



Education &  
Communities

# Bullimbal SSP Annual School Report 2014



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## School context statement

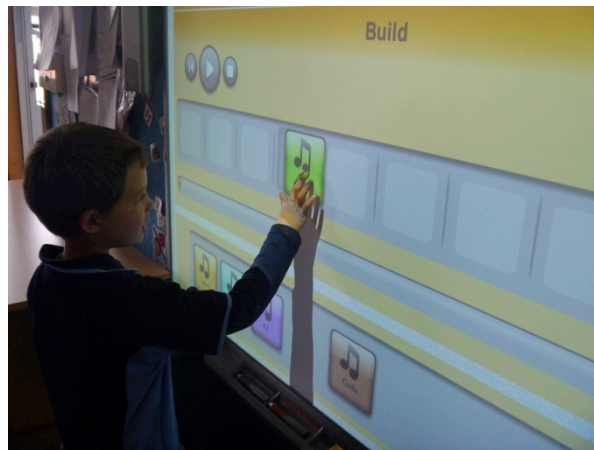
Bullimbal SSP caters for students with moderate and severe intellectual disabilities and their progress is assessed through curriculum-based assessment that is organised and delivered by our teaching staff. Parents of those students who were in the National Assessment Program for Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN) chose exemptions from these tests this year, due to their child's intellectual disability. Teaching staff were able to demonstrate progress of each of their students at Planning and Review meetings conducted for our students during the year and again these meetings were extremely well attended by the parents and carers of our students.

Our school continued its involvement in the Live Life Well@School program and all students are involved in Sip and Crunch, healthy eating with many of the vegetables provided from our school garden and sporting programs which emphasise physical activity.



We have continued our involvement with the New England /Hunter Health Newcastle and New England University medical students who are placed on various classes each Friday to work with our students and gain firsthand knowledge of working with young people with an intellectual disability.

The integration of technology into teaching and learning again was given a very strong emphasis during the year with staff attending many professional learning sessions on exactly which programs, software and applications could be successfully used to enhance our students learning.



Our P&C extended its work by providing information sessions to parents within and outside the school on topics such as "The Law and Your Rights" and "The National Disability Insurance Scheme". They intend to continue these information sessions in 2015.

## Principal's message

As we look back on our achievements in 2014, I find it very difficult to understand how staff and students had the time to pack so much into just one year. Again the major focus of our school revolved around students' personalised learning and Four Blocks to Literacy. We completed our School Improvement Plan for 2012-2014 and you will find reports on these areas within this Annual School Report.

Professional Learning for staff was again a major area of concentrated work during the year particularly in the area of integrating technology into classroom teaching and learning activities.

As it is now forty years since I started at Armidale Teachers College I continue to marvel at the changes that are apparent in today's classroom compared to those early days. Our students and staff certainly have the opportunity to access any type of information that they need at any time. Today's Internet world is certainly an exciting one, but is also challenging.

Our extremely busy P&C had a fantastic year and on behalf of myself, the staff and our school



community our thanks to Katrina Webb and her very hard working executive and P&C members who not only raised money but hosted workshops for all parents who have children with disabilities in the Tamworth area. Their work is highly valued and appreciated.

One of the workshops that the P&C hosted centred on the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS). I encourage all parents and carers to make sure that they continue to gain as much information as possible regarding the NDIS before its roll out into our area. The future of the students at our school will be very much dependent on the NDIS and how we work with other agencies ensuring that students' individual funding packages are used to maximise their potential. It will be exciting times I am sure.

Finally, Bullimbal School has certainly been, and will continue to be, an exciting and vibrant school where parents can work in a partnership with staff as we try to provide the best possible education for our students. I really encourage parents to make sure that they are as involved as they can be in this partnership. It is, after all, all about the kids!

Our 2014 Annual School Report highlights the achievements of our school during the year but also outlines areas for improvement.

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

### **Bullimbal P&C President's message**

We had a very eventful and productive year for the Bullimbal P&C last year. We started the year by hosting a welcome BBQ for new and returning families. This was a well attended event that allowed new parents to meet staff and other parents in the familiar surroundings of the school playground. (As a new parent who had just moved to the area, I really appreciated this event).

The P&C hosted its first "Community BBQ" early in the year at Bunnings followed by three more during the year. These events were good not only to raise much-needed funds for the school but were also a good public relations opportunity.



