



Wadestown School Board of Trustees

Annual Report for the period 1 January - 31 December 2006

CURRICULUM

2006 Curriculum priorities and a record of student achievement

This section of the report outlines achievements related to goals for student achievement drawn from the 2003–2007 Wadestown School Strategic Plan and specific objectives stated in the Annual Section of the 2006 Charter.

NUMERACY

Increase the achievement levels of children in Mathematics

Specifically:

By the end of 2006, 75% of Wadestown children will be working at or above national norms in each of the age groups

This was to be achieved through the school's involvement in the Ministry of Education's Numeracy Project by:

- enhancing teachers understanding of the mathematics content, knowledge and pedagogy
- assessing children against the Numeracy Project criteria in March and October
- setting goals and improving the numeracy achievement through teaching to the identified needs of individual students

Numeracy Project

In general, when compared to national data from decile 8-10 schools, the results of the year's initiative were not particularly surprising.

Addition and Subtraction

- In Years 1 – 3 there was evidence of improving results as the children got older. Year 1's were almost on a par with decile 8-10 data nationally and by Year 3 we were slightly better.
- In Year 4 our lower end achievers compared with the national trends but our middle group was more highly represented. This is at the expense of the top group where we do not compare favourably with similar schools.
- Year 5, 6 and 7 were strong year groups. We gained significantly better results than was the case for similar schools.
- It was at Year 8 where we showed dramatically higher levels of achievement compared to similar schools. An example was that the school was not at all represented in the lower 1/3 nationally, and there were twice as many children achieving in the top level than was the case in other schools.

Multiplication and Division

- In Year 1 the results were much the same as that of similar schools, although we had slightly more children in the higher levels
- In Year 2 there were more average and very high achievers and fewer below and slightly above average achievers than were found nationally in decile 8-10 schools.
- The results of Year 4 were marginally lower across all achievement levels than was found nationally.
- Year 5, 6 and 8 (but especially Year 5) showed significantly better results than was the case in other similar schools. All showed high levels of top-end achievement (up to 3 times the representation) and low levels of underperformance.
- Year 7 showed similar levels of achievement to decile 8-10 schools, except in the highest level where we were particularly strong.

Proportions and Ratios

- In Years 1 – 3 there was evidence of improving results as the children got older. Year 1's were almost on a par with decile 8-10 data nationally and by Year 3 we were slightly better. There were relatively small numbers of children in the lowest levels.
- Year 4 had results more on a par with Year 4s generally rather than the higher standards of decile 8-10 Year 4s.
- Spectacular results were seen in Years 5, 6 and 8, with up to 2 ½ times the number of children achieving at the top level than was expected in our type of school.
- Year 7 were consistently better represented at all levels than other similar schools, especially at the highest level where we had more than 3 times the expected number.

Conclusion

There was great consistency of performance in the 3 areas of numeracy tested.

The pattern that emerged showed that generally the Junior School compared similarly with those children from other decile 8-10 schools, although there was some evidence to show that a small comparative incremental improvement did occur during the year. The results were to be expected. The Year 4 group did not generally perform in a way similar to that of other year levels with achievement more akin to national average generally. From Year 5 – 8 the results were excellent. There was clear evidence that children had mastered all three of the numeracy areas. This was supported by the fact that there were very few underperformers and highly significant numbers of top performers. Pleasing also was the high representation of girls in the top levels, especially in Year 7 and 8, in this traditional male subject.

Comparisons with the performance of children in the Term 1 assessments have shown there to be considerable progress in all year levels.

The Charter Goal stated that by the end of 2006, 75% of Wadestown children will be working at or above national norms in each of the age groups. From the way this information was collated it was difficult to determine this, however it is likely that for most year levels the children achieved this goal.

LITERACY

90 % of all children are writing at levels at least commensurate with national norms and expectations

Specifically:

By the end of 2006, raise the level of student achievement in writing in all years, such that at least 75 % of each cohort is achieving above the national mean.

This was to be achieved through the school:

- focussing in the classrooms and syndicates on teaching strategies and organisation to improve children's writing
- increasing peer collaboration in planning, moderation of children's work and assessment to ensure greater teaching understanding, effectiveness, efficiency and consistency

Years 1- 3

Unfortunately the Exemplars assessment tools were not refined enough to determine whether or not children in this area of the school had achieved this specific goal.

However if we refer to the more general Charter goal (ie. 90% of children at or better than national norms) then the following results were considered valid:

- All Year 1 children were achieving at or above national expectations. (It would be impossible for them not to do this as Level 1i is the lowest level)
- Using a simple averaging of all the results from the assessment areas in the Surface and Deeper Features, there was a clear indication that there were more than 25% of children in each of the

Year 2 and 3 age groups who were achieving below the national norms noted above. Far more than we would expect to see.

It is therefore evident that there is room for improvement in increasing the levels of achievement in Writing throughout the Junior school.

Year 4 - 8

Assessments of writing in 2006 were gained through asTTle and Exemplar moderation.

The conclusions interpreted from these assessments were dramatically disappointing and defy any real explanation. Initial responses to the results of the tests suggested that they were difficult to administer, lacking in authenticity, and restrictive. There were also other reasons given for the poor performances.

However whatever the reasons for the results, the children's achievements in 2006 were viewed in stark contrast to those of 2005. Even when looking at the same individual child (eg. Year 5 to Year 6) the poor result remained evident.

These results showed that more analysis and understanding of children's writing needs to take place. Writing must continue take a front seat in further up-scaled professional development in 2007.

Solutions

It was clear that in 2006 we had not done enough to make a significant difference to children's achievements in writing. It was agreed that further time be put aside in 2007 to specifically address the persistent gap that existed between our expectations and children's writing achievements.

It was felt that further professional development aimed at improving the teaching of writing, and the administering of writing assessments was required. With reference to the school's Writing Programme developed in 2005, successful teaching practices needed to be debated, implemented and evaluated. Excerpts from the Year 5-8 Literacy Handbook would need to be considered. Outside experts may again work with teachers. There will need to be greater opportunities for teachers to practice moderation techniques using the Exemplar samples. Teachers will be required to scrutinise samples of children's writing from different genres to better understand their needs. There will also be an understanding that in 2007 writing will take a greater importance in class programmes, and this will probably be at the expense of other literacy subjects.

We must improve children's skills and attitudes towards writing. This has been a concern of the school over many years, and has been identified as a significant area of development since it was first identified as a problem in 2003.

Spelling

The number of children spelling below the norm for their chronological age reflected the small but significant group which were identified in the results of the Astyle testing completed in 2005. There were 20 children who spell more than one year below their chronological age, and for whom remedial programmes were required. They were spread throughout almost all classes, and an interesting characteristic of this group was that there included only one girl.

The 'Pseudo-words' diagnostic test enabled teachers to identify the specific difficulties underperformers were experiencing. Programmes planned this year in classes and across the planning groups began to address these learning deficits.

B Curriculum Assurance and Development Programme

a. Curriculum Reviews

Wadestown School Review of Year 7 and 8 Programmes

The following summary statements reflect the main action points identified in the comprehensive review:

- The school needs to ensure a greater awareness for all stakeholders of :
 - What is currently happening in Year 7 and 8 in the areas of Learning and Social/Relationships categories?
 - What are the compliance elements for Year 7/8 by the Ministry expectations from the secondary schools?
- Teachers need to develop a better understanding of the characteristics of 11-13 year olds and to encourage quality relationships between Year 7 and 8 pupils and all staff members.
- Year 7 and 8 children need to engage in discussions about the value and importance of the Year 7 and 8 level within Wadestown School and examine how they can fulfill authentic leadership and mentoring roles.
- The school needs to employ quality staff, and attend to utilizing all staff strengths in an effective way e.g. cross-grouping, arts and drama and other cultural opportunities.
- The syndicate needs to prioritize and improve the delivery of Science and Mathematics while ensuring a continuation of sound Literacy practice e.g. cross grouping.
- Teachers need to explore programmes and upcoming Ministry initiatives that address the generic aspects of learning such as self-directed learning, thinking skills, study and research skills and information literacy skills, and develop one that reflects the needs of Wadestown Year 7 and 8 children.
- The school organisation needs to attend to an improved transition to College through children experiencing different teachers at Year 7 and 8.
- The existing Year 7 and 8 procedures need to be extended to include more specific information about the programmes, events, pupils and teachers and to update accordingly in line with pending changes.
- That the school address the still present negative perceptions about the Karori West Technology programme

Curriculum Assurance Programme – Science

Children show obvious enjoyment and enthusiasm for science and this was reflected in their results, where they appear to have a sound background knowledge. Most children have strong observational and reasoning skills which enabled them to formulate useful scientific questions appropriate to their respective age levels. In the senior area some concerns were expressed about children's willingness to apply the necessary patience and rigor required for good scientific enquiry. The application of prior knowledge to the development of new scientific understanding is improving across the school. Children excel in practical work and are improving in the way they are able to write up investigations.

Teachers employing ARB assessments (nationally referenced) suggest that children are mostly above average in their achievements.

There are no official standardised tests for science, however each year some of our children elect to be part of the UNSW Science test. With the exception of this year, over recent years results in these tests continue to show general improvements. Over these last two years our Year 7 and 8 children have done very well in the NIWA Science Fair exhibitions.

Curriculum Assurance Programme – Social Studies

Social Studies is a subject that enables most children to become highly involved in the topics being taught. The inquiry learning approach allows children to pursue their own interests and at their own pace. Such motivation inspires achievement, more than might be seen in most other subject areas. Our children were generally worldly and have therefore got a reasonably good general knowledge of people and place.

Students achieve very successfully with most children acquiring sound understanding of the curriculum's achievement objectives in any given unit. Particularly in the younger years of schooling the learning outcomes were set so that most children achieve success.

There was no empirical evidence that was collated school-wide which gave specific achievement data, but teachers agreed that inclass assessment results and the quality of the work produced showed high levels of ability, which was in keeping with other core curriculum areas.

Curriculum Assurance Programme – Technology

Children showed obvious enjoyment and enthusiasm for technology and this was reflected in the results evident in teacher's Roll Book comments and marks. Most children have strong observational, creative and reasoning skills which enabled them to formulate useful technological questions appropriate to their respective age levels. This was the basis of Inquiry Learning, which was most often the teaching style practiced in Technology. The children generally have a good general understanding, and the application of prior knowledge to the development of new technological understanding was improving across the school. Children excel in practical work and were improving in the way they were able to write up investigations. There were no official standardised tests for technology,

In the Year 7 and 8 area some concerns still exist among children about the quality of the programme on offer at Karori West School.

b. Major Reviews

Assessment, data collection and Classroom Manager

Discussions with the designer of our proposed Classroom Manager data recording IT package began in 2005 and the assessment programme was completed in mid 2006. In late 2006 teachers moved over to an ICT based assessment recording system on a trial basis.

This was a Ministry supported initiative for all schools and will eventually revolutionise our recording and reporting system. It was intended that the new model would assist teachers considerably in cutting down the work of school reports, the duplication of information, and provide greater access by all teachers to information held on children throughout the school.

ERO Review

The 2006 ERO Review report was both constructive and positive. It focussed on areas identified by the school as well as national priorities.

The purpose of the review was to provide the school with suggestions for school improvement. In this, the review achieved a great deal and the final report included the following useful suggestions:

1. The reviewers felt there was not much that they could advise us on to progress our Year 7 and 8 programme. They believed that the research and report we ourselves had completed earlier in the year was comprehensive, and that we simply needed to take our own advice.
2. School culture was also an area where not much advice for improvement could be given. The reviewers did not feel this was an area of particular concern. However they did suggest the need for the school to re-examine the school's Behaviour Management procedures to ensure they were completely understood by staff, and that they were comprehensive enough.
3. It was in the area of Writing that reviewers placed the greatest focus in their report back. There were a number of areas in which they felt we could improve. Their report included suggestions such as a greater use of computers, consistent unit planning, wider grouping in classes, and a more print-rich classroom environment. However there was nothing in what they said which was particularly surprising or worrying. They did however say that they felt the school had come a long way in literacy development since the last report, and that the progress achieved is as much as could be expected over that period.

Within the government areas of interest the reviewers had advice for us in Health and PE. That advice suggested that we adopt the same form of long term planning model for Health and PE as we had for Literacy (this would also be applicable for all curriculum areas). As far as the International Fee Paying programme was concerned there was only a very minor alteration to be made in documentation. They

commented that the programme itself was going well. When addressing underachievement of students we received a suggestion for improving the learning opportunities for gifted children. However they were particularly impressed with the work being done in Learning Support, and were pleased to see the funding the Board was giving in this area.

There were also some areas to be developed under the compliance section (although these were not included in the final report). Most of the matters raised have been investigated or addressed already.

Reviewers were optimistic about the direction the school was taking and affirmed that the school was in good heart.

PERSONNEL

Staff changes:

Resignations

Bruce Henderson (Assistant Principal) Term 2
Linda Kingston (Teacher) Term 3
Helen Clark (Teacher) Term 4 Maternity Leave
Evonne Frost (Teacher) Term 4
Deborah Malcolm (Teacher) Term 4
Amy Austin (Teacher) Term 4
Jane Batchelor (Teacher) Term 4

Judy Bain (Int. Student Manag.) Term 4

Appointments

Nick Julian (Assistant Principal) Term 3
Brian Coleman (Teacher) Term 3 LTR
Phoebe Lippiett (Teacher) Term 3 LTR

Appraisals

The Deputy and Assistant Principals were responsible for the appraisal of teachers in their respective syndicates. The Principal had responsibility for Senior Management. There was no formal appraisal of the support staff.

The formal appraisals took the form of a 30 – 40 minute class observation followed by the AP and DP perusing teacher's lesson plans and samples of children's books. Teachers had determined personal goals related to the school's literacy initiative. These goals, together with the Interim Professional Standards for Teachers, formed the basis of the appraisal.

Inservice Professional Development opportunities

Teachers met for two days in late January at Fredrick Wallis House in preparation for the school year. Professional development for all staff was tied closely to the individual Appraisal goals set. Inservice development opportunities were provided to support school initiatives through regular staff meetings throughout the year, and were convened by outside professional experts.

Teacher Aides / Support Staff

Teacher Aides again worked extensively throughout the school. Their functions were to support both class teachers and individual children in their capacity as special needs teacher aides

Board funded teacher

This year the Board funded a full time classroom teacher with the purpose of lowering class sizes

Foreign Language Teachers

This began in mid Term 1 for Year 7 and 8 children, with French and Spanish being offered. This was held weekly

Reading Recovery

The number of children requiring Reading Recovery was high. The teacher was employed for 0.4 – 0.7 throughout the year.

Student Teachers

Training College Students were hosted at the school for various periods although this year we did not receive many students.

Release time for teachers

Throughout the year all teachers were entitled to 10 hours per term of release time (Funding came from the Ministry).

ROLL

In 2006 there were greater numbers of children leaving the school, greater numbers enrolling at the new entrant level, and fewer new arrivals at the Main School. The net impact of this has been that the roll started and remained lighter than usual. The distribution of children was skewed toward the younger classes. There is no particular evidence to suggest that in the medium term the end-of-year roll will fall beyond 2006 levels. However the movement of children to other schools, particularly at Year 7, continues to cause concern. This phenomenon is not peculiar to Wadestown, and has been an ongoing and historical issue with us.

Trends for the future

The trend in our admission numbers for the future is likely to be influenced by the following factors:

- The expensive property prices in Wadestown will mean that increasingly:
 - Most new enrolments in the Main School will come from overseas
 - There will be smaller sized families in the school
 - The ethnic mix of the school will remain Caucasian with a slight increase in Asian families
- Private education will become more of an option as:
 - the Wadestown community attracts residents more prepared to pay for education
 - single sex education, particularly for boys, becomes more appealing
- Parents will increasingly view schools as having a character that suits some children within a family, and not others in the same family.

It is therefore most unlikely that schools such as Wadestown, surrounded on all sides by other high decile schools, will maintain their rolls unless a uniquely different character is able to develop. The new character must appeal to the wider community and not just the traditional catchment area.

Ongoing Resource Students

In 2006 the school had 3 Ongoing Resource Students.

The International Student Programme

This year seven Korean students have been enrolled in the school. They have settled into both school and Kiwi life more smoothly than in past years. This was put down to several factors:

- Wadestown School children are now familiar with the international student arrangements and understand the timing required for new students to fit in and are therefore more accepting.
- Our Wadestown children no longer have any reservations about building friendships.
- Because there have been fewer Korean students they have integrated more easily.
- This year fewer Korean students are living in Kiwi homestays which has meant they have had fewer cultural challenges to adjust to.
- By attending school from the start of the year and being included in the classroom camps they were able to develop good relationships earlier.

Korean visitors programme

14 Korean children of various ages arrived in July for 3 weeks. The programme was difficult for all concerned. As a consequence of this it was not proposed to support the short stay programme in future years.

FINANCES

Sponsorship

The school gained sponsorship for our Sports Handbook, the Wadestown School Children's Register, and the school Community Newsletter.

Fundraising committee

The Parent Association set up a fundraising arm to take over the major fundraising project this year. This was a Gala, held in conjunction with the 125th Reunion. Approximately \$12,000 was raised by the event.

Entertainment Book fundraiser

The amount raised from the sale of the Entertainment Book this year was \$1,520.

After School Care OSCAR grant

The school's application for \$13,500 (incl. GST) from the Ministry of Social Development to support our After School Care programme, was granted. This compares with \$10,000 sought and approved in 2005. The increase in this year's grant relates to a more detailed application made which included administration costs.

Parent Donations

In 2006 the donation was set at \$270 per child. During the year 85% of parents paid this amount.

BUILDING AND MAINTENANCE

Programmed Minor Maintenance

A Programmed Minor Maintenance Schedule was determined at the start of the year. By the end of the year most maintenance projects identified had been completed.

Adventure Playground

The installation of new soft-fall surfacing at the main School was fully completed. The surfacing has greatly enhanced the use of the playground.

Staffroom refurbishment

The Main School staffroom refurbishment was completed during the year. All staff were very pleased with the results. The project kept to the \$25,000 budget proposed. The contractors worked closely with the school and we were also pleased with the quality of workmanship and the timeliness of the project.

HEALTH AND SAFETY

Health and Safety accidents and registers

During the year there were one serious injury, and this was reported to OSH but no further action was taken by them. This accident involved a broken arm.

To ensure the formal ongoing identification and management of safety hazards the school used a variety of registers and forms. These included:

- 'Accident Register': filled in when children have been hurt in a school accident.
- 'Trips Form': filled in and permission sought from the Principal whenever a class left the school.

Sexuality Education Programme (Year 7 and 8)

The school, with assistance from the Family Planning association, held the Year 7 and 8 Sexuality Education programme. The first part of the programme involved a parent evening, and this was followed up by inclass teaching programmes.

COMMUNITY LIAISON

Parent Association

At the initiation of the school, a group of parents met with school management to outline a new approach to revitalising parent involvement in the school. The new body proposed became known as the "Parent Association".

The main distinction between this group and previous parent groups is that the Parent Association would work to support the school from an exclusively parent driven perspective. That is, there would not be a requirement for the Board or management to be involved.

The format of the association follows very closely the Terms of Reference developed some years ago. The association has, as it's focus, the support of the school. To achieve this various sub groups were established to look after the identified interests of the school (eg. Social activities, fundraising ventures, class liaisons, library assistance, etc.). Meetings were held twice termly and the convenors had responsibility to report the minutes of the meeting to the school.

The History of Wadestown School the book

During the year "Windows over Wadestown", a book on the history of Wadestown School was written to commemorate the 125 years of education in Wadestown and to coincide with the 125th Jubilee. This was a great success and has become the authoritative history of our school. All credit to the author Debbie Monigatti.

After School Care

The numbers of children choosing our After School Care programme has risen markedly over the year. The average of 20 children, compares with previous figures of 12 – 15 children per day. Much of this can be attributed to the excellent supervision offered. A new bench top and hot water system has recently been installed in the After School Care room.

The 125th Jubilee reunion

This must have been 'the' most successful activity the school has experienced in its recent history. All credit to the organising committee under the leadership of Duncan Ferrier.

The celebrations began with the school's "Windows over Wadestown" production at the Michael Fowler Centre. Everyone involved in the show felt justifiably proud of the quality of the performance. The items ran so smoothly, the children sang so beautifully, the dancing and acting were so entertaining. Cocktails at the Beehive that evening was also a great success. Over 400 people attended the night and a wonderful atmosphere was experienced by all.

The gala was always going to be a winner. Thanks to the excellent organisation of Lisa Toovey and the Gala Committee everyone supported the event.

The evening on Saturday lived up to all expectations. Te Papa is a magnificent place to host a function such as this. Everyone enjoyed the food, the music, and the atmosphere.

Sunday brought more activities for the hard core reunionites. The church service and the golf were well supported.

This was a weekend we will all remember.

Marshall Clark (Chairman)

Bryan Gwilliam (Principal)