

Loxton Lutheran School



2016 School Performance Information Report

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As part of our funding agreement with the Australian Government, we are required to ensure that specific “School Performance Information” is made publicly available to the school community. This collated information which relates to the 2016 school year, appears in this report under the headings specified by the Australian Government.

If you have any questions regarding this information please feel free to contact the Loxton Lutheran School Office to make an appointment to see Principal Terry Sawade.

Contextual Information about the School Including Characteristics of the Student Body.

It is the mission of Loxton Lutheran School to be a Christ-centred caring community, providing quality education where individuals are challenged to achieve their potential and empowered to be responsible citizens and leaders in the community.

Our school vision is:

“Educational Excellence ~ Together in Christ.”

Education, by its very nature is dynamic – forever changing and evolving. For schools to be successful they too must be dynamic by continually evaluating, modifying and providing a challenging, safe and caring learning environment for their students.

From its inception in 1947 (1954 at its present site), Loxton Lutheran School has been an independent Christ-centred co-educational primary school catering for children from Reception to Year 7.

Through the continued support of government, and an active and committed parent community, the school has grown into a modern facility with well-equipped classrooms and facilities.

A member school of the Lutheran Schools’ Association of South Australia, the strength of Loxton Lutheran School has been its ability to continually improve its offerings to children via the provision of a quality, well rounded academic, spiritual and socially inclusive education program. Committed teaching and support staff continually provide a range of multi-disciplinary learning opportunities which embrace best practice educational theory and methodology, as well as focussing upon the core values of - **Love, Justice, Compassion, Forgiveness, Service, Courage, Humility, Hope, Quality and Appreciation.**

The foundation to success is knowing where you are and where you want to be. The staff, parents and students of Loxton Lutheran School are clear about what and where they want their school to be – the best at providing educational opportunities and instruction – academic, social and spiritual - enabling all children who attend, to grow into valued, caring and law-abiding adult citizens.

Located in the township of Loxton, in the Riverland of South Australia, 250 km from Adelaide, Loxton Lutheran School is highly regarded within the community for providing an extensive range of educational opportunities for its children that both directly and indirectly improve student outcomes. Examples of these are what could be termed '*Value Added.*' Loxton Lutheran School adds value to the education experience of its students and the experience of the wider school community by its ethos, culture and environment, and by the opportunities provided. Listed below are a range of examples of activities undertaken during 2016 that added value to the educational experience at Loxton Lutheran School.

- **Spiritual Development**

- Daily Staff Devotion
- Weekly Staff Prayer Circle
- Staff Bible Study (3 to 4 forty five minutes sessions each term)
- Staff Spiritual Retreat
- Daily Class Devotions
- Weekly School Chapel services (hosted by classes on a rotational basis and involving local Lutheran Pastors)
- Class / School involvement in Sunday Church Services at local Lutheran Congregations
- School Chaplaincy / Pastoral Care program

- **Curriculum Related Activities**

- LAP (Learning Assistance Program – which involves parents, grand-parents and friends of the school working with groups and individual students on a range of activities)
- Reading Recovery
- Mini-Lit Literacy Intervention Program
- Multi-Lit Literacy Intervention Program
- GMG Co-ordination Program (Reception classes)
- Standardised Diagnostic Testing (2 X per year –across all year levels)
- Extended Learning Program
- Specialist PE / Health Lessons

- Specialist Technology / Visual Arts Programs
- Weekly Library lessons with a Teacher Librarian
- Weekly German lessons
- Scholastic Book Fair & Book Club
- On-line Reading Eggs program
- Premier's Reading Challenge (100% participation & achievement level)
- ICAS Competitions – Science, Maths, English, Spelling, Writing, Digital Technologies
- Book-week activities – group sharing across the school
- Growth & Development Lessons (Year 6 & 7 students) via Families SA prepared materials
- Transition Programs
 - Pre-school to School – School to Pre-school visits
 - Year 7/8
- Tournament of Minds participation
- Year 7 Gardens
- School Parliament – providing structured student decision making processes
- One to one iPads for all children in Years 3 to 7 to enrich teaching programs

