

CHAIRPERSON'S REPORT

Welcome to all present, especially the members of new families to the school.

In order to prepare my annual report for the year 2007 I found it most useful to read through the weekly newsletters, within which I found a veritable treasure trove of experiences which our students shared.

Whole school camp; senior sailing camp; Out and About days incorporating varied activities from cuddling animals at the Alpaca Farm, to listening to writers such as Jackie French read their books and visiting Denmark Hospital and St John Ambulance centre; lessons in surfing and ocean awareness, archery, guitar, recorder and cooking; delicious shared meals on canteen days; LOTE immersion days studying language and culture of other countries; senior Quest; Musica Viva; school concert; Fancy Dress Dance; special lunch combined with gifts from the school to the students; seniors' Graduation dinner; Frenchman Bay picnic and end of year celebration ... and these were in amongst all the usual 'stuff of schools' such as reading, spelling, writing, maths and science!

None of the above would have happened without the indefatigable and special people who make up the Woodbury Boston staff.

In trying to find a theme for this report I reflected on the state of the world today. How personal agendas and greed seem to feature in what is being reported daily through the media. The term 'ethics' came to mind and I pondered the apparent lack of ethics in the behaviour of those who strut the world's stage. What is ethical about waging war on one's neighbour? Or in falsifying election results in order to achieve victory? Or in misrepresenting business dealings to send stock markets reeling? Or in demanding compensation for time spent in prison for apparently killing another person when all one did was just kick and bash him? The list is endless, and it is paraded before our eyes and it assails our ears and consciousness on a daily basis so that we just stop listening. 'What can we do about it?' we all say.

People talk about going 'back to basics' as a solution. But what does that mean?

I believe that what we offer in this school is our attempt to go back to 'the basics'. Kindness, compassion, consideration, fun, joy and love. These are the ethical ingredients of life.

I believe everything about our school is ethical.

Our curriculum is comprehensive and up-to-date. Children attending here do not 'miss out' on any of the essential aspects of the formal curriculum. In fact it is greatly enhanced through the ethic of honest communication and consideration for the individual.

We feel it is imperative that students are challenged through a 'rites of passage' process to step outside their comfort zone, to tackle adventurous activities, so they learn about themselves and their ability to overcome fear, and thereby experience the thrill of accomplishment and the headiness of personal success. It is ethical to help students to achieve personal growth in all areas of endeavour. I wonder what shaped

those brave souls on the Sea Shepherd, who are part of GreenPeace and literally 'throw themselves' into saving the whales. Their commitment is stunning.

Ours is truly child-centred learning and while focussing on children, we also focus on relationships. Children need to learn how to 'get on' with everyone around them; parents, siblings, peers, teachers, neighbours, those in authority and even the bullies of this world. Compassionate and co-operative relationships are vital in a child's life. We offer consideration, courtesy and respect to the children and, it goes without saying, that we expect it back from them. They are our friends.

The saying that 'it takes a village to raise a child' is still true. We hope that parents realise their importance in being seen around and supporting the school 'village'; children need to know that the school is positively viewed by their family members. Thank you to all those parents who have given of their time and energies to the many needs of the school. It is ethical to involve parents and families in the education of their children. They are our friends

Fortunately, all our staff members believe in and support the ethos of the school. Their views and ideas in problem-solving are invaluable and they are seen as partners in the day-to-day management of the school. Rex has continued to accomplish wonderful things for everyone involved – students, staff, parents and Governing Body members. It is ethical to promote consensus and harmony amongst the staff members. They are our friends.

The Governing Body too, is a group of parents and community members who believe in the school and work to ensure it continues in a sustainable and positive manner. Our meetings are based on discussion, deliberation and, hopefully, consensus in all problem-solving. I am so grateful to the generosity of energy and serious intent of all the GB members in 'hanging in there' at all meetings, especially when they go over time or discussions become trying. They are our friends.

This school has always pursued ethical means of fundraising. At no time will you be asked to sell 10 kilograms of chocolate Easter eggs so that the school can buy a new computer network. We are into selling socks, flower bulbs, cakes, sausage sizzles, spring rolls (sadly, no more) and raffle tickets, or asking you to coerce your friends into attending a musical soiree or quiz night.

In conclusion, I hope that what you know of this school makes you want to support it in any way you can. We always need people to put their hands up to take on new tasks – some small, some gigantic. We treat everyone the same way, in that we recognise and respect their individual differences. We set heaps of precedents. Children understand that someone else may need that little bit more consideration, or space, or time or whatever, to help them along the way. Children are very forgiving of our foibles and faults, as long as they feel that they are listened to and liked for who they are – not for who we hope to make them.

I hope and pray that in 2007 we achieved our goal of celebrating life, our friends and this beautiful earth on which we live (with some school work thrown in). I trust that 2008 will be the same, if not better.

Having been chairperson of the Governing Body for two years, I now wish to step down from that position. Thank you to everyone who has helped and supported me in that role. It has been an educational experience which I shall value always. However, my current term as GB member expires in 2009, so I shall remain on the GB till then.

GENERAL INFORMATION

Value Added Education

The Whole School Camp, Sailing Camp, Senior Quest, Canoeing and the Surfing and Ocean Awareness programme have greatly enhanced and added to the school experiences for all our students.

