

Chairperson's Report

One of the many things I came to appreciate after returning home from a trip around Australia last year was the fact that within this beautiful region, we have a fantastic choice of schools for our children.

Most regional towns around the country only have one or two schools to which parents can send their children. We travelled 40,000 km and I never saw or heard of any school that remotely resembled Woodbury Boston.

As I was told a couple of years ago, Woodbury Boston is one of five truly independent schools within Australia. It is not linked to any religious or philosophical organisation or school. It manages to meet all of the government criteria and delivers a thorough education that is nurturing and fun for each individual.

So I consider our children incredibly fortunate to have the opportunity to experience such a unique education. I have come to realise that while it may not suit every child, the thing I am most grateful for is the choice.

This year is quite a milestone as Woodbury Boston will have its 30th year celebration. This is a celebration of 30 years of hard work and passion by many. There are too many people to thank right now, however I would like to mention just a few. I would like to thank the founders of the school, John and Forrest Woodbury. I would also like to thank my fellow governing body members and the staff for their efforts and diligence over the last 12 months. Of particular mention, is to thank Tony Evers who is stepping down after 15 years of being on the Governing Body. I would also like to thank our principal Rex – thank you very much for all of many hours of hard work.

Now to a few official requirements:

Income breakdown The school receives 50 percent of its income from the federal government, and 25 percent of its funding from the state government. This funding is calculated from census dates in February and August. As we are such a small school, it is crucial that the maximum children attend school at these times. The remaining 25 percent of our funding is obtained from our school fees. We try very hard to keep these fees affordable.

Value Adding The school is continuing to value add to our extensive programme and school experience for the children. We provide many extra curriculum activities such as Out & About days, camps and the music programme. The computer/student ratio and staff/student ratios are generous and the children continue to have freedom to have their say. The school has grown this year, allowing us more funding for resources, and extra part-time teacher for the rest of the year, and extra aide time. We are also in the process of gaining an extra building which will also enhance our programme.

Workforce composition We have two full time teachers with the following 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

We have 7 part time teachers aides at present:

- Linda Brough
- Maree Johnston
- Robyn King
- Sunny Steffanoni
- Elaine Lehmann
- Valerie Nissen
- Jemma Hipper

We have three part time admin staff

- Whitney Weaver
- Jan Coombes
- Mark Weaver

We have Matthew Thorne in charge of grounds and maintenance, and the cleaner is Julie Bidewell.

Parent Satisfaction Woodbury Boston allows parents to become involved with the school and provides the opportunity to contact staff or governing body members with any concerns. We are in the process of doing a bi-annual school review to appraise parent, staff and student satisfaction and we will have these results by the end of this term.

Thanking you all

Michelle Rechichi- Governing Body Chairperson 2009

28 April 2010

Teacher in Charge Report

This report is to notify the Annual General meeting of the progress of the curriculum over the last year and the intended developments over the next years.

