Front Cover
Cast of
'The Wizard of Oz'
Year 6 2013
Relieving Principal’s message

I was given the privilege of leading Ben Venue Public School as the Relieving Principal for 2013. I am happy to say that it was an extremely successful year in many different areas.

During 2013 students at Ben Venue were offered many different opportunities in academic, cultural, social and sporting areas. This was due in no small way to the professional staff of the school who spend much of their ‘free’ time training, choreographing, conducting, facilitating and encouraging every student to express themselves using the abundance of talent present in the student population.

The school achieved a long term goal by having all classrooms equipped with interactive surfaces such as interactive whiteboards or interactive panels. This was only made possible by the very supportive P&C and Parent Group. They provided half of the cost of all the hardware that was needed to complete the installations. A highlight was attending the Opera House Concert as a part of the State Choral Festival to watch and enjoy the performance of our wonderful Senior Choir and our incredibly talented Senior Marimba Group. This was the fifth year that I have attended but the first that I have been able to watch as an audience member. The pride I felt watching our school group perform as an individual school amongst many State Selected Ensembles and Bands was indescribable.

Another highlight was in sport where not one but two teams have featured in the finals of a NSW PSSA State Knockout. Our Girls Hockey team was declared joint State Champions and our Boys Cricket Team were placed fourth in the State an outstanding accomplishment by both.

Achievements will be detailed in this report. 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.

Wally O’Hara
Relieving Principal 2013

P & C message

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

Our major fundraising activity for 2013 was a successful Daylight Festival, held in early November.

The Parents Club, a subcommittee of the P&C provides many fund raising activities throughout the year, examples of which are; the ‘Bulb Express’, a pie drive as well as running a canteen at the Ben Venue Cross Country and the District Cross Country.

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 the Thalgarragh visits each year), sporting events (where the students have been successful in gaining entry to the top end of their competition) and equipment for the school.

It’s always nice to see where our fundraising money ends up. During 2013 we provided the school with a number of interactive screens, this leaves only 4 -5 classrooms needing to have screens purchased for them, which is where a big portion of the Daylight Festival proceeds will be used.

As P&C President I would like to thank Wally O’Hara, Karen Watson and the staff of Ben Venue as well as parents and carers who have supported Ben Venue throughout 2013. 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.

Sadly we will be losing some very dedicated and long serving members of the P&C/Parents Club this year and would gladly welcome any new members to join us in 2014.

Andrew Harris
P&C President 2013
School Captains’ message
We are Adam Lucas and Meg Lye, the school captains of Ben Venue for 2013. We feel so lucky to have been students at this school that has so many amazing opportunities for its students. We can remember our first day of school. We were nervous, but at the same time ready. We were welcomed and taken to meet Mrs Fullerton and Miss Unsworth, the first of all the fantastic teachers we would have during our seven years at Ben Venue. During that year in Kindergarten, we made many of the friends we still have today. Now in Year Six, we look back over a very busy year, not just for us but for all of the Year Six students. Just this year alone, many of us have attended excursions to Lake Ainsworth, performed at the Sydney Opera House, been to leadership conferences at the Sydney Entertainment Centre and represented the North West Region at numerous academic and sporting events such as swimming, athletics, hockey, debating and public speaking.

During the year we ran very successful Mothers’ and Fathers’ Day stalls and two great Student Socials. The funds raised from the events have been donated to the school to help replace the school’s hall sound system.

We all have awesome memories from our first 7 years of school. We have learned so much, had many exciting experiences and made the most of the opportunities that we have had. Ben Venue has certainly prepared us well for our future. On behalf of Year 6 we would like to thank Mr O’Hara, Mrs Watson and the fabulous teachers for all of their hard work that makes Ben Venue as wonderful as it is.

Adam Lucas and Meg Lye
School Captains 2013

School context
Ben Venue 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 resources. All classroom, the creative arts room, school hall and library are equipped with interactive panels or whiteboards. Venue has a strong history of high academic achievement with students demonstrating a love of learning across academic, social, sporting, cultural and welfare programs. Students are supported and encouraged to achieve personal excellence.

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 2013 a number of significant retirements led to the employment of a number of temporary teachers and newly appointed teachers and it is expected that a number of retirements in 2014 will lead to further significant changes in staff at the school.

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 which financially supports many individuals, groups and programs each year to assist students to maximise the opportunities available.

Student information
Ben Venue always has a large cohort of students in Year 3 and Year 5 who achieve results within or above the State results. These students, of varying abilities, have sustained very good overall achievement levels over time. As a proud public school Ben Venue’s NAPLAN results in 2013 were within the 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 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.

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.

Armidale is divided into six primary school enrolment zones. In 2013 an enrolment committee met to discuss all Kindergarten 2014 applications and a small number of out of zone enrolments were agreed to be taken. This enabled the school to fill four Kindergarten classes for 2014. However the establishment of new subdivisions and housing estates in the Ben Venue Zone has created upward pressure on school numbers. This has resulted initially in the establishment of an additional demountable classroom in 2013 and the possibility of another in 2014.

For the first time since before 2007 Student enrolments have risen above 600.

**ANZAC day Service**

Student numbers have slowly increased since 2010 from around 550 to approximately 615. With increasing numbers of international students attending the University of New England (UNE) it is anticipated that numbers will rise in 2014 to around 620. 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 occupation and job opportunities for parents. The movement of students from interstate is a feature of this increasing student population trend. Large numbers of new arrivals has seen the steady increase in staffing allocations to cater for non-English speaking background students.

In 2013 there were 94 students from a Language Background Other Than English and there were 67 Aboriginal students enrolled at Ben Venue at the end of the year.

Management of non-attendance

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>2009</th>
<th>2010</th>
<th>2011</th>
<th>2012</th>
<th>2013</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total School</td>
<td>94.0</td>
<td>94.5</td>
<td>94.9</td>
<td>95.4</td>
<td>95.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Region</td>
<td>89.9</td>
<td>92.7</td>
<td>92.9</td>
<td>93.0</td>
<td>93.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total State</td>
<td>89.9</td>
<td>92.7</td>
<td>92.9</td>
<td>93.0</td>
<td>93.1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

During 2013 classroom teachers kept a manual roll in each classroom. Rolls were marked within the first 15 minutes of the school day and sent directly to the front office where the data was entered on to the school OASIS system. Teachers follow up each absence with a gentle reminder by way of a note to parents if absences were unexplained. If the absence is not explained after a first request an additional note is sent home explaining that absences must be explained. A third letter stating the legal requirement was sent after this.

