School context
Karuah Public School’s motto ‘Look, Listen, Learn’ promotes individual students’ education and enhances the school’s behaviour policy. Karuah Public School caters for students living within the township of Karuah as well as from the nearby settlements of Carrington, Tahlee, North Arm Cove and Swan Bay. The wide range of students’ abilities is supported in four composite classes. Our classes are arranged as K/1, 1/2, 3/4, and 4/5/6. Our library teacher works three days per week, teaching library and supplying RFF.

Karuah Public School has 80 students, however, anticipated enrolments for 2014, indicate a growth of 26 or more students.

A small but active P & C group supports students and school development through fundraising, family events and the promotion of Karuah Public School at outside community events. The P & C provide a canteen service each Friday during the school term for students.

Principal’s message
It is my pleasure to present the 2013 Annual School Report for Karuah Public School. The report presents an overview of the school year, with particular focus on our successes and achievements. School planning and progress on our targets is also addressed, as well as the targets set for 2014 and strategies to achieve them.
This report recognises our celebrated achievements. Our achievements for 2013 include:
• National Partnerships
• Aboriginal Education
• Positive Behaviour for Learning (PBL)
• Literacy Language and Learning (L3)
• SENTRAL data tracking system
• Homework Centre
• Breakfast Club
• Numeracy @ Home
• PSSA and in-school sport
• Creative and Performing Arts
• Crunch and Sip

I would like to thank the students and staff for their dedication and love of learning. Also I would like to thank the parents and community members who helped out at the school during 2013. Without your help the students would not have been able to engage in so many wonderful learning experiences.

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

Julie Hubbard

P & C and/or School Council message
Firstly to all of the P & C Members, who have given their time and effort to assist our school all year round, thank you. Without you, the fundraising and various events would not have been possible.

This year we held a movie night, Easter raffle, Pie drive, Mother’s Day and Father’s Day stalls and a fancy dress disco.

The P & C funded several Rewards Days for the student. We also supported the Swimming Carnival, Athletics Carnival, Cross Country, Grand Parents Day & Graduation Day.

Our Secretary sourced a wonderful grant, which allowed us to purchase a new stove for the Canteen and re stock with much needed cooking utensils.

This year the P & C did not make any major purchases for the school. However, our fundraising efforts have been in full swing and money raised over the last year has been set aside. Our aim is to purchase new play equipment for the soft fall area. It will cost approximately $15000 - $20000 and so far we are half way. We are hoping to have the new equipment by the end of 2014.

Thank you to P & C members and the school community who have assisted us over the last 12 months.

Janelle Egginton
Vice President.

Student representative’s message
In 2013 Tarah and I were announced as Captains and Angel Holston as Vice Captain.

On behalf of Tarah and I, we would like to thank Mrs Hubbard and all the staff for their support and organisation throughout the year.
Mrs Saffioti and Debra Myers organised the year 6 farewell, which we greatly appreciated and are very thankful for. We would also like to thank the parents for their dedication to our special night.

To the P&C we are very grateful for their hard work and fund-raising through discos and movie nights amongst a wide range of other events.

We would like to finally congratulate and send best wishes to the 2014 leaders, Levi Devine, Michelle Alcorn, Joshua Feeney, Mandy Fairbrother and Lia Demijian

Ema Lamb and Tarah Myers and Angel Hostein

Student Information

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

Student enrolment profile

Karuah Public School had seen a steady increase in enrolments during 2013. It is expected that there will be a continual increase in student numbers during 2014.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>2007</th>
<th>2008</th>
<th>2009</th>
<th>2010</th>
<th>2011</th>
<th>2012</th>
<th>2013</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Management of non-attendance

Non attendance is managed by daily roll marking. Staff then contacts parents of students with an unexplained absence. The Home School Liaison Officer (HSLO) is utilized if the need arises.

Workforce Information

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

The school had four teaching positions and a non-teaching Principal funded by National Partnerships.