Through government funding, we have also conducted a Reading Assistance programme and specifically-targeted Literacy and Numeracy programmes.

Special funding under the Drug Education Programme enabled us to run a very successful Drugs, Drama and Dinner Forum. All family members were invited to participate. The senior students planned and conducted the Drug Education part of the evening's activities which followed a delicious, catered meal of Indian food. The topics discussed and dramatised were thought-provoking, extremely well presented and entertaining, prompting lively discussions amongst the entire age-range of participants. Surprising and profound conclusions and judgements were shared by the students, making it clear to all those present, that this very serious issue had been well-covered by staff and absorbed by the children.

Well done, everyone.

We believe that everything we do can be seen as value-added education.

Focus on strong staff/student, inter-staff and staff/parent relationships creates a sound foundation for excellent education practice.

Parliament is a powerful forum for dealing with issues, disagreements and dilemmas which arise in any school day. Grievances can be safely aired and dealt with fairly, with no fear of retribution. Students are empowered and encouraged to find equitable solutions.

The availability of an extensive and well-functioning computer network (thank you Tony Evers) as well as other hardware in the form of photocopiers, facsimile machines, laminators, digital video and still cameras and many other electronic and mechanical aids for use by the students assist and enhance the delivery of education in the 21st century.

Staff Attendance

This has been excellent throughout 2007. Of a possible 800 staff days there were only 4 sick days taken. We have a healthy and dedicated group of professionals as our staff. Thank you.

Staff Retention

100% retention of staff. Doesn't that sound wonderful!

Teacher Qualifications

Rex Davies – Teacher in Charge

Registered with WA College of Teaching

B.Ed. Admin (partially completed) – Northern Territory University)

Bush and Mountain Leadership Certificate

Certificate of Student Counselling (Victorian Education Department)

Diploma of Education – (State College of Victoria)

Diploma of Fine Arts – (Deakin University)

Deanne Lowrie

Registration with WA College of Teaching

B.Ed (Primary) – (Edith Cowan University, WA)

Bronze Medallion in Lifesaving

Forrest Woodbury

Governing Body Chairperson

9 April 2008

HEAD TEACHER'S REPORT

Welcome all

As some of you may know, all schools are required to report to the parent and general public certain performance information. This requirement is part of the Educational Accountability Requirements under the *Schools Assistance (Learning Together – Achievement through Choice and Opportunity) Act 2004*.

We prefer to offer this information to our parent community through this meeting, and the school's annual report, which will be made available to all parents at the beginning of next term.

Forrest has already spoken to staff attendance and retention and teacher qualifications. I will now talk briefly on student attendance and the results from the Western Australian Numeracy and Literacy Assessment, participation in professional learning and parent, student and staff satisfaction.

Student attendance for 2007 was a satisfactory 82% overall. This is slightly down on last year's figures, mainly due to the prolonged absences of a couple of students. Obviously, in a very small school such as ours, the movements of one or two students can have a large effect on overall numbers.

The school participated in the Western Australian Numeracy and Literacy Assessment again last year, which assesses year 3, 5 and 7 students in reading, writing, spelling

and numeracy. As mentioned last year, these tests and the reporting of results are 'one size fits all'. We are to report in percentages. Our year level cohorts are sometimes so small that one student may constitute 100% of the results. Our intake is scattered across all year levels and continues throughout the year. The results of a student new to the school do not reflect the results of the school as a whole, and we do attract more than our fair share of challenged students.

Having said all this, our students have in the past, and continue now to perform very well in these assessments, with our overall results being at least as good as, and often better than, the state average.

In 2007:

- In Reading 13 out of 16 students in the three years assessed achieved over the national benchmark;
- In Writing 12 of the 16 achieved above the national benchmark
- In Spelling 9 of the 16 achieved above the national benchmark; and
- In Numeracy 11 of the 14 assessed achieved above the national benchmark.

2007 was the last year of the state-based assessments. For 2008, Western Australia will be part of the National Assessment Program, Literacy and Numeracy (called NAPLAN), which will be conducted across the country on the 13th, 14th and 15th of May.

In addition to Woodbury Boston students performing on a par with the state average; in general, students who have done the majority of their primary schooling here go on to achieve very well in high school and later life, both academically and socially.

Professional development

\$2500 was allocated to professional development for 2007, with over 142 hours being spent in professional and collegiate learning. Topics covered were well spread, including government policy, data collection, Maths, English, Science, Early Childhood, Health, Recycling, and our regular staff updates in Non-Violent, Compassionate Communication.

Satisfaction

Parents seem to be happy with the school. We receive positive anecdotal comments and general support incidentally in conversation, and formal surveys undertaken by the Governing Body members during our regular reviews are usually positive and an honest reflection. Student satisfaction with the school is determined by individuals expressing their feelings in class 'circles' and school parliament, with the comments always being positive. Parents and relatives also report that students generally express their joy to come to school, and student comment is invited during our annual review. Staff satisfaction is also high. Our staff work together extremely well, supporting each other in a warm, collegiate manner.

Rex Davies

Teacher-In-Charge

9 April 2008