Roll absences were also monitored using the absence rates report from the OASIS system and students who fall below 85% attendance were followed up by the Deputy Principal using a phone intervention strategy. Failure to respond resulted in a referral to the Home School Liaison Officer.

Any students with chronic non-attendance were firstly referred to the Home School Liaison Officer and, if the absence rate is considered critical, to the Department of Community Services.

Workforce information

It is a requirement that the reporting of information for all staff must be consistent with privacy and personal information policies. 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 recently entered the teaching service. At the end of 2013 a number of staff will retire whilst other will take leave pending retirement.

Harmony Day

Student attendance profile

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>2009</th>
<th>2010</th>
<th>2011</th>
<th>2012</th>
<th>2013</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>K</td>
<td>94.0</td>
<td>95.6</td>
<td>95.4</td>
<td>95.2</td>
<td>95.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>94.7</td>
<td>94.1</td>
<td>95.2</td>
<td>95.5</td>
<td>95.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>93.8</td>
<td>94.4</td>
<td>94.7</td>
<td>96.7</td>
<td>95.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>93.4</td>
<td>95.4</td>
<td>95.0</td>
<td>94.6</td>
<td>96.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>94.7</td>
<td>93.3</td>
<td>95.0</td>
<td>95.9</td>
<td>94.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>93.5</td>
<td>94.7</td>
<td>93.5</td>
<td>96.3</td>
<td>95.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>93.9</td>
<td>93.9</td>
<td>95.4</td>
<td>93.9</td>
<td>96.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>94.0</td>
<td>94.5</td>
<td>94.9</td>
<td>95.4</td>
<td>95.5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The data above and adjacent shows that the attendance rate of most Year groups has been maintained at about 94% to 96% with some Year levels falling whilst others have risen. The overall attendance rate has improved by 0.1%. The trend over time shows a steady improvement in attendance rates over a number of years. The attendance rate is well above the State average of 93.1%.

The data above shows Ben Venue attendance rates compared to Regional and State averages.
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>Classroom Teacher(s)</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher of Reading Recovery</td>
<td>0.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learning and Support Teacher(s)</td>
<td>1</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>4.06</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>--------</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

DEC policy requires the reporting of information for all staff must be consistent with privacy and personal information policies.

In 2013 a School Counsellor was based at Ben Venue but worked at other schools throughout the week.

The Australian Education Regulation, 2013 requires schools to report on Aboriginal composition of their workforce. Ben Venue has one teacher who identifies as Aboriginal.

Ben Venue has four teachers in Early Stage 1, seven 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, French and Personal Development and Health. The school also has the services of a 0.9 Learning and Support Teacher (LAST) to support a number of programs within the school. The LAST, who is at Assistant Principal level, is the coordinator of the Learning and Support Team. The role of the Learning and Support team has changed over the last 18 months and so its role and processes are under review.

Teacher qualifications

All teaching staff meet the professional requirements for teaching in NSW public schools. 50% of our teachers have postgraduate qualifications. Whilst only those newly appointed teachers have gained NSW institute Accreditation.

Qualifications

<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>50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NSW Institute of Teachers Accreditation</td>
<td>13%</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>30/11/2013</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Income</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Balance brought forward</td>
<td>$291512.60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Global funds</td>
<td>312474.35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tied funds</td>
<td>130978.10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School &amp; community sources</td>
<td>123256.29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interest</td>
<td>9533.05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trust receipts</td>
<td>31359.76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Canteen</td>
<td>87133.48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total income</td>
<td>986247.63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Expenditure</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teaching &amp; learning</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Key learning areas</td>
<td>24422.95</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Excursions</td>
<td>48586.74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Extracurricular dissections</td>
<td>70665.68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Library</td>
<td>8191.71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Training &amp; development</td>
<td>2778.09</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tied funds</td>
<td>120418.65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Casual relief teachers</td>
<td>93597.21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Administration &amp; office</td>
<td>63695.51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School-operated canteen</td>
<td>96490.68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Utilities</td>
<td>72738.66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maintenance</td>
<td>7234.23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trust accounts</td>
<td>29451.98</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Capital programs</td>
<td>56495.88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total expenditure</td>
<td>694767.97</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Balance carried forward</strong></td>
<td>291479.66</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
A full copy of the school’s 2013 financial statement is tabled at the annual general meetings of the Parents and Citizens. Further details concerning the statement can be obtained by contacting the school.

**School performance 2013**

The outstanding achievement of the school covers many areas including academic, cultural and sporting. These achievements are detailed below.

**Academic achievements**

**NAPLAN**

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

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

- **Year 3**: from Band 1 (lowest) to Band 6 (highest for Year 3)
- **Year 5**: from Band 3 (lowest) to Band 8 (highest for Year 5)

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

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

**NAPLAN Year 3 - Literacy** (including Reading, Writing, Spelling and Grammar and Punctuation)

Year 3 students at Ben Venue performed above the State average in all aspects of Literacy with a slightly lower result in Reading.

Targets will be set in the next period to address this issue. Improvements in the area will take into account the change to NSW English K-6 (Australian Curriculum in 2014).

Analysis of the data from NAPLAN Year 3 Reading has shown a drop in the number of students in Band 6 compared to the school average over the last 4 years. There has been a corresponding increase in the number of students in 5. This has implications for teaching to extend our higher achieving students. 2014 targets will encompass improvements in this area.

**Year 3 Average score, 2013 NAPLAN Writing**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>School</th>
<th>Similar School Group</th>
<th>State DEC</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Average score</strong></td>
<td>425.7</td>
<td>410.7</td>
<td>416.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Average NAPLAN scores in Writing show that the school is above both Similar School Group averages and above the State.

**Year 3 Average score NAPLAN Spelling, 2013**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>School</th>
<th>Similar School Group</th>
<th>State DEC</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Average score</strong></td>
<td>423.0</td>
<td>413.3</td>
<td>418.1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The table above showing Average NAPLAN scores in Year 3 Spelling indicates that the school is performing above a Similar School
Group of Schools average and above the State Departmental average.

**Year 3 Average score**

**NAPLAN Grammar and Punctuation 2013**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School</th>
<th>Similar School</th>
<th>State DEC</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>440.3</td>
<td>425.2</td>
<td>430.3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The table above showing Average NAPLAN scores in Year 3 Grammar and Punctuation indicates that the school is above a Similar School Group and above the State Departmental averages.