- **Community**

- Buddy Classes / weekly buddy activities
- Conducting monthly Chapel services for residents of the Riverview Rest Home
- Tidy Towns Clean-up
- Clean Up Australia Day
- Involvement in Loxton Mardi Gras (Grape Harvest) Pageant
- School involvement in “Operation Christmas Child”
 - Christmas Boxes prepared and donated by the school community for distribution to under-privileged communities around the world.
- School involvement in annual local Christmas Tree Display
- Annual School Continental (major fund-raiser)
- Student involvement in Anzac Day & Remembrance Day Ceremonies at the Cross of Sacrifice with the laying of a wreath
- Fund-raising for Charity - Monetary support for local, national & international charity organisations via donations accumulated through weekly Chapel offerings
- School Parliament organised Casual Days raising money for charity
- School involvement in Loxton Show (School Art Display and promotional stall)

- Recycling waste materials by classes
- Healthy Eating Canteen (Monday, Wednesday & Friday)
- Making the LIFE Centre available to community organisations (sporting & non-sporting) at no cost or for minimal hire cost.
- Provision of school facilities (eg School Buses & LIFE Centre) at no cost to community organisations.
- Student involvement in community service.

- **Sporting / Cultural**

- Involvement in Riverland SAPSASA with student participation in:-
 - All sports including tennis, cricket, hockey, football, netball, swimming, athletics, touch-football, soccer
- Specialist sports coaching
 - Soccer SA
 - AFL
 - South Australian Cricket Association
 - Riverland Golf Association
- School Student Band
- School Choir participation in the Riverland Festival of Music at Chaffey Theatre
- School Concert / Musical held in the School's LIFE Centre
- Annual School Sports Day
- Annual Riverland Athletics Day
- Various visiting performances
- Fortnightly Assemblies – Whole School
- Sporting Schools Program
- Involvement in the Pedal Prix Program with the school competing in 3 events during the year (Loxton, Adelaide & Murray Bridge)

- **Camps / Excursions**

- Reception – Stay-back
- Year 1 – Sleep-over and day local excursion
- Year 2 – Overnight stay at Mylor
- Years 3, 4 & 5 – 2 nights & 3 days Camp to Nanu Farm
- Year 6 adventure aquatics camp – 2 nights – 3 days Lake Culluleraie
- Year 7 - 5 nights & 6 Days – to Canberra – as a part of the Loxton Schools Combined Year 7 Trip (Early December)

- Swimming lessons – Reception to year 5 (Term 4)
- Year 7 Aquatics Day (Barmera) in Term 1

- **Student Leadership**

- Election of School Captains and Vice Captains (announcement of leaders for the following year made at the previous year's end of year service) by the student body.
- Election of Sports House Captains & Vice Captains (by the students year 3 & above)
- School Parliament (in place of SRC) with all year 7s involved in decision making and reporting on behalf of the student body in an organised parliamentary forum.
- Opportunities for student leaders to attend training and motivational forums such as 'Young Leaders Day' and Lutheran Education's Young Leader's Day

Teacher Standards and Qualifications (as mandated in the relevant jurisdiction).

Teaching Staff Changes/Additions

In 2016 Loxton Lutheran School's Staff changes during year and during the year were as follows.

- A female teacher (permanent 1.0FTE) who had been on maternity leave, returned at a reduced FTE (0.6) to share a Year 7 class with another teacher (0.4FTE) who had been a specialist PE/Health teacher the previous year.
- A contract teacher (0.4FTE) was appointed to be the specialist PE/Health teacher for a 12 month period.

Teacher Qualifications

All teachers at Loxton Lutheran School meet full accreditation requirements for the Teacher's Registration Board of South Australia. Many are well qualified in their field and hold two or more tertiary qualifications.

Some of our more experienced teachers hold a Diploma in Teaching (Dip T – 3 years study) and an Advanced Diploma in Teaching (Adv. Dip T – 4 years study). A number of these people have then completed further study in the form of Post Graduate Diplomas etc. Most younger teachers on staff began their teaching careers after a 4 year Bachelor degree in teaching. A number of teaching staff members have more than one tertiary qualification.

Below is a listing of teaching qualifications held by our teaching staff:

- Advanced Diploma In Teaching 1
- Diploma in Teaching (inc. Grad.Dip T) 2
- Associate Diploma in Applied Science 1

• Bachelor of Applied Science	1
• Bachelor of Primary & Junior Primary Education	1
• Bachelor of Education / Teaching (inc. Grad B Ed)	7
• Bachelor of Teaching (and Learning)	2
• Bachelor of early Childhood	2
• Bachelor of Arts	1
• Bachelor of Health Services	1
• Graduate Diploma (Education / Teaching)	2
• Graduate Diploma in Educational Administration	1
• Diploma / Certificate in Lutheran Education	2
• Master in Education	1
• Bachelor of Psychology	1
• Graduate Certificate in Catholic Ed	2
• Bachelor of Library Studies	1
• Diploma in Lutheran Education	1

Non-Teaching Staff Changes / Additions

- An existing LSO (0.4FTE) resigned at the end of the 2015 school year to focus on completing her teaching degree.
- Another LSO (0.4FTE) was appointed to replace her, with the new person's duties being to
 - Be a Front Office each Monday (0.2FTE) for the entire school year.
 - Manage the Accelerus Student Reporting System each Tuesday (terms 2 & 4) and to work as a classroom support person for terms 1 & 3.
- The School Executive Assistant (at Front Office) reduced her time by one day a week (Monday) from 1.0FTE to 0.8FTE. She was replaced in that position by the aforementioned new appointee.
- The 2 Indigenous LSOs were each initially appointed for 2 days a week (0.4FTE) to work in the area of classroom support for semester. These appointments were later extended to the end of the 2016 school year.

Staff Training / Professional Development

All staff members at Loxton Lutheran School are required to undertake training and have current accreditation in:-

- Mandatory Notification
- Basic 1st Aid (BELS)

- Valuing Safe Communities
- Epi-Pen Use (anaphylaxis)
- Asthma Management

The training in the above mentioned areas is not annual, but cyclic. In 2016 all staff, teaching and non-teaching, participated in the following training activities:-

- Valuing Safe Communities

All teaching staff members at Loxton Lutheran School are required to be involved in professional learning activities. These take a variety of forms:-

- whole staff professional development
- specific in school curriculum focus activities for teaching staff
- attendance at workshops, seminars and conferences for individuals or small groups of teachers.
- Individually focussed Professional Development, 'driven' and initiated by individual staff members, and tailored to the Personal Development Plans

During terms 3 & 4, staff also became more familiar with peer classroom observations, which were introduced with the assistance of consultants from the AISSA (Association of Independent Schools of South Australia).

While associated costs can be identified for most professional development activities, there are many for which it is not possible to allocate a cost. Teacher professional development activities that are not costed include:-

- the staff appraisal process
- teachers acting as mentors to new staff
- induction processes for new staff
- mentoring student teachers
- out of hours meetings to review curriculum, assessment etc
- participation on advisory committees such as the Ministry & Care, Personnel Consultative Committee, as well as joint parent/teacher committees such as Continental and Nutrition.
(It is an expectation that all teaching staff are involved in at least one committee)

In 2016 all professional development was funded through school resources.

It should also be noted that the aforementioned does not include the privately funded professional learning activities undertaken by teachers who are engaged in post graduate studies and other courses. Nor does it include travel and accommodation costs incurred by staff in order to attend work-shops or conferences.

Staff Attendance

The average attendance rate is an indicator of the time required to be at work that is actually spent at work. The larger the percentage figure the less time is spent away from work due to illness, carer's leave, bereavement leave, short term parenting leave and the like. It does not account for staff on long term leave for reasons such as extended illness, maternity leave, long service leave etc, where a replacement employee has been contracted to fulfil an absent person's duties.

The average attendance rate of staff (teaching and non-teaching) at Loxton Lutheran during **2016** was **98.04%**. This figure is 0.56% higher than the figure recorded in 2015 (97.48).

Workforce Composition, Including Indigenous Composition.

Loxton Lutheran's school teaching 2016 staff comprised the following:

- **Teachers**

○ Principal	1.0 (FTE)
○ Classroom teachers	7.0 (total FTE)
○ Librarian	0.6 (FTE)
○ Special Education	0.9 (FTE)
○ Language (German)	0.3 (FTE)
○ Technologies / Visual Arts (NIT)	0.4 (FTE)
○ Specialist PE / Health (NIT)	0.4 (FTE)
○ ELC Director	0.4 (FTE)
○ Counsellor / Pastoral Carer	0.4 (FTE)
<small>(Under the Commonwealth Government's National Chaplaincy program.)</small>	

- **Non-Teaching Staff**

- Business Manager
- Executive assistant (Front Office)
- 4 X Classroom School Assistants (various hours)
- Canteen Manager
- Uniform Shop Manager
- Groundsman / Maintenance Worker

- Promotions Officer
- Indigenous
 - 2 X Classroom School Assistants (each for 2 days per week)
- Trainee Groundsman / Maintenance Worker

Student attendance at school

- 1) The rates of attendance for the whole school and for each year level; and*
- 2) A description of how non-attendance is managed by the school.*

During the 2016 school year, the average total attendance for students enrolled at Loxton Lutheran School was 93.68%. Breaking this down for each year level, the following rates were achieved (figures are calculated to the nearest one hundredth of a whole percent)

Year Level	Maximum Days Possible	Actual Attendance	Percentage of attendance
Reception	2612	2392.5	91.60%
Year 1	3605	3401.5	94.36%
Year 2	2090	1990.5	95.24%
Year 3	4801	4531.5	94.39%
Year 4	4889	4622	94.54%
Year 5	2850	2715	95.24%
Year 6	4083	2830.5	93.82%
Year 7	4370	4055	92.79%

The over-all average attendance figure of 93.86% is 0.28 of a percentage point greater than the average for the 2015 school year (93.58%) and continues to indicate a stable rate of student attendance at Loxton Lutheran school which has only fluctuated (+ or -) by a percentage point over the last 9 years.

In the day to day recording of student absence, parents are required to contact the school to inform the administration of their child(ren)'s absence. School policy states that, in normal circumstances, this notification should be made via telephone or electronically (eg text message or an App. such as Dojo or SeeSaw which teachers used for home to school communication) by 9.30am on the morning of the absence. A written note, upon the child's return after the absence, is also acceptable.

Students arriving late or leaving early are required to do so via the school office to be signed in/out by parents/guardians.

If no notification of the reason for an absence is received at the school by 9.30am each morning, front office personnel will contact parents/guardians asking for a reason for the absence.

In dealing with any issues of consistent ongoing or extended unexplained non-attendance, all reasonable efforts are made to firstly contact and speak with the parents /guardians. Failing a satisfactory result or explanation, appropriate government agencies are contacted and involved, with written reports made.

Student Outcomes in Standardised National Literacy and Numeracy Testing

2016 marked the 9th year of the **National Assessment Program for Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN)** which is conducted in early May in all schools across all education systems in Australia.

The table below represents Loxton Lutheran School's overall results of children at or above the minimum national bench-marks for their year level. While the percentage figures (top) given provide a useful indication as to the results achieved across the school, further information regarding the number of students sitting the assessments does provide greater perspective to the actual percentages achieved.

For example, the smaller the cohort (number) of children taking the test at a year level, the greater the percentage for every child not achieving bench-mark status. In Loxton Lutheran School's situation, the numbers of children involved in the testing in 2016 at each year level was:-

- Year 3 26 children
- Year 5 14 children
- Year 7 19 children

The bottom number in each box within the brackets, indicates the actual number of students who were unable to achieve the bench-mark for that area in that year.

Loxton Lutheran School's policy is that all children school sit the NAPLAN tests, unless parents insist on their child's withdrawal for specific educational reasons. In 2016 -

- With Year 7, there was
 - A total of 4 children withdrawn from the Grammar & punctuation, Spelling and Reading assessments.

- A total of 3 children withdrawn from the Numeracy and Writing assessments.
- 1 child absent from the Reading, Writing and Numeracy assessments.
- With Year 5, there was
 - No child withdrawn from any of the assessments
 - 1 child absent for all assessments
- With Year 3, there was
 - A total of 2 children withdrawn from the Reading and Writing assessments.
 - A total of 3 children withdrawn from the Spelling and Grammar & punctuation assessments.
 - No child withdrawn from the Numeracy assessment
 - 1 Child absent front all assessments.

Percentage of Students At or Above the National Minimum Standard					
Year	Writing	Reading	Spelling	Grammar & Punctuation	Numeracy
Year 3	100 (0)	96 (1)	100 (0)	100 (0)	100 (0)
Year 5	100 (0)	93 (1)	100 (1)	93 (1)	93 (1)
Year 7	95 (1)	100 (0)	89 (2)	95 (1)	100 (0)

It needs to be stated that, while the NAPLAN testing results do provide a good indication as to a child's progress at school – and then (by default) a guide to the school's overall performance in its teaching in these core areas of the curriculum, they never-the-less remain a snapshot in time.

Reporting student progress is an ongoing process at Loxton Lutheran School. Formal reporting occurs three times a year:-

- Term 1 – Parent Interviews
- Term 2 – Plain English Written Reports
- Term 4 – Plain English Written Reports

Since the School's 2012 investment in the 'Accelerus' student reporting program the reporting structure and format have continued to be modified and 'tweaked.' This continued in 2016, and through this process, it is anticipated that more accurate and succinct reporting of student progress will eventuate.

Parents of children in years 3, 5 & 7 also receive their child's NAPLAN results in Term 3 and are invited to contact the school and arrange a meeting to speak to their child's teacher about matters pertaining to the tests and the results.

In addition to the abovementioned formal processes, teachers continually update parents about their child's progress through individually arranged interviews/meetings, test/assessment results and written comments via school/home communication books.

Standardised testing in Numeracy and Literacy occurs two times a year – mid-term 2 and early to mid-term 4. These results are recorded in each child's personal information folder housed in the administration building.

Loxton Lutheran School is acutely aware of taking every opportunity to improve its performance which it does by providing its teachers with the opportunity (through release time) to analyse the results using such instruments such as the 'SMART DATA TOOL,' a software program specifically written to analyse NAPLAN data – from an individual student's perspective, a year level perspective and a school wide perspective. Utilising this information, teachers are able to identify strengths and weaknesses that occur in teaching – within a year level and across the school. Measures can then be planned and implemented to improve the performance of overall curriculum delivery.

Parent, Student and Teacher Satisfaction with the School

Feedback from parents occurs through a number of sources, some formal and some informal. It includes responses to surveys, contributions by focus groups; comments through school community groups such as the Parents and Friends and various parent support groups; and specific feedback to teachers, senior staff and the Principal. Such feedback is always welcome.

In December 2016 we continued to use the externally formulated, conducted and collated parent satisfaction survey, '***Survey My School***' to protect against the possibility of internally conducted surveys being designed to achieve an intended result. Invitations containing a link to the online survey instrument were sent to all parents. The survey remained open for 14 days. Parents who

had not completed the survey were sent a reminder three days before the survey closed. Parent responses to questions appear below.

Percentage of Parent Responses

Question/Area	Agree/Strongly Agree	Not Sure	Disagree/Strongly Disagree
This is a good school	94	6	0
My child is happy going to this school	94	6	0
The school is a safe place for my child	100	0	0
My child is getting a good education at this school	79	17	4
The staff at this school take an interest in my child	92	8	0
Communication between the home and school is good	88	6	6
I know what is happening at the school and coming events	96	4	0
I can make contact with my child's teacher or other staff easily	98	2	0
The school responds quickly to my concerns	88	10	2
My child's teacher is approachable	94	4	2
The school Principal and other leaders in the school are approachable	90	10	0
The school Principal and other leaders in the school are committed to the best possible education for my child	85	15	2
Parent – teacher conferences are helpful	87	13	0
The school report card keeps me informed about my child's progress at school	79	17	4
I am happy with the quality of teaching my child receives	83	13	4

This school takes a balanced approach in providing an all-round education	88	10	2
The school's expectations of students are clear	92	8	0
Staff at the school make me feel welcome	96	4	0
My child's teacher makes me feel welcome	96	4	0
This school is well equipped	92	8	0
I am happy with the school's facilities	94	6	0
I am happy with my child's access to computers and other technologies available through the school	96	4	0

When asked 'The BEST thing about this school is.....' parents highlighted the

- The teachers and staff. They are professional, dedicated and show Christ's love - welcoming, caring and genuine love for all people in the school community
- The compassion and love shown by parents, staff and children
- Facilities - The life centre
- Very welcoming and friendly. Facilities are great. Good to see kids do activities like grow vegetables in the garden etc.
- We are all like one big family and nothing is better than family!
- How organised with the events are and how good communication is with school and parent
- The school acknowledges that family is just as important as the children who attend school, therefore welcomes,
- Care factor and comforting spirit.
- Christian ethos.
- Appreciate parent volunteer who organise the running of school events, eg continental the welcoming atmosphere, family orientated and the Christian content.
- Holistic approach Christian foundation Great outdoor spaces
- My children love going to school. they are happy, therefore I am happy
- Community
- Does not have some of the behavioural problems that larger schools have.
- School community, teaching staff, admin staff, varied lessons with current up to date teaching styles

While the continuing message or parent feedback is positive, supportive and appreciative of the opportunities and facilities the school provides for its students, concerns are also expressed, and

these provide school Management, teaching staff and School Council with the opportunity to enquire further to address the matters where improved performance is both perceived and required.

By enlarge, attempts by management and staff to address these, are outlined via future planning and review processes undertaken by the various sub-committees of School Council, as well as the innovative initiatives - much of which is outlined below.

Improvement to School Facilities

The school's Grounds and Maintenance Committee continued to co-ordinate development of the grounds and facilities through the work carried out by planning and conducting a range parent working bees through-out the year. Throughout 2016 the appearance of the school grounds has been maintained at a very high standard, with compliments frequently received by visitors and members of the school and wider Loxton Communities.

Works & upgrading carried out in 2016 included:-

- Construction of the Kid's Shed
 - This is a facility that is identified in the school Strategic Plan as catering for the engagement, instruction and mentoring of children who find it difficult to function effectively in a more traditional classroom environment.
 - Using parent expertise and support the construction process was completed during the latter months of the year.
 - The electrical wiring of the shed in 2017 will complete the construction process.

- Internal Refurbishment / Upgrading of the School's Library
 - During the 2nd half of the year, the internal refurbishment of the School's Library was commenced and completed.
 - This included
 - the installation of a librarian's 'borrowing' desk
 - upgrading of the book shelving with aesthetically pleasing book-shelf ends
 - new furniture, including colourful student tables and ottomans

- Administration Building Upgrade
 - Commencing in December 2015 (after the completing of the school year) this project was completed in early term 1 2016 and included
 - A complete roof replacement
 - Installation of insulation into the roof cavity

- Installation of new split system reverse cycle air-conditioning to all areas
 - Rendering of the outer cladding on the northern and eastern walls of the administration building
 - Repair of internal wall and ceiling cracking
- Painting of the ‘annex’ areas in Rooms 7 & 8
 - This project was completed in the January school holidays, prior to school commencing for the year.
- Upgrading of the Dam Pump Electrical Switch Board
 - This had been identified by our groundsman in 2015 with money set aside in the budget to provide for this upgrade.
 - The completion ensured a more efficient and reliable operation of the irrigation system that waters the school’s various grassed areas.