The teaching staff were supported by a School Administration Manager, one School Administration Officer and a General Assistant, one day per week.

Workforce composition

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Position</th>
<th>Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Principal</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deputy Principal(s)</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assistant Principal(s)</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Head Teachers</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Classroom Teacher(s)</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher of Reading Recovery</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learning and Support Teacher(s)</td>
<td>0.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher Librarian</td>
<td>0.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher of ESL</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
School Counsellor 0.1  
School Administrative & Support 0.406  
Total 7.106

The Australian Education Regulation, 2013 requires schools to report on Aboriginal composition of their workforce.

On our staff we have two Aboriginal community members who liaise with the community and support our classroom programs.

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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Qualifications</th>
<th>% of staff</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Degree or Diploma</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date of financial summary</th>
<th>30/11/2013</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Income</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Balance brought forward</td>
<td>118,601.90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Global funds</td>
<td>79,707.58</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tied funds</td>
<td>87,867.88</td>
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<tr>
<td>School &amp; community sources</td>
<td>26,080.80</td>
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<tr>
<td>Interest</td>
<td>3,308.70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trust receipts</td>
<td>3,690.60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Canteen</td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total income</td>
<td>200,655.56</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Expenditure
Teaching & learning
  - Key learning areas 13,408.84
  - Excursions 11,305.57
  - Extracurricular dissections 14,874.27
Library 2,894.30
Training & development 353.71
Tied funds 95,572.65
Casual relief teachers 15,540.34
Administration & office 26,377.39
School-operated canteen 0.00
Utilities 22,681.27
Maintenance 12,334.94
Trust accounts 4,467.63
Capital programs 8,220.09
Total expenditure 228,030.90
Balance carried forward 0.00

A full copy of the school’s 2013 financial statement is tabled at the annual general meetings of the School Council and/or the parent body. Further details concerning the statement can be obtained by contacting the school.

School performance 2013
Numeracy at Home
The Numeracy At Home (NAH) program was designed to provide cost effective, family-friendly numeracy activities that engage students and parents and encourage family members to have fun while supporting classroom learning. The NAH program encourages students to use mathematical concepts taught at school in playing numeracy games at home. The Numeracy At Home program reinforces Quality Teaching and Learning (QT) and classroom mathematics teaching. The program also encourages home, school and community partnerships by engaging parents and families in their children’s learning.

At Karuah Public School we established four classroom NAH kits that allow students to borrow simple, fun mathematical games. At the start of Term Four students began borrowing the kits on a weekly basis in-line with homework assignments. Teacher feedback indicated that students have found this program to be a fun and engaging method of practicing numeracy skills at home.

Sport
Our school programs promote and enhance a healthy and fit lifestyle, encourage sportsmanship and provide opportunities for our students to represent the school at a Zone level.

In 2013 Karuah School’s sporting program included:

- Successful swimming, cross country and athletics carnivals. A number of students represented the school at zone level in cross country and athletics.
- The opportunity for students to participate in a 5-A Side Soccer Gala Day.
- The opportunity to participate in a Rugby League Gala day and NRL development days. Many students developed skills with one student receiving a recognition award from the NRL Team.
- The opportunity for four students to attend the selections for Zone Soccer Representatives.
- The whole school was involved in the 'Jump Rope for Heart' program, with a visiting specialist demonstrating 'Jump Rope' skills and techniques.
- Skill development was continued across all years with improvement in throwing, catching, kicking, passing and trapping (ball skills).
- The opportunities for students to participate and develop skills in the following sports; soccer, tennis, jogging, bike-riding and walking.
- In school gymnastics program K-6
- A visit from an ex Olympic Athlete representing the Little Athletics N.S.W. Schools Program, providing and demonstrating the skills and techniques of Athletics for our primary students.

**Kinder Transition**

Many of our 22 students and their parents attended our 5 week Kinder Transition to school program in Term 4 last year. The program allows families to learn more about our school and how to help their child in the first year of school. It is also an opportunity for our new students to get to know their teacher and learn about their Kinder classroom.

