be advertised early in 2015.

Teaching and learning focuses on high expectations for all students, quality curriculum, assessment and high levels of engagement with many opportunities for enhanced learning.

Teachers and parents work together to provide opportunities for students to participate in many activities and excursions. All students wear the school uniform and many represent the school at District, Regional, and National levels. The school is acknowledged in broader educational arenas for its Music, Arts and sporting achievements. Environmental awareness is actively encouraged through a variety of on-going initiatives.

Ben Venue has an active Parents and Citizens Association and Parent Club which financially supports many individuals, groups and programs each year to assist students to participate fully in the many opportunities available.

With no canteen operating in 2014 the very active parent Club decided to hold Special Lunch Days once a term. These have been great fundraisers.

Judy Graham
Principal

Parent Club Coordinators Searna Love and Michelle Peak receiving Education Week Awards

P&C President’s Message

Ben Venue P & C Annual Report
2014 was another very successful year. The P&C donated $10000 towards the update of the school’s computer needs allowing all of the school to be linked to Wi-Fi. We also donated amounts of money for students competing in various sports at State level and National level.

The fete was our major fundraiser for the year; unfortunately we had to contend with an extremely hot summer. Although the revenue from the fete was down slightly on previous
years, it was another great success. The parent club has contributed greatly to the fundraising this year with the bulb orders and the very successful sausage sizzles. I would like to thank all of our parent volunteers and members of the school community for their dedication and time over the past 12 months. I would also like to make special mention of the Parent Club which with the leadership of Michelle Peak, has raised a massive amount of money to be used for new school equipment.

Thank you again to all.

Andrew Harris
President

A message from the 2014 School Captains
I had a fantastic year in 2014 being the school captain. We had a great year group and some of the main highlights I experienced with my peers were:
The Young Leaders Conference in Sydney, our Year 6 camp to the Great Aussie Bush Camp, performing in Charlie - our Year 6 musical and performing with the choir and marimba group at the Opera house. I was fortunate enough to be chosen in the New England debating team and enjoyed competing in Sydney against other teams from throughout NSW. I loved leading assemblies during the year and laying the wreath on behalf of the school on Anzac day was a wonderful honour. 2014 was the best year so far of my school life and it was a tremendous privilege being the school captain at Ben Venue. (Georgia )

My year as the Ben Venue 2014 school captain has given me memories that will stay with me for the rest of my life. The experiences and opportunities throughout the year were amazing. I know that because of those experiences, I have the confidence to do things I didn’t realise I could. It was an honour to be given the opportunity to be a leader at the best school in Armidale. (Ronan)

School Captains
2014 – Ronan Crotty and Georgia MacMahon
(Photo)

Student information

An enrolment of 635 students enabled the school to gain an extra teacher at the end of Term 1. This teacher worked to support students across classes and Key Learning Areas and will take her place on a class in 2015.

Students from a diverse range of backgrounds and abilities achieved results in all areas which indicated personal improvement in outcomes. As teachers work collaboratively to improve achievement in all areas, some results were highlighted as exemplars while other areas were analysed as areas to build on in 2014. The diagnostic nature of these assessments is the main area for focus on teaching and learning. Results are achieved when teachers work together through Kindergarten to Year 6.

Students in Year 3 and Year 5 achieve results equal to or above the State results. Students, of varying abilities, have sustained very good overall achievement levels over time. As a proud public school Ben Venue’s NAPLAN results in 2014 were within the State average.

Ben Venue Public School has achieved excellent results over time and will continue to strive to ensure students achieve their personal best results. It is a requirement that the reporting of information for all students be consistent with privacy and personal information policies.