Having photos of the school allowed members of the public to see the school, its program and some children and then ask questions if they wanted. Many people made small donations to the school, which was much appreciated.

The P&C also ran four boot sales during the year; these were generally well attended and raised a good amount of money for the school. Parents helped where possible by donating cakes, slices etc and donating their time.



Once again the school has been exceptionally fortunate to have Pam and Michael Pavey donating their time to organise functions and raise money for the school – by their hard work we have been able to purchase a "Macbook Pro" for use in the classrooms. The P&C are extremely thankful for all that they contribute to the school.

We had two members of the P&C donate their time and money for plants to establish a garden in the front of the school. Through their effort and buying of plants, the front of the school is looking beautiful and we are extremely grateful for their efforts.

The Bullimbal P&C raised \$11,844 during the year, a tremendous effort and congratulations to all who helped during 2014.

Katrina Webb – Bullimbal P&C President

## Student information

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

### Student enrolment profile

Gender	2011	2012	2013	2014
Male	27	30	31	34
Female	11	12	13	15

## Student attendance profile

### Management of non-attendance

Non-attendance is managed at our school with the assistance of the Home School Liaison Program. Student absences and reasons are noted daily in the class roll. Unexplained absences are followed through with requests made to parents for them to provide reasons for students' absences.

Students' attendance is checked on a weekly basis and students who are absent from school for any length of time, an application for exemption from school is organised.

The health needs of some of our students are taken into account regarding their absences. Any exemptions from school are organised by the principal.

Rolls are checked regularly by Home School Liaison Officers based in Tamworth with the Department of Education and Communities.

### Structure of classes

There has been a steady increase in the numbers of students at Bullimbal SSP since 2011. With current population trends it is envisaged that an

eighth class will be established at the school at sometime during the next two years. Our students are organised into classes depending on their age and not their cognitive ability.

Each of our classes has been staffed by a teacher and a School Learning Support Officer. Additional support for the allocation of additional SLSO was allocated by the Area Executive Director in 2014. The school will again apply for additional staffing funds in 2015.

## Post school destinations

Two students completed their Higher School Certificates in Life Skills in 2014 and graduated into post school placements with various service providers. These students and their parents chose post school service providers that would best suit their individual needs, with the assistance of our Support Teacher Transition.

One of these students moved interstate at the conclusion of Term Three and the other student was involved in a transition program to their new placement in Fourth Term.



## Workforce information

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

## Workforce composition

Position	Number
Principal	1
Assistant Principal(s)	2
Classroom Teacher(s)	5
Teacher Librarian	0.2
Itinerant Support Teacher (Transition)	1
Teacher(Relief from Face to Face)	0.8
Supplementary Teacher – Equity Funding	0.1
School Counsellor	0.05
School Administrative & Support Staff	1.4
School Learning Support Officers	7
<b>Total</b>	<b>18.55</b>

The Australian Education Regulation, 2014 requires schools to report on Aboriginal composition of their workforce.

During 2014 Bullimbal had one staff member that identified as Aboriginal.

## Staff retention

All permanent staff were retained at Bullimbal School in 2014. One staff member had maternity leave and her position was filled by one of our part time SLSO'S.

## Teacher qualifications

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

Qualifications	% of staff
Degree or Diploma	100
Postgraduate	100

## Professional learning and teacher accreditation

Each year at Bullimbal School all staff are involved in Professional Learning activities which are designed to increase their knowledge and

skills as members of a team who are working with children and young people.

There are mandatory professional learning activities, which must be completed by staff. During 2014 these activities were:

- ☐ CPR, Emergency Care and Defibrillator training
- ☐ Work place Health and Safety
- ☐ Child Protection

Further professional learning activities were organised for staff that reflected the priorities that were outlined in our School Improvement Plan.

These activities were:

- ☐ Roles and Responsibilities
- ☐ Maintaining work/life balance for staff
- ☐ Use of High Tech and Low Tech communication when working with students with an intellectual disability
- ☐ Assessing iPads for students' communication
- ☐ Ascertaining appropriate applications for iPad use in the classroom

One staff member attended the State Special Educators Leaders conference in Sydney to gain a working knowledge of the work done by other special schools in regards to the Every Student Every School (ESES) program.