Each week a range of speakers from the school community spoke to parents and offered relevant and up to date information. Guest speakers included the School Counsellor, Home Liaison Officer, P & C President, Busways Representative and representatives from Karuah Public School teaching staff.

The program concluded with a Celebration Ceremony followed by afternoon tea and a power point display of the children’s activities during the program.

**ARTS**

In 2013 Karuah Public School students had the fortuity to participate and present their artistic and musical talents across the school and broader community.

Renae Lamb instigated Aboriginal Dance opportunities for students. Renae taught students about Aboriginal Culture through the dynamism of dance and storytelling. From Renae’s first lessons, Stephanie Callaghan (SLSO) embraced the enthusiasm of our students and fine-tuned their dances. The Karuah Aboriginal Dance Group performed at Murrook Cultural Centre, Karuah Public School Assembly and Presentation Day. On Naidoc Day, students from Hunter River High School showcased their talents at our school, with many of the students being former Karuah Public School students.

Mrs Saffioti and Mrs Henry braved themselves and seized the opportunity to endure the hard work of supporting 45 students for the Christmas Play 'A Christmas Peter Pan’. Thanks to Mrs. Claire Hill and her two daughters, Rebecca and Julie, for volunteering their precious time to help out with the 'props' and artwork.
The Smith Family, led by Dianne Smith and her troupe of volunteers organised a ‘Fun Day’ for our students during Children’s Week. Karuah Public School students had the opportunity to participate in activities not normally held during classroom time.

Ms Chyzy arranged for the students to dress-up as their favourite book character during ‘Book Week’. A parade was held and parents, caregivers & community members were able to view our students in their ‘dress-ups’. Speaking of parades, Karuah students were also involved in an exciting Easter Hat Parade, which saw many community members attend.

The Burwood Girls High School Band showcased their talents at our school and taught our students about the musical instruments that they play.

A number of Karuah Public School students entered competitions and won first & second prizes. Annika Johns and Monica McDonald took out first prize in the Port Stephens Recycling Poster Competition. Amelia Curry & Alkira Cobb won first and second prizes in their age division entering a Christmas Colouring-in Competition organised by BIG W.

Community Involvement

DAY FOR DANIEL
On the 3rd September our school received a visit from Bruce & Denise Morcombe. The Morcombe’s provided a truly inspiring presentation to the wider school community. Students listened and interacted with the practical and important safety messages that Mr and Mrs Morcombe delivered.

Students later discussed in class, the ‘Recognise, React, Report’ strategies that they learnt. We felt very privileged that the Morcombe’s were able to spend the morning with us at Karuah Public School.

Thank you to Hunter Quarries for sponsoring this wonderful event.
Academic achievements

NAPLAN

In the National Assessment Program, the results across the Years 3, 5, 7 and 9 literacy and numeracy assessments are reported on a scale from Band 1 to Band 10.

The achievement scale represents increasing levels of skills and understandings demonstrated in these assessments.

Year 3: from Band 1 (lowest) to Band 6 (highest for Year 3)
Year 5: from Band 3 (lowest) to Band 8 (highest for Year 5)
Year 7: from Band 4 (lowest) to Band 9 (highest for Year 7)
Year 9: from Band 5 (lowest) to Band 10 (highest for Year 9)

The My School website provides detailed information and data for national literacy and numeracy testing (NAPLAN).

Click on the link http://www.myschool.edu.au and enter the school name in the Find a school and select GO to access the school data.

NAPLAN Year 3 - Literacy

READING

In 2013, 16 students in year 3 sat the NAPLAN tests in Literacy.

