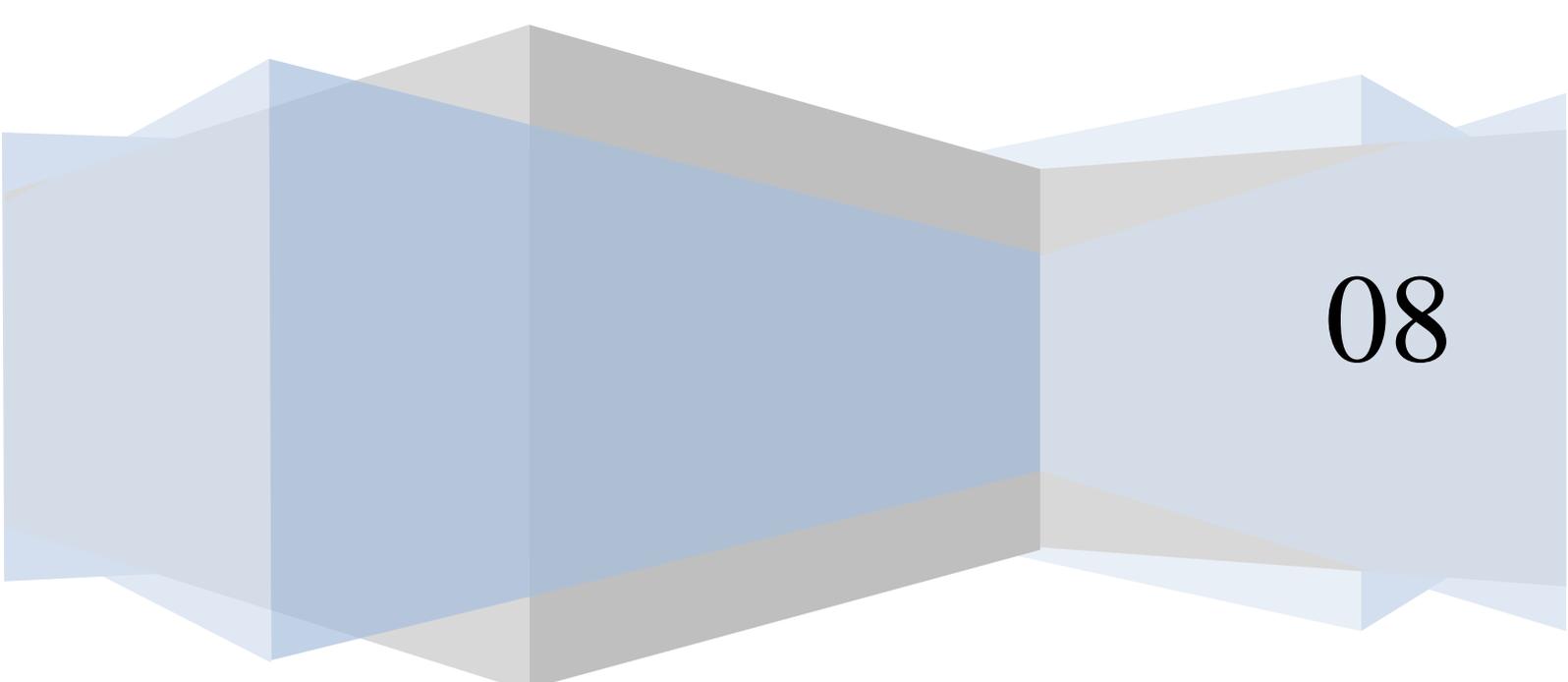


GOVERNING BODY

SCHOOL REVIEW

Woodbury Boston Primary School



08

WOODBURY BOSTON PRIMARY SCHOOL REVIEW

NOVEMBER 2008

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Over a period of a month, we have surveyed staff, students and parents to allow feedback for strengths and weaknesses.

