



# Palmer Primary School 2017 Annual Report to the School Community



Government  
of South Australia

Department for Education  
and Child Development

Palmer Primary School Number: 326

Partnership: Murraylands

**Name of School Principal:**

Lauren Poole

**Name of Governing Council Chair:**

Jo Bland

**Date of Endorsement:**

07/02/2018

## School Context and Highlights

Palmer Primary School is a vibrant, small community school 60 kilometres from Adelaide. The nearest regional centre is Murray Bridge. Our total enrolment at the end of 2017 was 33, with a Reception-3 class consisting of 14 students, and a year 4-7 class consisting of 19 students. Again, our numbers continued to grow as the year progressed, with six new students enrolling in term four alone. Palmer Primary School has two classroom teachers, a full-time finance officer, three SSO's who share classroom support and intervention, and a Principal with a teaching load. Our current index of disadvantage is 3. Out of our 22 families attending Palmer this year, only four families reside in Palmer itself, with the remaining 18 families living in Mannum, Murray Bridge and surrounding areas.

Our priorities for 2017 have been Literacy, Numeracy, STEM, and Powerful Learning. Students have also been involved in extra-curricular activities including SAPSASA and participating in the Murraylands Partnership priority, Student Learning Communities.

We have progressed further in our pursuit of Literacy excellence this year. In addition to continuing our 'Literacy loops' literacy block, staff have undertaken training and development in the 'Big six of reading'. This has seen an increased focus on early literacy skills in the JP class, including phonological awareness and phonics, as well as fluency, vocabulary and comprehension across the school. Student data supports our focus on this, with students in the early years making great gains in running record levels, and especially in the number of sight words recognised by sight and also spelt correctly.

In Numeracy, staff developed a Whole School Numeracy Agreement, allowing us to create a universal set of daily 'non-negotiables' in every Numeracy block. Students loved the consistency across classrooms and this also allowed for better transition processes between the junior and upper classes.

Our STEM focus saw the purchase of two new 'Prowise' computers to replace our 'Mimeo whiteboards'. Students experienced many ways to engage with this new technology. Students in the JP class especially enjoyed the interactive maths and literacy games that allowed for greater teamwork and collaboration and the opportunity to reinforce automaticity in an engaging way. We also began exploring 3D designing and printing, as well as coding, and this will continue to be a focus in 2018 as we were successful in the 3D printing in schools project.

## Governing Council Report

The start of the school year commenced with 27 very excited students.

The year started early with the open night in week 2 followed by swimming lessons in week 4 and many activities following throughout the course of the year. Students eagerly attended the small school's sports day, the Mr Stink excursion, The Road and Cycle safety centre along with many other events onsite and off. The highlight of the year for many was the 3-day camp to Arbury Park at Bridgewater, with many stories still being told.

Fundraising was again an important part of the year. In May, the school once again fed the many hungry hordes of rock enthusiasts over the weekend at the Palmer Rock-a-rama. This event would not be a success if it was not for the generous donations from many local businesses. The gate takings from the Mount Pleasant Farmers Market added to the fundraising tally, with some families more than happy to forgo their Saturday morning sleep ins for our school. If it were not for the kind generosity of families to donate their time assisting with fundraisers, the students would not have the wonderful array of books that were purchased with some of last year's fundraising money.

Once again, this year the school saw many improvements. The students were welcomed back at the start of the school year to a new and revamped library, making this old tired space more inviting to our enthusiastic readers. The inclusion of the Stephanie Alexander Kitchen Program saw the garden moved onsite which grew the enthusiasm for many students of growing and preparing own food. This led to the revamp of the tech room, enabling students to undertake cooking activities in modern facilities. This updated space will be an asset to the school for many years to come.

The end of the year concert came around quickly once again with students receiving recognition for their hard work and commitment to their education. It was once again that we farewelled our cohort of year sevens, with 8 students saying their goodbyes to venture onto their secondary schooling. The students once again presented an end of year performance of a high calibre.

The 33 students that completed the year, should be proud of their many achievements. Many lifetime memories were made, and lasting friendships were formed during this year. The dedication from the committed staff and families made Palmer Primary School an excellent learning community for our children to thrive and grow in 2017.

## Improvement Planning and Outcomes

As identified in our 2017 Site Improvement Plan, our priorities were Numeracy, Literacy, STEM and Powerful Learning.

Our biggest strategy in Numeracy this year was to establish a Whole School Numeracy Agreement, which included a daily mental routine, strategy lesson or problematised situation, and daily reflection. This has enabled a more streamlined approach to Numeracy blocks at Palmer Primary School and allowed for smoother transition for students going from the Junior to Upper Primary class. Our Numeracy target was for every student to increase their mean scaled score by a minimum of five points from PAT Maths scores 2016-2017, and pleasingly 80% of students achieved this, with over 50% of students greatly exceeding this target.

Our Literacy blocks continued to develop with the implementation of our 'Literacy Loops'. This year we progressed further to include a deeper focus on the comprehension skills being explicitly taught during guided reading sessions and a strategic approach to introducing different genres. Planning ahead for 2018, staff identified that the next step in the best implementation of guided reading was to begin to introduce reciprocal reading, allowing students to have greater leadership during guided reading sessions. Along with our reading focus, another priority we identified was improving the way in which we teach writing. As a staff we researched and discovered 'the seven steps to writing success'. During early term one, our upper primary teacher attended the training and development associated with this, and in early 2018 the junior primary teachers will also be attending this training. Students in the upper primary class provided positive feedback about the strategies taught within this framework, and a much higher level of engagement when writing was observed. We look forward to seeing this positivity towards writing continue in both classes throughout 2018.

STEM was added onto our 2017 Site Improvement Plan to reflect the importance of problem solving being embedded across learning areas. As a staff we identified areas that problem solving could be embedded and researched resources that would support the implementation of this. We purchased Bee-bots, Pro-bots, coding programs for iPads as well as the two Prowise interactive computers. Students were thoroughly engaged during learning experiences such as 3D designing and using minecraft to create buildings with set criteria. We are excited to continue this focus next year with our involvement in the '3D printing in schools project'.

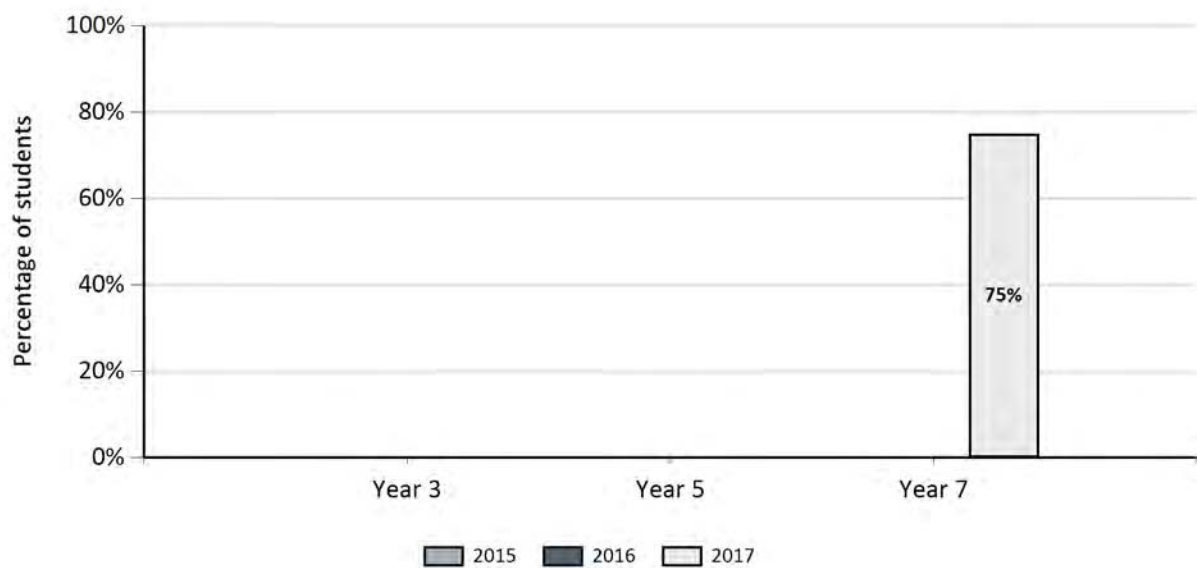
We continue to focus on developing 'Powerful Learners' for the 21st century world. Students have been encouraged to enter 'the learning pit' deeper this year, and in doing so, become more comfortable with the intellectual stretch and challenge. Our target was to have student data reflect a greater 'growth mindset' in class, and student survey results certainly reflected this. Powerful Learners were also acknowledged during fortnightly newsletters and during Palmer Student Council meetings, where teachers could nominate students who had showed great resilience when faced with a learning challenge and modelled a growth mindset.

## Performance Summary

### NAPLAN Proficiency

The DECD Standard of Educational Achievement (SEA) is defined as children and young people progressing and achieving at or above their appropriate year level. For NAPLAN, this is students achieving in proficiency bands one or more above the National Minimum Standard for Reading and Numeracy. The graph below identifies the percentage of non-exempt students enrolled in the school at the time of NAPLAN testing, who have demonstrated achievement in NAPLAN proficiency bands at or above the DECD SEA for Reading and Numeracy.

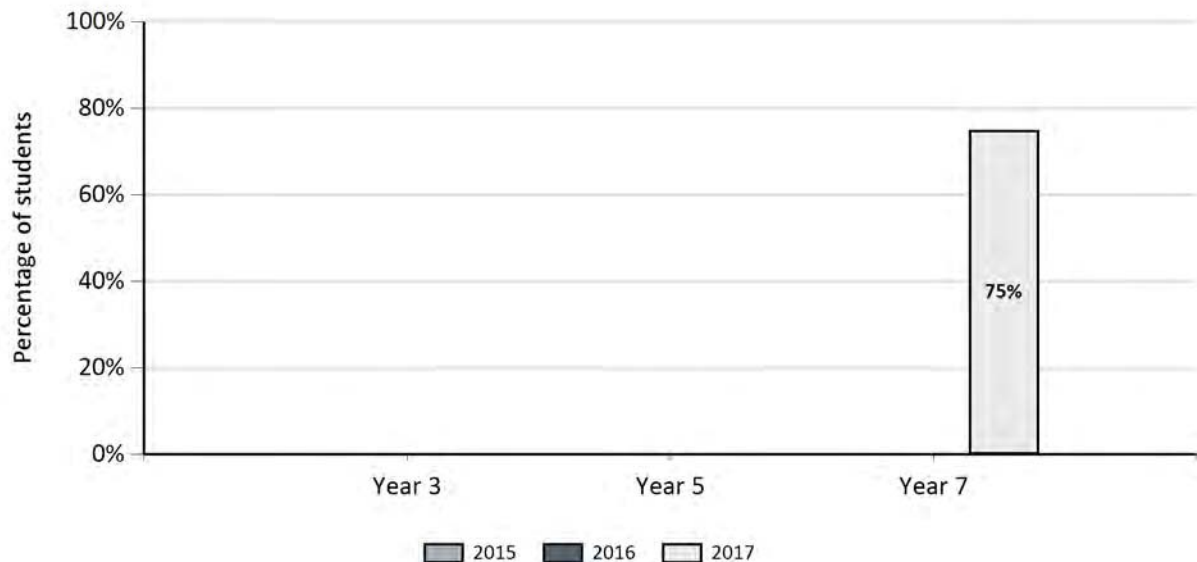
#### Reading



Data Source: DECD special extract from National Assessment Program Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN) SA TAA data holdings, July 2017.

\*NOTE: Reporting of data not provided when less than six students in the respective cohort. A blank graph may imply student count being less than six across all cohorts.

#### Numeracy



Data Source: DECD special extract from National Assessment Program Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN) SA TAA data holdings, July 2017.

\*NOTE: Reporting of data not provided when less than six students in the respective cohort. A blank graph may imply student count being less than six across all cohorts.

## NAPLAN Progress

The data below represents the growth of students from 2015 to 2017 in the NAPLAN test relative to students with the same original score, presented in quartiles.

### Reading

NAPLAN progression	Year 3-5	Year 5-7	State (average)
Upper progress group	*	20%	25%
Middle progress group	*	40%	50%
Lower progress group	*	40%	25%

Data Source: DECD special extract from Student DataWarehouse, July 2017.

\*NOTE: Reporting of data not provided when less than six students in the respective cohort. Due to rounding of percentages, data may not add up to 100%.

### Numeracy

NAPLAN progression	Year 5-7	Year 3-5	State (average)
Upper progress group	20%	*	25%
Middle progress group	40%	*	50%
Lower progress group	40%	*	25%

Data Source: DECD special extract from Student DataWarehouse, July 2017.

\*NOTE: Reporting of data not provided when less than six students in the respective cohort. Due to rounding of percentages, data may not add up to 100%.

## NAPLAN Upper Two Bands Achievement

This measure shows the number of non-exempt students enrolled at the time of NAPLAN testing who have demonstrated achievement in the relevant NAPLAN higher bands.

	No. of students who sat the test <sup>^</sup>		No. of students achieving in the upper two bands		% of students achieving in the upper two bands <sup>**</sup>	
	Reading	Numeracy	Reading	Numeracy	Reading	Numeracy
Year 3 2017	*	*	*	*	*	*
Year 3 2015-17 Average	*	*	*	*	*	*
Year 5 2017	*	*	*	*	*	*
Year 5 2015-17 Average	*	*	*	*	*	*
Year 7 2017	8	8	1	0	13%	0%
Year 7 2015-17 Average	*	*	*	*	*	*

Data Source: DECD special extract from NAPLAN SA TAA data holdings, July 2017.