- 81% of Year 3 students achieved national minimum standards or higher in reading

WRITING

- 56% of year 3 students achieved band 3 or higher in writing

SPELLING

- 3% of students achieved band 3 or higher in spelling
GRAMMAR and PUNCTUATION

- 43% of year 3 students achieved band 3 or higher in Grammar and Punctuation

NAPLAN Year 3 - Numeracy

- 50% of Year 3 students achieved national minimum standards or higher in Numeracy

NAPLAN Year 5 - Literacy

In 2013, 7 students in year 5 sat the NAPLAN tests in Literacy.

- 85% of students achieved the national minimum standard or higher

WRITING

- the majority of students fell in the lowest three bands in writing, which is an area for further investigation.
**SPELLING**

- 71% of students achieved the national minimum standard or higher

**GRAMMAR and PUNCTUATION**

- 85% of students achieved the national minimum standard or higher

**NAPLAN Year 5 – Numeracy**

- 71% of students achieved the national minimum standard or higher
The 2013 NAPLAN assessment was positive in a number of areas. Student achievement included:

- 69% of Year 3 students achieved national minimum standards or higher in reading and 53% in numeracy
- 13% of Year 3 students achieved proficiency in reading and 7% in numeracy
- 75% of Year 5 students achieved national minimum standards or higher in reading and 62% in numeracy
- 14% of Year 5 students achieved proficiency in Year 5 in reading and 0% in numeracy
- 71.5% of Year 5 students achieved Band 5 or higher in reading and 42% in numeracy
- 42.9% of Year 3 students achieved Band 3 or higher in reading
- the percentage of students in Year 5 achieving expected growth or greater was 80% in reading and 20% in numeracy
- 40% of Year 3 ATSI students achieved national minimum standards or above in reading
- 25% of Year 5 ATSI students achieved national minimum standards or above in reading

Significant programs and initiatives

Aboriginal education

Our school provides integrated studies in all Key Learning Areas which are designed to educate all students about Aboriginal perspectives and culture.

All classes have participated in activities relating to Indigenous culture throughout the year. As part of NAIDOC celebrations students learned songs, aboriginal art, traditional games and read dreamtime stories.

Multicultural education

Karuah Public School actively encourages a multicultural outlook that supports and recognizes differences in culture in all teaching and learning.
In 2013 our school celebrated Harmony Day. Karuah staff and students organized a quality Assembly, that involved many members of the community.

National partnerships

The school entered into the fourth and final year of the Low SES School Communities National Partnership.

The funding for this program continued to allow the school to provide extra support in literacy and numeracy teaching. The funding of a class teacher to relieve the Principal has allowed for closer support in whole school teaching and in particular, the opportunity to work with the Kindergarten L3 program. Overall supervision of numeracy based teaching programs further provided students with opportunities to develop numeracy skills in weekly specialized numeracy lessons. The Principal has additionally had greater opportunities to develop welfare connections and to work with Karuah Strong student-based programs.

Positive Behaviour for Learning (PBL)

2013 saw the introduction of the Positive Behaviour for Learning Program. PBL helps us deliver high quality programs to improve student academic and behavioural learning.

PBL has three main elements. The first of these is data - this may include everything from keeping an accurate record of children who come to school late, children who receive special awards or children doing well in their weekly spelling tests. The data we gather helps all teachers to make really informed decisions about students at KPS.

The second element is systems. At KPS this means we are constantly reviewing and renewing systems at our school. This can involve trialing lunch and recess times to suit student needs.

The third and most important element involves Staff Practices. At KPS we are very fortunate to have a group of wonderful teachers and support staff. By having effective systems and data in place staff are able to make more informed decisions about the learning and welfare needs of the students in their class.

Every morning at 9.15 staff reinforce the PBL focus for the week. Our Aussie 5 rules are explicitly taught across all classrooms.

School planning and evaluation 2012—2014

School evaluation processes

NSW public schools conduct evaluations to support the effective implementation of the school plan. The processes used include:

- Regular data gathering K-6
- Strategic evaluation
School planning 2012—2014: progress in 2013

School priority 1

To improve Literacy outcomes for all students.

