

# Macarthur Primary School 1571

## 2007 Annual Report to the School Community



Department of Education and  
Early Childhood Development

## School Overview

Macarthur Primary School is a small rural school located 37 kilometres south east of Hamilton in Victoria's Western District. The school was established in 1875 to serve the local township of Macarthur, population 300, and the surrounding farming area.

The school is situated in the Macarthur township on a spacious area of land with views over the surrounding countryside. Students enjoy the attractive school grounds which are set up to provide both sporting and recreational play areas. Particular emphasis has been placed upon development of treed and garden areas and the school has a green house and shade area located in the school grounds for the raising of plants and trees. During 2006 a vegetable garden was established by grade 5 and 6 students and this has been extensively used during 2007.

The school buildings are comprised of three classrooms, Library, Information Technology Area, Art Room, small canteen, staffroom and office. There is a shelter shed in the school grounds which is used in very cold or hot weather and there is also an attractive amphitheatre area which is shaded for summer and provides a dry play area for wet days and a venue for community BBQs and performances. During 2007 the School Council developed a master plan for facilities improvement and has successfully gained funding to build an extension to the school. This will house a new library and ICT centre which is planned for 2008.

During 2007 the Corangamite library service was located within the school to allow community access to the regional library service. The school actively works with local government bodies such as Moyne Shire to develop partnerships with the wider local community.

Students' families are employed in farming and rural service industries with the local township providing employment in these areas. The school SFO (School Family Occupation) density is 0.53 with no students in the LBOTE (Language Background Other Than English). Approximately one third of families received EMA (Education Maintenance Allowance) in 2007.

Approximately 50% of students travel to school by bus, with routes covering a radius of approximately 20 kilometres from the school, the remainder travelling by private car, on foot and bicycle. Bus services to Hawkesdale P-12 school and Hamilton Secondary Colleges pass through the town allowing students access to a choice of secondary colleges.

Preparatory students beginning at the school attend Macarthur Pre-school prior to commencement which is a short walking distance from the school.

**School Goals**

During 2005 the school developed a Strategic Plan to outline school goals for the following 4 years. These goals are continuing to drive the school’s plans into 2008.

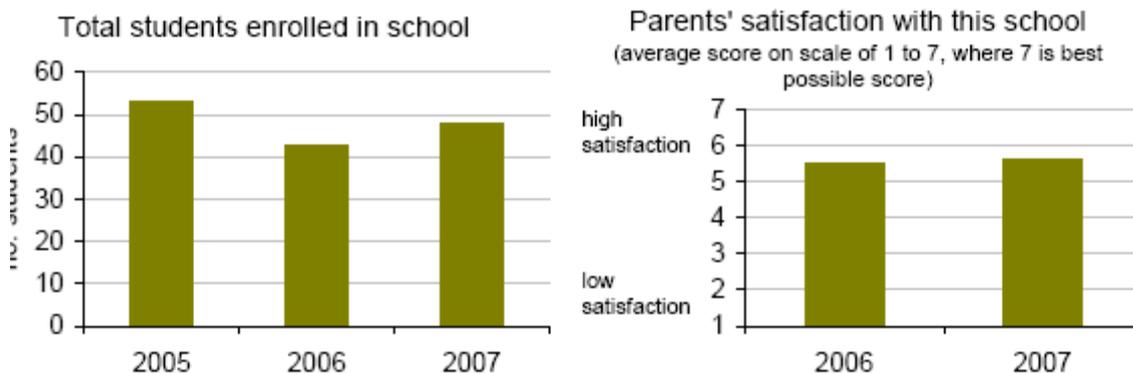
	<b>Student Learning Outcomes</b>	<b>Student Engagement and Wellbeing</b>	<b>Student Pathways and Transitions</b>
<b>Goals</b>	To achieve continuous improvement in Literacy and Numeracy across all year levels.	To provide a supportive and challenging school environment which promotes student connectedness to school, teachers and peers	To achieve a seamless transition from pre-school to primary school, from one class group to the next, and from primary to secondary school.