**NAPLAN Year 3 - Numeracy**

The number of students achieving in each band in Reading in Year 5 is depicted above. It shows a sharp drop in the number of students achieving Band 8 compared Ben Venue results. There has been a likewise increase in the number of students achieving in Band 7.

**Average score Year 5 NAPLAN Writing 2013**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School</th>
<th>Similar School</th>
<th>State DEC</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>478.7</td>
<td>473.1</td>
<td>476.6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Average scores depicted in the table above shows that in NAPLAN Writing the school achieved a higher than State average score.

**Average score, 2013 Year 5 NAPLAN Spelling**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School</th>
<th>Similar School</th>
<th>State DEC</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>498.5</td>
<td>497.1</td>
<td>499.7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Average scores depicted in the table above shows that in NAPLAN Spelling the school achieved a higher than Similar School Group average score but fell 1.2 points below the State Average.

**Average score, Year Grammar and Punctuation**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School</th>
<th>Similar School</th>
<th>State DEC</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>523.6</td>
<td>496.4</td>
<td>501.3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In Grammar and Punctuation the schools scores were well above the state average by more than 23 points.
In Numeracy there was a shift down in the number of students scoring in the higher bands with a drop in those achieving Band 8 and an increase in those achieving Band 4.

Analysis of the growth in Reading between tracked Year 3 and Year 5 students shows a less than average growth compared to the State average growth.

**Other school based assessments**

There were a large number of outstanding individual student achievements in 2013.

In the International Competitions and Assessments for Schools (ICAS) run by the University of NSW, Ben Venue was successful in gaining excellent results over a number of competitions and grades. Results in each of the subject competitions are as follows:

**Computer Skills**

Distinction - Georgia Donoghue Y4, Anisha Majib Y5

Credit – Carlos Remigio-Smith Y3, Hadi Hussein Y6, Lily Scales Y5, Bailey Pattison Y5, Chloe Dowd Y4, Britney Walls Y5

**Science**

High Distinction – Georgia Donoghue Y4, Zenden Grieves Y4

Credit – Mehdi Ahsan Y4, Leo Schmude Y4, Liam Lamb Y5, Bailey Pattison Y5, Lily Scales Y5, Britney Walls Y5, Tao Grieves Y6, Adam Lucas Y6

Zenden was also awarded the University medal for full marks in the Science competition.
Spelling
Distinction – Adam Lucas Y6, Zenden Grieves Y4, Georgia Donoghue Y4
Credit – Kyanna Villano Y6, Georgia Vaughan Y6, Nyanyuie Nanedo Y6, Lily Scales Y5, Bailey Pattison Y5, Anisha Majib Y5, Frederic Heslin Y5, Chlo Dowd Y4, Jessica Abbo Y4, Brock Parson Y3, Bethany Johnstone Y3, Ryan Harris Y3

Writing
High Distinction – Anisha Majib Y5
Distinction – Zenden Grieves Y4, Georgia Vaughan Y6, Adam Lucas Y6, Emma Collins Y6
Credit – Kyanna Villano Y6, Amelia Randell Y6, Elizabeth Lee Y6, Britney Walls Y5, Jessica Abbo Y4, Laura Sauer Y4, Bronte Bulmer Y3

English
High Distinction – Adam Lucas Y6
Distinction – Aiden Swick Y3, Zenden Grieves Y4, Bailey Pattison Y5
Credit – Tahaf Omar Y3, Mehdi Ahsan Y4, Georgia Donoghue Y4, Leo Schmude Y4, Kyanna Villano Y6

Mathematics
High Distinction – Georgia Donoghue Y4
Distinction – Adam Lucas Y6, Zenden Grieves Y4, Aiden Swick Y3
Credit – Tao Grieves Y6, Tristan Turner Y5, Bailey Pattison Y5, Sophie Gale Y5, Leo Schmude Y4, Janda Collins-Widders Y4, Mehdi Ahsan Y4, Brock Parsons Y3, Ryan Harris Y3

Other achievements
eGATS
In 2013 Ben Venue continued to provide tailored programs to identified gifted and talented students in the primary school. This included the participation of fourteen selected student in the online gifted and talented program eGATS. The school also provided a mentor to work with the fifty students from around the region. The students attended a three day camp where they worked with mentors in the areas of English, History, Science, Mathematics and Technology and had the opportunity to work alongside like-minded students within the Region. The students participated in a series of tasks which targeted the development of critical thinking skills.

Debating
This year the Ben Venue Debating teams continued to excel. The debating squad consisted of fourteen students. Ben Venue Blue and Gold Teams debated admirably in the New England section of the Premier’s Debating Challenge. The students participated in a State training day in Armidale which fostered strategies for effective debating teams. Georgia Vaughan, selected in the North West Team attended the State Debating Championships in December. The interest and commitment of the debating students is to be highly commended.

Premier’s Spelling Bee
All students in Years 3-6 were given the opportunity to participate in the Premier’s Spelling Bee. Class ‘spell offs’ were held to determine three representatives from each class to participate in the school final in the hall. At the school final four students were selected to represent Ben Venue at the regional finals. The successful students from Years 3 and 4 were Zenden Grieves and Tahaf Omar and from Years 5 and 6 Freddie Heslin and Adam Lucas. Zenden Grieves went on to win the regional final and represented the school and region at the State final held in Sydney.

Science and Engineering Challenge
On Tuesday March 19 the Science and Engineering Challenge was conducted at the University of New England. Sixty-four Year 5 and Year 6 students from Ben Venue took part in this wonderful experience.

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".

Far Out Science: Science in the Bush

‘Far Out Science’ is a free program that includes lots of interesting and exciting science activities for children. Science in the Bush is an annual event held at the University of New England.

These programs intend to demonstrate the variety and vitality of the science that happens in 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.

Activities offered include things such as making slime and hot/cold packs in the Chemistry lab, monitoring jumping height and throw speed and accuracy in the Sports Science lab, looking at an ancient marsupial lion in the Zoology Department, and a Chemistry Magic Show.

Congratulation to Raquel Remigio-Smith who was the winner of the Far Out Science, Logo Design Competition for Science in the Bush.

Music

Opera House

Ben Venue Senior Choir students successfully auditioned to perform at the Opera House as part of the ‘Festival Of Choral Music’. This is the sixth year in a row that the choir has been selected, with 36 students performing in the massed choir at the Opera House.

Many of these students were also part of the Year 6 Marimba Ensemble who were also successful in their individual audition performing centre stage at the Opera House. This was a wonderful achievement for the group as very few ensembles throughout NSW are chosen for this individual honour.