Bullimbal SSP continued its work in developing a Technology Toolbox for other schools as part of the ESES Centres of Expertise program. Funds were allocated from both state and area sources to allow for this project to be completed.





Staff continued attending after school technology meetings every fortnight, which continued to look at new hardware and software and its use in the classroom. Staff were also involved in Learning Management and Business Reform training in Student Wellbeing.

### Financial summary

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

### Schools AFS Bullimbal

#### as at 31 DEC 2014

	DEC 2014 Actuals
Opening Balance	(132,651)
Revenue	(2,019,881)
(2a) Appropriation	(1,972,902)
(2b) Sale of Goods and Services	(3,228)
(2c) Grants and Contributions	(41,716)
(2d) Investment Income	(2,034)
(2e) Gain and Loss	
(2f) Other Revenue	
Expenses	2,084,487
Recurrent Expenses	2,084,487
(3a) Employee Related	1,871,208
(3b) Operating Expenses	213,279
Capital Expenses	
(3c) Employee Related	
(3d) Operating Expenses	
SURPLUS / DEFICIT FOR THE YEAR	64,606
Balance Carried Forward	(68,045)

### School performance 2014

#### Achievements

##### Arts

In 2014 Bullimbal was once again fortunate to have Musica Viva visit the school for a performance. This year the performance was from Makukuhan, a mini gamelan orchestra, which brought the distinctive and stirring Indonesian sound to life. Combining traditional masked dance and instruments including the kendang, angklung and rebana, Makukuhan

introduced the students to some exotic music and instruments.

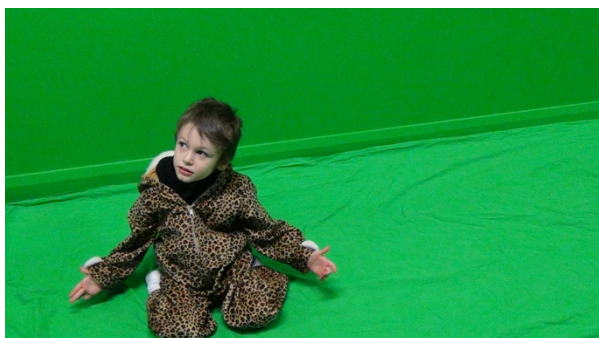
Students from various senior classes had the opportunity to view a live performance of 'Annie The Musical' presented by students from Oxley High School. Students from across the school also attended a live play titled 'Pete the Sheep'. This play was an adaptation based on Jackie French and Bruce Whatley's quirky and characteristically Australian picture book. All who attended enjoyed these performances and follow up lessons were carried out to further extend the students' learning about this text.

Senior students participated in the Challenge Disabilities Art Competition again in 2014. We had several entrants from across the senior school and Blake Willard was awarded an encouragement award for his entry.



Towards the end of 2014 our playground area was enhanced by the addition of many chalkboards in various designs. This allowed students to draw, colour and be creative during their break times if they chose to do so. The chalkboards have proven to be very popular with the students and have brightened up the playground.

Cineliteracy projects were again well received at the end of year Presentation Night. Projects were varied and ranged from trips in a time machine, adventures with student-eating snakes and important messages about recycling.



## Sports

Sauvage Sharks were the winners of our annual sports carnival in 2014, however, each of the 3 house teams participated to the best of their abilities. Great sportsmanship was observed throughout the day with students participating in events including track and field and novelty events. Attendance for this event was excellent and many families also joined the children to cheer them on and share a sausage sizzle.



Bullimbal students continue to participate in weekly sessions in the hydrotherapy pool for both therapy and swimming lessons. During terms 2 and 3 of 2014 students also continued to attend Riding for the Disabled where students rode horses and some students experienced riding in a horse drawn cart.



Fun and fitness were promoted by the inclusion of the Adidas School Fun Run into our school sports calendar. Students participated in this event with enthusiasm and their fund raising efforts were rewarded with incentive prizes. A weekly Zumba Kids program was also implemented for approximately one Semester. This program involved all students and was a highly motivating dance and fitness initiative.





## Significant programs and initiatives – Policy and equity funding

### Aboriginal education

Aboriginal education forms a part of each classroom's curriculum. Students cover topics on aboriginal art and culture through books, Smartboard activities, visual arts and cooking programs.

