Murray Farm Public School
Annual School Report 2014
School context statement
Welcome to the Murray Farm Public School Annual School Report for 2014. This year, once again, has been full of student achievement and success. In many and various ways, Murray Farm has shown itself to be “A Great Place To Be.”

Outstanding academic achievement continues to be an important part of the school’s ethos, but is by no means the only measure of success. Social, cultural and sporting successes have also characterised 2014.

Our academic success has included outstanding NAPLAN results in Years 3 and 5, and many Opportunity Class and Selective High School placement offers. In Performing Arts, hundreds of students were actively involved in one of our three award winning school bands, our award winning string ensembles, choirs and dance groups, all of which performed at various public events.

Other extra curricula activities offered to the students included public speaking, student leadership courses, chess club, Lego Robotics and NSW Young Writers competition.

Our bilingual program extended into Year 5, and now caters for students from Kindergarten to year 5.

Our two “Challenge Classes”, cater for some of our gifted students across a number of disciplines.

I certify that the information in this report is the result of a rigorous self-evaluation process and is a balanced and genuine account of the school’s achievements and areas for development.

Adrian Pearson

P & C Message
At Murray Farm, the P&C is made up of a small group of enthusiastic parents and supported by a much larger group of committed parents, including various subcommittees such as: the Cracker Carnival Committee; Book Club; the Uniform Shop; the School Band; the String Ensemble; and the Canteen. Throughout the year, parents and other school community members volunteer their time and skills to help with a variety of activities and events. Amongst other things, these include: staffing the school uniform shop and canteen; book club; helping with reading and the multi-lit program; assisting at special event days (e.g. Kindergarten Orientation, sports carnivals, Grandparents Day, Open Day); helping with gross motor skills; and organising and running the school’s largest fundraising event, the Cracker Carnival. Each of these events was a great success this year, which is testament to the dedication of the Murray Farm School Community. We have, however, experienced a drop in the number of volunteers available to fill shifts in the uniform shop and especially the canteen. Unfortunately, if volunteer numbers remain down throughout 2015, we may need to employ two people each day (instead of one), resulting in prices inevitably increasing to cover running costs.

The Class Parent Scheme and Coffee with the Principal mornings have become integral parts of the school’s operations. We again hosted our “Movie at the Farm” night, which was a great success in spite of the poor weather. We also continued our campaign to highlight the issue of safe driving around the school at drop-off and pick-up times and will continue this initiative into 2015.

In 2014, we again collected the P&C Voluntary Contributions as part of the school’s semester 2 invoices. Thanks to the generosity of our school community we raised almost $43,500. This money, in addition to the $40,500 raised from our fabulous Cracker Carnival, has been used for the benefit of all our children at Murray Farm.

As the peak parent body of the school, the P&C has responsibility for determining how money raised on its behalf is spent. This year we have contributed a massive $139,500 to the school for the following:
• P&C agreed this year to increase our annual contribution to the school’s Key Learning Area (KLA) budget from $45,000 to $50,000. These funds supplement Government funding and were used to: purchase English and Mathematics teaching resources; provide a Learning Support Teacher two days per week; and provide professional development opportunities for teachers within the Key Learning Areas;

• A total of $30,000 to provide air-conditioning in the library and to replace the shade-cloth over the handball courts near the uniform shop;

• $10,000 to upgrade the concrete murals around the school;

• $1,500 to purchase new play-leader sports equipment used during lunchtime;

• In addition, P&C agreed to contribute the following to the school before the year’s end:
  – $16,000 to purchase two interactive whiteboards for two new demountable classrooms; and
  – $32,000 for the purchase of iPads, applications and supporting equipment for use in Kindergarten classrooms in 2015.

The Murray Farm P&C Association cannot operate effectively without the invaluable contributions from our parent volunteers. I would like to express my sincere thanks to those parents who so generously give their time to make the school such a wonderful place for our children. In particular, the members of the P&C committee, who show a remarkable dedication to both the children and the school. They truly make Murray Farm “a great place to be”.

Finally, 2014 has seen our children achieve exceptionally high standards in all areas of their schooling – literacy, numeracy, science, music, the arts and sport. On behalf of all parents and the school community, I would like to extend a huge congratulations to our children, and a heartfelt thank you to all of the staff at Murray Farm for helping our children to become the best version of themselves they can be.