Student attendance profile

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>2012</th>
<th>2013</th>
<th>2014</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>K</td>
<td>95.2</td>
<td>95.5</td>
<td>95.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>95.5</td>
<td>95.1</td>
<td>95.4</td>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>96.7</td>
<td>95.2</td>
<td>94.7</td>
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<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>94.6</td>
<td>96.0</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>95.9</td>
<td>94.5</td>
<td>96.1</td>
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<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>96.3</td>
<td>95.7</td>
<td>94.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>93.9</td>
<td>96.4</td>
<td>94.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>95.4</td>
<td>95.5</td>
<td>95.4</td>
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State DEC

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>2012</th>
<th>2013</th>
<th>2014</th>
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<tbody>
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<td>K</td>
<td>94.3</td>
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<td>1</td>
<td>93.9</td>
<td>94.5</td>
<td>94.7</td>
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<td>94.2</td>
<td>94.7</td>
<td>94.9</td>
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<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>94.4</td>
<td>94.8</td>
<td>95.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>94.3</td>
<td>94.7</td>
<td>94.9</td>
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<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>94.2</td>
<td>94.5</td>
<td>94.8</td>
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<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>93.8</td>
<td>94.1</td>
<td>94.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>94.2</td>
<td>94.7</td>
<td>94.8</td>
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Student enrolment profile
Student Enrolment

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>2010</th>
<th>2011</th>
<th>2012</th>
<th>2013</th>
<th>2014</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>270</td>
<td>276</td>
<td>291</td>
<td>287</td>
<td>303</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>273</td>
<td>281</td>
<td>301</td>
<td>321</td>
<td>311</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Workforce information**

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

**Workforce composition**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Position</th>
<th>Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Principal</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deputy Principal(s)</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assistant Principal(s)</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RFF/PT</td>
<td>2.234</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Classroom Teacher(s)</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher of Reading Recovery</td>
<td>0.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learning and Support Teacher(s)</td>
<td>1.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher Librarian</td>
<td>1.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher of ESL</td>
<td>0.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School Counsellor</td>
<td>1.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School Administrative &amp; Support Staff</td>
<td>4.062</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>36.796</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**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>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Postgraduate</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Professional learning and teacher accreditation**

Each teacher new to the school in 2013 or 2014 was required to discuss their Professional Development Plan (PDP) with the Principal. The plan is aligned with the Teaching Standards and the current school plan. All other teachers developed their PDPs with their supervisors.

During 2014 much of the Teacher Professional Learning was focused around curriculum delivery and pedagogical change. Teachers worked collaboratively to develop units of work in English and systematically improved their teaching and learning through Adobe Connect sessions on Mathematics K-6 and History K-6. Sessions were presented in the latter half of the 2014 to raise awareness of the Science K-6 and teachers were able to gain an understanding of Primary Connections and how the upgraded and reviewed publications facilitate improvement in student outcomes in this curriculum area.

**Beginning Teachers**

Ben Venue has no permanent beginning teachers who are supported with extra funding to develop professionally in all areas.

There are a number of teachers requiring accreditation and all of these are registered with BOSTES.

*Local Education Director Sue Brown and Executive Director Frank Potter with school captains Ronan and Georgia.*
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 30/11/2014

Income
Balance brought forward 291,479.66
Global funds 321,765.88
Tied funds 177,977.82
Interest 129,087.07
Trust receipts 8570.72
Canteen 24238.75
Total income 960,110.50

Expenditure
Teaching & learning
  Key learning areas 27,242.87
  Excursions 57,061.49
Extracurricular dissections 87,682.48
Library 7,098.92
Training & development 4060.38
Tied funds 162,969.33
Casual relief teachers 118,450.83
Administration & office 59,144.73
School-operated canteen 15,401.19
Utilities 72,677.98
Maintenance 16,605.85
Trust accounts 21,017.10
Capital programs 5,822.50
Total expenditure 655,235.65
Balance carried forward 304,874.85

A full copy of the school’s 2014 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 2014

Ben Venue Public School works tirelessly to make a difference to all students who attend the school by differentiating and ensuring that all students are assessed so that their learning needs can be met in and beyond the classroom.

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 MySchool website provides detailed information and data for national literacy and numeracy testing (NAPLAN).