The staff were presented a general questionnaire developed by Macquarie university. It consisted of over 100 questions with possible answers on a scale of 1-5. The parents were phone interviewed and given 5 open ended questions. The students were given a written survey of both open ended and closed questions.

Overall, these result paints a very positive picture of the school and it's management. See attached results. Various respondents have commented their appreciation for the opportunity to give input. We feel this is an important part of community building and accountability.

It is our suggestion that this be done annually. Third term is a good time to do this as it allows time for a thorough picture of the year, time for compilation and allows suggestions to be implemented if necessary by the beginning of the following year. In future, we also suggest that the questions be standardised further to allow comparisons to be made between staff, students and parents. The staff review should be more customised and condensed.

The parent interview, was particularly important and allowed parents to express opinions without constraints. The GB allowed a third party presence being slightly removed from day to day interactions. It is also suggested that parents that are withdrawing their child from school be given an opportunity to voice an opinion. This should be termed an exit interview.

PARENT REVIEW

All but 2 families were contactable and interviewed.

What are 3 things that you think the school does well?

Teaching reading – good at bringing books home	Non- violent communication	Out and about days
Adventure activities	Mixed age classrooms	Empower kids
Adventure program	Quality education	Caring for the inner individual
Adventure program eg. Camps quest canoe,	Communication and social skills	Independant learning, encourage children to think for themselves and seek out learning
Caters for individual differences	Rex provides great leadership and excellent educational focus	Support staff very good
Child feels empowered	Respect for environment, themselves and others	Supported for self directed learning
Communivcation – the teachers are well trained in this and also encourage children to give their input eg Parliament	Out and abouts and bush setting	Rex and Diane do a great job and mixed age groups a plus
Deals with children as individuals	Level of education to meet the child	Outings and awareness of the community and the environment
Encourages and demonstrates respect and equality amongst students and between students and teachers	Sensitive to the needs of individuals	Encourages an enjoyment of learning through inspiring children both in classrooms and on out and about days
Ethos	Multi level classrooms	
Every child is cared for and important.	Non classroom environments to stimulate learning. Eg out and about and adventure program.	Child engaged in learning. Learning is fun.
Excursions and out and abouts	Communicaion and parliament	Relationship with teachers and teachers aides very good
Focus on childs individual level	Focus on relationships	Newsletter
Good at letting kids be kids	Good communication with parents and within the school and that this has got better in recent years	Likes small community environment and sensitivity to the individual and the family
Inclusive of the kids. Also responsive to concerns and needs	Present mandatory curriculum in an engaging way	Music and drama performance is fantastic for such a small school
Listen to children and give them a voice	Less restrictive and allow children to be individual	Parents are allowed to be involved and have their say.
Newsletter	Welcoming environment for parents in classroom/excursions	Flexibility in age structure of classrooms

Parents always welcome	Openminded to talk about any issue	Child learn to problem solve
Philosophy/Ethos		
Rex is great	Allowed to learn at their own pace	discipline
The atmosphere and the ethos	Much effort into individual needs	The teaching and structure of the school
Too many tings to list – outdoor and extracurricular	Child centred and allowed to develop at own ability	Multi level ag groups encourage confidence and interpersonal skills
Treats the kids well	Allows children to learn at their own level	Allows for individuality
Validates kids – allows them to express themselves and their opinions	Adults make good allies	Conflict resolution and decision making

What are 3 areas that the school could improve on?

