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Principal's foreword

Introduction

Welcome to the 2008 School Annual Report for St Helens State School (St Helens SS).

This report contains a broad range of information on the operations of the school through out the 2008 school year, focussing on: Student Achievement, School community relations, significant events/ achievements through out the year and some of the goals that the school looks forward to achieving in 2009.

Future outlook

In 2008 a Triennial School Review (TSR) was undertaken. The TSR has been pivotal in determining the schools direction over the next 3 years.

The TSR uncovered the following key areas for focus from 2009 – 2011:

- Renewed focus on literacy and numeracy
- Redevelop the school grounds and refine our ways of working to better meet the needs of an expanding student population
- Increase the opportunities for greater involvement from the school community
- Review Responsible Behaviour Plan

Over the coming year we would like to see our results in reading improve so that our average score exceeds the average score for Queensland. In order to achieve this we are planning on paying particular focus on implementing effective **reading** practices in **P-3** through the use of home reading journals and look at creating **defined literacy benchmarks** at key junctures within P-3.

It is hoped that our results in numeracy will improve as we add renewed rigour to incorporating **higher order thinking skills** into our school mathematics program.

Our school at a glance

School Profile

St Helens SS is a band 6 school that commenced operations in 1882. The school is located in the Wide Bay South District, on the northern outskirts of Maryborough. The 2008 enrolment census records our student population at 199. St Helens SS has classes from prep to year 7.

The staff at St Helens believe in providing a safe and exciting learning environment that allows each student the opportunity to reach their full potential.

Curriculum offerings

Our distinctive curriculum offerings

- The majority of classes are multi age
- Although we are a comparatively small school we have our own Strings Orchestra
- Every classroom contains an interactive whiteboard

Extra curricula activities.

- Participation in the Active After School Program
- Student Council
- Participation in Maryborough Technology Challenge
- Interschool Sport

How computers are used to assist learning

St Helens SS has worked hard to ensure that technology is easily accessible by both teachers and students to ensure rich learning experiences. We are in the fortunate position of having established a computer lab that houses 17 networked computers. Each classroom also has several computers, all with internet access.

In 2008 a collaborative decision was made by all teachers to embrace Interactive White Board technology. Each classroom now houses an interactive whiteboard, allowing teachers to integrate more effectively the use of ICTs in their teaching and planning processes.

Professional development has been made available to teachers so that this technology can be utilised effectively.

Social climate

At St Helens SS we pride ourselves on the climate within the school that we are able to create and maintain.

The responses of the 2008 School Opinion Survey for the questions (parents) *"that your child is happy to go to this school"* & *"that your child is treated fairly at this school"* were significantly above state and like school means. Student responses to questions pertaining to school climate indicate that overall the students at St Helens SS are very satisfied with the climate at the school.

A school Chaplain attends the school one day a fortnight (sourced from Aldridge SHS). The Chaplain works with teachers and students and undertakes special lunch time programs for all students as well as specific programs for our upper primary students designed to prepare them for high school.

At St Helens SS we actively encourage our older students to take on a leadership role within the school through Student Council. Our school leaders take responsibility for running parade and presenting encouragement awards to their peers.

Involving parents in their child's education.

Our school at a glance

Many of our parents volunteer within the school to assist classroom teachers on a regular basis. We pride ourselves on being accessible to all our parents. School Opinion Survey results strongly support this fact as parent responses to the question *“that school staff are approachable when you want to talk about your child”* far exceed both state and like school mean.