### Multicultural education and anti-racism

Harmony Day was celebrated in 2014 to acknowledge the cultural diversity of our country and our students.



To recognise this important day the students and staff at Bullimbal created a beautiful piece of art that was formed using cut outs of each and every school members' handprint. The hands were then joined to form a harmony tree that now hangs in the library for all to see. Harmony Day balloons were also decorated by the students in their individual ways and were put on display in the hall.



## Socio-economic Background

In 2014 Equity funding enabled support for Literacy and Numeracy programs across the school. The funds were used to supplement our staffing so that extra support to all students was available to help improve Literacy and Numeracy outcomes. A supplementary teacher allocation (0.1) was also provided through Equity funding.

### Findings and conclusions

In 2014 Equity funding has resulted in:

- ☐ The continued provision of extra School Learning Support Officer (SLSO) staffing supplementation resulting in extra time spent on teaching and learning activities.
- ☐ The purchase of additional specialised teaching resources to support Literacy programs for students with intellectual disabilities including the Four Blocks to Literacy program and related assessment materials (and other software).
- ☐ The release of staff for professional development in communication strategies for students with Personalised Learning and Support needs.

### Future directions

In 2015 the school will continue to improve and expand its Equity program through:

- ☐ The continued SLSO staffing supplementation to support each student's individual Literacy and Numeracy programs where appropriate.
- ☐ Ongoing staff surveys and support requests will be used to determine need.
- ☐ The release of staff for professional development in Augmentative and Alternative Communication Systems.



## Other significant initiatives

### Educational Technology

The Bullimbal School staff recognise the importance of digital literacy in educating our students for the future, with technology being a vital component of our curriculum from K-12. During 2014 the technology team has focused on refining and developing professional development resources for the Assistive Technology Assessment Toolbox, which has been an ongoing project. Staff participated in fortnightly professional learning activities that were strategically linked to students' individual education plans. This strategic approach ultimately leads to improved student outcomes across Key Learning Areas as well as improving staff confidence in the integration of 21<sup>st</sup> century learning tools into Teaching and Learning activities.

All staff were surveyed to identify the strategic focus areas for the 2015 training and development sessions. The results of the survey were split into the areas of; Assistive Classroom Technologies; iPad Teaching, Learning and Creating Tools and General Operation and Administration Tools. The strategic focus areas for 2015 will be drawn from the identified needs of staff as *illustrated*.

### Assistive Classroom Technologies

In the area of assistive technology the following areas were identified by staff as areas of need:

- ☐ Clicker6,
- ☐ Board Maker Studio,
- ☐ Skoog Music,
- ☐ Interactive Reading Books and Software,
- ☐ Banana Keyboard, and;
- ☐ Switch It/ Choose It maker



## General Operation and Administration Tools

In General Operations and Administrative Tools staff wanted to focus on the following areas:

- ☐ Technology Assessment Toolbox
- ☐ Notebook software and interactive whiteboard
- ☐ MAC OS Navigation and features,
- ☐ Windows OS features and general navigation,
- ☐ Accessing and using server, and;
- ☐ Outlook emails and calendars

### iPad Teaching, Learning and Creating Tools

In the final area of iPad teaching and Creative Tools staff have identified several areas of need. The processes used include:

- ☐ Podd and iPad apps
- ☐ iPad general navigation and Reflector software
- ☐ iPad literacy,
- ☐ iPad classroom tools,
- ☐ Proloquo2Go,
- ☐ iPad ACC,
- ☐ iPad Numeracy, and;
- ☐ iPad film.

## School planning and evaluation 2012—2014

### School Evaluation Processes

NSW Public Schools conduct evaluations to support the effective implementation of the school improvement plan. The processes used include:

- ☐ Parents and staff surveys.
- ☐ Evaluation of individual and class programs including the monitoring of progress towards satisfying individual outcomes, and.
- ☐ Parent interviews at planning and review meetings.

## School planning 2012-2014:

### School priority 1

#### Improved levels of performance in literacy and numeracy

In 2014 Bullimbal School continued to focus on the ongoing need to ensure that appropriate Literacy and Numeracy activities and assessments were being delivered to the students.

