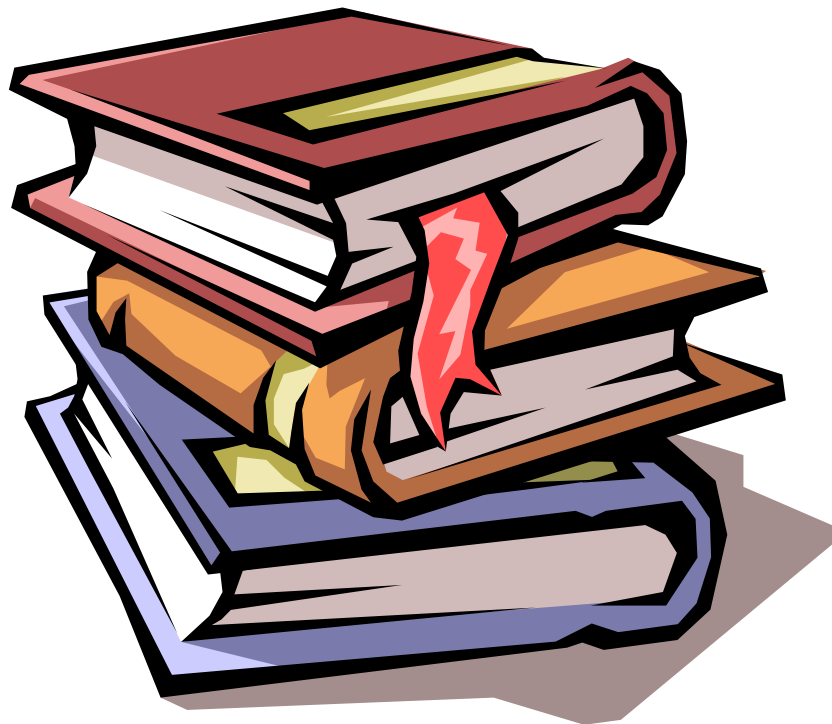


Kin Kora State School

Literacy Strategy



2002 -2005

Community Profile

General Background:

- Kin Kora State School is one of five state primary and four private schools servicing the needs of the students of Gladstone.
- Gladstone is an industrial city currently experiencing growth
- A high percentage of school parents are employed in industry (approx. 45%)
- 25% of our school families are single income with one parent not currently in the workforce.
- Current unemployment is 8.3%
- Kin Kora State School has limited diversity of students – including a small ATSI population 7 % and 2 % students from other cultures
- 8 % of students have been identified with learning difficulties and disabilities.

Literacy Profile:

After surveying the school's parent population, 25% responded. Results indicate:-

- High levels of technology skills
- Literacy is valued for both personal and professional use
- Further literacy development is undertaken by many through job training, study etc
- There is a perceived competence in own literacy standards
- Competence in literacy skills is both valued and considered vital for the future

Shared Vision

What is Literacy? (Our Definition)

At the core of one's learning is the ability to think and communicate creatively, effectively, efficiently and critically through all modes of literacy - reading, viewing, speaking, listening and writing in varied contexts associated with living in and negotiating with our world.

Our Beliefs and values about Literacy Teaching and Learning

- Literacy teaching and learning is developed in all key learning areas of the curriculum.
- There are strong links between good learning and good teaching.
- All students can learn.
- Students learn at different rates and in different ways
- As students gain control over language, the more they are empowered to think, learn and act.
- Students learn best when they are valued, experience success and see a purpose for what they are doing.
- Students must be active participants in the learning process, learning to read by reading, learning to write by writing.
- Students need Cambourne's Conditions of Language Learning to develop their literacy : Immersion, Demonstration, Expectations, Responsibility, Use, Approximation and Response.
- Students need a range and variety of texts matched to their needs.

Desired Learner Outcomes

Kin Kora Kids will develop as :

- Competent skilled learners with deep knowledge and understanding
- Active Investigators
- Effective communicators
- Creative, critical and complex thinkers
- Confident, self managed individuals
- Socially responsible citizens
- Environmentally responsible citizens
- Life-long carers

These desired outcomes articulated as desired learner exit outcomes, are driving our research, development, planning and practice to ensure our orientation to position the school for the demands of future literacies. They assist in giving our school community, a partnership of staff, parents and students, unity, purpose and constancy in a holistic approach. Quality relationships ensuring Quality Work resulting in Quality Outcomes for all.

Standards and Targets

School benchmarks and reporting frameworks have been developed that indicate the level of essential skills in literacy. The use of the terms Approaching, Meeting and Exceeding Year Level is an attempt to move away from the notion of failure and to incorporate optimism into our feedback and reporting for both parents and students.

Reviewing national testing data and Queensland Year 2 Net data, the School's 2002 AOP benchmark targets are that:

- No more than 20% of students will need learning support in year 2
- 85% of girls and boys in years 3, 5 and 7 will reach the state averages in reading, viewing and writing over the next three years.

The school will aim to :

- Review standards/minimum requirements from the School English program to ascertain their ongoing viability.
- Establish achievable targets in literacy across the curriculum for each grade level.

Assessment and Monitoring

Whole school monitoring of student outcomes continues to be developed and organized to indicate the level of essential skills in literacy attained by students in the early, middle and upper primary school.

Minimum requirements for assessment and monitoring for reading and writing have been outlined for years 1-3 and 4-7. Outlines for speaking, listening and viewing will be developed.

Relating to the Targets and Standards outlined previously, whole school longitudinal study of student outcomes data in literacy provides information about:-

- Individual progress
- Trends for each year level over time
- Progress of each year level from one year to the next
- Trends for different gender, ability and cultural groups.

Assessment techniques and assessment tools will be explored and developed by teachers and students to assist in a variety of strategies being employed to collect and collate data on student achievement.

The school reporting systems are under review with the view to improve our partners' understanding of student progress. Clearer formatted Report cards will be devised , programmed on the computer, used and receive community feedback in 2002.

Assessment data and reports from both within the school context and from other agencies are analyzed . The information is shared with stakeholders and is used to inform classroom teachers' curriculum planning, provide modified programs as necessary, and organize the support programs from Intervention, Learning Support and Reading Recovery Teachers within the school.

Intervention and Special Needs

At Kin Kora State School we are committed to the belief and value that ALL CHILDREN CAN LEARN. Therefore we are committed to identifying literacy needs and providing an appropriate curriculum. This is a vital component of the teaching/ learning process in each classroom. Literacy intervention is an ongoing and integral part of effective teaching.

Teachers, teacher aides, Specialists including Intervention teachers, Reading Recovery Teachers, Occupational Therapists, Speech Language Pathologists , Guidance Officers and Administrators all work together in a concerted approach to ensure students' identified needs are addressed through individualized programs, resourcing and monitoring progress.

At Kin Kora State School we analyze assessment data, both formal and informal, to determine student needs on an individual basis.

A Policy for Ascertainment has been devised to ensure a consistent and fair process for tracking and determining the level of support given for each student identified with a learning difficulty.

Within the school structure, programs are underway to support students at risk in their literacy development : Reading Recovery (Year 2) Intervention (years 2, 3 and 6) Learning Support (1-3 and 4 -7) and Special Education Class (SEC) for all year levels.

The school is committed to extend the ORACY program from Preschool to Years 1-3.

Leadership Coordination and Professional Learning

The administration team are actively involved in leading the development of the whole school plan in literacy. The plan is evolving over time to ensure a seamless curriculum for each student throughout the school. Performance development processes that link Student Outcomes, Teacher Practice and Performance Development in a context of overall school performance are being developed as the school shifts to an Outcomes based education model. This will enhance the school's capacity to achieve quality outcomes in literacy and address the specific needs of the range of learners in our school community.

The school has a self-evaluation / co-verification model for performance development where individuals take responsibility for building his/her own capacity to achieve desired outcomes. To assist in this process, the school has developed both school and year level curriculum overviews, some unit plans and formats for planning literacy experiences to ensure some consistency in the curriculum delivery. Detailed audits on teachers' planning are carried out in term two of each year. Teachers are encouraged to share their planning expertise with other teachers in buddying / peer tutoring that generally takes place in each year level.

As a school we will evaluate and modify school based standards for teachers in the literacy area , particularly in the teaching of reading and writing. We will also develop standards in the areas of speaking, listening and viewing. These will be a means of self-evaluating against a standard of what's expected to develop performance and thus maximize both individual and organizational capacity.

To support the teachers in their delivery of quality literacy education to our students, a series of professional development opportunities will be provided in reading, viewing and writing workshops will be devised by key people with identified expertise from both within and beyond our school community, to meet the identified needs of the professional learners of Kin Kora State School.

As a school we continue to network with other schools in the district on key issues of literacy education. We are associated with organisations such as ARA , PETA, ALEA etc.

Strategic Community Partnerships

Kin Kora State School is known for sharing its good practice with others, forging a community of learners.

We make links with the parent community, valuing its contributions through sharing the literacy strategy with the school Parents and Citizens Association, **disseminating** information through the school newsletters, providing information nights for parents and community members as well as training workshops such as Support a Reader and Support a Writer. We aim to engage our partners to help with literacy in the school.

We actively seek out authors, illustrators, poets, actors and other experienced literaries to be involved in our teaching programs as models for our students.

Classroom Organization and Pedagogy

The art of learning as well as pedagogy is the focus of classrooms at Kin Kora State School. Matching curriculum and appropriate teaching to the learner involves:-

Finding out about the learner:

Who they are
What they need/want
How they learn
When they need it

Enabling the teacher to :

Understand each learner
What to teach
How to teach
When to teach it

The school curriculum framework is being reviewed and developed . Our school vision for our learners, in terms of exit outcomes, is being incorporated into the school curriculum programs. We aim to link all of the key learning areas with a focus on literacy development across the curriculum.

The whole school literacy program, although organized in overviews of years 1-3 and years 4-7, is grounded in theory about language acquisition and use which enables practices to be considered and innovations to be initiated within a conceptual framework. Core Learning Tasks are identified in the school's English program for each year level and across years 1-3 and 4-7.

Some of the theories that are valued and evident in our classroom philosophies and practices include :-

- Cambourne
Goodman
Holdaway
Learning to read and write is similar to how learners learn to speak
(Conditions for Language Learning)
- Graves
Clay
Literacy learning is best when one emulates what real readers and writers do
Meaning is made from whole texts
(Whole language approach)
- Holdaway
Meek
Rosen
Literature based approach to reading
Learning to read through narratives

Martin
Rothery

Use of meaningful, real life and life like texts for the teaching of reading and writing (Practical Literacy and genre based literacy)

We understand that what we believe about language learning determines what we do / how we teach. At Kin Kora State School we prefer an eclectic approach to teaching and learning literacy. We have found this varied approach acknowledges learning differences, caters for individual learning styles and multiple intelligences.

As trends have developed in literacy learning over decades, our classroom practice has retained many good and varied teaching strategies and approaches, including :-

- Language experience
- Process writing
- Process approach to learning – top level structure, focus on metacognition
- Whole language approaches - immersion in print / print walks, integrating reading, writing, speaking/ listening/viewing tasks, child-centred tasks. Focus on whole texts and their interpretation
- Genre based approaches - exploring texts and contexts, focus on meaning making and explicit teaching
- Critical Literacies - emphasis on the non neutralities of language – bias in text and deconstruction of texts
- Back to Basics - skills based approach to improving literacy
- New literacies – multiple literacies
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We believe we need to provide a balanced literacy program and are working toward this end. Resource development and organization to support programming will be a key focus.

The teaching of reading, viewing and writing, as the development of further teaching strategies, enhanced learning experiences and interesting and multiple uses of available resources, will be a focus for teacher in-service and development.