<sup>^</sup>includes absent and withdrawn students.

\*Reporting of data not provided when less than six students in the respective cohort.

\*\*Percentages have been rounded off to the nearest whole number.

## School Performance Comment

Whilst the cohort of year three and five students is too small to provide comments on, so as not to identify individual students, there has been some great achievements in NAPLAN results. The bigger cohort of year 7 students this year has enabled us to examine cohort strengths and areas of growth for our year 7 students, and we were pleased that 75% of our year 7 students achieved the DECD Standard of Educational Achievement in both Numeracy and Literacy. Whilst it is pleasing that one of our eight students achieved in the upper two bands, it remains to be a challenge for Palmer Primary School students to achieve in the upper bands and remain there throughout NAPLAN testing in years three, five and seven. When exploring individual student responses from NAPLAN testing, there were some common areas of improvement identified that we have committed to strengthen in 2018. In reading, the area of growth identified across years 3,5 and 7 testing was the ability to infer meaning from texts, both fiction and non-fiction, and also interpreting the meaning of vocabulary within texts. Both of these areas will be a focus during our 'Literacy loops' guided reading sessions with a range of text types. When examining NAPLAN Grammar and Punctuation student responses, we identified an area of growth being the correct usage of pronouns and speech when there is indirect or reported speech. Again, this will be a teaching focus in 2018. When examining NAPLAN Maths results, the common area of growth was identified to be reading and understanding word problems in multi-step mathematical problems. Supporting our students in understanding to read the mathematical questions and determine what mathematical operation is required will be a focus for 2018.

Progressive Achievement Testing (PAT) was completed by all students in September, and allowed us to measure individual student growth in the areas of Reading Comprehension, Maths, Grammar & Punctuation and Spelling. One of our targets was that PAT Grammar & Punctuation, and PAT Spelling results are consistently improved upon previous years, and this target has been achieved this year. All students showed progress on their Grammar & Punctuation scale score in comparison to 2016 scores who had been at Palmer for both year's testing, and all but four students showed an improvement in the PAT Spelling scale score. In the area of PAT Reading Comprehension, 10 out of the 13 students who sat PAT Reading Comprehension testing in both 2016 and 2017 showed a notable improvement in their scale score, and in PAT Maths, 9 out of the 12 students who sat PAT Maths testing in both 2016 and 2017 showed a notable improvement in their scale score.

Running record data in the early years was largely positive. In the period between the end of January 2017 and beginning of December 2017, every student on levelled readers progressed between 5 and 14 levels. Our continued focus on recognition of the 500 Oxford Sight Words also saw students make outstanding gains in their sight word recognition between January to December of 2017.

## Attendance

Year level	2014	2015	2016	2017
Reception		88.3%	85.2%	97.1%
Year 1	90.7%	80.3%	96.0%	91.8%
Year 2	86.3%	86.0%	85.3%	91.2%
Year 3	94.1%	88.3%	85.7%	89.0%
Year 4	89.9%	90.8%	85.1%	89.1%
Year 5	94.1%	88.1%	96.9%	84.3%
Year 6	90.4%	93.1%	88.3%	90.3%
Year 7	85.7%	87.8%	89.1%	83.0%
Total	91.0%	88.8%	88.9%	88.1%

Data Source: Site Performance Reporting System, Semester 1 Attendance.

Note: A blank cell indicates there were no students enrolled.

## Attendance Comment

Being the small community school that we are, non-attendance is able to be closely monitored. Any student who is absent by 9:30 am on any given morning, and who the school has not received any communication about, is personally phoned by a staff member and this communication is documented on EDSAS. We are very pleased to report that all absences and instances of late arrivals have been followed up, resulting in no 'unexplained' absences or lateness. Students who have achieved between 95-100% attendance each term are recognised during each end of term Assembly.

## Behaviour Management Comment

There were a number of suspensions, both internal and external this year, mainly due to violence, threatened or actual. This is reflective of the increase of students enrolling with complex needs and difficulties, and also the students who we have hosted whilst on exclusion from their own school. Palmer Primary School continues to follow the school behaviour management policy, and we remain proud of the many achievements all students have made.

## Client Opinion Summary

Four parent responses were received from the 2017 parent survey. Overall, we were very pleased with the results from this survey, with every question receiving a 'strongly agree' response with the exception of the question 'The school is well maintained'. Upgrading school facilities is a focus for next year, as it has been for the past few years, with the outside entrance getting completely redone during the January 2018 holidays. During 2017 the library upgrade was completed, and there was extensive upgrades to the technology room in November 2017. A focus for next year will be made in discussion with the school community and within our budget limitations. Text responses from parents indicate a high level of satisfaction with their child's learning journey at school this year, with one parent responding that their child was making: "Huge improvements and gaining confidence in his abilities due to the excellent work of all staff and their commitment to all students to achieve their best according to individual abilities".