As with all shools their could be more awareness on kids with disabilities	Nothing else	
Can't think of any		
Child need some manners. Their attitude can be very rude	Not enough peers	School has a bag stigma for "bad" kids
Clearer follow up on actions at GB/admin level or at least being informed that actions have occurred	Stronger response to bullying (commented that both these areas have improved in recent years)	
Concerns that they will have difficulty adjusting to secondary school		
Could reinforce the ethos. Eg, the playground can be very competitive and some of the games a bit violent. Would like to see co operative instead of competitive	Like to see the kids have more of a say on what they are learning. They are guided too much by the teacher	Standard improved for the food quality.
Feels children with special needs would benefit from more attention from the teachers as well as the aides but acknowledges this is difficult	More to do at luchtime	
Getting more parents involved	A bit more sport	A stronger arts program using outside experts. Eg. Pottery, costumes, circus, puppetry
Head lice! Self expression good but could hair be tied up, more checking at home	Swearing by older students in playground	More acknowledgemet of fundraising/ alternatives for low income earners to fundraise as a means of offsetting fees
Improve child attitude. Often lack of respect and manners especially to adults.	Would like to see a quieter junior classroom. Often so many distractions and feel that productivity could be better.	Public perception

More children ideally 60	Improved profile in community. Eg. The hippie school	Structures to support the high demands on staff. More DOT time for Rex and reduced responsibility on aides when he is on DOT time.
More choice and self directed learning	More resources for the teachers and books for the children if budget allowed	Stronger role for older children in the playground as carers
More resources esp learning games	Poor provisions in home corner and cooking area	
More sport – important to learn how to win and lose	Difficult for parents in K and PP when out and about is on	Sometimes newsletter can be confusing
Not enough attention to kids that need it. Often the individual detail is lost both academically and socially		
nothing		
Outside perception of school	Lack of community amongst the parents	Recruitment of more students
Problem children get too much attention	Improve environmental thinking eg. Improve recycling	Basics not reinforced eg. Spelling and maths
Reports are too “fluffy” Would like a grading	Teachers aide can show too much authority and discipline	Lack of correction in work.
Staff in senior room are not caring, stern, opinionated	Doesn't appreciate phone calls at 9.30pm at night	
Wonders how well WB does at meeting the needs of academically challenged students given difficulties with resources but suspects it still does better than most		
Would like to see more finished (and unfinished) work coming home throughout term	Building student numbers and fundraising	Encourage perception that the school is an alternative for all children
Would like to see more parent community	Difficult to do after school curriculum activities	
Would like to see the teaching style match the philosophy. The teachers aides make up their own rules and conflict with the philosophy. They are often insulting and control/ boss the children around. Aides aren't qualified.	More children. The social network is very small and classroom can be dominated by the biggest class.	Would like to see child challenged in areas that they enjoy

Do you feel sufficiently informed about your child's academic and social development and does this meet with your expectations?

Feedback detailed and appreciate teachers' availability and high levels of communication	Yes, the school helps students to live up to their potential
Feel in the dark. Would like more frequent feedback.	Overall happy with it
Feel sufficiently informed	Has exceeded expectations
Happy with reporting and feel well informed	Happy
Like the letter format. It is better than a level and focus on what the child can do.	Happy with the development
Likes the report structure and that communication that goes with it	Feels the child is given good opportunities to realise potential
No feedback	Would like to see more challenges
Not easy to know where they are. Would like to know more so can help weaknesses	Happy with social development
Not really informed	Would like to see more hands on maths activities and learning to problem solve
Not really involved and would like to be	Very happy with progress and has seen a turn around in his social skills
Reports are too "fluffy" Would like a grading Not really sure where they are at	The standard needs to be raised. Children work is often not corrected and therefore they accept the "that will do" attitude. If corrected, they could raise the standard.
Teacher always accessible so can be informed when one wants to be	Happy
Teacher is always available	Pleased with the progress
Very happy about being informed and teacher is always accessible	Yes
Very happy with report/interview and feel that the teachers are readily available for further feedback	Happy, feel that an interest in learning is being rekindled and already resulting in better achievements
Very happy with reporting and interview plus availability of teachers	Expectations being met but pointed out that her child was very young
Well informed	Happy with development
Would like some mid term feedback. Otherwise it can be 3-4 months before you know if there are any weaknesses	Disappointed with spelling
Would like to see a level. Like to know if child needs help	She is hopeful
Would like to see some work home during term. It seems a long time between seeing what work is being done. Would like more feedback, particularly on weaknesses	Happy with social and arts. Would like to see some more maths and reading. Would like to see higher standards for children to aim for.
Yes	Yes
Yes	Yes
Yes	Has exceeded expectations, Deanne has been fantastic
Yes and also strongly feels that it is the parents	Feels academic and social standards are good and that

responsibility to stay informed	they also cater to individual needs
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Do you feel sufficiently informed about the school management and does this meet with your expectations?