The school will be focussing on the continued implementation of the Victorian Essential Learning Standards over the next years with a continued emphasis on maximising success for students in literacy and numeracy . Information technology is also a focus of curriculum development which is seen as an integral part of learning at Macarthur Primary School. Classrooms are equipped with computers at a ratio of 1:3 and ICT is used as a tool to support learning in all curriculum areas. During 2007 all classrooms were equipped with interactive whiteboards so that all students have access to the latest learning opportunities using ICT.

Small grades are a feature of Macarthur Primary School and mean that each child’s performance and learning style is well known by the teachers. Staff include Multiple Intelligences and Thinking Curriculum elements in curriculum planning to develop engaging and relevant curriculum programs. The “You Can Do It” and “Learning to Learn” programs are an important part of the school’s beliefs and values in assisting us develop a safe, inclusive and positive learning environment at the school.

**Student Enrolments**

There were 48 students enrolled during 2007 a rise of 5 from the 2006 enrolment of 43. It is expected that the school will maintain this number of enrolments in 2008 with a small rise predicted in 2009 to take enrolments over 50.



The average score for parent satisfaction with this school is 5.63 on a scale from 1 to 7, where 7 is the best possible score.

**Staffing**

Macarthur PS employed 4 teaching staff during 2007: 3 full time staff, including the principal, one 0.8 staff member and one staff member at 0.2 filling a specialist Art role. The principal shared a grade responsibility at 0.2 to allow three grades to operate in the school. A visiting MARC Van library teacher visited on a fortnightly basis and a visiting music teacher offers the option of specialist music tuition. The school employed a 0.5 SSO Business Manager and 3 staff members were employed as SSOs on different time fractions to support our Program for Students with Disabilities.

During 2007 the school achieved accreditation in the Performance and Development Culture Program. This was confirmation of staff success in working together to achieve school goals as a team. A focus of the process for achieving accreditation was a review of our assessment procedures and how we allow opportunities for teachers to work, plan and seek feedback from each other.

All teaching staff have participated in professional learning throughout the year, such as POLT (Principles of Learning and Teaching), Oral Language, Restorative Practices and ICT (Information Communications Technology). Of the 4 teaching staff at Macarthur in June 2006 (including those on leave) all were still there in June 2007. This is a retention rate of 100% where the state average is 87%.

The average score for teacher satisfaction (morale) at this school was 83.3 on a scale from 0 to 100 where 100 is the best possible score. The average number of absence days per teacher in 2007 was 0.39.

*All teachers in Victorian Government schools are registered with the Victorian Institute of Teaching. The requirements for registration with the Victorian Institute of Teaching can be found at:  
<http://www.vit.vic.edu.au/content.asp?DocumentID=241>*

## Principal's Report

It is with great pleasure that I reflect upon the achievements of the school community during the year of 2007 at Macarthur Primary School. The school has worked hard to provide a wonderful educational environment for the students and many positive experiences have been the result.

Through the involvement of the wider school community and the hard work of parents and staff we have been able to offer students a wider range of opportunities and an enriched learning environment. I thank everyone involved for their support.

The staff have worked together as a cohesive team and offered a wide range of programs and learning experiences for students. We can be proud of our academic results particularly in the area of literacy where our results are outstanding. A highlight for staff was our success in achieving accreditation in Performance and Development Culture which is a testimony to the way all staff work together as a team to achieve the best learning outcomes for students.

Community involvement has been another strength of this past year. Parent involvement and support in programs such as Clubs, fundraising for our camping program, transporting students to sporting events, daily assistance with reading, and running extra programs for students such as Net, Set Go and Auskick has been outstanding.

The work of the School Council for the school has been ongoing throughout the year and I thank them for their work and support in gaining two major grants for the school. The Investing in Our Schools Grant and the Community Water grant will enable some major improvements to occur in facilities in 2008 with the building of our new library and drainage for our school oval.

The purchase of new interactive whiteboards for all of our classrooms during 2007 was a highlight for students learning opportunities using ICT. This gave all of our students access to the latest technology in their daily learning.

