Messages

Principal’s message

Ben Venue is a school with a proud tradition of achievement and academic success. At Ben Venue Public School students are offered many opportunities in academic, social, sporting and cultural areas. The promotion of achievement at individual, group and school level is supported and encouraged. Each year the P&C supports student leaders to travel with me on a Leadership excursion to Sydney. This year we enjoyed a visit to a city school and also to the New South Wales Parliament. Students were already in Sydney for the two Opera House Concerts where they performed with distinction.

Students highlighted the success of the school’s music program by achieving great results at the Armidale Eisteddfod. Individual students and student groups have achieved outstanding results in academic, sporting and cultural pursuits and I commend the commitment and enthusiasm they exhibit in varied areas of talent and expertise.

I am very appreciative of the extra time that teachers and community members give unstintingly to coach teams, develop musical talents and support students to achieve their personal best in many skills including debating and public speaking. In 2011 a Multicultural Support Group commenced.

Teachers and parents work together to provide many extra curricula activities. Parents provide on-going support for many school activities and their input is valued and appreciated. 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.

Judy Graham
Principal

P & C message

P & C message for 2011 report

The Ben Venue P&C is the primary forum through which parents and/or guardians can become involved in planning and decision making within our school. We are always happy to welcome new members to strengthen our team.

Our major fundraising activity for 2011 broke from the tradition of a Twilight Festival by running a Daylight Festival in November and unusually it didn’t rain. Maybe this is a good omen! As I write this, figures are still being finalised, but I would claim it to be a success.

The Parents Club, a subcommittee of the P&C provide many fund raising activities throughout the year, examples of which are; the ‘Bulb Express’, a pie and lamington drive as well as running a canteen at the Ben Venue cross country and the regional cross country. Also in the absence of a school canteen they have provided the students with a special treat by running a pie and popper day as well as a sausage sizzle day at the K-2 athletics carnival.

The P&C is committed to providing support to the school students and staff, and we continue to subsidise the costs of school, activities such as visits to the Thalgarrah Environmental Education Centre visits, the Life Education Van and the Young Leaders excursion to Sydney.

It’s always nice to see where our fundraising money ends up. During 2011 we purchased new netball uniforms and recently approved the purchase of new seating, a marimba trailer and interactive whiteboards/projectors.

As P&C president I would like to thank Judy Graham, Wally O’Hara and the staff of Ben Venue as well as parents and carers who have supported Ben Venue throughout 2011. Lastly I would like to acknowledge the hard work and commitment of the Ben Venue P&C and Parents Club for all their time and effort.

Mark Simpson

P&C President 2011
Our school at a glance

Students

Ben Venue Public School is the largest primary school in Armidale on the New England Tablelands in New South Wales. The school has a population of 560 students with approximately 11% Aboriginal students and 10% non-English speaking background (NESB) population made up of families mostly associated with the University of New England (UNE). Each year the school has increased numbers of new students across classes from K-6 from other schools within New South Wales, interstate and overseas.

In 2011 the school had 22 classes with a composite Kindergarten Year 1, a Year 1/2 and a Year 4/5

The level of mobility of families is increasing steadily. This has impacted on the number of matched students in the NAPLAN assessments.

Significant programs and initiatives

- The Bilingual Support Group and the Multicultural Support Group were both established during 2011. Parents in these groups prepared a wonderful multicultural lunch for the Assistant Director-General when he visited in April.

Student achievement in 2011

Ben Venue always has a large cohort of students in Year 3 and Year 5 who have achieved results within or above the State results. These large cohorts with students of varying abilities have been sustained very good overall achievement levels over time. As a proud public school Ben Venue.

NAPLAN results in 2011 were within or above state average. Students from a diverse range of backgrounds and abilities achieved results in all areas which indicated personal improvement in outcomes.

As teachers work to collaboratively improve achievement in all areas, some results were highlighted as exemplars while other areas were analysed as areas to build on in 2012.

The diagnostic nature of these assessments is the main area for focus on teaching and learning. Results are achieved when teachers work together Kindergarten to Year 6. Ben Venue Public School has achieved excellent results over time and will continue to strive to ensure students achieve their personal best results.