Projected 2017 Projects for School Facilities Improvement

- BGA (Block Grant Authority) GRANT for Refurbishment of the School House
 - In mid-2016, the school received news that it had been successful in receiving a BGA Grant for the internal refurbishment of the school house (old Principal’s residence)
 - This refurbishment will involve
 - the installation of a new kitchen facility specifically designed for teachers to use in cooking lessons with their classes
 - re-configuration and repairing of some internal walls
 - re-pair of flooring
 - complete internal repainting
 - re-configuration of bath-room and toilet facilities
 - new floor coverings throughout the building
- Extension of JP Play-ground
 - This to include
 - landscaping
 - A sensory garden in what is now the front yard of the school house
 - Installation of 1500mm high fencing around the playground extension perimeter.

Once again the school acknowledges the wonderful support of the many parents who donate their time, expertise and equipment attending monthly working bees, ensuring that many of the projects become a reality. Such contributions not only save considerably on costs, but also perpetuate and foster a sense of camaraderie, community and ownership among those who participate in such activities.

Innovation

Flexible Learning Spaces

2016 saw the introduction of the concept 'Flexible Learning Spaces' in classrooms by at least 2 teachers. In an attempt to better cater for the learning styles and needs of today's children, the teachers introduced a range of class-room furniture options which included various styles of seating and work tables/desks, as well as a variety of work spaces.

While this presented a significant change to the 'one size fits all' more traditional classroom, and while it is too early to pass judgement of the success or otherwise of this innovation, what is clear, is that our thinking about the factors affecting student performance, is becoming ever more diverse.

It is anticipated that more class teachers in the school will embrace the concept of 'Flexible Learning Spaces' in 2017

Curriculum – Teaching & Learning

Engaging children in their Learning through Inquiry

In keeping with the main theme of 'Student Engagement,' identified in the ***Teaching and Learning*** key area of the School's Strategic plan, the main focus for teaching training in 2016 remained the investigation and exploration into teaching through inquiry.

Through the continued support of the Lutheran Schools Association (LSA) advisory team of Rod Wearn & Tori Weiss, staff were able to be released to investigate, discuss, identify and plan 'Units of Inquiry.'

As a result of the work, teaching staff developed our Loxton Lutheran School Inquiry Model (appendix 1) which teachers use as a basis for planning their units of inquiry.

Keeping Safe: Child Protection Curriculum

During Term 2 interested members of School Council, interested parents and teaching staff attended a day's training workshop in the "Keeping Safe: Child Protection Curriculum" (KS:KPC) at the Waikerie Lutheran Primary School. This was so Council, parents and teachers could subsequently work together to form a working party to analyse the curriculum and make recommendations about its implementation across all year levels at school.

Once again this exemplified the close working relationship of the teaching staff and the school board in providing best practice outcomes for our children.

Student Well-being

In this fast moving and ever more complex world, student well-being is assuming a much higher profile as a part of what 'we do' in schools. Loxton Lutheran School Staff continue to be acutely aware of providing students with the support structures they need to function a vibrant young citizens in today's world. Such support, apart from the ongoing counselling provided by the teachers to their students, takes place in various forms, some of which are:-

- the School Chaplain (funded under the Commonwealth School Chaplaincy Program)
- the Adaptive Education teacher and various intervention programs provided
- the **KidsMatter** program and the joint parent/teacher team responsible for the in-service of staff in the modules, working in conjunction with teachers and their classes
- the **Growing with Gratitude** program throughout the school

Students

In 2016 students in years 5, 6 & 7 were surveyed about their impressions of the school. The following table displays their feelings about the areas identified in the left hand column. Clearly, their responses were positive in all areas.

Percentage of Student Responses

Area	Excellent	Good	Okay	Poor
Facilities (Buildings, equipment, computers, IWBs etc)	58	36	6	0
Extra Curricula Activities (eg Concerts, SAPSASA, assemblies, performances etc)	50	44	6	0
Student Leadership Opportunities (Student Parliament etc)	44	50	6	0
Student Involvement (decision making about own learning etc)	39	39	22	0
Camps & Excursions	58	39	3	0
Quality of Teaching / Helpfulness of teachers	42	47	11	0

Examples of comments made by these students were:

- The school is a good and safe place to be and learn
- I like the concerts
- Pedal Prix is great.
- I like the space and the use of space
- The new technology, computers and iPads are awesome
- Camps and excursions are great
- I like the sports and fitness – especially when the teachers do it.
- The LIFE Centre is fantastic
- I like it the way Students help others in situations of need
- Mostly everybody is nice and I like the people here
- I really like the helpfulness and care of the teachers
- The food in the canteen is great
- I have many friends to play with
- I like the camps and excursions

Staff

Well-ness and well-being of all staff members continues to be a priority as schools and teaching become increasingly more complex and demanding. Feedback is received both formally and informally at a one to one /group / whole staff level and continues to indicate a positive work environment where staff members enjoy what they do. Loxton Lutheran School is fortunate to have a very hard working and committed staff it has – people who in their respective roles continue to value add in what they do.

Systemic, government and school requirements mean that the challenges associated with time and its management, are an ongoing focus. Initiatives specifically introduced early in 2015 to facilitate the smarter – not harder theme, were the focus on:

- collegiality and teamwork
- entering into ‘**professional conversations.**’
- sharing of ideas and professional readings
- an ongoing longitudinal professional development exercise into inquiry, and involving all teaching staff.
 - ie – the search for better ways to engage all children in their learning.

Greater emphasis was also placed upon whole staff training and development, rather than a fragmented approach of sending one or two people to a work-shop/conference. The collegiate model, which still caters for individual training and development, appears to have been well received by staff members.

Lack of time to accomplish all that needs to be done, continues to be the single biggest issue for the staff, especially the teachers in classrooms and we continue (as a staff) to pursue ways of relieving this constant pressure

School Income Broken Down By Funding Source

In 2016, the funding for the school was provided by the following sources.

2016 School Funding Sources	Total	Per Student
Australian Government recurrent Funding	\$1,326,955.00	\$8,616.59
State / Territory Recurrent Funding	\$297,377.00	\$1,931.02
Fees, Charges and Parent Contributions	\$330,437.00	\$2145.69
Other Private Sources	\$87,395.00	\$567.50
Total Gross Income	\$2,042,164.00	\$13,260.81

Significant Highlights of 2016

- District SYNOD 2016

Building a closer relationship with the wider community, and in particular, the congregations of the Loxton Lutheran Parish which support the school, in another identified area in the school's Strategic Plan.

During 2016, one event school out above all others in this respect. The school, in conjunction with the local Parish, and the South Australian District office of the Lutheran Church of Australia, hosted the 2016 District Synod (Convention) of the Lutheran Church of Australia. Held in late May, over the duration a week-end, 500+ representatives attended sessions in the school's LIFE Centre.

As this was the 1st time such an event has been held at a primary school, the planning and cooperation required between the school, district church office and the local parish, needed to be thorough and meticulous. Congratulations to all involved as consensus is that this convention was a huge success, and due in no small part to the high level of cooperation amongst all parties involved.

- *Tournament Of Minds*

While winning the State Championship for their section, as was the case in 2015, our 2016 Tournament Of Minds team was awarded an Honourable Mention Medal. Again, this was a significant achievement for the team, and only the 2nd time our students have received such a medal in many years our school has been involved with Tournament Of Minds.

- *Pedal Prix*

As a community building exercise, none proves to be better than our annual commitment to Pedal Prix. In 2016, after campaigning our original bike for the Loxton and Adelaide 6 hour events, it was clear that the bike needed replacing. In a very short period of 2-3 months, from July to September, over \$8000 was raised through extremely generous donations from school parents and local organisations, for the purchase of a new fibreglass body 'Trumptrike.'

The new bike had its 1st outing at the Murray Bridge 24 hour event, which once again proved successful, with the team finishing 16th of 64 teams in the Primary school category and 92nd of 173 teams overall.

The way participation in this activity involves and engages both parents and students from diverse backgrounds into working for a common outcome, is simply outstanding.

We look forward to the 2017 campaign.

Appendix 1

Loxton Lutheran School Inquiry Model