Fran Koltai
P&C President

Student Representative’s Message

Our leadership experience began when we nominated for Prefect during the previous November. Little did we know what interesting events and challenges we would face.

During February the vice captains and ourselves attended a leadership camp at Arcadia. The camp was most inspirational, especially Loren (the blind guitarist) and Marcella (public speaker). They showed us how we can overcome fears and to try our best and set goals. Meeting other leaders from different schools was also a great experience. Later in March the entire leadership team attended a leadership day at Homebush, in which we continued to develop our communication, team building and problem solving skills.

The Student Representative Council, which includes the leadership team and the elected class representatives, has worked to support a variety of school and community projects during the year. Through this process we developed our leadership skills and gained greater experience in planning, organising and implementing fund raising events.

The whole school has enjoyed participating in events organised by the SRC including mufti days, school disco, guessing competition, Purple Day and a ‘Bazaar Day’ market stall. Funds raised from these events have enabled the SRC to continue to financially support our chosen charities, which include World Vision Honduras sponsored child, Taronga Zoo tiger and Stewart House.

It has been a great honour to represent students at MFPS as the 2014 Captains. We have learnt an enormous amount about leadership and how to meet the challenges that we will face in the years ahead. We would like to thank the staff and
students for their support while at Murray Farm. It really is ‘A Great Place To Be’.

Denique Shai-Hee and Zaki Razi

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

Student enrolment profile

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>2009</th>
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<th>2012</th>
<th>2013</th>
<th>2014</th>
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Student attendance profile

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<td>96.2</td>
<td>95.8</td>
<td>95.9</td>
<td>95.8</td>
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Management of non-attendance
Rolls are marked electronically at Murray Farm PS. Students who are late to school must report to the office for a late note. Reasons for absences should be recognised as valid within the DEC guidelines and must be supported with communication from the parent/caregiver. In consultation with parents/caregivers, a support program is implemented for any student whose attendance pattern is cause for concern. In 2014, no student required this action. The Home School Liaison Officer (HSLO) conducts regular audits on student attendance.

Staff Information
It is a requirement that the reporting of information for all staff must be consistent with privacy and personal information policies. The National Education Agreement requires schools to report on the indigenous composition of their staff.

On the information available at the time of writing this report, one staff member identifies as Aboriginal.

In the table below, where staff positions are shown in decimal form, 0.2 is equivalent to one day.

Staff establishment

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Position</th>
<th>Number</th>
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<tr>
<td>Principal</td>
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<tr>
<td>Deputy Principal(s)</td>
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<td>Assistant Principal(s)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Classroom Teacher(s)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Teacher Bilingual</td>
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<td>Teacher RFF</td>
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<tr>
<td>Teacher Part time</td>
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<tr>
<td>Teacher Executive Release</td>
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<tr>
<td>Learning and Support Teacher(s)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Teacher Librarian</td>
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<tr>
<td>Teacher of EALD</td>
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<tr>
<td>School Counsellor</td>
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<tr>
<td>School Administrative &amp; Support Staff</td>
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<td>Total</td>
<td>52.842</td>
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Staff Retention
Murray Farm PS has a staff of enthusiastic, creative and dedicated professionals ranging from early career teachers to highly experienced teachers and executive. The staff retention rate is high and any vacancies that have occurred have been through retirement or increased student numbers.

Teacher qualifications
All teaching staff meet the professional requirements for teaching in NSW public schools.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Qualifications</th>
<th>% of staff</th>
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<td>Degree or Diploma</td>
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<td>Postgraduate</td>
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<tr>
<td>NSW Institute of Teachers Accreditation</td>
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Professional learning and teacher accreditation

In 2014, staff participated in a range of professional learning opportunities addressing the needs of individuals, small groups and whole staff. Fortnightly afternoon staff meetings, five school development days, fortnightly stage grade meetings, numerous external courses occurring both during school hours and outside school time, and collegial sharing and support facilitated quality professional learning.