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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2007</th>
<th>2008</th>
<th>2009</th>
<th>2010</th>
<th>2011</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>295</td>
<td>301</td>
<td>276</td>
<td>270</td>
<td>276</td>
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<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>279</td>
<td>285</td>
<td>277</td>
<td>273</td>
<td>281</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Student numbers have remained stable around 550 and with increasing numbers of International students attending the University of New England (UNE) it is anticipated that numbers will rise in 2012 to around 580. There is a balance between male and female students and this is always considered when classes are organised.

An increased number of students move in and out of the school associated with changes in occupations and job opportunities for parents.

The movement of students from interstate is a feature of this increasing student population trend.

Large number of New Arrivals has seen the steady increase in staffing allocations to cater for non-English speaking background students.
The data above and adjacent shows that the attendance rate of most Year groups has maintained at about 94 to 95% with some Year levels falling whilst others have risen. The overall attendance rate has improved by 0.4%. Even though the attendance rate is well above the State average of 94.3% the school participated in a school review of attendance procedures and has agreed to implement recommendations designed to improve and streamline attendance monitoring processes. With improved roll supervision, the use of the phone intervention strategy and closer communication with the Home School Liaison Officer the aim is to improve this significantly over all the Year levels in 2012.

### Management of non-attendance

During 2011 as a part of its annual review on management systems the school undertook an external review of its attendance procedures. This has resulted in a number of changes and refinements to the attendance procedures and the management of non-attendance. Prior to this the school had in place a system which was effective in maintaining and improving the above average attendance rates compared to the state and regional average.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>2009</th>
<th>2010</th>
<th>2011</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>BV School Total</td>
<td>94.0</td>
<td>94.5</td>
<td>94.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Regional Total</td>
<td>89.9</td>
<td>92.7</td>
<td>92.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>State Total</td>
<td>92.1</td>
<td>94.4</td>
<td>94.3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Class sizes

Primary class sizes are included in the annual school report in order to provide parents with as much local information as possible. The following table shows class sizes as reported at the 2011 Class Size Audit,

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>2008</th>
<th>2009</th>
<th>2010</th>
<th>2011</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>93.4</td>
<td>94.0</td>
<td>94.5</td>
<td>94.9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Structure of classes

Classes are structured according to the recommended class sizes although the local zoning has an impact as all in-zone students are guaranteed a place at their local school. No out of zone places can be offered if the recommended class size has been reached. Numbers are constantly changing and parent enquiries are welcome at all times.

Each year students are allocated to classes after an allocation card has listed friends, programs the student has accessed e.g. Reading Recovery, Behaviour Support, Gifted and Talented programs etc and teacher recommendation about educational levels. This assists teachers to put together classes with groups of students who are like minded and who challenge and support each other in educational opportunities and initiatives.

### Staff information

In 2011 the School Counsellor was based at Ben Venue but worked at other schools throughout the week.

The National Education Agreement requires schools to report on Indigenous composition of their workforce. Ben Venue has one teacher who identifies as Aboriginal.

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

There are four teachers in Early Stage 1, eight teachers in Stage 1, six teachers in Stage 2 and five teachers in Stage 3. Other teachers at the school are involved in the delivery of the Relief from Face to Face Program which has a focus on Library, Music, Computers and Personal Development and Health.

A new School Administrative Officer (SAO) was appointed during the year.

### Staff retention

Ben Venue has a mix of teachers with differing years of experience, from teachers who have been teaching for many years through to those who have entered the teaching service in the last five to ten years. A number of teachers took 12 months leave in 2011 on the DET’s Four for Five Plan. At the end of 2012 there will be a number of staff retiring.

---

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Class Code</th>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Total per year</th>
<th>Total In class</th>
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<tbody>
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<td>K</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KL</td>
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<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>K/1P</td>
<td>K</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>K/1P</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>8</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1E</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>1S</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1X</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1/2C</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1/2C</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>11</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2G</td>
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<td>24</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2H</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2M</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>25</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
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</tr>
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<td>29</td>
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<tr>
<td>3Z</td>
<td>3</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>4R</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4S</td>
<td>4</td>
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<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4/5W</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4/5W</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>14</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5C</td>
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<td>31</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5H</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6A</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6M</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>6T</td>
<td>6</td>
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<td>28</td>
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Staff establishment