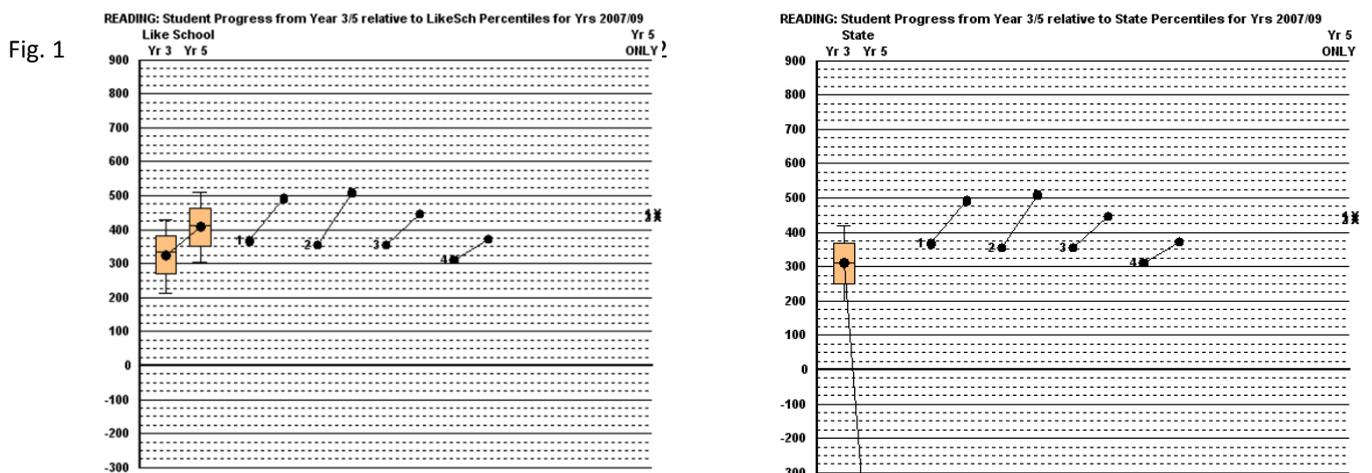
As a result of the legislation enacted under the Federal act 'Schools Assistance Achievement Through Choice and Opportunity. Regulations 2005' and the continued accountability mandated by the present Federal Government, we are required to report on various aspects of the school's curriculum. However this may be reasonable for a system, or even a large independent school, where the results of individuals would be considered with many others and be largely anonymous. For our non-systemic and smaller school this is problematic as recognised by the feds. and enacted under the 'Privacy Act 1988'. Privacy constraints are why we will not be including the year 7 NAPLAN results for 2009.

Also problematic is the change in 'Bench Mark' results over the years. This is intended to show whether the school is derelict in its duty in improving student's outcomes over the years. This of course will change as a percent, if we have only one student join a class of, say four students, whose abilities are considerably higher or lower than the existing cohort of students, or a student leaves the school, it would have similar results. Nevertheless we can show a sample of the progress of a group of same year five WB students over three years and their progress without compromise and with due diligence to privacy.

In reading and comprehension:

Fig 1. The coloured rectangles show a like school in size and region and their average progress against WB students in the same years, students are numbered 1 to 4.

Fig. 2 The coloured rectangles show student progress for the same period for the state.



The reference for these graphs are the 'NU LIT DATA' collections resulting from the NAPLAN and WALNA statistics published by UWA.

So while the NAPLAN tests only show a thin slice of achievement in one year, over a couple of years and compared against state and like schools, and with the same students, they can begin to be a little helpful. We are very aware that there is an ongoing challenge with spelling at our school especially within the year three group and some year fives, and this is being meticulously addressed by the staff in 2009 and again in 2010.

The 2009 results from the NAPLAN tests are:

Year 3

Two students out of four who were registered, completed all the tests.

Reading Two students were both above the minimum standard (50%) and within the Australian average.

Writing Both students well within the minimum required standard along with 67% of the national average.

Spelling One student at and above average standard, within the top 20% of all Australian students and two students at the minimum standard required.

Punctuation and grammar One student is in the top 20% of Australian students, and the other, above the national average.

Numeracy All four students above the minimum required three out of four scored around the 60%, this represented an average of all students tested.

Year 5

Six students sat the tests; four of those were also represented in the 2007 year three tests, two having arrived in the school later.

Reading All were above the required minimum standard and three above the average nation score reaching at or above 71% of the required total.

Writing All students were well above the national bench mark an average of 86%, however just below the WA state mean score.

Punctuation and grammar All students in the group were above the benchmark, with three students in the top 20%.

Numeracy All students above the Benchmark, with six students above the national mean average and two in the top 20%.

On reading the stats around percentages of students nationally who fell through the academic net or who performed brilliantly, and those who fall right in the middle, the school well represents those averages. These figures look like for example, one in five is in the top 30%, and one in 10 requires specialist attention during the first 5 years of schooling. In our past groupings of students, we have often been weighted on the deficit side. At last I'm beginning I feel our total scores hit at, or at least closely resemble the national average.

Student attendance in 2009 was 84 % slightly down on last years stats.