Teachers from Murray Farm PS attended a Positive Behaviour for Engaged Learning (PBEL) course, with the intention of implementing it across the school. Senior executive attended Principal and DP network meetings and DEC courses, Responding to Emergency Situations and Difficult Conversations. Network meetings addressing issues in EALD, in library and in boy’s literacy were also well attended. Teachers involved in the bilingual program attended network meetings for language teachers and a Professional Learning Conference for Teachers of Japanese.

Murray Farm PS teachers attended a choir workshop, author talks, visual art workshops, autism workshops and an inservice addressing the needs of the hearing impaired. Teachers also worked on the implementation of the English and Mathematics Curriculums and the new Science Curriculum and units in stage grade meetings. The whole staff was involved in inservicing in relation to technology, including, current programs, Mathletics, IWB’s and saving information to the school server.

New Scheme Teachers

The New Scheme Teachers held whole group meetings twice per term with their supervisor (AP Year 2) to discuss their accreditation and development. They also met with their Mentors to discuss different teaching ideas. They attended several inservice courses to broaden their knowledge and skills.

Three teachers achieved accreditation in 2014. Three others are working towards their accreditation in 2015.

Financial summary

This summary covers funds for operating costs and does not involve expenditure areas such as permanent salaries, building and major maintenance.

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<td>Tied funds</td>
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<td>Interest</td>
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<td>Canteen</td>
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<td>Total income</td>
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<table>
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<tr>
<th><strong>Expenditure</strong></th>
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<td>Teaching &amp; learning</td>
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<td>Balance carried forward</td>
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A full copy of the school’s 2014 financial statement is tabled at the annual general meeting of the P & C. Further details concerning the statement can be obtained by contacting the school.

School performance 2014

CREATIVE ARTS

Murray Farm Public School continues to provide quality education in the area of Creative Arts. All students are given the opportunity to be involved in a variety of creative and performing arts activities each week. These include dance and movement, visual arts, drama and music.

Throughout the year students participated in Creative and Practical Arts Groups, which were
created on a stage basis. They rotate every few weeks through the activities. The activities included music appreciation, singing, dance, drama, percussion and recorder. Art and craft activities are taught within the classroom setting.

Opportunities are available for participation in specialist performance groups. This year there was a Stage 1, Stage 2, Stage 3 and a Boy’s Dance Group. There are three bands; the Training Band, an Intermediate Band, a Concert Band, as well as 3 string ensembles. We have three choirs; the Stage 1 Choir, the Stage 2 Choir and the Opera House Choir. We also had three Stage 1 recorder groups. A number of students attend paid, private music tuition that is conducted by external teachers at school.

The bands, string ensembles, choirs, dance groups and recorder groups have performed during the year at a number of events, which include Grandparents Day, the Cracker Carnival, the Hills Performing Arts Festival at Penrith, Kindergarten Orientation Day, Presentation Night and weekly and special assemblies. The Opera House Choir performed as a part of the massed choir at the Opera House.

The bands took part in the NSW Bands Festival. The Concert Band won gold and the Intermediate and Beginner bands won silver. This year the band members were involved in a weekend Band Camp held at the school. The Concert Band performed at this year’s Sydney Royal Easter Show. Band members were also invited to attend and participate in the Muirfield High School Ensemble Evening. The Dolce String Ensemble was awarded first place at the Penrith Eisteddfod and the Vivace String Ensemble was awarded second place at the Ryde Eisteddfod. At the Australian School Orchestral Festival the Dolce Ensemble received a Gold Award and the Andante Ensemble received a Silver Award.

Examples of the student’s artwork are displayed in classrooms, the school hall, the library and the office foyer. A number of students were selected to participate in Operation Art. During 2014, a music program continued to be embedded into the RFF program across the school. Professional Development workshops were provided in the Creative Arts area to assist the implementation of new ideas, skills and techniques for use in the classroom.

SPORT

At Murray Farm Public School sport and physical activity continue to play an important part in the overall development of each student.

During 2014, students in Years K-2 have learnt new skills and games through Gross Motor and Sportspro lessons, which teach gymnastics techniques, games skills and flexibility. The Gross Motor program was well supported by parent helpers. The PDHPE Committee purchased relevant equipment and materials to allow these programs to be successful.

Students in Years 3-6 participated in weekly sport activities and Sportspro lessons. Athletics skills, gymnastics styles and games, such as cricket, soccer, hockey, basketball and European handball were experienced. The weekly competitions were keenly contested and students awarded certificates for great skill and sportsmanship.

