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Principal's foreword

Introduction

Bluff State School is a small school about 30 kms from the Blackdown Tablelands, 18 kms from Blackwater and approx 100 kms from Emerald. The school is situated on the Main Street of Bluff alongside the Capricorn Highway which takes you West to Longreach and beyond and East to Rockhampton and Yeppoon. Primarily the parents of our students work with Queensland Rail or in the local mines around the Blackwater District. The town is very proud of its rail and cattle heritage. The town has a very active Rugby League Club, a well established Lions and CWA Associations.

Bluff State School enrolments fluctuate from 42 - 50+ students depending on transfers in and out from Queensland Rail and family housing vacancies. We have very experienced and dedicated classroom teacher aides that have been part of the community for a very long time. They contribute positively to the school and enjoy their work roles.

Future outlook

During 2008 Bluff State School progressed our goal for all our children to achieve above state and like schools benchmarks in literacy and numeracy. There were gains in many of our strategic initiatives, particularly in student learning outcomes and student enjoyment of the school environment. The upkeep of the buildings, gardens and paved area will certainly ensure the aesthetic features of the school remain welcoming, pleasant and relatively modern.

Our outlook for the future is to continue to promote our school as a 'community school' where parents, students and staff feel respected. We are actively working on enriching our relationships with our parents and the esteem they have for their school.

We will continue to improve our ICT and multi-media, library and teacher resources and to continue to develop the concept of Life Long Learning in our students.

Our school at a glance

School Profile

Bluff State School has a current enrolment of 42. We have two multi-age classrooms that range from Prep – 3 up to 4-7. The school is well resourced with recent additions to our teacher's resource room as well as our library and ICT equipment. We have highly respected teacher aides that assist the teachers in the classrooms to deliver our school curriculum in all KLAs. We have a library that has numerous genres and an abundant supply of fiction and non-fiction books. We have a visiting PE, Music and LOTE specialist teachers visiting our school on a weekly basis. Our school takes every opportunity to provide learning experiences for our students by supporting visiting experts in such activities as science, maths activities, musical productions, outdoor adventure experiences and Get Active sports programs led by athletes in their respective fields.

Our School Improvement Strategies for 2008 were based around improving literacy and numeracy and increasing parent participation in our school activities. As a Staff we supported 'measurable achievement' and independent and cooperative work skills as our focus for individual achievement. A huge emphasis was placed on the children to read for pleasure as well as read for purpose. Each student in our school reads every day. Promoting the pleasures of reading has had a positive impact on our school data particularly in reading and spelling.

Curriculum offerings

Our distinctive curriculum offerings

ICT CLUB

Bluff school offered our students a lunchtime ICT Club. The activities were designed for smaller groups. The children negotiated the activities with our ICT teacher aide. Some of the activities they have enjoyed throughout the year are Robotics, Digital portfolios, Photoshop and Cartoon Design and Drawing.

ART ACTIVITIES

Bluff School offered our students a lunchtime Art Club. These activities are linked to the Art curriculum. Teacher aides provided students with a variety of organised drawing, sketching, craft and painting experiences.

SOCIAL GAMES

For our little preps and year 1's we provided special time in which they play games and modified sports in an environment that models cooperative and supportive play with others.

Extra curricula activities – Our School encourages all students to participate in all sporting, cultural and community initiatives. The activities our students engage with are:

Central Highlands Soccer

Central Highlands Netball

Central Highlands Touch

Central Highlands Rugby League

Gifted and Talented Camps and Cluster Initiatives

Creative Writing and Poetry Competitions

CWA Country of the Year

Computers and the Curriculum

At Bluff School we reviewed our ICT technology ratio per student. Through P&C and PCAP funding the school purchased 2 interactive whiteboards and 5 additional desktop computers for use in both classrooms. The ratio is 1:3 computers for our students across all year levels including our Prep year. We use our computers to capacity. In fact our prep and year 1 undertake many of their English and integrated unit activities using the interactive whiteboard.

Our school at a glance

Social climate

Bluff State School student surveys indicate that 92% of our children believe this is a 'good' school and just as many are happy with the education they receive. Staff Morale is also very good. Indications are that more professional development should be made available. Professional Development is can be limited by distance, timing and relevancy rather than support from the school administration to promote attendance.

Bluff State School has experienced numerous staff changes, particularly in the school leadership, over several years making consistency in leadership and curriculum development a problem. This means that the parent survey results indicate dissatisfaction with curriculum, social climate and image of the school being a 'good school'. These results are less than satisfactory.

The P&C and staff are working very hard to reinstate the positive feelings and attachment to the school community through numerous initiatives. The curriculum is stable and the children are progressing in the areas of literacy and numeracy. Participation by the wider community is very good and we are supported actively by the CWA and Lions Club at Bluff. This intergenerational support has been invaluable for our school particularly in terms of attendance at P&C, working bees and our special social events.

Involving parents in their child's education.