Outcomes from 2012–2014

- 75% of kindergarten students achieved Level 5 or higher in Benchmarking
- 80% of Year 5 students attained great than or equal to expected growth in reading
- 66% of Year 5 Aboriginal students attained great than or equal to expected growth in reading

Strategies to achieve these outcomes in 2014

- Continue ES1 Focus on L3 and allocate resources for L3 training for an additional staff member
- Continue to employ Aboriginal SLSO 4 days per week to support student learning.
- Continue to employ classroom teacher to take on Stage 3 teaching role to relieve Principal, according to allocated funding.
- Implementation of data input into Sentral to continue in 2014. Data collection to include reading, writing and spelling assessments, continuums, PLP and LS plans
- Establish Accelerated Literacy Program focusing on Stage 2 and 3
- Principal to provide explicit professional learning opportunities for staff in using SMART and the literacy and numeracy continuums, to analyse student performance and to inform teaching and learning practice. District support will be sought to implement PLAN software.
- Classes to be organised into guided reading groups with support from the LAST and district team.
- Ensure that a PLP has been initiated or updated for all Aboriginal students and all PLP’s to include at least one literacy and numeracy goals
- Investigate use of Multilit and Reading Eggs for intensive literacy support.

School priority 2

To improve Numeracy outcomes for all students

Outcomes from 2012–2014

- 53% of Year 3 students achieved national minimum standards or higher in numeracy
- 7% of Year 3 students achieved proficiency in numeracy
- 62% of Year 5 students achieved national minimum standards or higher in numeracy
- No Year 5 students reached proficiency in numeracy
- 42% of Year 5 students achieved Band 5 or higher in numeracy

Evidence of progress towards outcomes in 2013:

- 20% of Year 5 students achieved expected growth in NAPLAN numeracy
- 33% of year 5 Aboriginal students achieved expected growth in NAPLAN numeracy

Strategies to achieve these outcomes in 2014:

- Staff released to test all students using SENA in Term 1 and Term 4.
- Provide a planning day where SENA results are analysed and teachers released to plan teaching and learning and student groups based on number results and student needs.
- Count Me in Too (CMIT) strategies utilised during CMIT number groups for K-6
- Teacher classroom observations to be included on Planning days. TPL in lesson study will be sought.
- Whole school TPL for implementation of National Curriculum
- Targeted Numeracy Teaching (TNT) team teaching to be implemented K-6
- Implement Numeracy at Home Program
- LAST support for students working below stage average in numeracy during CMIT number groups.
School priority 3
To improve student engagement
Outcomes from 2012–2014

- Attendance rate for all students to be more than 92%.
- Increase Aboriginal families’ direct participation in the PLP process from 80% to 90%.

Evidence of progress towards outcomes in 2013:

- Documentation for negative behaviours has decreased from 26% to 15%
- Semester 1 attendance data indicates attendance for all students is 92.6% and for Aboriginal students 90.7%
- 95% of PLP’s were successfully completed with 80% of Aboriginal families’ direct participation by the end of Term 2, 2013.

Strategies to achieve these outcomes in 2014:

- Continue the ‘Kindy at Karuah’ transition program for students transitioning from pre-school into early stage one which involves a six week intensive training program for new students and their parents.
- Connected classroom initiated in Stage 3 which includes access to other schools within local LMG to assist in forming relationships with other Stage 3 students in our area.
- Engage experienced volunteers to provide ‘Breakfast Club’ four mornings per week.
- Continue homework centre after school two afternoons per week for all students, with the addition of an extra day specifically for local high school students.
- Establish Wi-Fi systems and provide increased opportunities for Aboriginal families to access technology by promoting workshops in the school newsletter. Purchase mini laptops
- LAST to be trained in Multilit implementation. Review LAST timetable to include additional support in literacy and numeracy
- Full implementation of PBL across whole school community. Strategy to include parent involvement.
- Teachers released from face to face teaching to contact Aboriginal families, organise and participate in Personalised Learning plans for all Aboriginal students.
- Ensure unexplained absences are followed up by immediate contact with parents/carers and that regular meetings with HSLO and Aboriginal HSLO are held.
- Continue the Karuah Leadership program where stage three students are trained as leaders and implement welfare programs such as ‘Brekkie club’ and ‘Playground happenings”.
- Utilise additional funds from the ‘Smith Family’ through the ‘Karuah Strong - Communities for Children’ project to initiate activities/events to promote healthy families, healthy children and a healthy environment.
- Conduct yearly evaluation to inform school planning