Eisteddfod

2G gave a wonderful performance combining marimbas with drums and tambourines. They were awarded 1st place winning the Armidale Dumaesq Council Perpetual Shield.

Year 6 Marimba Group gave an outstanding performance performing ‘Canon’ and ‘Skokiaann’. They were awarded 1st place winning the shield and $100 in prize money.

6M gave a flawless performance combining drums, recorder and tenor horn with marimbas. They were awarded 2nd place in a very competitive section.

5W gave a fabulous performance combining marimbas, recorders and wind chimes. They were awarded 2nd place.

Our Senior Choir gave a wonderful performance at the Eisteddfod gaining 3rd place.

3D performed “Summer Place’ combining violins and recorders with marimbas. They were awarded 3rd place.

Our final performance at the Eisteddfod was our School Orchestra. They performed ‘Viva La Vida’ and ‘Can Can’. They were awarded 3rd place for their performance.

Night of Music

Students throughout the school came together to perform
at the fabulous ‘Night of Music’ which raised over $1,000 to help towards the Opera House trip.

The night featured class groups 2G, 3D, 5W and 6M, The BVPS School Orchestra and the wonderful Year 6 Marimba Group as well as the Junior and Senior Choirs and many talented musicians performing solos at the concert.

Performing for the Community
Junior Choir performed at the K-Mart Wishing Tree Extravaganza and put on a lovely Christmas concert at Autumn Lodge and Wollenmi.

The Year 6 Marimba Group performed at the Autumn Lodge Fete and ‘Christmas in the Mall’.

Ben Venue Star Maker
Ben Venue starmaker is held annually in Term 3. Students from Years 3-6 create their own musical performances to be judged by their peers. They then get through to the semi-finals where they are judged by teachers resulting in the grand-final of Starmaker, a wonderful afternoon of entertainment showcasing the outstanding musical talents of the students in our school.

Orchestra
2013 has been a wonderful year for the BVPS Orchestra. This year Bronwyn Jones (Yr3 teachers) has conducted our school orchestra. We have had many new musicians hire instruments from the school some of whom have joined our Orchestra this year which has grown to 30 members. Next year, we will have many new students who began learning instruments this year joining our orchestra.

Some highlights from 2013 include the performance at the Armidale Eisteddfod. Another highlight was performing for the BVPS school community in several school assemblies as well as at the Daylight Festival.

We have also been involved in the community through the Armidale Community of Schools (ACOS) 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 is conducted by Bronwyn Jones and has approximately 80 members from Armidale’s Public Primary Schools. This 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. Students performed at Presentation Day.

Art
Ben Venue has had great success in the Visual Arts this year. Students have competed and won prizes or commendations in many areas:

‘UNESAP: The University of New England School Acquisitive Art Prize’, with Braydon Richards and Jackson Cook’s work selected to

Braydon Richards

“Hang” at NERAM New England Regional Art Museum.

Jackson Cook
Ben Venue Ps
Proudly Presents
The ‘Fair Trade NAIDOC Week’ Art Competition with Kindergarten Penguins receiving 3rd Prize for ‘Turtles’, 6R also receiving 3rd prize with ‘We belong to this land’ and 2G receiving a Highly Commended for ‘Animals on bark’.

Class 5D 3rd prize ‘Waste into Art and Design’ Competition with 3J given 2nd prize for their chandelier made out of bottle tops and 5D receiving 3rd prize for their artwork ‘Closing the Loop’.

The Armidale Dumaresq Council ‘Waste into Art and Design’ Competition with 3J given 2nd prize for their chandelier made out of bottle tops and 5D receiving 3rd prize for their artwork ‘Closing the Loop’.

‘Operation Art’ was a huge highlight with, four students selected to “hang”: Matthew Myers KD, Neve Crotty 2G, Heather Gurner 4W and Georgia Vaughan 6M.

The biggest highlight was Georgia’s work being selected to appear in ‘Paw Prints’ the Operation Art Teacher Resource, that is published each year as examples for other teachers to use, and Neve’s work being selected to “hang” in a NSW hospital to support the wellbeing of sick children.

For the first time Ben Venue participated in the “Booked In”: Fantasy Illustration Art Competition. Ben Venue received all but one of the prizes awarded in the competition, including, 1st prize to Tom Channell, 2nd prize to Emma Collins, 3rd prize to Zarah Anderson, as well as a Highly Commended given to each of: Jackson Cook, Tora-Lee Smith, Kyanna Villano and Adam Lucas, with a Commended given to Amelia Randell.
Again Ben Venue was successful in the ‘Far Out Science’ Logo Design Competition, as a part of ‘Science in the Bush’. Raquel Remigio-Smith was the winner in this design competition. Her prize was an iPad Mini, as well as a t-shirt with her winning design printed on it. All of the volunteers at Science in the Bush were wearing t-shirts with Raquel’s design printed on it.

Raquel’s original design and
Her modified design for the t-shirt

The ‘Reclaim the Night’ Art Competition was run for the first time this year, in conjunction with the Armidale Night Markets. In the art competition: Jessica Barnett received 2nd prize, Caitlin Schuman 3rd prize, as well as Manu Yarram and Alex Kirk both receiving a Highly Commended.

Jessica Barnett (2nd Prize)

Sport

Athletics

This year Ben Venue had 64 students represent at District level in 45 different events. Ben Venue relay teams won every division and Ben Venue was the Champion School. We had Champion athletes in the Senior Boys and Girls Division as well as the Junior Girls division.

From there, 28 students attended North West Region Athletics as part of the Armidale Zone Representative Team. Junior boys, Senior Boys and Senior Girls relays qualified for state. As well as athletes for Junior Girls long jump, Senior Girls 100m and 200m and the 11yr boys 100 and 10yrs boys 100m.

A total of 13 athletes attended the state carnival with finishes in the top 20 for the Senior Boys Relay and Junior Boys Relay Team. The Senior Girls Relay Team made the State Semi-final.

Senior Girls Relay Team

Orienteering

Ben Venue performed well at the Northern Tablelands Orienteering Club Schools Competition held at Sunnyside. After intensive training and skills development on the various school courses over 80 students participated in the Primary Score event, while many others entered the Line Events and were successful in becoming overall winners.

Football

Both the Boys and Girls teams produced wonderful results in the NSW PSSA Football Knockout competitions before being defeated in the Regional finals. Several players had been selected for North West PSSA teams in 2013.
**Cricket**

After becoming Regional champions, Ben Venue defeated King St PS and Tacking Point PS to reach the NSW PSSA Boys Cricket Knockout Semi-finals held in Maitland. Despite a great effort the boys were defeated in the Semi to finish equal 3rd in the State. Several players were selected in the North West Boys Cricket Team for 2013 and 2014. The school was fortunate to have had very instructive coaching clinics during the year.