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<td>Principal</td>
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<tr>
<td>Deputy Principal(s)</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assistant Principal(s)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Classroom Teachers</td>
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<tr>
<td>Teacher of Reading Recovery</td>
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<tr>
<td>Support Teacher Learning Assistance</td>
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<tr>
<td>Teacher Librarian</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher of ESL</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Counsellor</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School Administrative &amp; Support Staff</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td></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>72%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Postgraduate</td>
<td>28%</td>
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</table>

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: 30/11/2011

**Income**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source</th>
<th>Amount</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Balance brought forward</td>
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<tr>
<td>Global funds</td>
<td>297,593.98</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tied funds</td>
<td>126,422.40</td>
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<tr>
<td>School &amp; community sources</td>
<td>114,199.43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interest</td>
<td>15,148.91</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trust receipts</td>
<td>23,501.15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Canteen</td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total income</strong></td>
<td><strong>810,784.24</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Expenditure**

Teaching & learning:
- Key learning areas: 32,352.07
- Excursions: 50,204.93
- Extracurricular dissections: 55,361.74

Library: 7,809.91
Training & development: 1,393.81
Tied funds: 92,871.82
Casual relief teachers: 94,671.31
Administration & office: 69,020.68
School-operated canteen: 0.00
Utilities: 63,372.46
Maintenance: 8,969.95
Trust accounts: 27,514.36
Capital programs: 8,505.00

**Total expenditure**: 512,048.04

Balance carried forward: 298,736.20

A full copy of the school’s 2011 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 2011

Achievements

Arts

Music

The year in Creative arts began with the school’s participation in the Autumn Festival parade. The Year 6 Marimba Ensemble performed with the Year 3 Unkung players and didgeridoo players on the Ben Venue float entertaining the crowds of Armidale. Approximately 260 students marched with the float representing the school and the Armidale Community of Schools celebrating the international and multicultural diversity of Armidale.
Eisteddfod

Ben Venue had over 300 students participate in the Armidale Eisteddfod in 2011. In speech and drama three classes performed with K-2 classes taking out first place and a highly commended. In music 1/2C, 3A, 4R, 5C, Year 6 marimba group, Junior Choir and the Senior Choir achieved many second places, a first and a third, a great experience for all involved.

Night of Music

During Term 2 the school presented the “Ben Venue Night of Music”. The night featured our Opera House singers, the Year 6 Marimba group, class performances from 3A and 4R, Junior and Senior Choirs as well as many of our talented individual musicians from throughout the school.

Choral Concert Series

In Term 3 the 46 students comprising the Year 6 Marimba Group and the Opera House Choral Group participated in the Festival of Music, performing in the Endeavour Concert as a part of the Choral Choir and at the Australis Concert where they performed with the marimbas as an individual item, a wonderful achievement for students as very few ensembles throughout NSW are chosen to perform an individual item at the Opera House.

Marimba rehearsal time in the Opera House

This was the fourth consecutive year of selection for Ben Venue students.

Armidale Community of Schools Choir

During Term 3 Ben Venue teachers Sally Spillane and Bettina Townsend coordinated the Community of Schools’ Choir for the Excellence in Education Awards.

Visual Arts

This choir also performed at a whistle stop tour of the local Nursing Homes.

The Ben Venue Starmaker has become an annual event. Students from Years 3 -6 create their own acts for the Starmaker talent competition. The grand final for Starmaker was held in Week 10 where the concert showcased the amazing talent of the students in our school.

A number of Aboriginal students attended workshops with the Internationally acclaimed didgeridoo performer William Barton working on didgeridoo techniques. This work was completed with the boys participating in two concerts with the Armidale Youth orchestra where they performed original compositions.

Operation Art

The Dark City - Brooke McElroy Year 4

Operation Art provides opportunities for students and demonstrates the standards of excellence in visual arts education through major exhibitions across NSW.
George Junior
Alicia Ball Year 4

Alicia Ball’s artwork titled -"George Jnr", was chosen for hanging in the Children’s Hospital at Westmead and has also been chosen as one of the top fifty entries in Operation Art. This means that Alicia’s artwork was hung in the Art Gallery of NSW.

Amber Leitner, had her work displayed in the final of the University of New England School Acquisitive Art Prize (UNESAP). She received a highly commended award with her artwork on display at the New England Regional Art Museum.

Debating

In 2011 Ben Venue Public School’s debating teams were very successful. The school entered two teams in the Premier’s Debating Challenge.