Professional learning
Priorities for professional learning have been in line with the school’s plan.
Staff have been provided with opportunities to attend training in literacy, numeracy, technology and Positive Behaviour for Learning.
Where appropriate, teaching staff have attended activities linked to their personal professional development plan.
All professional learning programs are used to build the capacity of teachers to provide quality teaching and learning programs for students.

Parent/caregiver, student, and teacher satisfaction
In 2013, the school sought the opinions of parents, students and teachers about the school.
Their responses are presented below.

During discussions with students and parents at personal learning plan (PLP) meetings all stake holders said that they were happy and satisfied with the school.

One comment made by the students was
interesting. They enjoyed having a larger school that enabled them to play more team sports and enter teams into local competitions.

**Program evaluations**

**Change: Small Group Literacy Instruction (L3)**

**Background**
The Language Learning and Literacy (L3) program involves small group instruction in reading, writing and reading to in the kindergarten classroom. Using Best Start and class based assessment Early Stage One students are grouped according to their needs and are taught in specific small group literacy lessons. Year 3 literacy NAPLAN results and kindergarten Best Start data at Karuah showed that students were performing below state averages in literacy in the early years. The L3 program has brought improvements to literacy learning in Early Stage One students’ literacy assessments.

**What we did – strategies**
The Early Stage One teacher began L3 training in 2011. Through regional support and professional development this teacher has developed her knowledge of explicit L3 teaching methods as well as extended her professional leadership of the L3 program in Kindergarten. Within the school and classroom environment support has been provided to the L3 program with timetabled support from the Principal who has worked in 2013 to provide group L3 support, specific small group teaching, follow-up analysis, assessment and planning. Parent volunteer support further enhances the daily L3 program and provides small group literacy extension to Kindergarten students.

**Findings**
Through on-going assessment, teacher feedback, parent interviews and student focus groups the following feedback indicated:

- the Early Stage One (ES1) teacher has developed a sound working knowledge of the L3 program through professional development and support. This teacher is now confident in delivering the L3 program.
- the ES1 teacher has increased her expectations of students under the L3 program and she has developed deeper understandings of literacy learning in Kindergarten.
- the ES1 teacher noted that individual student reading development has developed earlier in the Kindergarten year than in previous years before L3 teaching.
- principal released as literacy/numeracy mentor to support Best Start kindergarten assessment implementation. This included; supporting the grouping process and demonstrating small group specific teaching in using the computer program ‘Reading Eggs’. Students have been highly engaged and focused in completing reading and spelling activities.
- principal relieved to continue L3 ES1 program 4 mornings per week. This included; supporting the grouping process, demonstrating specific teaching in guided reading and computing skills.
- parents indicated that the L3 program is providing specific skills to their children in reading development and that they are pleased to see reading development in the first year of their child’s education.
- parents felt happy that they have the opportunity to work in the classroom on specific literacy tasks. Parents interviewed felt that they are making a valuable contribution to student learning with specific literacy tasks.
- parent volunteer feedback indicated that they enjoy assisting with small group work and the short sessions of rotating group work.
- student focus group feedback indicated that they know specific skills in how to read and that students enjoy the close support in daily literacy sessions.