Throughout the winter months, our PSSA teams represented the school in AFL, Soccer, Rugby League, Netball and Newcombe Ball. Teamwork, encouragement, developing skills and having fun were important elements of PSSA competitions. The Junior A Netball team won the Grand Final, and the Senior A Netball team, the Junior Newcombe Ball team and the Junior Soccer team were runners-up in their Grand Final. The Senior B Netball team reached the semi finals.

In 2014 Murray Farm was successful in winning the Zone Athletics Carnival. Students performed credibly at the Zone Swimming, Cross Country and Athletics Carnivals, many achieving personal best results.

The following students represented Castle Hill Zone at Sydney West:
Swimming – Arya, Maya, Sophie, Lily, Alana, Jade, Esther

Cross Country – Alana, Sophie, Lily, David, Samantha, Ciara, Jacintta, Gabrielle.

Athletics – Alana, Lily, Jessica, Anthony, David, Ammon, the Junior Girl’s Relay Team (Sophie, Jessica, Lisa, Lily, Aima)

Soccer – Alana, Tarsha.

Sydney West Reps at State Titles:
Swimming – Alana, Arya, Maya, Sophie, Lily.
Athletics – Lily, Anthony.
Hockey – Alana, Sophie.

Public Speaking

2014 has been a successful year for Public Speaking at Murray Farm Public School. This year all students from Stages 2 and 3 were given the opportunity to compete in the Multicultural Perspectives Public Speaking Competition and the Hills Network Public Speaking Competition. The winners of the school finals represented Murray Farm Public School at the two competitions and also had opportunities to improve their public speaking skills by attending workshops during lunchtimes or before school.

In the Multicultural Perspectives Public Speaking Competition, Chloe and Athavan represented Stage 2 and Amardeep and Jyothi represented Stage 3. Jyothi and Athavan both won their division at the Local Final held at Cherrybrook Public School and went on to compete in the Northern Sydney Regional Finals at the Arts Unit, Lewisham. They spoke eloquently on their chosen topics.

The Hills Network Public Speaking Competition was held at Glenhaven Public School with Jude and Kasia representing Stage 2 and Amardeep and Esther representing Stage 3. The representatives spoke well on their given subjects and Esther was awarded Highly Commended.

The standard of the speeches at all levels of the competitions is to be commended.

International Competitions and Assessments for Schools (UNSW ICAS)

During 2014 students were able to test their skills and knowledge in Spelling, English and Mathematics against other students from Australia and New Zealand. In the Spelling competition, 26 students attained Merit, 107 Credit, 55 Distinction and 17 High Distinction.

In the English competition, 34 students were awarded Merit, 110 Credit, 42 Distinction and 7 High Distinction. In the Mathematics competition, 35 achieved Merit, 97 Credit, 87 Distinction and 19 High Distinction.

2 students were presented Competition Medals; Jordan (Spelling) and Timothy (Mathematics).

Premiers Spelling Bee

Four students, Jordan, Justin, Daniel and Isaac, participated in the regional final.

Premiers Reading Challenge

186 students from Kindergarten to Year 6 successfully completed the challenge.

Youth Writing Competition

25 awards were presented to 17 Murray Farm PS students. Esther was a finalist for the fourth year in a row.

Academic achievements

NAPLAN

In the National Assessment Program, the results across the Years 3, 5, 7 and 9 literacy and numeracy assessments are reported on a scale from Band 1 to Band 10.

The achievement scale represents increasing levels of skills and understandings demonstrated in these assessments.
Year 3: from Band 1 (lowest) to Band 6 (highest for Year 3)
Year 5: from Band 3 (lowest) to Band 8 (highest for Year 5)

Murray Farm Public School has continued to maintain its standard of excellence in literacy and numeracy. The 2014 NAPLAN results for our students are outstanding.

The My School website provides detailed information and data for national literacy and numeracy testing (NAPLAN). To view the data for Murray Farm Public School, click on the link http://www.myschool.edu.au and enter the school name in the Find a school and select GO to access the school data.