One student was selected for the regional debating team.

Multicultural Public Speaking competition

Georgia Vaughan (pictured below) represented the New England Region in the Multicultural Public Speaking at the State finals in Sydney.

Premiers Spelling Challenge

All students in Years 3-6 participated in class spelling bee competitions in the lead up to the Premier’s Spelling Bee school finals.

Two school representatives were then selected from these finals to take part in the regional finals. At the regional finals Tanvee Islam finished second in the senior division and Petra Nunn and Adam Lucas placed third in the junior division.

Regional runners up in the Premier’s Spelling Bee - Tanvee Islam with Angus Lawrence.

Chess

This year chess was very popular with the school entering two teams in the State Chess Tournament and knockout.

Ben Venue entered eight teams in the local day tournament.

In the knockout the team of Tanvee Islam, Tung Nguyen, Mohammed Ahsan and Dan Whiteley were runners up in the region, losing the final 4 games to 2.

Sport

During 2011 the school continued to participate and excel in many sports.

In the major carnivals Cross Country, Athletics and Swimming, the school had many district and regional representatives.

Cross Country

After successfully holding the Ben Venue Cross County the Armidale Zone Cross country was hosted by Ben Venue at the University of New England.

A large number of runners participated on the day, a squad of Ben Venue students was selected to compete at the 2011 Armidale Zone Cross
Country. 16 runners from Ben Venue were successful in representing the Armidale zone at the Regional Cross Country at Coolah.

**Netball**

The Ben Venue netball team progressed to Round 3 in the State Knockout where they were defeated by Nemingha Public School. The team would like to thank the P & C for their new netball uniforms.

**Gymnastics**

2011 was the first year for primary school students to compete in PSSA Gymnastics. 65 students from 13 schools from across the North West Region competed at the Armidale City Gymnastics Centre in three of the Gymnastics Gymsports Disciplines: Men’s Gymnastics, Women’s Gymnastics and Rhythmic Gymnastics.

Ben Venue had 24 representatives at this competition.

The Men’s Gymnastics competition included 25 competitors in total in Levels 0 to Level 4.

Highest overall score in the Men’s competition Ben Venue was achieved by student, Tao Grieves who was placed 1st Overall with 54.350 out of 60.00.

The Women’s Gymnastics competition included 37 competitors in Levels 1 Prep – Level 4.

In the Level 1 competition Ben Venue Public School was placed 2nd and in the Level 2 Team results Ben Venue Public School was placed 1st.

**Athletics**

At the Regional Athletics Carnival Ben Venue was represented by a healthy contingent of athletes and four relay teams.

14 athletes from Ben Venue travelled to Sydney as part of the North West Athletics Team to participate in the NSW State Athletics Carnival – breaking many school records.

11 year old N'Dea Rumble had outstanding results in the 800m, 200m and discus where she set new school records in each event.

**NSW PREMIER’S SPORTING CHALLENGE**

Ben Venue participated in The Premier’s Primary School Sport Challenge. All classes registered for the 10 week program and recorded their weekly exercise activities. The Challenge is a government initiative that aims to encourage young people to become more active, more often in sport and physical activity, encouraging them to lead healthy, active lifestyles.

Students were encouraged to participate in a range of activities and record in their individual log book the time spent actively involved in physical activity between May and October.

Students across 22 classes were involved in the 10 week challenge between May and October.

The school received a premier’s Sporting Challenge capital grant to build a synthetic run up track and long jump pit surround. This will be constructed early in 2012.

**Hockey**

In 2011 the Ben Venue boys and girls hockey teams were both regional finalists in the PSSA State Knockout competitions.

In 2011 Ben Venue had a number of students selected in their respective North West teams.

**Rugby**

In 2011 Ben Venue competed in a number of competitions. The Opens team competed in the Brian Palmer Shield State Knockout where they played in the North West Regional Final and were Regional runners up. 13 players from this team went onto North West selection which 3 players gained selection. Patrick Frost receiving the North West medal for his achievement at the NSW State PSSA Championships.

In the local Commander Cup competition involving State, Independent and Catholic schools the Ben Venue Opens team comprehensively won the grand final after an extremely successful season with outstanding results. The junior development teams consisted of 45 young players who played in the Junior Commander Cup competition on Wednesday afternoons. They played with great skill, enthusiasm and great sportsmanship. The Ben Venue Rugby Program involved 65 boys. Coach Andrew Watson (Yr 3 teacher at Ben Venue) coached the NSW team in the Australian Rugby Union Championships.
Blaxland House Captains

NAIDOC dancers

Public speaking winner

School Leaders

Cirque De Ben Venue

Sturt House Captains

Cunningham House Captains

Book Week characters

Playground fun

School fete student helpers

Multicultural luncheon

Oxley House Captains

Ben Venue Public School ...
Starmaker winner

NAIDOC Flag raising

Opera House choir

Victorious relay team

Kindergarten Assembly

Operation Art winner

Fabulous footballers

Glittering hoop dancers

Twins

Year 6 rainforest excursion

Excellence award winners

Science and Engineering

...we make a world of difference.
Other

In the University of NSW academic competitions the following results were achieved.

- Spelling - 1 high distinction, 3 distinctions and 11 credits
- English - 6 distinctions and 10 credits
- Writing - 1 high distinction and 3 distinctions
- Computer studies - 1 high distinction 3 distinctions and 2 credits.
- Mathematics - 4 distinctions and 12 credits

In the Newcastle Permanent Mathematics Competition, student Bradley Lucas was placed second place overall in Year 5 and won $80 in prize money whilst another Year 5 student, Cameron Roan was awarded the New England District Award $40 in prize money. Students at Ben Venue achieved 6 High Distinctions, 17 Distinctions and 20 Merit Awards in this competition.

Korean ConneXion

Ben Venue Public School commenced fortnightly interaction with Korea as part of the Australian Government’s National Asian Languages and Studies in Schools Program (NALSSP) Becoming Asia Literate.

Class 6M at Ben Venue has been engaged in regular videoconferencing with Cheongsol Primary School. Ben Venue students provide insights into the school, the Armidale community and also share information about Australia, especially readily recognisable flora and fauna.

The students from Ben Venue engaged “face-to-face” video conferencing and this will continue in 2012.

Ben Venue’s videoconferencing classes are part of the Australia-Korea ConneXion (AKC) project conducted by a University of New England project team under the leadership of Dr Myung-Sook Auh.

Academic

Ben Venue consistently achieves high standards in all external tests. The table below shows that the school is consistently above the State average in all areas of the NAPLAN but also above the standards of like schools.

In every strand of learning in the NAPLAN Ben Venue is above both State and Similar Schools average.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Area</th>
<th>Ben Venue</th>
<th>Similar School Group</th>
<th>State</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Year 3</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reading</td>
<td>439.0</td>
<td>414.8</td>
<td>415.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Writing</td>
<td>436.1</td>
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<td>Spelling</td>
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<td>Grammar Punctuation</td>
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<td>504.4</td>
<td>496.5</td>
<td>495.9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Literacy – NAPLAN Year 3

The graph depicting the percentage of student in bands for reading demonstrates the substantial reduction compared to previous years of students achieving the lowest two bands in reading. This is matched by an equally high increase in students compared to previous years in band 6 for reading.

Writing demonstrates a similar pattern to that of Reading with there being no students in the bottom two bands for writing. Although there is a high achievement of students in Band 5 those achieving Band 6 is below that of previous years.
Spelling and grammar and punctuation show a similar picture to that of Writing where students are above state average. There is a noticeable lowering of numbers in the lowest bands whilst there is a similar increase in the number of students in the highest bands.

Analysis of Smart Data suggests that:

- Year 3 Aboriginal students are 62 scale scores above the state average in the test aspect of Grammar & Punctuation.
- These same students have improved by 31 scale scores from the 2010 data in the test aspect of Grammar & Punctuation.

In Year 3 numeracy results are moving the lowest two Bands 1 and 2 towards Band 3. The school continues to extend our more able mathematicians and it is expected that they will achieve higher results towards Band 6.

**Literacy – NAPLAN Year 5**

Year 5 Reading data has shown a substantial increase in students achieving the highest bands in reading whilst the school has almost halved the number of students achieving in the lowest band.
Analysis of Smart Data suggests that Year 5 Girls are 27 scale scores above the state average growth in the test aspect of Reading.

The data for Year 5 Writing shows a definite shift from the lower band towards the higher bands.