Click on the link [http://www.myschool.edu.au](http://www.myschool.edu.au) and enter the school name in the Find a school and select GO to access the school data. I recommend this website to you.

The following results highlight some of the information on the MySchool website.

NAPLAN Year 3 - Literacy

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year 3 NAPLAN Reading</th>
<th>School</th>
<th>SSG</th>
<th>State DEC</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Average score, 2014</td>
<td>422.1</td>
<td>417.4</td>
<td>416.3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Skill Band Distribution</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Band</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number in Bands</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percentage in Bands</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School Average 2010-2014</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SSG % in Bands 2014</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>State DEC % in Bands 2014</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

NAPLAN Year 3 Spelling

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year 3 NAPLAN Spelling</th>
<th>School</th>
<th>SSG</th>
<th>State DEC</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Average score, 2014</td>
<td>424.0</td>
<td>416.5</td>
<td>412.8</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Skill Band Distribution</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Band</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number in Bands</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percentage in Bands</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School Average 2010-2014</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SSG % in Bands 2014</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>State DEC % in Bands 2014</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The following tables show the performance of the Year 3 and Year 5 cohort. People are strongly encouraged to visit the ACARA MySchool website to see other aspects of the school’s performance.
Other achievements

Music

Ben Venue is well known for the Music Programs and initiatives it offers. A specialist music teacher, Sally Spillane takes classes K-6 and she also trains the Senior and Junior Choir and the Performance Year 6 Marimba Group.

Each year a group of 36 students are selected to perform at the Choral Concert Series at the Opera House. Under the guidance of the Music teacher and Bettina Townsend - a recently retired teacher who is still very supportive of school music initiatives, the students train regularly and this guarantees success in auditions as well as beautiful singing. The performance at the Opera House is always a highlight for students, parents and teachers.

A view from the Dress Circle at the Opera House Concert Hall.
After the local Eisteddfod each year Ben Venue holds a ‘Night of Music’ to showcase the performances and talents of groups and individuals in music areas. An appreciative audience of parents and friends always offer very positive feedback.

Students and teachers look forward to the annual Talent Quest ‘Starmaker’ which has been featured in previous Annual School Reports.

Ben Venue Public School and Armidale Community of Schools (ACOS) Primary Orchestra

2014 has been a wonderful year for the BVPS Orchestra. This year Bronwyn Paull has conducted the school orchestra. Many new musicians hire instruments from BVPS as they develop their skills to enable them to join the orchestra. Some highlights from 2014 include the performance at the Armidale Eisteddfod. Ben Venue was proud to be placed third in a very competitive section. Another highlight was performing for the BVPS school community in several school assemblies as well as at the BVPS Daylight Festival.

Students have also been involved in the local community through the Armidale Community of Schools Orchestra. This has involved a rehearsal and performance day at Armidale City Public School, Ben Venue Public School, Martins Gully Public School and Sandon Public School. The ACOS Primary Orchestra has approximately 80 members from Armidale’s Public Primary Schools and has been a wonderful opportunity for BVPS orchestra members to get to know musicians from other schools, have sectional rehearsals with local experts and perform to large audiences. The ACOS Primary Orchestra performed at the Armidale Community of Schools Education Week Award Ceremony at Armidale High School.

Science and Technology

**Far Out Science: Science in the Bush**

‘Far-Out Science’ is a free program that includes lots of interesting and exciting science activities for students, such as ‘Science in the Bush’ and the ‘Science and Engineering Challenge’. ‘Science in the Bush’ is an annual event held at the University of New England over two days for students in Years 5-9.

These programs intend to demonstrate the variety and vitality of the science that happens in the New England. It is a day of hands-on workshops, with students taking on experimental challenges and coming face-to-face with cutting-edge research.

‘Science in the Bush’ is limited to 20 students per school in Years 5-6. In 2014, Ben Venue was offered an additional 20 places due to the school’s success in the ‘Far-Out Science’ competitions held in conjunction with the practical science activities.