Significant programs and initiatives – Policy and equity funding

Aboriginal education

In 2014, Murray Farm Public School was committed to promoting the educational achievements of all Indigenous students and to enhance the knowledge and understanding of all students about Aboriginal Australia.

Our Aboriginal Education policies and practices are current and are aligned to the new curriculum. Our teachers regularly include the Aboriginal cultural perspective in the teaching content across the curriculum. These documents are available on the school server.

This year, the committee undertook projects to support our dedication to Aboriginal education. NAIDOC Week was celebrated with the visit of Reuben Andrew, an Indigenous performer, and the sale of Aboriginal wristbands and stationary packs. Murray Farm also participated in the Great Book Swap which raised $1050 for the Indigenous Literacy Foundation.

This year, Murray Farm Public School had two students who identified as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander. Personalised Learning Plans (PLPs) were maintained for these students in response to recommendations of the 2004 Aboriginal Education Review.

These two students were nominated for their academic and creative achievements to the AECG (Aboriginal Education Consultative Group) by their teachers. Their achievements were recognised with a certificate.

Several Stage 3 students entered the Guringai Festival Reconciliation Writing Competition, with the aim to promote reconciliation amongst young Australians. Their efforts were highly commended.

Multicultural education and anti-racism

Murray Farm Public School encourages and embraces all cultures and places great emphasis on developing values of inclusion and respect for all cultural differences in the school and the community. Our enrolment of Non-English Speaking Background learners now comprises 75% of the school population. The 3.2 EALD teacher allocation has ensured that these learners are provided with the appropriate support to develop in all aspects of English.

Through individual lessons and programs the skills and language development of the EALD students have been extended. Special events such as Harmony Day and Multicultural Day have promoted the inclusion of all cultures.

Japanese Bilingual Program

Murray Farm Public School continues to receive generous support from the Japan Foundation, which enables extra teaching time and the purchasing of extra resources. During the year, the school was fortunate to display some of the program and skills of the students to visiting lecturers and guests from Chuba University.

2014 saw further expansion of the Japanese bilingual program into Year 5. The Japanese team has continued to work on the Japanese Literacy Continuum and different units of work in Science and HSIE to support the future program.

The buddy system, where advanced students assist and read Japanese books and play games with Kindergarten students, has been a huge success.
Japanese LOTE

In 2014 students who are in the non-bilingual program received Japanese instruction in weekly forty-minute lessons. Students were exposed to various aspects of Japanese culture and language. The two Challenge classes (4/3R and 6/5R) undertook two Japanese LOTE lessons per week with added literacy.

Student Leadership

Opportunities for student leadership continue to be a focus at Murray Farm. The Buddy Program, the successful functioning of the Student Representative Council (SRC), the responsibilities our elected prefects undertake, and the opportunities provided to students in classrooms and in representative groups and teams are some of the ways the development of student leadership is facilitated. The Play Leaders Program, which is led and supported by a group of teachers, provides students in years 5 and 6 the opportunity to involve themselves in leading playground games and activities for the kindergarten, year one and year two students during lunchtimes, has continued to be a huge success.

School planning and evaluation
2012—2014

School evaluation processes

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

- Feedback from students, staff and parents in interviews, discussions and reports.
- Collection of data from surveys of students, staff and parents.
- Review of NAPLAN data and student assessments in each KLA.

School planning 2012-2014:

School priority 1 - Curriculum

Progress on 2013 Targets

1. To improve student performance in numeracy; focusing on the number and algebra strand.

Our 2014 achievements include:

- Continued to in-service K-6 staff on the implementation of the NSW Mathematics syllabus for the Australian Curriculum
- Began the development of a K-6 scope and sequence for Mathematics
- Continued creating differentiated mathematics programs using the outcomes of the NSW Mathematics Syllabus for the Australian Curriculum
- Updated Semester 2 Mathematics assessment tasks and placed them on the school’s shared drive as a Mathematics Committee resource
- Continued to use Mathletics in classrooms to enhance student learning
- Purchased classroom resources based on the 2014 audit to support the teaching of the new curriculum
- 75% of Year 3 students in NAPLAN bands 5 and 6 and 73% of Year 5 students in NAPLAN bands 7 and 8 in Numeracy

2. To develop creativity in students’ writing.

Our 2014 achievements include:

- Continued to in-service K-6 staff on the implementation of the NSW English syllabus for the Australian Curriculum.
- Updated Writing and Grammar assessment tasks and placed them on to the school’s shared drive as an English Committee resource
- Creating differentiated Writing programs using the syllabus outcomes and based on the students’ needs
- Sharing and displaying creative writing examples within the classroom and the library
- Increased quality in creative writing in class and in competitions
- 81% of Year 3 students in NAPLAN bands 5 and 6 in Reading and 62% of Year 5 students in NAPLAN bands 7 and 8
- 72% of Year 3 students in NAPLAN bands 5 and 6 and 60% of Year 5 students in NAPLAN bands 7 and 8 in Writing

Outcomes from 2012–2014
Implement the NSW syllabuses for the Australian Curriculum in English and Mathematics.
Trial the new Science & Technology Syllabus.

Evidence of achievement of outcomes in 2014:
- Teaching/Learning Programs reflect the new English/Mathematics outcomes.
- Student results in Literacy and Numeracy have increased in the top two bands.
- Students are displaying enjoyment and greater understanding of Science outcomes participating in the hands-on lessons.

Strategies to achieve these outcomes in 2014
- Sharing of ideas, units of work and assessment tasks in stage/grade meetings.
- Inservice the staff on new Science outcomes and activities.
- Purchase new resources for the Science units and activities.

School priority 2
Leadership
Outcomes from 2012–2014
Increase the culture of shared leadership, ownership and facilitation of programs operating within the school.

Evidence of progress towards outcomes in 2014:
- Staff leading and taking responsibility for KLA’s.
- Staff leading and taking responsibility for other school programs
- Parents taking responsibility for the School Band Program and The String Ensemble organisation.

Strategies to achieve these outcomes in 2014:
- Discussions with Stage/Grade to determine staff interested in leading KLA’s and school programs.
- Meeting with interested parents and the Band Coordinator and String Ensemble Team to organise leaders for each group.
- Survey staff, parents and students to determine current practices and future directions.

School priority 3
Technology
Outcomes from 2012–2014
Increase learning experiences, which incorporate the use of various forms of technology.

Evidence of progress towards outcomes in 2014:
- Students using computers more to gather information and present it in interesting slideshows, reports, pictures and tables.
- Students and teachers using the IWB’s more in their teaching/learning activities.
- Teachers’ programs reflect the increasing use of technology in their teaching.

Strategies to achieve these outcomes in 2014:
- Inservice staff and parents on the use of IWB’s and computers/ipads.
- Purchase more IWB’s, computers and ipads for use.
- Sharing of software with other staff in stage/grade meetings.

Parent/caregiver, student, and teacher satisfaction
In 2014, the school sought the opinions of parents, students and teachers about the school.
Their responses are presented below.
Data was collected through an online survey, Quality School Life. All parents and teachers, and a random selection of students from Years 3 to 6, were given the opportunity to participate.
Findings and conclusions

Murray Farm Public School is seen as a welcoming school with friendly teachers by each of the three groups surveyed.

94% of the students ‘agreed’ or ‘strongly agreed’ that they felt successful at school and were encouraged by their teachers to achieve their best. 95% of students felt they were treated fairly by their teachers. 94% of students and 92% of parents ‘agreed’ or ‘strongly agreed’ that they are challenged at school and are learning for the future.

100% of teachers surveyed enjoy coming to school each day and believe they provide their students with effective strategies to manage the work they do and work they may meet in the future.

The responses to all statements were consistently positive in all groups.

Future Directions
2015-2017 School Plan

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

About this report

In preparing this report, the self-evaluation committee has gathered information from evaluations conducted during the year and analysed other information about the school’s practices and student learning outcomes. The self-evaluation committee and school planning committee have determined targets for the school’s future development.

Adrian Pearson Principal
Fran Koltai P&C President
Terry Gorrie Deputy Principal
Sharon Rennie Staff Representative
Troy Wurth Staff Representative

School contact information
Murray Farm Public School (4401)
Tracey Avenue CARLINGFORD 2118
Ph: 9871 5952

Fax: 9872 1301
Email: murrayfarm-p.school@det.nsw.edu.au
Web: [www.murrayfarm-p.schools.nsw.edu.au/]

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: