

Peer Review Report Tawonga Primary School - August 2014

Executive Summary

Since the previous review, Tawonga Primary School has a new principal, new teachers and a completely new building. Academic results have remained high with the four year average NAPLAN results for Reading and Numeracy being in the top 20% of the state. While the small cohorts challenge the accuracy of these data, teacher judgements confirm that most students are achieving at or above the expected level. A traditional style of teaching in traditional classrooms, some overstaffing and few, if any, students with additional learning or behaviour needs have also been factors contributing to this success. The context has now changed. The new buildings, a new principal with a new vision for a whole school approach to teaching and learning, new and less experienced teachers and a student population with changing needs will provide new challenges moving into the next Strategic Plan. Student Attitude to School survey results are positive with Connectedness to School being above the state mean over a four year period, as was Safety. Attendance remains an issue with targets not met but it is acknowledged that the distance from major centres and the fact that many family holidays need to be taken out of term time can impact on the overall. This is because a number of families are involved in farming and tourism. Although given the small enrolments, data can be skewed; absenteeism is recognised as an issue. It is important that the school continues to monitor absences and emphasise the learning time that is lost through non-attendance. Lateness to school is of concern, especially with the Literacy block being in the first two hours.

The school is also to be congratulated for these achievements and initiatives:

- new school values developed collaboratively with the whole school community: *Support, Opportunity, Understanding, Responsibility, Community and Excellence*;
- the introduction of Individual Learning Plans for all students;
- the trialling of multiage (social and academic) student groupings;
- the use of the former school buildings for establishment of an excellent kindergarten and before and after school facility;
- 1:1 computer access for all students;
- the Music program and whole school production
- the transformation of the school grounds which saw the school awarded the Victorian School Garden Award for school under 100 students in 2013.
- Introduction of a LOTE program (Japanese) by a qualified native speaking Language teacher.

Summary of recommendations:

- Develop a whole school approach to learning and teaching with a common language.
- Continue to develop strategies to differentiate learning and curriculum to meet students at their point of need.
- Maximise the learning environment, both internal and external; explore the use of flexible, fluid grouping of students.
- Continue to develop processes to track individual student's learning and progression.
- Reinvigorate the cluster to support student socialisation, transition and teacher professional learning and interaction.
- Identify Tawonga's uniqueness and communicate this to encourage enrolments.