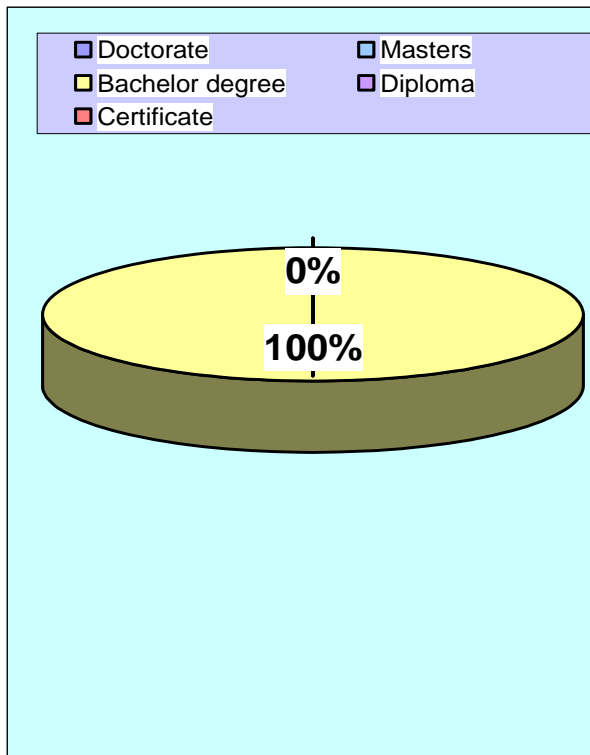
In 2009 we will continue to explore additional ways of involving our parents in the life of the school.

The P&C play a critical role within the school and run a weekly tuckshop service for the students and staff. The P&C and school work very closely on joint projects such as concerts, Yr7 graduation, sports days and working bees.

Our staff profile

Qualifications of all teachers.

Highest level of attainment	Number of classroom teachers and school leaders at the school
Doctorate	
Masters	
Bachelor degree	10
Diploma	
Certificate	



Expenditure on and teacher participation in professional development.

- The total funds expended on teacher professional development in 2008 was \$4697.
- The major professional development initiatives are as follows: Special Needs, Numeracy (First Steps in Maths), Literacy (P-3), Leadership, Technology, First Aid and Learning Support.
- The involvement of the teaching staff in professional development activities during 2008 was 100%.

Average staff attendance

- For permanent, temporary staff and school leaders the staff attendance rate was 95% in 2008

Proportion of staff retained from the previous school year.

- From the end of the 2007 school year, 100% of staff were retained by the school for the entire 2008 school year.

Performance of our students

Student attendance

The average attendance rate as a percentage in 2008 was 93%.

Key outcomes

National Assessment Program – Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN) results - our reading, writing, spelling, grammar and punctuation, and numeracy results for the Years 3, 5, 7 and 9.)

Domain	Measures	Yr 3	Yr 5	Yr 7
Reading	Average score for the school	345	461	538
	Average score for Queensland	371.1	466.1	528.1
	For the school the percentage of students at or above the national minimum standard.	2008 90 %	92 %	100 %
Writing	Average score for the school	372	471	511
	Average score for Queensland	391.8	468.9	522.7
	For the school the percentage of students at or above the national minimum standard.	2008 90 %	88 %	84 %
Spelling	Average score for the school	335	475	531
	Average score for Queensland	366.7	462.0	528.0
	For the school the percentage of students at or above the national minimum standard.	2008 83 %	92 %	92 %
Grammar and Punctuation	Average score for the school	353	494	519
	Average score for Queensland	370.4	476.6	518.0
	For the school the percentage of students at or above the national minimum standard.	2008 90 %	92 %	92 %
Numeracy	Average score for the school	344	457	545
	Average score for Queensland	367.9	458.2	539.0
	For the school the percentage of students at or above the national minimum standard.	2008 93 %	92 %	100 %

Results in the Year 2 Diagnostic Net

	Percentage of students not requiring additional support
Reading	64 %
Writing	72 %
Number	48 %

Performance of our students

Value added

2009 presents exciting challenges to both the staff and students at St Helens SS. We are very excited about embracing new technologies to increase the engagement of our students and to refresh our teaching and learning. We are also looking forward to a renewed focus within our professional teams (P-3 & 4-7) to adopt a more consistent approach to our curriculum offerings.

A new library and school hall are being constructed in 2009 along with an upper primary adventure playground. These projects are being undertaken through the *Building the Education Revolution* initiative.

Parent, student and teacher satisfaction with the school

School opinion survey data from 2008 indicates that parent, student and staff satisfaction at St Helens SS was extremely high.

Parent responses concerning whether they thought St Helens SS was a good school far exceeded both the like school mean and state mean. The vast majority of students responded to this question with a very satisfied.

Staff survey data covering areas such as relationships, satisfaction with work role, resourcing, morale and operations are, without exception higher than state means.