Activities offered included making slime and hot/cold packs in the chemistry lab, learning about the science behind how our body works to heal itself and archaeological, electronics, environmental and rural science activities.

**Science and Engineering Challenge**

The Science and Engineering Challenge was conducted at the University of New England for 200 Year 5 and Year 6 students from across the region, including 64 students from Ben Venue PS.

The Science and Engineering Challenge is an initiative presented by the University of Newcastle, in cooperation with the University of New England and Armidale Central Rotary Club. It is an initiative designed to provide enrichment to budding young scientists in the senior years of primary school, with the hope of inspiring them to pursue science and/or engineering fields in high school, but also beyond.

As a part of the Highlands Cluster, Ben Venue Public School enthusiastically participated in this day-long event, which provided practical and positive experiences in science and engineering, through investigative, hands-on and evaluative experiments in a variety of areas.

In teams of four the students built catapults, remote controlled hovercrafts, all-terrain vehicles that travelled comfortably over rough terrain, towers that could potentially withstand an earthquake and engine-less/air-powered automobiles. Others designed and built a bridge that could carry a load of “gold”.

*Concentration!*
ICAS Results

Computer Skills

High Distinction
- Zenden Grieves Yr 5

Distinction
- Chloe Dowd Yr 5

Credit
- Orrin Forman Yr 3,
- Nicole Tarrant Yr 3,
- Ethan Hinds Yr 4,
- Aiden Swick Yr 4,
- Georgia Donoghue Yr 5,
- Leo Schmude Yr 5,
- Dhavve Manoharan Yr 5

Merit
- Janda Collins-Widders Yr 5,
- Hayden Schumacher Yr 4,
- Lauren Johns Yr 3

Science

High Distinction
- Zenden Grieves Yr 5

Distinction
- Neve Crotty Yr 3,
- Alexandra Donoghue Yr 3,
- Brock Parsons Yr 4,
- Mehdi Ahsan Yr 5,
- Bailey Pattison Yr 6

Credit
- Charlie Selby Yr 6,
- Georgia Donoghue Yr 5,
- Aiden Swick Yr 4,
- Harrison Peart Yr 4,
- Nicole Tarrant Yr 4,
- Ethan Naylor Yr 3,
- Eden Love Yr 3,
- Michael Bogeholz Yr 3

Merit
- Leo Schmude Yr 5

Writing

Credit
- Zenden Grieves Yr 5,
- Neve Crotty Yr 3

Merit
- Mehdi Ahsan Yr 5

Spelling

Distinction
- Karl Ferber Yr 5,
- Zenden Grieves Yr 5

Credit
- Nicole Tarrant Yr 3,
- Kaylee Swick Yr 3
- Alexandra Donoghue Yr 3,
- Ryan Harris Yr 4,
- Omar Tahaf Yr 4, Brock Parsons Yr 4, Madison Sim Yr 4, Aiden Swick Yr 4, Janda Collins-Widders Yr 5, Georgia Donoghue, Yr 5, Frederic Heslin Yr 6,
- Bailey Pattison Yr 6

Merit
- Aiden Swick Yr 4,
- Mehdi Ahsan Yr 5,
- Janda Collins-Widders Yr 5

English

Credit
- Alexandra Donoghue Yr 3,
- Kaylee Swick Yr 3,
- Nicole Tarrant Yr 3,
- Brock Parsons Yr 4,
- Zenden Grieves Yr 5

Merit
- Aiden Swick Yr 4,
- Mehdi Ahsan Yr 5,
- Janda Collins-Widders Yr 5
Student leadership

Each year the captains and prefects from Ben Venue travel to Sydney to attend the Young Leaders Conference in March. While they are in Sydney with the principal and a parent, they visit Parliament House and spend time interacting with a city school. In 2014 the students visited Crown Street Public School in Surry Hills. This is a school with a long history and students saw huge differences in the buildings and the school environs. This trip is supported each year by a $50 per student donation from the P&C.

Students also attended the GRIP Leadership course run for the first time in Armidale.