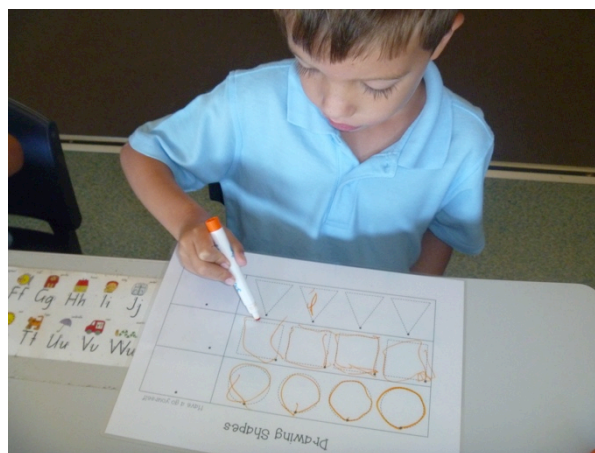


### Outcomes from 2012-2014

#### Evidence of achievement of outcomes in 2014:

- ☐ The continuation of using the Numeracy Framework Assessment and related activities across the school for consistency of testing student ability in each Mathematics strand;
- ☐ Continuation of the use of shared digital storage to assist in the conveying of student academic results to new teachers at the end of each year;
- ☐ Further development in the use of 4 Blocks Literacy Program as a whole school policy and program for teaching literacy;
- ☐ Ongoing use of a combination of literacy assessment tools across the school.
- ☐ A 2 day Communication Training Workshop was developed and delivered for Bullimbal staff and staff from a range of other schools and service providers to support the teaching of communication skills for students with personalized learning and support needs;

- ☐ Investigate strategies used in other SSP's in Mathematics;
- ☐ Commenced implementation of new Mathematics K-10 curriculum;
- ☐ Use of Departmental and external websites to support the teaching of literacy;
- ☐ Assessment in and use of Alternative and Augmentative Communication systems for all students as appropriate;
- ☐ Ongoing professional learning in using the new English and Mathematics Curriculum.



### School priority 2

#### Transition

#### Outcomes from 2012-2014

#### Evidence of achievement of outcomes in 2014:

In this priority area we have worked towards transition points being planned and monitored to ensure a seamless and smooth transition for students and parents from school to post school.

#### Evidence of achievement of outcomes in 2014:

- ☐ Anticipated Transition Policy completed in draft form and given to all stakeholders for consultation. Consultation with Area Office staff to gain their support in best practice,
- ☐ All transition points identified and appropriate processes written and included in our policy,



- ☐ Social stories and photos included in student's transition,
- ☐ Individual Transition Plans for Senior Students updated,
- ☐ Students transition supported through SLSO allocations,
- ☐ School To Work Action Plan implemented, and;
- ☐ Parent workshops provided on Self Managed Package for post school planning completed.

It is envisaged that the Transition Policy will be completed in Term One 2015 and that all stakeholders will find this policy useful and easy to use and understand.

### School priority 3

#### Partnerships

In this area strategies were used to ensure a strong partnership was evident between our school and parents.



### Outcomes from 2012–2014

#### Evidence of achievement of outcomes in 2014:

- ☐ Application for School Chaplin to assist in caseworker relationship with parents. Unfortunately, this application was unsuccessful,
- ☐ Pre and post surveys to ascertain areas of need. These surveys have highlighted the schools physical appearance, having access to teachers at times outside of their RFF time and understanding the

National Disability Insurance Scheme as issues of concern for parents,

- ☐ Review Planning/Review meeting procedures to allow for other times for scheduled meetings outside teachers regular RFF time
- ☐ P.S.P. Applications for next quadrenium with parent assistance.
- ☐ Using PSP funds organise parent participation activities in technology and behaviour.
- ☐ Parent workshops on behaviour, post school placement and communication were successful even if attendance numbers were low.



#### 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.

The thoughts and opinions of parents, students and staff regarding the school and how it operates were sought through various surveys.

Their responses are written below and are presented in three different sections.

#### Parents and carers:

Parents were given two types of surveys, one a tick a box the other allowed room for parents to write comments. All surveys were anonymous.

In all sixteen, surveys were returned to the school which was less than in previous years.

Respondents strongly agreed with many of the fifteen statements.

Parents felt confident that they could discuss issues with their child's teacher and that the school was well connected with the community. Parents felt encouraged to contact the school concerning their child and valued the Planning and Review meetings that are held at the school. One parent felt that these meetings should be held earlier in the year.