Spelling for Year 5 shows a movement from the lower bands and a substantial growth in students achieving Band 8. The challenge in 2012 is to move the substantial group achieving Band 5 towards higher achievement. This would be achieved by an emphasis on proactive explicit teaching in spelling.

Grammar and Punctuation shows a similar pattern to that of spelling with a substantial group achieving in the higher bands but an increase in the mid-range bands needs addressing in the future.

Data presented below suggests that there has been some movement towards the higher bands.

Progress in literacy

The below data suggests that Ben Venue has gone against state wide trends and has shown an improvement in reading, spelling and grammar and punctuation aspects of NAPLAN growth between Year 3 and 5 whilst similar school groups and the state have declined in growth.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Average progress in Grammar &amp; Punctuation between Year 3 and 5*</th>
<th>2008-2010</th>
<th>2009-2011</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>School</td>
<td>79.1</td>
<td>90.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SSG</td>
<td>91.7</td>
<td>79.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>State DEC</td>
<td>96.6</td>
<td>82.7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Progress in numeracy

Although Ben Venue has shown an improved growth between Years 3 and 5 in numeracy compared to the previous year’s growth, the level of growth has not matched the rest of the state. This may be because of the high level of achievement when these students were in Year 3.

Analysis of Smart data suggests that in Year 5 girls are 21 scale scores below the state average growth in the test aspect of Numeracy.

Number patterns and algebra is a focus for 2012.
Minimum standards
The Commonwealth Government sets minimum standards for reading, writing, grammar and punctuation, spelling and numeracy for Years 3 and 5.

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.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Percentage of Year 5 students achieving at or above minimum standard (exempt students included)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reading</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Writing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spelling</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grammar &amp; Punctuation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Numeracy</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The school has identified numeracy in Year 5 as an area for development and emphasis in 2012. Targets relating to this are included at the end of this document.

Significant programs and initiatives
Aboriginal education
Ben Venue’s Aboriginal student population is increasing and the school is hoping to reinstate the excellent literacy support program that was embedded into the RFF timetable in 2008. Regional Funds will be sought in 2012 to supplement a school commitment to this area.

NAPLAN results for Aboriginal students indicate that students also need support to equal the state average for Aboriginal students which is under the level for all students. Results in Mathematics need attention. The focus on closing the achievement gap continues to underpin all student engagement and programs.

Multicultural education
Ben Venue student population changed significantly with and increased enrolment of students with a language background other than English (LBOTE). The school boasted an enrolment of 10% LBOTE. This group was supported by the regional office. The group also supported the school’s major fundraising venture the annual fete with a multicultural tastes stall.

New Arrivals Program (NAP)
In 2011 the NAP program at Ben Venue PS attracted funding to support a targeted group of international students in English literacy. This funding over the year allowed for an average of 2.5 teacher days per week. The number of NAP students receiving support was 25. These students were from each stage group in the school with the majority of students 22 from Early Stage 1, Stage 1 and Stage 2. Our stage 3 students except for three are competent uses of academic English.

To support both the teachers and the international students at Ben Venue, who number 55, a training day in the use of the ESL scales and teaching strategies took place in term 4. Ten teachers from each stage group across the school attended the day. The facilitators of the course were the regional ESL teacher mentors who will provide follow up sessions at the school,
thus in 2012 providing continued support for the staff and students.

Support for our international parents is a priority. This year we have had a multicultural luncheon and afternoon tea to enable the parents to meet with teachers and other parents. A number of these parents also had an international food table at our school fete in term 4.

Our parents have the opportunity to attend a parents craft group at Drummond Memorial PS and in 2012 two of our students have been invited to participate in an after school homework centre one day per week.

**Progress on 2011 targets**

**Target 1**

To plan a program of teacher professional learning to facilitate the use of upgraded technology including use of new interactive whiteboards and videoconferencing facilities.

Our achievements include:

- During 2011 the school continued to participate in the Korean connection with weekly links to the Korean school of Chungsol.
- The school negotiated a plan for the progressive installation of interactive whiteboards in every classroom. In 2011 eight whiteboards were purchased with plans to install another four in the early part of 2012.
- Increased spending in the technology budget saw purchases of interactive technology as well as interactive software and online resources.
- Planning in 2012 to release a teacher to model the use of interactive technology into the RFF program so that her expertise can be shared among staff.
- Staff using online communication with weekly memos and principal communications sent to emails.
- Teachers regularly attend the informal morning inservice “Brekkie with a Teckkie”.
- The end of year school development day incorporating inservice by Team board in the use of the new team board Interactive whiteboards.