Captains and Prefects at the Armidale Leadership course

In 2015 the participation in the GRIP Leadership course will be extended to Year 5 and Year 6 to increase the exposure to leadership training.

Ben Venue students at Parliament House standing at the Speaker’s Chair with Adam Marshall the local member for Armidale.

Visual Arts

In 2014 students from Ben Venue participated in a number of Visual Arts competitions held locally, regionally and across the State. Students always gain awards and accolades in this area.

School Acquisitive Art Prize: Let’s Hang It!

The University of New England School Acquisitive Art Prize (UNESAP) is an annual competition designed to promote interest in visual arts and encourage young artists throughout regional New South Wales.

With over 600 entries, 66 students were selected as finalists and their works ‘hung’ at NERAM in the exhibition. A panel of experts judge the works submitted to the exhibition. Jodie Henshall from Year 1 at Ben Venue PS was selected for the exhibition at NERAM.

Fair Trade NAIDOC Week Art

The ‘Fair Trade NAIDOC Week’ Art Competition in now an annual competition that Ben Venue PS enters enthusiastically. In 2014 classes throughout the school planned and developed artworks responding to the national theme: ‘Serving Country: Centenary & Beyond’. Classes 1D and 3H were successful in winning their divisions in the locally run Armidale community competition.

Operation Art

Operation Art provides opportunities for students K-10 to demonstrate their talents in Visual Arts through a major exhibition while working to contribute to a visual environment for children in hospital.

In 2014 Operation Art had 800 entries from all over New South Wales, four were chosen from Ben Venue.

Felix Dwyer- Westhorpe (6R) Nikki Ardalic - (5K) Bianca Bull - (5D) Sophie Ridley - (2G)

The official opening was at the Armory Gallery Sydney Olympic Park where over 4000 people visited on the first day, and almost 10,000 visitors viewing throughout the exhibition!

Niki Ardalic’s artwork, was selected by Frank Potter, Executive Director, NSW Public Schools as one of the images on the Christmas cards he sent out in 2014.
Significant programs and initiatives – Policy and equity funding

The school receives funds for activities, programs and initiatives. These funds are allocated to programs that address the needs of students. The Reading Recovery teacher is funded to work full-time and a Student Learning Support officer (SLSO) was employed to work collaboratively with the Learning and Support Teacher (LaST). The SLSO was trained to deliver the MiniLit program (results elsewhere in this Report).

Students are assisted with funding to attend the Great Aussie Bush Camp.

Aboriginal education

In 2014, a very active Aboriginal Education Committee revamped the Personalised Learning Plans (PLPs) in consultation with the wider Aboriginal Community. The number of parents participating in the PLPs rose significantly. Parents were offered extra time at normal parent interviews.

Information Sessions were run promoting the benefit and purpose of PLPs. A workshop supporting Literacy in the home was well attended. The committee had oversight of the NAIDOC WEEK activities and celebrations. Aboriginal parents regularly visit, phone the school and are active supporters of their student’s learning.

Aboriginal students Brayden Levy and Benrick Smith Atkinson performing at the NAIDOC Week Assembly

Aboriginal background

In 2014, 92 Aboriginal students were supported through a variety of programs to develop literacy and numeracy. All students were monitored at each reporting period and programs of support devised after the mid-year and the end of year reporting period. PLPs are reviewed regularly and learning goals discussed with students. Some results for Aboriginal students have been outstanding.

Teachers have high expectations for all Aboriginal students to ensure a relentless focus on improved student outcomes.
Multicultural education and anti-racism

Ben Venue has a staffing allocation of 0.4 English as a Second language/Dialect (EALD) and during 2014 attracted a further day of funding for NAP – New Arrivals program.

One staff member became a trained Anti-Racism Officer (ARCO) she will now train other staff and provide updates.