Professional Development of school employees. All staff were involved in professional learning last year, including teachers, teacher assistance and office staff. Subjects covered including Non Violent Communication, Spelling and Grammar, Maths Special needs and NU LIT Data. This accounts for about 2.5 % of average expenditure per teacher and about the same for teacher aides.

Looking Forward

In 2009 I made a plea to move forward to have new ideas and to strengthen the best of our traditions. The challenge was largely met in 2009/10. Physical evidence of this can be found with the changes to the school yard, classrooms and buildings. Then more subtly, with the strength of the Governing body.

Behind the scenes we have had fundraising, and more computers delivered, progress towards our 30th celebrations for November; not being so subtle, with a huge banner hanging in Albany Highway.

Also a tangible commitment to keeping the school's finances strong, balancing a rather ambitious school curriculum with a bottom line. This is motivated by a strong sense of student-centred decision making, assuring that the substance that matters to the students stays. The progress towards a third class is another initiative of the GB, the support for the staff of the school, the ongoing concern for the student's welfare which amongst other things signals their concern for the curriculum.

Thanks also for the continuing commitment of John and Forrest Woodbury. To Forrest for her depth of experience with the more pragmatic everyday problems, and John for his continued support for the sailing programme. Thanks to both, for their help and advice with the building project.

In 2011 we can expect to see the introduction of the National Curriculum. This will include only Science, Mathematics, History and English. Evidently there will be scope for input from the states and territories to fill in the gaps. Also there is an extensive consultation process ongoing this year. There are some areas of concern from this teacher's perspective at this point in time. For example there seems to be no outcomes for arts, humanities, values or ethics. There is little in the way of preparation for sequencing of subjects between years, like the next year's outcomes or revising the previous year's outcomes before moving on. These will probably be the responsibility of the year level teacher to programme or as is the case in high school the year level co-ordinator to organise. I'm a little unclear as to where we sit as a non-systemic school in all this, but I'm following it at a distance at this early stage and are relying on the Association of Independent Schools Western Australia to 'go into bat for us'.

I know that the school community will all be interested in any adverse effects it may have on our wonderful kids, but I'm confident there will be room for our little, but effective model of education in all this.

I personally am very proud of the contributions from a dedicated staff. Deanne has now become an experienced Woodbury Boston teacher. Her contributions in music, her inclusion of the outdoors, the sea, the arts and our yard contribute much to her scheduled programme. Robyn's contribution continues to be much more than her excellent skill with our youngest. Her work in sport with the kids is incredible, comprising effort and determination without an emphasis on competition against each other. Robyn is still co-ordinating the Active After Schools programme in school. This has resulted in the school receiving much needed sporting equipment. Linda and Ree's extra ordinary efforts to keep the schools 'Out 'n' About' and camping programme together has many demands on their time and must be mentioned. Elaine takes on work as do others that expand way beyond the scope of the expectations of a teacher's aide. Val is still unanimously loved by the students, and her dedication to the challenged students is incredibly productive. We welcome Jemma again this term, transitioning the middle classroom until we employ a more permanent staff member. We're very happy to see more of Sunny these days, who is fast becoming a very experienced and valued teacher's aide. Mark, who's voluntary work around the yard is in addition to his new job in the office. This complements the work of Jan and Whitney, who all do a fantastic job in such an important role in the school's structure. They also put in extra hours often taking work home to keep things moving. Thanks also to Tony Evers for his work keeping the computers up and going, another effort well over might be expected from a paid arrangement. Mathew Thorne is doing a great job behind the scenes. It's often a pleasant surprise to find the windows clean and leaves cleaned out.

And we welcome Julie Bidwell to our team; she is also showing terrific initiative, and going the extra bit to make sure that the school stays clean.

A special thanks to the voluntary hours put in by Diane Evers with her concern for the finances.

That we have 100% staff retention this year means a bright outlook for the continuity of the school generally, and particularly for the feeling of security of the students.

We are all looking forward to the year ahead, new building, new and old faces and 30 years to look back on.

Rex Davies
Teacher In Charge
28 April 2010