A major community event during 2007 was the Macarthur 150<sup>th</sup> Anniversary and it was a memorable experience for students to be involved in the street parade and celebrations. The school was open for visitors and many students from past years took the opportunity to visit the school and relive a few school moments. As principal of the school I was proud to be here to welcome those people, to be part of the celebrations and to witness the feelings of pride the people of Macarthur have in their school.

2007 was a wonderful year at Macarthur Primary School and with the support of the community the school can only grow in strength and pride.

Lynn Lyles

## **School Council President's Report**

2007 has been an excellent year for the Macarthur Primary School. Interactive whiteboards were installed in each classroom giving both children and teachers new learning resources. Many maintenance issues have been dealt with inside and out, including a new fence in the car park and grants have been obtained for water recycling for the oval. We look forward to school building works completed in 2008. The school council have worked well as a unit on these and other issues including the purchase of fifteen computers. I take this opportunity to thank all involved in the school community for their work in making the school what it is today and congratulations go to Lynn on an excellent first year.

Peter Musson  
School Council President

## Student Progress & Achievements

### Student Learning

The results for student learning during 2007 were extremely good at Macarthur Primary School and reflected the major school aims of:-

- Achieving continuous improvement in P/1/2 Reading Results as measured by the Prep – 2 benchmarking and
- Reporting on VELS in English and Maths with consistency

Prep to grade 2 reading results were excellent during 2007 with 100% of prep students reading at or above the state target text level 5, 100% of grade 1 students reading at or above the state target text level 15, and 100% of grade 2 students reading at or above the state target text level 20. This follows an excellent year of results in 2006 and indicates that a strong, successful and consistent approach to the teaching of literacy exists in the school.

During 2007 teachers reported to parents against all VELS domains and worked on developing consistent judgments against VELS standards which were transferred into the A to E grading system of the new report format for reporting to parents. During 2007 teacher judgments using the grading system are reflecting confidence and greater consistency with a wider use of students receiving A and D grades showing on reports.

Teacher judgments against VELS Writing (Years Prep to 6 combined) in 2006 and 2007. Comparison of percentage of students receiving grades on reports.

	%A	%B	%C	%D	%E
2006	0	7	79	14	0
2007	5	14	70	9	2

AIM data from grade 3 and 5 during 2007 showed mixed results and it is difficult to give meaningful percentages and comparisons between years because of the small cohorts involved during 2007 (4 students in each cohort and only 3 students participating in grade 5 ). It is also important that reports do not identify students so it is not appropriate to include percentage data.

Generally AIM results show grade 5 reading and number results slightly up from 2006 when comparing the percentage of students at or above national benchmarks. The small grade 3 cohort shows a wide variation in results in reading with students both exceeding and failing to meet national benchmarks. Number results for grade 3 are stronger but also indicate some students needing additional assistance. The grade 3 cohort will need to be monitored closely and supported in future years throughout the school.

The Parent Opinion Survey during 2007 was very pleasing with parent rating up in many areas for measuring improvement in student learning. Reporting showed a strong satisfaction rate with a score of 5.54 (up from 5.37 in 2006) out of a possible satisfaction rating of 7. Other areas showing improvement were Learning Focus 5.64 (up from 5.43), Stimulating Learning Environment 5.77 (up from 5.58) and School Improvement 5.75 (up from 5.27). We hope to maintain this trend as we continue to strive for excellent outcomes in student learning.

## Student Pathways and Transitions

### School Goals

During 2007 the school worked on achieving the following goals in the area of improving Student Pathways and Transition as part of the School's Strategic Plan for 2006 -2009.

We aimed to strengthen links between parents, pre-school, secondary school and the community and strategies included to:

- Develop a program of activities which includes preschool students and their families.
- Continue involvement in transition program with secondary schools.