**Changes in systems and practices**

- ES1 teacher is programming new learning activities for individual student needs.
- L3 strategies and teaching methods embedded into early Stage One teaching and learning cycle.
- ES1 teacher regularly assesses students’ reading levels and analyses student reading data to plan teaching
• Parents happy to volunteer and participate in daily Kindergarten literacy lessons

Conclusion
Focus group discussions and interviews with staff, students and parents reflect the impact that the L3 program has had at Karuah Public School in the last three years. Results of reading levels have shown that reading targets set for 2013 will be met in Kindergarten. This will assist students moving into Year One to develop stronger reading development. The L3 program has brought a key approach to literacy teaching in Kindergarten and provided an effective and proven method to teaching specific reading skills for students.

Future directions
The L3 program will continue in 2014 with the Early Stage One teacher now trained and independently programming L3 lessons. The L3 teacher will work with the Year One teacher in 2014 to provide key L3 strategies for Year One students. The Principal will continue to assist in the assessment and analysis of L3 development alongside the teacher. The Principal will also assist in daily literacy L3 sessions. Parents of Kindergarten students will be encouraged and supported to assist in daily group literacy work. The ES1 teacher will also continue to be supported by the school with access to L3 network meetings and professional development courses. Resources will be allocated for an additional staff member to be trained in L3 in 2014.

Change: Student Engagement
Background
In order to improve student’s engagement with school and classroom learning as well as improve student attendance rates, a key target in the 2012 – 2014 School Plan was set for ‘student engagement’. The aspect of student engagement at Karuah public school includes the wider aspect of maintaining positive relationships with outside community partners, students’ families and professional educational agencies. The attempt to meet the school target of improved student engagement and attendance included the key aspects of achieving:

- Increased engagement during class instruction time and decreased evidence of negative behaviours impacting on others.

- Attendance rate for all students to be more than 92%.

- Increased participation of Aboriginal families in school based programs and community workshops.

What we did - strategies
In order to increase student engagement during class instruction time a breakfast program (‘Brekkie Club’) was begun in 2011 with the support of the Smith Family ‘Karuah Strong’ project. This project has assisted in funding the breakfast program to students of Karuah Public School since August 2010. In 2011 the program ran three mornings a week. The popular program saw a need to increase the program in 2012 to four mornings a week. Increased enrolments during 2013 have seen over 8000 breakfasts served to students, with an average daily attendance of 49 students. The Karuah Strong project has committed to continued support of the Brekkie Club in 2014.

In order to improve the percentage of students scoring in the bottom two bands in NAPLAN literacy and numeracy a weekly ‘Focus Groups’ time was offered to students at the beginning of 2012 and 2013. The main impetus for these groups was to provide close support for Year 3 and Year 5 students in NAPLAN literacy and numeracy revision for NAPLAN style assessment. Whilst NAPLAN support for Year 3 and Year 5 students was timetabled in 2013 the secondary element of structured reading support groups and numeracy groups provided the stimulus for improving student engagement for all students at Karuah Public School.

The ‘Focus Groups’ were timetabled in term one and two of 2012 and 2013 and provided the main support to Year 3 and Year 5 students in NAPLAN practice. A reading support group for students not achieving expected targets in reading was led by the LAST and another staff member to provide extra school and individual support to struggling readers.

A drama workshop program funded through a grant obtained by the Karuah strong project
(Smith Family) was conducted in Term 3 of 2012. These workshops led by a Newcastle drama company, Tantrum Theatre, provided positive skills practise for students as well as team building and positive relationship strategies for all students. All students in the school were involved in the ten week, one hour workshops.

With the provision of funding under National Partnerships the Principal has been able to support welfare programs offered to the school. The Principal has been able to work closely with the school counsellor and to provide support and assistance to families in accessing the monthly paediatric outreach clinic that visits the school. The Principal has also worked closely with the Smith Family’s ‘Karuah Strong’ initiative in order to provide student engagement activities (Children’s week activities, Tantrum Theatre)

Eleven students from Stages 2 and 3 were trained in the Rock and Water positive behaviour program in 2012. These students were trained by a teaching staff member who completed a professional learning course in the Rock and Water program in March 2012. This program was planned to assist both male and female Karuah Public School students in maintaining positive behaviour when interacting with other school students as well as teaching self-control strategies and self-confidence techniques. The program was demonstrated to parents of Aboriginal students at a community workshop that was partnered with the Family Action Centre’s Project Officer and introduced the program to parents.