**Cross Country**

Ben Venue hosted the Armidale Zone Cross Country at Bellevue Oval. Ben Venue students shone throughout the day by winning five team trophies and winning the overall shield convincingly. Seventeen students represented at Coolah in the Regional Cross Country and of these five went on to represent the North West region at Eastern Creek in Sydney at the State Cross Country Titles.

**Rugby Union**

2013 was a successful year for the Ben Venue Rugby Union Program. 108 students both boys and girls participated in the Rugby Union Gala day in Term 2. This was an extremely successful day, enjoyed by the girls and boys who participated. This day was highlighted by the skill development sessions and a round robin of games with other local schools. Two Ben Venue teams contested the final. The senior division team won the local gala day and was placed in the regional finals. The Wednesday afternoon competition, The Ace Embroidery Cup, saw Ben Venue compete with 3 teams. Two teams in the Year 3/4 Division were extremely competitive and demonstrated outstanding skills and fair play. The senior team again being extremely popular dominated most games and played with outstanding skill. Twelve players were selected to attend the Northern Trials and consequently four players gained selection in the North West team to compete in the State PSSA Championships. The Brian Palmer Shield was another highlight where the Ben Venue Open team was North West Regional Champion and was placed in the top 16 teams in the state after being beaten in the State Quarter Finals.

**Touch Football**

In the local Primary competition Ben Venue fielded 4 teams in Term 1 of the competition. 2 teams played in the 3/4 division and 2 teams in the 5/6 competition. The teams played each Thursday afternoon each week throughout the term. In Term 4 the same number of teams played while there were quite a few new faces added to both divisions.

In the PSSA Knockout Touch Football the Ben Venue boys’ team attended a Gala Day in Uralla to account for the first three rounds of the
knockout. They played Uralla, Guyra and Armidale City, defeating all teams convincingly. For round 4 of the competition the team travelled to Tenterfield to Sir Henry Parks and were defeated 11-6 after a very tough match and a great second half effort by the boys.

Swimming

This year’s Swimming Scheme was a great success and the weather was mostly on our side. We had 44 students participate. Out of these 44 students, two had never been in a pool before. At the end of the two weeks three students could swim 50 metres.

Ben Venue swimmers attended the Armidale District Swimming Carnival held at the Monkton Aquatic Centre. Twenty students represented Ben Venue at the Regional Carnival held in Armidale on the March 5 with all four relay teams being successful in making it through to this level.

North West Region Swimming Representatives

At the North West Regional Swimming Carnival Ben Venue was very competitive in all events and thirteen Ben Venue swimmers were selected in the North West Team which competed at the State Carnival in Sydney! This is the largest team for a number of years.

The mid-winter interschool Hanna Shield swimming competition was held again in 2013. Ben Venue entered boys and girls teams in both the junior and senior divisions. All students competed with great enthusiasm and fairness. Our junior girls team of Brielle Ball, Cailtlin Lord, Elise De Crespigny and Lara Moloney were very strong on the day and proved to be an unbeatable combination. They blitzed the opposition to take out 1st place in both of their relays. The senior girls team, Emma Collins, Cailtlin Schuman, Meg Lye and Alicia Ball swam great races together finishing 2nd in both of their events.

These great results saw the Ben Venue Girls teams become overall Champions for the Armidale District.

Hockey

The Ben Venue Boys’ Hockey Team were regional finalists in the PSSA State Knockout competition, after defeating Sir Henry Parkes P.S. and Guyra C.S. in earlier rounds. They travelled to Tamworth to play Timbumburi P.S in the Regional Final but were unfortunately defeated in this match.

The Ben Venue Girls’ Hockey Team played matches against Moree P.S. and Guyra C.S. before progressing to the Regional Final where they defeated Tamworth South P.S. to become the North West Regional Champions. They then won their State Quarter Final match against Grafton P.S. at home in Armidale and travelled to Narellan to contest the finals. The girls played a strong semi-final match against Taree West P.S and, with the score 3-0 at full time, progressed to the final. This match was against Harrington Park P.S. with both teams being declared Joint State Champions after a 1-1 draw.

Our dedicated team of Ben Venue girls displayed excellent teamwork and fair play in each and every game. They were coached by parent, Mark Low, whose guidance and expertise were invaluable and greatly appreciated.

A number of students were selected in the North West teams. These players were Alicia Ball,
This year 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 80 players from all year levels K-6 being involved.

**Triathlon**

On Sunday, 17 November, the Armidale Triathlon Club staged its School Teams’ Challenge.

Six teams from Ben Venue entered ranging from Year 4 to Year 6 students. The ‘Pocket Rockets’, ‘Smurfs’, ‘Rejectors’, ‘Destroyers’ and ‘Pink Panthers’ performed commendably whilst the ‘Purple Panther’, comprising of Mitchell Hayden, Alicia Ball and Emma Collins took out 1st place in the Primary Schools’ event. As defending champions, Ben Venue once again proved that teamwork is essential for a team’s success.

**Gymnastics**

The Annual North West PSSA Gymnastics Gala Day was held in Armidale and was coordinated by staff from Ben Venue. 72 students from 19 schools from across the North West Region took up the chance to compete at the Armidale City Gymnastics Centre in three areas of the Gymnastics GymSports Disciplines: Men’s Gymnastics, Women’s Gymnastics and Rhythmic Gymnastics.

Ben Venue had 23 competitors in this competition, the most from any school. Ben Venue Public School was one of only two schools that were competitive in all three Gym Sports Disciplines.

The Men’s Gymnastics competition included 22 competitors in the Levels 0-3. Ben Venue won level the individual Junior and Senior Divisions and also won the team event. At level 3 Ben Venue individuals were first and second. In the Women’s Gymnastic Level 1 preparation section Ben Venue individuals was first overall in the senior division and Ben Venue won the teams event. They also won the teams event in the level 1 section. In the rhythmic competition Ben Venue individuals were second in the junior division and first in the senior division and were placed 2nd overall in the teams event.

**Netball**

The Ben Venue Netball team made it the third round of the PSSA Knockout this year. They won their first round against Armidale City 20-1 and won the second round against Glen Innes 2 goals. They were defeated by Ross Hill in the third round by 9 goals.