### What we did achieve.

The school continued to work to improve our pre school transition program during 2007 and aimed to develop relationships and communications with Macarthur Pre- School staff, students and parents. This included:-

- Four organised visits to the school by pre school children including Orientation Day where children were involved in structured activities
- A visit by current prep students and staff to the pre school.
- Invitations to pre school students to attend visiting performance with infant students
- An Open Evening for parents with tours conducted by school staff and students
- Relationships with kinder staff was fostered and developed.
- An information night was held mid year at the school for pre school parents attended by teacher Jan Wilson, Principal Lynn Lyles, and School Council President Peter Musson.
- Personal invitations to pre school parents to attend transition program
- School Concert invitations to all new parents
- School Information Pack distributed
- Newsletters distributed weekly to pre school parents

The secondary transition program included:-

- Visits by secondary college transition coordinators,
- Visits to secondary colleges by students and
- Involvement in cluster transition programs by all grade 5 and 6 students.

The success of this can be measured by both anecdotal evidence, including conversations with parents of school leavers and new prep parents, attendance at pre school information nights and more formally with the Parent Opinion Survey data.

Data from the Parent Opinion Survey in 2007 indicated an increase in the satisfaction rate of our transition programs from 5.38 in 2006 to 5.74 in 2007. This suggests that our strategies to improve transition processes for students and parents have been effective. This work will continue into 2008 so that we continue to offer the best possible transition programs for students entering our school and moving into a new high school setting.

## Student Engagement and Wellbeing

At Macarthur Primary School our primary goal in the area of Student Engagement and Wellbeing is:

- To provide a supportive and challenging school environment which promotes student connectedness to school, teachers and peers.

We have developed some key strategies within our School Strategic Plan which include to:

- Create a personalized learning environment focusing on high achievement and expectations of students
- Investigate and implement the provision of teaching and learning activities that promote self-confidence, resilience and leadership opportunities.
- Monitor the health and well-being of the students by appointing a Primary Welfare Officer.
- Develop teacher awareness and utilization of knowledge of individual learning styles.

### What we achieved during 2007.

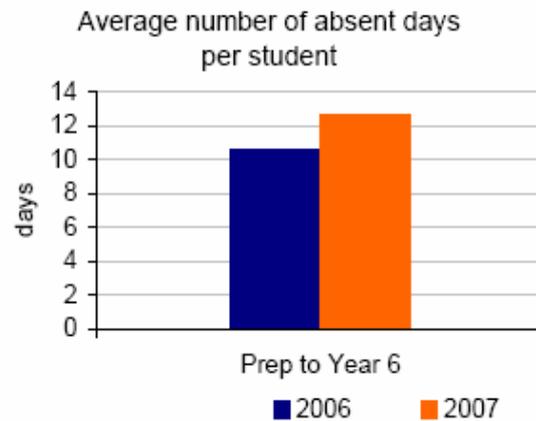
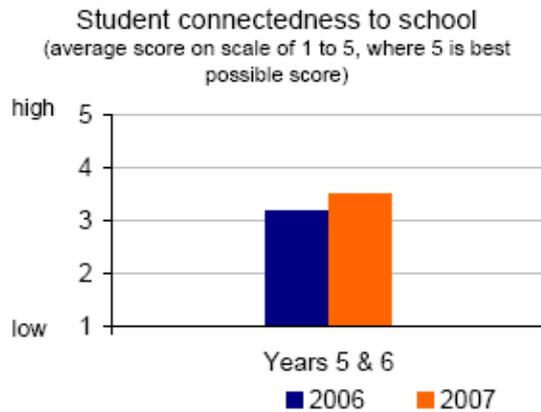
During 2007 the school introduced a range of strategies and approaches aimed at developing student self confidence, connectedness, resilience and leadership. These included:

- Leadership development opportunities were increased to include all grade 6 students with each student given a specific role as either school captain or on executive in Junior School Council.
- All grade 6 students attended the Student Leaders Conference in Melbourne and attended a leadership camp
- The camping program for all students across the school was extended
- There was an increase in extra curricular opportunities for students
- A restorative approach to student welfare was trialled with an emphasis on developing positive relationships between students and understanding the impact of our actions on others. Student conferences were introduced to classrooms to address issues in a collective way.
- Staff aimed to include the regular use of ICT in student learning programs. Interactive whiteboards were introduced to each classroom and used effectively to engage students in learning.
- Digital portfolios were introduced into the upper grades using the Edcube Program.
- A Peer tutoring and buddies system was used with older students assisting younger students gain skills with ICT.
- All staff attended Professional development in Restorative practices and ICT to support program implementation.