Staff survey results also indicate a high level of satisfaction within the school. One comment about communication between staff members was 'We continuously are provided with feedback on how we can improve our work practices and also continue to provide a whole school approach for every student and their individual needs.' reinforces the 'team around the child' approach that we foster here at Palmer Primary School.

Student responses were very positive, and it was especially pleasing to see movement from 'agree' to 'strongly agree' in response to the question, 'I receive useful feedback about my work'. This was identified as an area of growth last year, and teachers have spent time with students discussing critical and constructive feedback, so this growth is certainly affirming.

## Intended Destination

Leave Reason	School	
	Number	%
Employment	0	NA
Interstate/Overseas	2	22.2%
Other	0	NA
Seeking Employment	0	NA
Tertiary/TAFE/Training	0	NA
Transfer to Non-Govt School	1	11.1%
Transfer to SA Govt School	5	55.6%
Unknown	1	11.1%
Unknown (TG - Not Found)	0	NA

Data Source: Education Department School Administration System (EDSAS) Data extract Term 3 2017.

## DECD Relevant History Screening

We follow DECD requirements for DCSI clearances for staff, volunteers and other persons interacting with students at Palmer Primary School. During 2017 no DCSI clearances were needed to be arranged and paid for by Palmer Primary School, however this may change in the future if we have volunteers other than parents/carers wanting to work in our school.



## Teacher Qualifications and Workforce Composition

All teachers at this school are qualified and registered with the SA Teachers Registration Board.

Qualification Level	Number of Qualifications
Bachelor Degrees or Diplomas	5
Post Graduate Qualifications	1

Data Source: DECD HR Management Reporting System, extracted Term 3 2017.

Please note: Staff who have more than 1 qualification will be counted more than once in the above qualification table. Therefore the total number of staff by qualification type may be more than the total number of teaching staff.

### Workforce Composition including Indigenous staff

	Teaching Staff		Non-Teaching Staff	
	Indigenous	Non-Indigenous	Indigenous	Non-Indigenous
Full-Time Equivalents	0.0	2.9	0.0	2.3
Persons	0	3	0	3

Data Source: DECD HR Management Reporting System, extracted Term 3 2017.

## Financial Statement

Funding Source	Amount
Grants: State	5971.90
Grants: Commonwealth	
Parent Contributions	10327.65
Fund Raising	2265.00
Other	

Data Source: Data Source: Education Department School Administration System (EDSAS).

## 2017 School Annual Report: Tier 2 Funding Report\*

\*Tier 2 funding provides additional resources to support students who are unlikely to obtain the desired outcomes without further support.

Tier 2 Funding Section	Tier 2 Category (where applicable to the site)	Briefly describe how the 2017 funding was used to improve the relevant Standard of Educational Achievement (SEA) outcomes	Outcomes achieved or progress towards these outcomes	
Targeted Funding for Individual Students	Improved Behaviour Management and Engagement	As this funding was for less than six students, no comment can be made.	Attendance and engagement was significantly improved.	
	Improved Outcomes for Students with an Additional Language or Dialect			
	Improved Outcomes for Students with Disabilities			
Targeted Funding for Groups of Students	Improved Outcomes for - Rural & Isolated Students - Aboriginal Students - Numeracy and Literacy First Language Maintenance & Development Students taking Alternative Pathways Students with Learning Difficulties Grant	Targeted students were supported for structured intervention programs (MULTILIT/MINILIT) as well as 1:1 classroom support and speech programs for targeted students with and without a verified disability.	Targeted students reported significant gains in their reading level, sight word recognition and fluency. Improvements in PAT spelling and Reading Comprehension.	
	Australian Curriculum	Professional Development in STEM, Problem solving and 3D printing was a priority, as well as moderation support and the beginning of the 'steps to writing success' program being implemented.		
Other Discretionary Funding	Aboriginal Languages Programs Initiatives	Not Applicable		
	Better Schools Funding	This funding was put towards general classroom support across both classrooms to ensure that students received additional support across literacy and numeracy where required.	Individual student results have demonstrated significant growth.	
	Specialist School Reporting (as required)	Not Applicable		
	Improved Outcomes for Gifted Students	Not Applicable		
	Primary School Counsellor (if applicable)	Not Applicable due to the small fraction of time funded due to the small size of our school.		