**Target 2**

Establish ongoing parent meetings to develop relationships between the school and Aboriginal parent group

Our achievements include:

- Establishing a regular term meeting with Aboriginal parents support group at Ben Venue.
- Regular attendance at the Local Aboriginal Education Consultative Group by a school representative.
- Invitations to and support from the local Aboriginal Community Liaison Officer.
- Celebrating a very successful NAIDOC Week Assembly.

Aboriginal performer, local Aboriginal parent and a student raising the flag to celebrate the beginning of NAIDOC week.

NAIDOC dancers
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 2011 our school carried out evaluations of attendance.

Educational and management practice-Attendance

Background

Attendance rates for Ben Venue Public School are traditionally very good with attendance rates over the years showing a steady improvement as can be seen in the table below. This is due to a number of reasons:

- The monitoring of rolls on a weekly basis.
- The use of exemptions for agreed leave.
- The movement towards accountability for follow up by teachers.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>2009</th>
<th>2010</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0</td>
<td>94.0</td>
<td>95.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>94.7</td>
<td>94.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>93.8</td>
<td>94.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>93.4</td>
<td>95.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>94.7</td>
<td>93.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>93.5</td>
<td>94.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>93.9</td>
<td>93.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>94.0</td>
<td>94.5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As a part of a Targeted School Self Evaluation the School Development Officer (SDO) and the Home School Liaison Officer (HSLO) performed a snapshot review of attendance procedures within the school.

Findings and conclusions

The school was commended for the current attendance rate which is higher than state level.

The attendance of Aboriginal students compares favourably with non-indigenous students and there are no major discrepancies between the groups.

Areas to address

The following issues need to be addressed:

- The school welfare and discipline code does not mention truancy or lack of attendance at school. Information on attendance can be found on the school internet website. The school uses the standard information presented from the Department of Education and Communities.
- Notification to the HSLO needs to be more systematic and formalized for all to follow.
- The school does not have in place a system to reward students with good attendance.

Many of the processes in the school can potentially be interpreted differently. Many of the processes are people dependent and if people are away the school processes slow down.

The school includes information in the newsletter about the importance on attendance.

Future directions

- A new whole school reward scheme will be developed for good attendance and for those improving their attendance.
- Systems will be developed and articulated in the school around attendance.
- Students and parents need to be aware of the consequences of lateness and truancy.
- The school must develop an attendance action plan with specific targets.

Curriculum- Mathematics

NAPLAN results in Numeracy for Ben Venue continue to be above state average.

Findings and conclusions

Examination of NAPLAN data has shown that overall Numeracy results continue to be above
state average for both Year 3 and Year 5 as can be seen in the table below.

Patterns and Algebra for Aboriginal students and for girls overall.

Aboriginal student results demonstrated a range of achievements. Student achievement was over represented in the mid range bands in bands 3, 4 and 5 where the school exceeded or equaled the overall State percentage of students. In all cases the Aboriginal students were above the state average for all Aboriginal students however the focus will be for Aboriginal students to achieve in the top two bands.

Many students achieving these results were newly enrolled at Ben Venue. Their results in Year 5 will show the progress achieved while at Ben Venue Public School.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year 3 Aboriginal student performance in Numeracy</th>
<th>Band 1</th>
<th>Band 2</th>
<th>Band 3</th>
<th>Band 4</th>
<th>Band 5</th>
<th>Band 6</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>State All %</td>
<td>2.8</td>
<td>11.8</td>
<td>19.7</td>
<td>26.5</td>
<td>21.5</td>
<td>17.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>State (Aboriginal) %</td>
<td>9.2</td>
<td>27.8</td>
<td>28.6</td>
<td>21.4</td>
<td>9.3</td>
<td>3.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ben Venue School (Aboriginal) %</td>
<td>7.1</td>
<td>7.1</td>
<td>35.7</td>
<td>28.6</td>
<td>21.4</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In Year 5 Aboriginal students results were clustered at midrange band 5 or lower. No Aboriginal student achieved Bands 6, 7 or 8.