The school also remained focused on maintaining some strategies which had been implemented successfully in previous years such as:

- Continued implementation of the “You Can Do It” Program
- The “Learning to Learn” program was implemented consistently across the whole school at the start of the year to promote the development of a positive learning environment in classrooms.
- The principal continued to fulfill the role of Primary welfare officer, accessing support for students as required and coordinating the Program for Students with Disabilities.

- Junior School Council operated to allow students the opportunity to have input into school decision making
- Students had opportunities to take on responsibility as House captains, Junior Red Cross leaders, and buddies to younger students.
- Teachers developed classroom programs incorporating Multiple Intelligences and Thinking Curriculum elements to create learning opportunities for students which allowed for individual learning styles.



#### What does the data tell us?

Student absence rates during 2007 are slightly higher than in 2006 although still lower than the 2005 level. Attendance of most students is good and the data is reflecting a small number of students with a high absence rate. Some absences are due to regular illness and some are explained by family holidays being traditionally taken during school weeks. We also had a spate of Chickenpox during 2007 which accounted for some absences. The absence rate will need to be monitored during 2008.

The data informing us about school connectedness in 2007 shows improvement from 2006. The Student Attitudes to School Survey completed by all grade 5 and 6 students shows improvement in the area of Teaching and Learning indicating that students are happy with the teaching and learning programs at Macarthur Primary School. Scores from a possible score of 5 show Student Motivation up from 3.71 in 2006 to 4.43 in 2007, Teacher Empathy up from 3.49 to 4.26 and Teacher Effectiveness up from 3.46 to 4.14. The area of School Connectedness is up slightly from 3.2 to 3.52 but Connectedness to Peers is still low at 3.64 in 2007 compared to 3.93 in 2006. This indicates a need to work on building student relationships and sense of connection and will be a focus for improvement in 2008.

## Future Directions

The school has many plans for improvement in 2008 with some exciting projects ahead as we look at a year of both improving facilities and infrastructure as well as continuing to focus on achieving improved social and learning outcomes for all students at Macarthur Primary School.

The school Annual Implementation plan has been developed for 2008 and includes the following key areas for improvement:

### **1. Enhance Teaching and Learning across the school.**

Following the training of a staff member in POLT (Principles of Learning and Teaching) in 2006 school staff have targeted the area of Assessment and Reporting as an area of improvement for 2008 with a particular focus on mathematics and student self assessment. We have planned to invest in new computers for all classrooms in 2008 to complement the interactive whiteboards installed in all classrooms during 2007 and give students access to the latest technology in their learning. All staff will attend professional development in using ICT in teaching and learning with the goal of regular inclusion of ICT in classroom programs. Another staff member will be trained in the Oral Language Program and it is planned to have a coordinated program running in 2008 to support students with oral language needs.

### **2. Strengthen links between parents, pre-school, secondary school and community.**

In 2008 it is planned to continue to offer opportunities for the community to be involved in Macarthur Primary School and continue to encourage parents to be involved in some of the exciting programs that have been running in 2007 such as Clubs, Net,Set,Go and Auskick. The community involvement in these programs is a strength we hope to maintain well into the future. We also plan to maintain the school involvement with local sporting and community groups who have supported the school in 2007 such as the Macarthur Bowls Club, Golf Club and Red Cross.

The Pre school links which have been developed underpin our very successful transition program from the pre school and it is hoped to continue to strengthen these links through joint incursions and encouraging pre school parents to use school facilities such as the school based Corangamite Library Service.