Harmony Day

On Friday 21 March Ben Venue celebrated Harmony Day. All children were encouraged to wear orange or traditional dress. The celebrations started with a whole school assembly in which the school’s talent was showcased. A fashion parade was held with traditional clothing from Chile, Wales, Egypt, Sri Lanka, China, India, Saudi Arabia, Bangladesh and Japan. We were also entertained by three groups who sang an Aboriginal hymn, a dance from Bangladesh and a didgeridoo performance. The students who were in the fashion parade and those who performed were very entertaining.

A group of parents have successfully commenced an after school Language Club (K-2) teaching introductory courses in Japanese, Chinese and Spanish. Other languages will be introduced as parents volunteer.

Socio-economic background

Students are supported with appropriate programs to address their learning needs. All programs are designed and delivered by teachers.

Learning and support

Ben Venue has a 1.0 Learning and Support teacher who organises and facilitates programs and support for students around learning for students and also preparing and filing Health Care Plans, Behaviour Plans and Risk Assessments and Personalised Learning Plans. The Nationally Consistent Collection of Data relating to differentiation and adjustment required for student learning was organised and collated in 2014 through the LaST.

Other significant initiatives

Korean ConneXion

The Australia-Korea ConneXion Program is an initiative run through the University of New England School of Education with backing from the Federal Government and the NSW Department of Education and Communities. The program aims to develop cultural exchange and awareness between Australian and Korean school students through video conferencing and using digital presentation technologies. By connecting digitally and with regular video conferencing sessions, students enhance their attitudes and values not just about a foreign culture but also their own.

Ben Venue Public School and Chungsol School in Korea connect digitally each week, presenting activities to each other on alternative weeks. The students have found this program both challenging and very rewarding.

The Australia-Korea ConneXion program focuses on three curriculum areas. Ben Venue students are involved in the following area only.

1. Studies of Australian and Korean culture in the Social Studies subject, which, in NSW, is based on Human Society and Its Environment (HSIE) Curriculum.

Ben Venue students are involved in Studies of Australian and Korean culture and activities based on the key learning areas of both countries.

Studies of both the Australian and Korean cultures have made students more aware of their own cultural and national identities as well as each other’s culture. Students have learned about the different ways Australian and Korean people think about their customs and the reasons for them. For the Korean students, the cultural exchange has also provided them with opportunities to develop English language skills.

Before the program starts at the beginning of each year activities in English, Culture, Science, Mathematics and the Arts are programmed via video conferencing. Students manage the sessions and use the technology under the guidance of the teacher.

Each week the students prepare activities in a particular area, produce a power point, gather all the resources needed and then on the day they teach the activity to both the Australian students
and the Korean students. Students have time to ask questions and e-mail work completed to each other. It has been a very successful program which the students have all enjoyed and both lots of students have improved their knowledge and understanding about another culture.

You Can Do It

The You Can Do It program has continued to be successfully implemented in the school this year. The program focuses on developing the social and emotional wellbeing of students through the development of skills in the 5 key areas of Resilience, Getting Along, Organisation, Persistence and Confidence. Regular lessons were conducted in classes and a special focus day (a ‘You Can Do It’ Fun Day) was held in Term 4. The focus for this fun day was ‘Persistence’, with peer leaders from Year 6 running small group lessons and taking on the responsibility of being YCDI leaders with great enthusiasm. Group games focusing on the development of persistence were held in the afternoon as a conclusion to the day.

A large number of students were successful in achieving their ‘Rainbow Award’ this year after receiving each of the five key awards.

Sport

Ben Venue offers a wide range of team and individual sports for both boys and girls. Each year different sports are featured in this report.

Girls Hockey

The Ben Venue Girls Hockey Team played matches against Armidale City P.S, Walcha P.S and Sir Henry Parkes Public School before progressing to the Regional Final where they defeated Oxley Vale P.S to become the North West Regional Champions. They won the State Quarter Final match against Westlawn Public School in Grafton and travelled to Narellan to contest the finals. The girls played a strong semi-final match against Wollondilly PS but were unfortunately defeated by this team who went on to become the PSSA State Knockout Champions. Ben Venue played a consolation final later in the day against Harrington Park PS with both teams being declared equal third in the state after a draw at full time.