The implementation of Positive Behaviour for Learning (PBL) in 2013 has been a key strategy for the school. This strategy has been enabled by National Partnerships. Three staff members attended PBL training during 2013. A reduction in suspensions and a reduction in playground incidents have been key indicators of the success of this strategy. In 2011 there were a total of 41 suspensions, in 2012, 22 suspensions and in 2013, 16 suspensions.

Celebrating and rewarding students who did not receive a ‘Yellow Card’ and have to attend ‘Planning Room’ was a key initiative introduced as a student engagement strategy. Celebrating students who made consistently positive choices in behaviour was celebrated at the end of each term in excursion events. This initiative was implemented to recognise students’ positive behaviour choices at school.

Findings
Through teacher feedback, the offering of a breakfast program for students four mornings a week has supported students in being able to focus and engage in the classroom for more sustained periods in the morning class time. All teaching staff support this program and agree that it has made an impact for engaging students at school. The operation of school canteen on Fridays does not allow for the running of ‘Brekkie Club’ and teachers noted a difference on Fridays in class concentration for students who regularly access the Brekkie Club. Parent feedback indicated a high level of satisfaction at the school providing a breakfast program. Community volunteers staffing the program reflect the wider community’s support of this program.

Teacher, student and parent feedback has indicated that the Tantrum Theatre workshops achieved an outstanding level of support amongst students. Students were provided with a one hour lesson in team-building exercises, drama performance and for each week in term three of 2012. Four teachers and the Principal attended a professional development workshop in order to maintain a sustainable approach to extending the program for students at the school.

Student and parent feedback have suggested that the Gymnastics program has been a very popular addition to the sport program. Students attended one house per week for ten weeks in term 3 2013. Teachers have commented that students have learnt valuable social skills which are now evident in playground behaviours.

Two teachers and the Principal have been trained in the Rock and Water program and eleven students from Stages 2 and 3 were involved in a ten week participant workshop. The teacher leading these workshops was assisted by our Norta Norta tutor who was additionally trained in the program. This tutor has noticed positive changes in the students who have been Rock and Water trained. Teachers on playground duty have commented that strategies taught in Rock and Water have been used by students in the playground at school. Students who participated
in the program commented on their increased self-confidence and self-control.

The ‘No Yellow Card Reward Days’ were a successful outcome for each term in 2013 in recognising and rewarding positive behaviour at Karuah Public School. The number of students attending ‘reward days’ in 2013, has increased by 4%. Student feedback highlighted the incentive they had in maintaining positive and acceptable behaviour throughout each term. Parent feedback indicated that such an initiative recognised students’ positive efforts and were keen to see this popular initiative continue.

Changes in systems and practices
Students, teachers, staff, parents and community partners have all provided feedback indicating that Karuah Public School supports students closely and that the school has offered practical and engaging programs for all students in 2013. An increased focus on student engagement programs has been made possible with the Principal being able to access welfare supported programs and liaise with community partners.

Conclusion
Whilst there has been an increase in student based activities and programs at Karuah Public School in 2013 there is scope for more student engagement programs. Feedback from teachers indicated that the breakfast program has assisted students in classroom engagement. There has been a measured decrease of documented negative classroom and playground behaviour through programs designed to increase student engagement at school.

Future directions
The ‘Brekkie Club’ breakfast program will continue to operate four mornings a week in order to support students who have not had breakfast before school. The term one ‘Focus Groups’ program will continue in 2014 in order to assist Year 3 and Year 5 students in NAPLAN support. A whole school focus on recognising and rewarding positive behaviour at school will be supported with ‘No Yellow Card’ celebrations at the end of school terms. The PBL program will be a major focus in 2014.

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.

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