The secondary school transition program will be a focus for 2008 with an emphasis on accessing district transition programs for our students.

### **3. Create a personalized learning environment focusing on high achievement and expectations of students.**

A major aim for student learning and wellbeing in 2008 is to develop student feelings about and connectedness to school and their peers. A Restorative Practices approach will be used across the school offering a consistent approach to dealing with students conflict and behaviour. All staff have been trained in the Restorative Practices approach. The emphasis will be on developing student relationships and an understanding of how what we do impacts upon others. There will be continued emphasis on student involvement in the school through the provision of leadership roles and opportunities for students to participate in decision making and problem solving.

**4. Facilities Improvement: Building of library and ICT Centre.**

The school has two major projects to improve school facilities planned for 2008 following two successful funding applications in 2007. A grant from Investing in Our Schools was received to allow the school to add an extension to the main school building which will house our library and future ICT Centre. Another grant through the Community Water Grant has also been received and will be used to provide drainage during winter and an irrigation system during summer for our school oval. Both projects are planned to be completed during 2008 and will enhance the school facilities and improve the learning environment for our students.

## **Financial Performance**

The current pattern of expenditure matches the predicted allocations in the majority of cases. There were some budgetary adjustments made throughout the year and these are recorded in the School Council minutes.

There were also some additional receipts in the form of state grants associated with drought relief funds and also a large receipt from Commonwealth Grants Investing in Our Schools Funds. This will be committed in the 2008 budget to enable the building of our library ICT Centre.

The large allocation to capital expenditure in the 2007 budget was used by the school to purchase interactive whiteboards for each classroom.

The School finances are well-managed and this is reflected in the data.

Processes are well in place to expedite future expenditure.

The summary shown below is in line with the school's audited statement of receipts and payments.

<b>Financial Performance for the year ending 31<sup>st</sup> December, 2007</b>	
<b>Revenue</b>	<b>2007 Actual</b>
DE&T Grants	\$55,431
Commonwealth Government Grants	\$85,000
State Government Grants	\$2,231
Other	\$37,672
Locally Raised Funds	\$22,684
<b>Total Operating Revenue</b>	<b>\$203,018</b>
<b>Expenditure</b>	
Salaries and Allowances	\$16,396
Bank Charges	\$385
Consumables	\$10,043
Books and Publications	\$1,059
Communication Costs	\$2,211
Furniture and Equipment	\$7,254
Utilities	\$4,680
Property Services	\$32,338
Travel and Subsistence	0
Motor Vehicle Expenses	0
Administration	\$1,280
Health and Personal Development	\$121
Professional Development	\$1,744
Trading and Fundraising	\$11,498
Support/Service	\$12,399
Miscellaneous	\$28,114
<b>Total Operating Expenditure</b>	<b>\$129,522</b>
<b>Net Operating Surplus/- Deficit</b>	<b>\$73,496</b>
<b>Capital Expenditure ( Cases 21 Finance Only)</b>	<b>\$12,625</b>
Please note that the above amounts do not include any credit revenue or expenditure allocated or spent by the school through its Student Resource Package	

<b>Financial Position as at 31<sup>st</sup> December, 2007</b>	
<b>Funds Available</b>	<b>2007 Actual</b>
High Yield Investment Account	\$156,597
Official Account	\$6,682
Other Bank Accounts( listed individually)	0
<b>Total Funds Available</b>	<b>\$163,279</b>
<b>Financial Commitments</b>	<b>2007 Actual</b>
Accounts Payable Control	0
Camps/Excursions	\$1,700
Building/Grounds including SMS	\$117,691
Special Programs inc Student Services	\$4,396
Region /Clusters Funds	0
Professional Development	\$,1000
Other ( please list)	
School Assets	\$19,958
Trading Operations	\$2,338
Parent Clubs	\$4,115
School Operating Reserve	\$12,081
<b>Total Financial Commitments</b>	<b>\$163,279</b>

## School Contact Information

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**This report contains summary data extracted from the School Level Report. If you would like to access the School Level Report, please contact Lynn Lyles.**