	Not interested in the school management
	Far exceeds
As parent, don't need to be informed	Happy with the GB. At school there is too much focus on the positive. Life is up and down and child need to accept failure. There is less worth if errors aren't picked up.
Don't know much	If child happy don't need to know much
Don't know much	Happy with how things are going
Feel it is going well	
Feel teachers do an excellent job and communication from the office very good	
Feel the GB and Rex all do their job extremely well	
Feels a bit out of touch	Office and GB seem to run smoothly
Generally happy and teachers excellent	
If things are going well, then happy not to know	Staff seem happy
Is informed	Happy
Know very little about it.	Only want to know if things are not going well.
No idea about GB management and is hopeful	There doesn't seem to be any protocol for the staff
Not well informed but also haven't made an effort	Happy with how things are going
Seems to be doing fine	
The staff are very team oriented	
Very impressed with management especially knowing the low student numbers and the implications for fees etc –“give my compliments to Rex and the GB!”	
Would like to know more	Rex is over worked
Would like to know more but acknowledge that haven't been to meetings etc	
Would like to know where we are at with implementation of the policy/values practices	No problems with Rex and staff. Do have concerns about the school sustainability as numbers are pretty low.

How does your child feel about their school experience?

Average	
Extremely happy	
Extremely happy	
Extremely happy	
Extremely happy. The first time a child in the family has been happy to go to school.	
Generally happy	
Generally happy	
Generally very happy, sometimes he has social issues	
Happy overall	
Loves it	
Loves it and hates school holidays	
Loves the school and thinks very highly of Rex	
Miserable	
Overall great	
Overall happy	
Overall happy	
Overall very happy	
Overall very happy though one or two occasions of feeling frightened by an older student.	
Pretty happy, by year 7 can be feeling a bit bored	
Pretty positive, one or two incidences of bullying but these dealt with effectively by staff.	
Up and down, would rather play than work and would like to see more swings and longer playtimes	
Very happy	
Very positive	
Younger kids love it. Older child would like more peers	

SUMMARY of parent interviews

1. What the school does well

- Excursions, out and about days and camps
- Children respected as individuals and allowed to develop at their own pace
- Communication- Teachers and staff communicate well with children and parents and everyone encouraged to have input and make feelings known
- Newsletter and parliament seen as a real strength
- Teaching standards are high and catered to a diversity of needs
- Ethos/ philosophy

2. Where the school could improve

- By recruiting more students both for resources and because of small number of peers in some age groups
- Improving public perception ie sometimes seen as ‘the hippy school’ or one for kids who don’t fit the system
- More classroom attention to students from teacher as well as teachers aides- parents of both children with identified learning needs and others said this so perhaps difficult to manage
- No-one expressed concern about fees
- Swearing and bullying out of the classroom is an issue
- Focus on one language for LOTE program
- More facilities for art
- Stronger school community of parents both socially and contributing to the school

3. Do you feel sufficiently informed about your child’s academic and social development and does it meet expectations?

- Most people felt that they were informed and that they could always ask for more information – teachers seen as very approachable
- A number felt concerned about report structure – ‘fluffy’ would like a grade not for comparing students to each other but to be able to judge more clearly if their child had a weakness in a particular area or was falling behind in a particular subject or not putting the effort in – grade for effort.
- Several requested more work coming home during term.
- Overall most people felt that development met expectations.