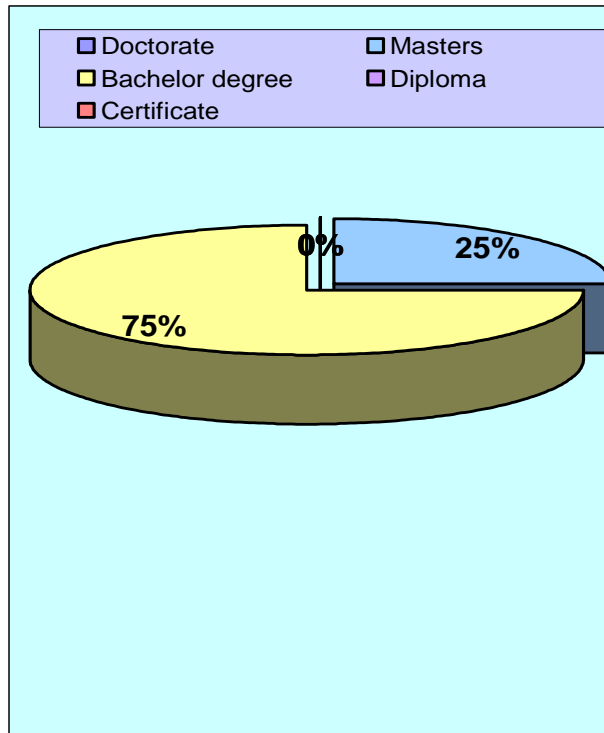
Bluff State School enjoys having the parents coming to our parades and participating in our end of term barbeques and Open Days. A lot of our parents were once students of Bluff themselves and have an immediate connection to the school's many traditions.

Many of the Prep to 3 parents come in with their children in the mornings before school. The P&C is active within the school and wider community and contribute greatly to the social aspects of our school. Many of the activities they organise promote a sense of belonging and 'community'. All parents are encouraged to talk with teachers regularly, particularly if they require assistance or progress reports on their child.

Our staff profile

Qualifications of all teachers

Highest level of attainment	Number of classroom teachers and school leaders at the school
Doctorate	0
Masters	1
Bachelor degree	3
Diploma	0
Certificate	0



Expenditure on and teacher participation in professional development.

The total funds expended on teacher professional development in 2008 was \$ 1,615.00

The major professional development initiatives are as follows:

One School Training

On The Same Page – learning to cater for diverse learners

Principal professional development

Performance Training

Mater Hospital – Twilight Series

Indigenous Perspectives Conference

Literacy Blocks – The Teaching of Grammar

ICT Certificate Training

The involvement of the teaching staff in professional development activities during 2008 was 100 %.

Average staff attendance

For permanent and temporary staff and school leaders the staff attendance rate was 98% in 2008.

Proportion of staff retained from the previous school year.

From the end of the 2007 school year, 100 % of staff was retained by the school for the entire 2008 school year.

Performance of our students

Student attendance

The average attendance rate as a percentage in 2008 was 93%.

Key outcomes

National Assessment Program – Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN) results - our reading, writing, spelling, grammar and punctuation, and numeracy results for the Years 3, 5, and 7

Domain	Measures	Yr 3	Yr 5	Yr 7
Reading	Average score for the school	387	466	505
	Average score for Queensland	371.1	466.1	528.1
	For the school the percentage of students at or above the national minimum standard.	2008 100 %	100%	80%
Writing	Average score for the school	406	509	541
	Average score for Queensland	391.8	468.9	522.7
	For the school the percentage of students at or above the national minimum standard.	2008 75%	100%	80%
Spelling	Average score for the school	341	553	599
	Average score for Queensland	366.7	462.0	528.0
	For the school the percentage of students at or above the national minimum standard.	2008 75%	100%	100%
Grammar and Punctuation	Average score for the school	371	480	544
	Average score for Queensland	370.4	476.6	518.0

Performance of our students

	For the school the percentage of students at or above the national minimum standard.	2008	75 %	83%	75%
Numeracy	Average score for the school		404	477	540
	Average score for Queensland		367.9	458.2	539.0
	For the school the percentage of students at or above the national minimum standard.	2008	100%	100%	80%

Performance of our students

Results in the Year 2 Diagnostic Net	
	Percentage of students not requiring additional support
Reading	78%
Writing	78%
Number	67%

Value added

Bluff State School had a clear focus on reading and developing reading strategies in all our students across all year levels. The consistency in our approach toward our students reading each day has motivated and engaged many students in reading for pleasure. Our parents have expressed satisfaction in what their child/children are achieving.

Parent, student and teacher satisfaction with the school

Improvements have been made to re-establish links with the wider community. The Lions, CWA and Queensland Rail representatives and Regional Council were involved in our school special events and ceremonies. We have developed a very positive relationship with Jellinbah Mine, our local mine. They have sponsored Bluff's P&C in numerous fundraising ventures.

Student and teacher satisfaction with the school