Analysis of the progress between Years 3 and 5 for all students shows an improvement but this improvement is below state average.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Average progress in Numeracy between Year 3 and 5*</th>
<th>2008-2010</th>
<th>2009-2011</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>School</td>
<td>74.1</td>
<td>80.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SSG</td>
<td>89.2</td>
<td>92.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>State DEC</td>
<td>89.6</td>
<td>95.8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A survey of teaching staff and students has revealed the following information. The school results on NAPLAN are efficiently disseminated among staff and they are fully aware of the strengths and weaknesses.

However even though staff are aware of the areas for development in numeracy a more consistent strategy is required to systematically use the information to improve curriculum delivery.

Of more interest were the responses by students to the numeracy survey. These are presented below.

Student responses were very positive in their belief that the school has high expectations in
mathematics and that mathematics is an important subject to learn. However they were not as positive in regards to the usefulness of mathematics in other subject areas which may indicate a need for emphasis on working mathematically. Students also indicated that there is an imbalance between working in groups and working individually. Students responses were also noticeably lower in their response towards finding mathematics interesting.

**Future directions**

Future direction indicated by this review will be:

- Increased emphasis on working mathematically in all grades.
- Training in the use of Newman’s Analysis for all staff.
- More emphasis on the use of NAPLAN data to inform teaching practice.
- Increased support for Aboriginal students particularly in Years 3, 4 and 5 to improve the progress in these years.

**Professional learning**

During 2011 the school spent funds to support ongoing Teacher Professional Learning (TPL) in 7 areas.

- **Beginning Teachers**

  With one new scheme teacher the school used TPL funds to release the teacher to work with a mentor to complete the teacher accreditation requirements. The teacher was also supported with attendance at a number of beginning teacher courses in the local area.

  Teachers also attended a number of other ICT courses such as “Coffee and Connect” and “Brekkie with a Tekkie.”

  Two teachers attended training in relation to the “Korean Connexion” - the videoconference connection with Cheongsol School in Korea.

- **Use of Information Communication Technology.**

- **Quality Teaching**

  Participation in the Climate Clever energy savers program and sporting courses such as the Sports Unit courses on Gymnastics and Swimming in NSW Schools.

- **Literacy and Numeracy**

  Best Start training for Stage 1 and early Stage 1 teachers.

  Professional learning around consistency of Teacher Judgement remains a priority.

- **Syllabus Implementation**

  In 2011 the school commenced their participation in the “Curriculum Collaborations” project to support the introduction of the Australian K-10 Science curriculum.

- **Leadership and career development**

  Two teachers attended the Future Leaders Course.

- **Welfare and Equity**

  In 2011 the school continued to implement the You Can Do It program to support the social and emotional wellbeing of students.

  TPL days were taken internally for teachers to develop resources for classroom use.

**School planning 2012—2014**

The school planning policy provides direction for the preparation and implementation of school plans including the identification of priority areas, intended outcomes and targets that are consistent with the NSW State Plan and the Department’s planning documents.

**School priority 1**

**Outcome for 2012–2014**

To increase writing achievement to equal or better than Reading in NAPLAN years.

**Strategies to achieve this outcome:**

- Review reading and writing results for Year 3 and Year 5 over time.
- Monitor reading (K-6) programs and support to highlight reasons for continued achievement.
• Regularly collect writing samples and monitor lesson types and support programs offered.
• Develop teacher understanding around the reading/writing connection.
• Record and discuss Peer Comparison results at mid-year reporting time.
• Compare achievement levels in reading and writing in all Years 1-6.

School priority 2
Outcome for 2012–2014
Improved attendance rates for all students.

2012 Targets to achieve this outcome include:
• School overall attendance rate to 95% or above.
• Improved attendance rate for Aboriginal students to 95%
• Develop an improved and simpler system of managing student non-attendance.

Strategies to achieve these targets include:
• The school developing a whole school reward scheme for good attendance and for those improving attendance.
• The school implementing a system to identify students quickly and notify parents about unexplained absences. The Phone Intervention System will continue.
• The school will identify and use an school attendance leader.
• The school will review the Pupil Welfare and Discipline Policy to include the consequences for lateness and truancy.
• The school will develop an attendance action plan in conjunction with the HSLO.

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.