**Significant programs and initiatives**

**Technology**

2013 has seen an upgrade in technology throughout the school. The Technology Committee has installed 12 interactive panels in classrooms that did not have access to interactive capabilities. This has enabled instantaneous access to teaching resources and learning programs for all students in the school. During this upgrade, up to date printers and
photocopiers were purchased so printing solutions for students and staff will be more productive and efficient.

The Computer Lab was refurbished with 28 new computers and software programs have been purchased to support student learning in this centre.

A new scope and sequence and Cyberbullying program has been developed and will be initiated late in 2013 and 2014. The Technology Committee will also continue to support teachers and students in the implementation of these areas.

2013 has also seen the broadening of the wireless network, where all areas of the school are now encompassed by the network. Further improvements have seen the use of mobile technology introduced into classrooms. 50 Notebooks have been introduced across the stages. We have also purchased an additional 15 iPads for classroom use to support the 15 I-pads that are in the library. A number of apps have been installed on these devices. In 2014 the iPads will be upgraded with apps that will be used to support the new curriculum in English and Mathematics. Further purchases of iPads and apps are anticipated so that each stage will have greater access to technology within the classroom.

A second mobile video conferencing centre has also been introduced to help the Korean Connection and its availability within the school. Teacher in-service and contact amongst different school groups including E-Gats has been established.

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 are held in classes and special focus days were held on three occasions. During these focus days peer leaders from Year 6 ran small group lessons, taking on the responsibility of being YCDI leaders with great enthusiasm.

A celebration day was held in Term 4 during which student took part in peer lessons, YCDI treat stalls and group games which were designed to be fun while of the skills covered during the year.

Environment Committee

During 2013, the Environment Committee began to implement plans that had been drawn up during 2012.

The Chicken Run

A new larger chicken run was donated to the school and is now situated in a prominent part of the playground. The feed and water containers and nesting material have all been purchased. Chickens that have hatched from the original Year 4 unit of work 2012, are ready to go into their new home in 2014 for the unit of work “The Chicken or the Egg”.

Gardens

There have been major upgrades to the entry gardens, and gardens between the library and the Year 3 buildings.

The area for the kitchen garden for the K-2 units of work has been established and will be ready for the classes to plant and nurture in 2014. The area is to be fenced. 5 raised garden beds have been placed and filled with soil.

Composting

The school has participated in Armidale Dumaresq Council’s food scraps recycling program and has purchased 2 large composting bins and worm farms to supplement this program.
Aboriginal education

NAIDOC Week 2013

NAIDOC Week was celebrated at Ben Venue throughout the week of July 22 to July 26 through a variety of daily whole school activities. The activities planned by the Aboriginal Education Committee provided all students with an opportunity to learn and experience different aspects of our indigenous culture and history.

The celebrations included a Flag Raising Ceremony with special guest Sally Anne Cutmore. A morning tea was shared with staff and our indigenous parents and carers. Students enjoyed a casual dress day wearing clothing with Aboriginal print or colours of the Aboriginal Flag. Students made the Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander flags and learnt about their significance. An official NAIDOC Week assembly was conducted by our Year 6 indigenous students and showcased our indigenous students from Kindergarten to Year 6 through traditional dance, hip hop dancing and awards.

Ben Venue Students also actively participated in NAIDOC Week Celebrations in the wider Armidale Community. This included presenting the Hip Hop Dance at Duval High School and participating in activities at ‘A Day in the Dale’ and at an awards ceremony in the Mall.

During 2013 an active Aboriginal Education Committee operated in the school as a part of the school’s committee structure. During Term 1 teachers were given time for consultation with parents and the completion of the Personalised Learning Plans (PLP) for every Aboriginal student in the school. The committee also reviewed the structure and process of constructing PLPs. This involved consulting with Aboriginal parents and also the Local Aboriginal Student Support Officer and the Aboriginal Community Liaison Officer. The newly formulated PLP will be ready for introduction at the beginning of 2014. It is more relevant and non-intrusive document and will provide valuable guidance for current teachers and the future teachers of each Aboriginal student at Ben Venue.

The school has utilized the Norta Norta Funding to support students in Year 4 on a daily basis in basic skills - Numeracy and Literacy. This was also supplemented with a small Regional Aboriginal Education Committee funding provided for Aboriginal student support. An Aboriginal teacher’s aide was employed in Term 4 to supplement our School Learning Support Officer team.

One student Shuaib Rhodes-Swain was awarded a Highly Commended in the Myall Creek Memorial Art, Writing and Song Competition – ‘Thoughts and Dreams’. There were over 100 schools involved in the competition and Shuaib was placed in the top 3.

Three classes were awarded prizes in the Armidale Fair Trading Centre’s NAIDOC Week Art Competition.
Multicultural education

Harmony Day

To celebrate Harmony Day, Ben Venue held a special day which included an assembly, luncheon and games afternoon. During the assembly students paraded their National Dress and some students performed songs and played musical instruments from their ethnic background. Students were from Thailand, Fiji, Saudi Arabia, Malaysia, Italy, China, France, Mongolia, India, Bangladesh and other countries around the world. After the assembly, parents were invited to join the staff for a luncheon. After lunch each grade had a games afternoon which involved the Year 6 students teaching the rest of the students in the school games from China, Ghana, Japan and the United Kingdom.

Korean Connexions: 4W

4W have been participating in video conference sessions all year. Each Friday at 10.50am we have linked up with JukSeong Elementary School in Busan province, South Korea and shared different aspects of our cultures and languages. Students have engaged in and delivered presentations on many different topics. Some of these topics have included: a look at our local area, weather, a tea drinking ceremony, traditional holidays, traditional foods, native animals, dreamtime/folk stories, language and Australian exports. The year’s video conferences culminated in a gift exchange which was a special way to thank each group for all of the interesting information and culture we have shared.

Korean ConneXion

Throughout 2013 Year 6 students have connected with Korean classes in Korea through video conferencing. The Year 6 class connects with Chungsol each week for 40 minutes. The students from each country take turns to present lessons in Science, Art, Drama, English and dance. The students have also exchanged gifts and letters. Early in 2013 we had a visit from some Korean students and families. These people were billeted at very short notice by the amazing Ben Venue families.

Multicultural Speech Competition

Ben Venue hosted the Regional Finals of the Multicultural Speech Competition this year. We had two students in the final; Georgia Vaughan and Adam Lucas, both accomplished public Speakers, Georgia Vaughan received a Highly Commended narrowly missing out on a trip to Sydney.