4. Do you feel sufficiently informed about the school management and does it meet your expectations

- Most felt sufficiently informed and that it was their responsibility to find out more if they wanted to
- Most felt that the GB, teachers and staff do very well on the budget they have
- Suggestion that activities of GB could be promoted a bit more in the newsletter and parents reminded that minutes are available
- Suggestion that rumours need to be managed on occasion

5. How does your child feel about their school experience?

- Generally very happy

STAFF REVIEW

Staff : 2 teachers, 4 aides and 1 admin

	STRENGTHS	AREAS TO IMPROVE
School communication	Communication is brilliant. Rex is a fantastic listener and leader and supporter. The staff are all very happy with the communication. Staff meetings are working really well. (Rex rated 3, everyone else 5 out of 5) Workshop at PD day at start of term really good	New staff would benefit from a job description and a clear interpretation of the ethos.
Job satisfaction	Everybody shows a very high job satisfaction (ave score 91%)	General pattern that staff with less history with the school would like policies communicated better. New staff would benefit from job expectation and a little extra praise. Wages could be improved.
Occupational stress	Stress levels are mild/moderate. An average score of 2.1 out of 5 or 43% with nobody rating higher than a 3. There were many areas that staff felt very little stress.	Discipline and dealing with constant misbehaviour rated the highest stress. Personal failings had a range from 1 to 4 out of 5 with two members rating a 4. Maintaining standards created mild stress
Job commitment	The staff all really enjoy working at the school. Everybody is committed to working very hard for the school and are all very proud to tell others they are working there.	Mixed responses (1-4) on considering leaving if the opportunity arose.

SUMMARY of staff interviews

I think we should be very happy with the way the staff are working together. There were very few issues that arose and they appear very happy. I think it's important that we try to maintain these findings and keep the communication at a very high level. Well done staff. Well done Rex. !!!!!

I think that this emphasises the importance to clarify and uphold our school ethos.

STUDENT REVIEW

A sample of 33 students was surveyed. They were asked to include their age, however only 7 students did, so I have not analysed this factor too much.

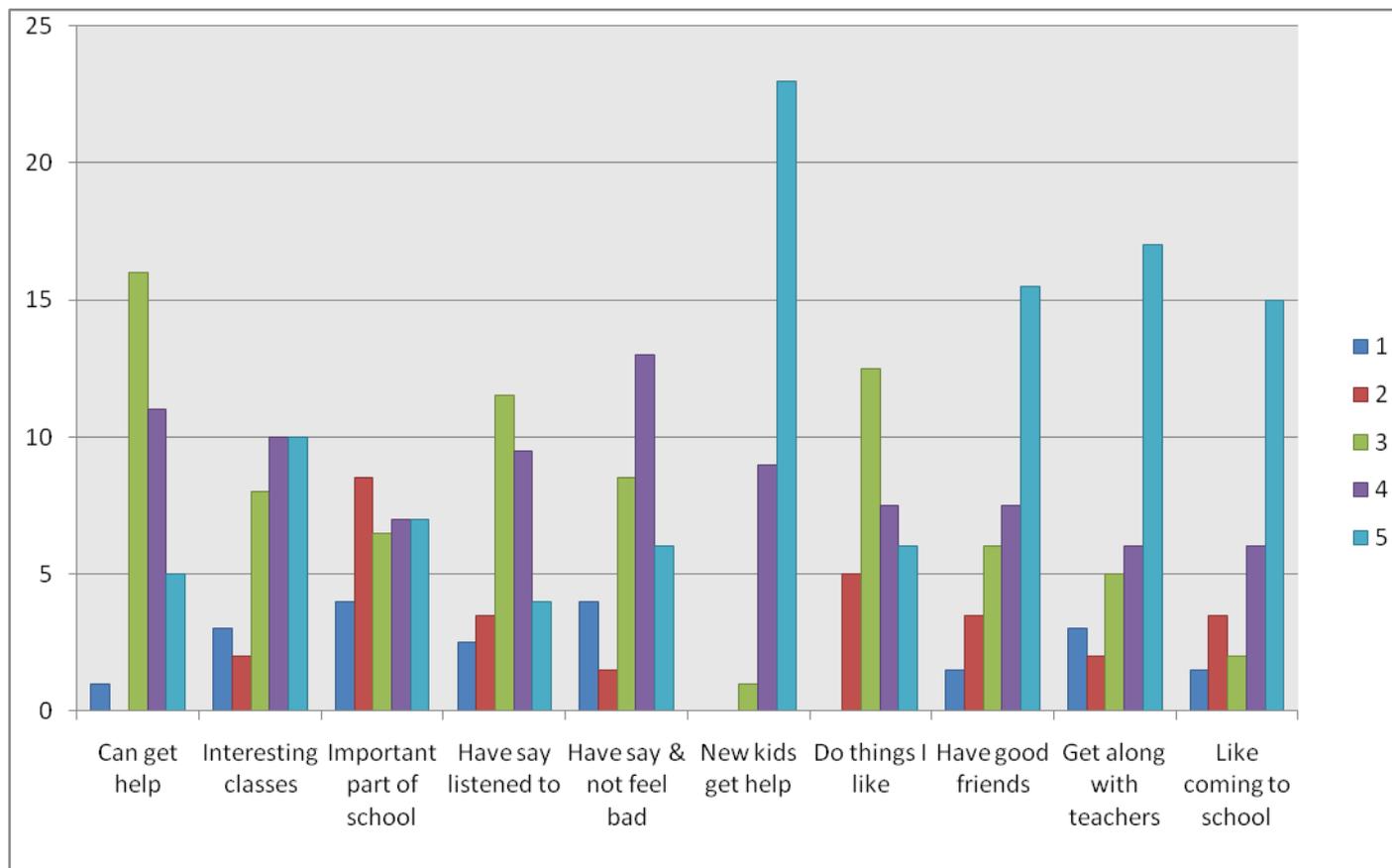
Part A:

The 10 questions asked were:

1. I can get help at school when I need it
2. Classes at school are interesting
3. Do you feel you are an important part of the school
4. I can have my say and are listened to
5. I can say things at school and not feel bad
6. New kids get help when they come to the school
7. I get a chance to do the things I like when I come to school
8. I make good friends at school
9. I get along with the teachers at school
10. I like coming to WB school

The response options were:

1. Never
2. Can be
3. Sometimes
4. Usually
5. All the time



Part B

We asked 4 open ended questions. Not all of the students or questions were answered.

Things that I would like to see stay at the school are:

swings	11
people/friends	10
everything	4
play equipment (other than swing)	3
bush/environment	2

Things that I would like to see changed are:

bullies	4	(2 of these answers were from 8 yr olds)
new kids	3	
broken things fixed	3	(e.g. branches)
friends	2	
Terran	1	
sharing	1	

toilets	1
lollies	1
whole school camp	1
times tables	1
inc Hardness of work	1

Things that I need help with are:

maths	3
writing	3
spelling	3
friendship	3
work	3
problems	3
english	2
being bad	2
nothing	2
drawing	1
rope swing	1

Things that I am good at are:

maths	6
sport	4
friends	4
writing	3
english	2
everything	2
making things	2
art	1
science	1
playing	1
reading	1
drawing	1

SUMMARY of student interviews

Strengths

- New students get plenty of help
- High majority enjoy coming to school

- High majority have good friends
- High majority get along with the teachers. (An interesting finding with this question was that the 3 students that circled “never” and 1 that circled “can be” all mentioned the word Val and one mention also of Rex. My interpretation is that they all like Val.)
- Classes seem to interest most students
- Swings and playground equipment is popular
- Maths seems to be a strong subject

Average result

- Student get to do the things they like
- Students get to have their say and not feel bad

Areas to improve

- We could improve on making students feel like they are important part of the school
- Perhaps a bit of room for improvement for students to get help
- Perhaps reduce the bullying