Parents reported that they believed School Learning Support Officers were extremely supportive regarding their child's progress at school. Parents reported that they are happy with the school reports and the information they have regarding their child's progress at school.



All parents agreed that their children were happy at school and that the school promotes healthy lifestyle. Parents felt that there was good access to iPads and technology programs at the school and were extremely happy with the service that they receive from the front office. While all parents agreed that the school would welcome new ideas and that the principal is receptive to new ideas and concerns, this was an area that could be improved to match the high levels of support recorded for the other years surveyed.

One suggestion for future development was that the criteria for selection of school staff stay at the same high level and that Bullimbal School should

continue to explore alternative teaching and learning methods.

### **Staff:**

Seventeen fulltime and part time staff responded to our staff survey. Respondents were asked eighteen questions and asked to rate their answers.

All staff enjoyed coming to school each day with only one respondent replying only sometimes. All staff members felt supported at work and felt at ease asking for help and clarification of issues. One staff member replied that they only felt supported some of the time. All staff reported that they enjoyed working with students at the school and felt that they contributed to Bullimbal being a great place for students with a disability to learn. All staff felt that the school was a supportive and happy place to work.

Areas that one to three staff members felt needed to be improved were:

- ☐ They needed to be included more in staff discussions, that the school executive and the principal needed to have a greater understanding of their work, and;
- ☐ Students need to be involved in lessons of higher quality and we need to have even higher expectations regarding students working to their potential.

These last two points will be incorporated into our school strategic directions for 2015-2017 as areas of importance for improvement.

### **Students:**

Information regarding student satisfaction with school was gathered in several ways. Students answered a survey either in written or oral form and some students were assisted in giving their answers by using adaptive augmentative communication.

Results from students were:

- ☐ All students enjoyed coming to school but one student answered "a tiny bit no",
- ☐ All students answered that they felt safe at school,
- ☐ When asked 'What the best thing about school would be?' answers were varied. These answers included friends, playtime, swimming, seeing visiting people like



Healthy Harold, eating fruit, books, iPads, my teacher and doing work,

- Favourite activities at school included iPads, computers, morning circle, singing and dancing, library, puzzles, sensory room, swimming, shopping, Thomas the Tank Engine books and games and communicating with others,
- Many students couldn't think of activities that they didn't like doing at school but those who could answer this question didn't like, cooking, gardening, the sandpit, changes and sitting outside my room during playtime,
- Students enjoyed being involved in the following during playtime: monkey bars, trampoline, bikes, play equipment, water play, drawing with chalk, music, finding insects, talking to staff and collecting things. One student felt that the playground could be made better by having traffic lights in the bike track, and;
- Most students felt that they did have friends at school although some senior students answered that they didn't have friends.



## **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.

## **Planning Processes**

In order to develop Bullimbal's School Plan 2015-2017 a range of strategies and consultative

practices are being used across all stakeholders including staff, students, parents and carers and the wider school community. Three staff-based teams have been formulated to support the ongoing development, consultation and evaluation of each of our strategic directions.

## **Strategic Directions**

### **Strategic Direction 1: School Community**

#### **Purpose**

Bullimbal's School environment and community and its specialised nature necessitate the development of ongoing and respectful relationships between staff, students, parents and carers and community members in order to achieve the best outcomes for our students. We will maintain and enhance existing relationships with parents, carers and the wider community to in order to create an effective and welcoming learning environment for our students.

### **Strategic Direction 2: Student Profiling**

#### **Purpose**

Highly individualised and specialised assessment of all students is required in order to fully support improved student outcomes in Life Skills, Curriculum and post school environments. Profiling of student performance across a number of areas will allow better communication of student performance across settings and classes and allow for more targeted and effective personalised learning plans.

### **Strategic Direction 3: Communication**

#### **Purpose**

The ability to communicate is an essential skill for all students. At Bullimbal we recognise that all students communicate differently and may need a variety of supports to allow them to achieve our main goal of being able to communicate whatever they want, to whomever they want, whenever they want.



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:

<http://www.schools.nsw.edu.au/learning/emsad/asr/index.php>

## 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.

Mal Donald, Principal

Brett Pearson, Assistant Principal

Trish Carr, Assistant Principal

Katrina Webb, P and C President

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