Leo Schumde received a Highly Commended at District level. All our speakers were well prepared and performed competently.

School planning and evaluation
2012—2014

School evaluation processes

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

Learning Support team (LST)

Background

Ben Venue School operates a Learning Support Team (LST). The LST consists of:- a stage representative from each stage , English as a Second Language teacher(ESL), Learning & Support Teacher (LaST), School Counsellor, Deputy Principal and Reading Recovery Teacher. It is coordinated by the LaST who is also an Assistant Principal. The procedures for LST referrals are:

1. Classroom teacher identifies child and completes the LST referral form.
2. The referral is discussed with the stage supervisor.
3. Stage supervisor signs and gives the referral to the LST Co-ordinator.
4. Referral is placed on the LST agenda and discussed at next meeting.
5. Stage representative gives feedback to classroom teacher regarding the recommendations made at the LST meeting.
6. Recommendations to be implemented.
7. Feedback from the recommendations is discussed at the following LST meeting.
8. Students remain on minutes whilst deemed necessary by the LST.

In July 2012, the role of the Support Teacher Learning Difficulties (STLA) and also the support teachers for behaviour, language, intensive reading, early school support, integration and learning assistance, changed to Learning & Support Teacher (LaST). The role is diverse, complex and ever-increasing. The school is still transitioning to this new role.

Currently the role of the LaST includes coordinating and managing: literacy support, school counsellor referrals, language and speech difficulties, attendance, motor coordination difficulties, behaviour, welfare, health concerns, numeracy support, Aboriginal Personalised Learning Plans (PLP’s), healthcare plans, Out of Home Care (OoHC) students and coordinating the LST.

Because of the significant role change the school implemented an evaluation to review and set future directions. A part of this process was that all LST members and classroom teachers were surveyed to determine strengths and weaknesses. At this point in time, it was determined not to survey the parents as the School was reviewing the internal structures and procedures. Of the 24 teachers who were asked to complete the LST Survey 18 returned the survey. The 7 members of the LST were surveyed separately and 6 returned their surveys.

**Results Findings and conclusions**
- 15 teachers were able to identify most members of the LST and 14 teachers were able to identify their stage representative.
- 15 teachers knew when LST meetings were held.
- 16 teachers knew how to refer a student to the LST. Most teachers referred for reading, spelling and writing, social skills and counsellor referral including cognitive assessments.
- Most teachers have referred students to the LST and most received feedback and found it useful.

Teachers expectations from the survey included feedback on classroom adjustments, classroom support, professional development, written feedback, case management, LaST intervention and assessment.

The services found most useful by teachers were:
- LaST or counsellor assessment
- classroom support
- LaST caseload and
- parent involvement.

**Additional comments include:**
- LST to be embedded throughout the school rather than operating as a satellite program.
- LST recommendations to be discussed at stage meetings.
- LST minutes to be sent to stage supervisor and stage representative.
- All stages representatives need to attend LST meeting.
- All relevant information and reports to be given to LST Coordinator
- Referral meeting procedures should be revisited at staff meeting.
- Classroom teacher to follow-up on referrals if concerned.
- Executive staff should be the stage representative as they oversee the stage.
- A more consistent tracking system of referrals and recommendations available for all teachers to access, including hearing and vision assessments.
- Classroom teacher should communicate with parents prior to submitting a LST referral.
- Parents must be invited to attend referral feedback meeting.
Future directions

- To improve communication of student referrals. The most effective and efficient way to improve communication is for the stage supervisor to be the LST representative. The inclusion of LST recommendations included on stage meeting agendas.
- Improve student referral tracking by using the Register of Incidents of Student Contact (RISC).
- The school/parent relationship to be strengthened by including parents in pre and post LST referral meetings.

Personal Development, Health and Physical Education. (PD/H/PE)

Background

Team Sport at Ben Venue is mostly limited to State Knockout teams which consist mainly of Year 6 students. Traditionally Ben Venue does very well in these competitions. 2013 was no exception where the Senior Girls Hockey Team was the NSW State Champions and the Senior Boys Cricket team was placed 4th in the State. Apart from the representative teams there are little to no specific skills taught in a logical sequential way.

Ben Venue Kindergarten has a two periods of programmed Fundamental Movement Skills (FMS) in the year. This program is called Tucabia. It is run with the assistance of many parents.

All classes actively participate in the Premier Sporting Challenge. The school was awarded the Premier’s Sporting Challenge ‘Gold Award’ in 2013. Because of the support of the funding through the Premier’s Sporting Challenge and the Coles Sports for Schools drive the school has a variety of equipment on offer for the teachers and students to use.

In 2013 two teachers from the School Sport Committee attended a Live Life Well@School (LLWatS) course. As a part of the course the teachers evaluated current practice and developed an action plan to be implemented on their return. Information from this evaluation was supplemented with a staff survey.

Results Findings and conclusions

- It was clear that students are becoming more inactive,
- Students are eating unhealthily and Sport and P.E. are not taught well at school due to a number of factors including teacher expertise.
- All strands in the PD/H/PE syllabus were covered by either the classroom teacher or RFF teacher.
- All teachers had a syllabus and 50% of teachers used a tracking sheet.
- The majority of teachers said the lessons taught had high levels of activity, were fun and emphasised Fundamental Movement Skills.
- All teachers said they cater for each student’s needs.
- About 70% of teachers had a coaching accreditation or expertise in a sport. Theses sports were swimming, water polo, hockey, athletics, netball, soccer, volleyball, touch football, rugby union, rugby league, basketball, golf, softball, dance, tennis and gymnastics.
- Around 60% of teachers wanted to attend a course provided by the sports unit. The areas asked for were Austswim, rugby, softball, touch football, athletics and cross-country. Three did not mind and would be happy with any course to improve their delivery of PE skills to their class.
- All teachers utilised the equipment available in the sport shed but suggested equipment purchases which included updated T-ball stands, shotput, discus, relay batons and Aerolite gym mats.
75% of teachers do not do daily P.E.

P.E. is taught mostly over two days and for mostly 20-35 minutes and in these lessons nearly all teachers teach explicit sports skills.

75% play organised sport. 25% teach P.E. or sport for 1 ½ or less a week. 25% teach for 1 ½ hours a week and 50% teach for 1 ½ hours or more.

90% of teachers said they had at least one overweight child in the class.

**Recommendations**

- The utilisation of a P.E. teacher as a part of the Release form Face to Face (RFF) program. This teacher would set up and monitor a Scope and Sequence for PD/H/PE to be implemented in the school.

**Recommendations in the area of Nutrition**

- Order relevant nutrition resources available for free from the LLWatS scheme.
- Complete the Staff in-service module as a part of the LLWatS program.
- Review and update nutrition units in the school scope and sequence.
- Work with Stage coordinators, and canteen supervisor to plan and run LLWatS challenges
- Allow students to have water bottles in the classrooms.
- Develop plans to establish a Kitchen Garden within the school grounds.
- Implement DEC whole school nutrition policy
- Order Healthy Kids Fact Sheets to send home to parents with newsletters and arrange for newsletter snippets on nutrition to be included in the school newsletter over a 12 month period.
- Continue to inform parents of the reasons why a healthy canteen is important and encourage parents input.
- Involve parents in the school kitchen garden.
- The school to be a member of the Healthy Kids Association.
- **Recommendations In the area of Physical Education**
- Complete the Fundamental movement Skills (FMS) module and then in-service staff on the Fundamental Movement Skills
- Place Get Skilled: Get Active DVD onto the school's intranet so teachers have easy access
- Review and update the PDHPE scope and sequence.
- Track students FMS progress throughout their school attendance.
- Continue the Tucabia and extend the program, through to Year 2.
- Build a sporting skills program from Year 3 to year 6 which continues on from Tucabia Year 2.
- Organise sports storeroom for increased access and efficiency.
- Ensure Fundamental Movement Skills hold a focus in all PE lessons. And purchase FMS kits for use in PE
- Continue Premier Sporting Challenge and Crunch ‘n’ Sip

**School planning 2012—2014: progress in 2013**

**School priority 1**

**Outcome for 2012–2014**

Increased student outcomes and levels of achievement in Literacy for all students.

**Evidence of progress towards outcomes in 2013:**

- The target for 2013 was to increase the number of Year 5 students achieving the expected growth in reading by 6% to meet the state average by 2014.
- The target was not reached for reading as can be seen in the graph below showing less than State average growth in reading.

![Average progress in Reading between Year 3 and 5](image_url)
• Spelling is showing a similar less than state average growth. This is depicted in the graph below.

![Graph showing average progress in Spelling between Year 3 and 5](image)

• The growth in Grammar and Punctuation between years 3 and 5 has shown the school reaching State average growth as can be seen in the graph below.

![Graph showing average progress in Grammar & Punctuation between Year 3 and 5](image)

Strategies to achieve these outcomes in 2014

The My School’s website clearly shows that over time Ben Venue has not had any areas slightly of significantly below the State Average.

School priority 2

Outcome for 2012–2014

Increased student Outcomes and levels of achievement in Numeracy for all students

2013 Targets to achieve this outcome include:

• Increase the number of students in Year 3 achieving in the top two bands by 6% from 31% in 2012 to 37% in 2014.

Evidence of progress towards outcomes in 2013:

• There was a drop in the number of students achieving in the top two bands in Year 3 Numeracy.

Strategies to achieve these outcomes in 2014

• Identify target areas in Mathematics from 2013.
• Mathematics Committee to develop focused learning and activities to address areas of concern.
• Identify higher level questions or more capable students.

School priority 3

Outcome for 2012–2014

High levels of wellbeing for all students.

2013 Targets to achieve this outcome include:

• Decreased number of negative behavior entries and an increase in positive behavior entries registered on RISC as measured each term over the year.

Evidence of progress towards outcomes in 2013:

• Over the three terms there was a small decline in the number of negative incidents registered on RISC over the course of the year.
• There was however not an increase in the number of positive incidents registered on RISC. This was thought to be because teachers did not utilize the program for positive incident tracking.

Strategies to achieve these outcomes in 2014

• Professional learning in the consistent use of RISC by all staff.
• Focus in Year 5 on programs which counter cyber bullying and in Year 4 on the Bystander Program.
• Registration on RISC of Grade, Principal and Excellence Awards.
• Supervisors to monitor the Grade Awards registers.
Professional learning

During 2013, the major emphasis on Teacher professional learning was on the introduction of the New Australian Curriculum in English.

School development days were utilized in Term 1, Term 2, and Term 3 in the training for the full implementation of the English Syllabus in 2014. Two full days were devoted mostly to the syllabus at the beginning of Term 2.

The staff also completed mandatory training in each of the following:
- Code of Conduct
- Emergency care.
- They also had training by the nurse Educator in the use of Epipens for use in managing anaphylaxis.
- Child Protection Training.

The staff also completed training in the Disability Discrimination Act and from there implemented the PLASST Trial.
- Live Life Well @ School Course. The information gained from this course led to the evaluation of the PD/PE/Health program in the school.
- Regional librarian course.
- Anti-Racist Contact Officer Training (ARCO).
- New England Beginning Teachers Conference.

Teacher Professional learning Funds were used to release teachers in groups to construct English units using the Board of Studies Program Builder.

They were also used by the Aboriginal Committee to meet with Aboriginal resource staff to help in the review of the Personalised Learning Plans.

Parent/caregiver, student, and teacher satisfaction

In 2013, the school sought the opinions of parents, students, and teachers about the school. Their responses are presented below.

The school sought the opinions of the parent population using the SchoolMap Best Practice Statements for both Teaching Practice and Learning.

The information provided by the survey indicated a high satisfaction with the Teaching and Learning in Ben Venue.
- 75% of parents surveyed indicated that almost always “my child’s classroom” is an interesting place to learn
- 80% of respondents agreeing with the statement “School expects students to achieve to the best of their ability”

It was interesting to also note that parents view the school as having high expectations with nearly 80% of respondents agreeing with ‘The school expects students to achieve to the best of their ability’

The effects of best start and School Based Student Reporting (SBaSR) is evident in the high rating for records of student progress.

Areas to address:
- Many parents indicated more regular and programmed contact between parents and teachers to communicate student progress.
- Processes and procedures for students to see their progress over time by referring to work samples or regular skills checklists.

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.

Wally O’Hara - Relieving Principal
Karen Watson - Relieving Deputy Principal
Andrew Harris - President Ben Venue P&C
Ann Lewis - Assistant Principal LAST
Richard Crocket - Chairperson Sport Committee
Amanda Swain - Member of the Sport Committee
School contact information
Ben Venue Public School
Erskine Street Armidale 2350.
Ph: 02 6772 4263
Fax: 02 6771 2037
Email: benvenue-p.school@det.nsw.edu.au
School Code: 1198
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:

Ben Venue Marimba Group rehearsing in the Concert Hall at the Opera House in preparation for the Festival of Choral Music