The team of Ben Venue girls displayed excellent teamwork and fair play in each and every game. A number of students were selected in their respective North West Hockey Teams. These players were Hayley Lennon, Sophie Gale, Lara Moloney, Zac Davidson, Marley Lynch and Rohan Lawrence. Hayley Lennon was also selected as a member of the NSW PSSA State Hockey Team. She played in the National Championships in Hobart in July and assisted NSW to become the national champions.

Ben Venue students were also strongly involved again in the Primary Indoor Hockey Competition which was run on Friday afternoons at Armidale High School during Terms 1 and 4. The competition attracted many of our younger students and those new to hockey resulting in 12 teams (80 players) from all year levels K-6 being involved.

Boys Hockey

The boys hockey team had a terrific start to their season winning against Armidale City PS and Sir Henry Parkes PS to become the regional finalists in the PSSA State Knockout Competition. They contested the Regional Final and went down 4-1. Throughout all of their games the squad played extremely well together, even though many of the players had to play out of position or continually change during the games.
The team this year included Nicholas Meyers, Rylie Smith, Bailey Pattison, William Cotton, Leo Schmude, Rohan Lawrence, Cade Rossiter, Zac Davidson, Corey Wilson, Zenden Grieves, Luke Wilson, Jordan King, Bertie Lynch, Marley Lynch.

School planning and evaluation
2012—2014

School evaluation processes

NSW public schools conduct evaluations to support the effective implementation of the school plan. The processes used include:

School priority 1

Effective support programs to meet student learning needs.

MiniLit was a major program investment to be considered for purchase and implementation. It is a practical, systematic, explicit and effective model for teaching early reading skills.

Strategies to achieve these outcomes in 2014

- Monitoring explicit support programs to ascertain progress over time and the efficiency of intervention strategies.
- LaST trained to deliver program then to train SLO’s and other support staff to implement the programs (groups of four).
- Literacy assessments and MiniLit placement tests completed prior to commencement of the program (Benchmark).
- Pre and post data records for later comparison.

Evidence of achievement of outcomes in 2014

- All students on the program improved.
- On the standardised reading assessment, growth ranged from one month to an increase of two years and five months.
- Most students at the end of the program could identify most digraphs and were able to decode more words than at the beginning of the program.
- Most students made gains on the spelling assessments however thirteen of the twenty seven score were still below average.

Future directions

The MiniLit program will operate again in 2015. Data gathered will allow the school to focus on changes to the administration of the program and refinement of the procedures for deliver.

School priority 2

Students and staff are engaged in learning

- Audit professional learning needs for staff.
- Implement Teacher Professional Learning (TPL) to enhance collective professional knowledge in Mathematics, Science and Technology and History.
- Share processes and procedures around consistent judgement of student work samples with new teachers at the school.
- Engage with online learning (Adobe Connect) to facilitate professional dialog.

Outcomes from 2012–2014

- Teacher programs reflect differentiated learning across curriculum areas.
- Temporary teachers and new teachers confidently engage to consistently judge student progress via work samples.
- Teachers deliver programs and lessons reflecting changes in pedagogy evident in new syllabus documents.
Parent/caregiver satisfaction

In 2014, the school sought the opinions of parents about the school. Their responses are presented below.

Parents were surveyed to ascertain the areas where Ben Venue delivered positive outcomes:

Results were:

- 98% of respondents believe that the teaching staff ‘make the difference’ at Ben Venue.
- 99% rated programs, opportunities and excursion for students as excellent.
- 100% stated that the school’s music and sporting programs were essential features of the school.

Future Directions

- 80% of parents would like to see more technology in use across the subject areas.
- 75% of respondents were concerned about parking and safety around the school at dismissal times.

2015-2017 School Plan

NSW DEC is implementing a new school planning process for 2015-17. The new plan will be published on the school’s website from the beginning of Term 2 2015.

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: