**Principal’s foreword**

**Introduction**

This report provides parents and members of the school community with information about the school’s activities and performance during the 2011 school year. It highlights strengths and identifies areas for development and improvement.

The School Annual Report is a public document required for the school’s and Education Queensland’s accountability and improvement purposes. It provides valuable information for Education Queensland and members of the school community on the achievement of the school in relation to declared systemic and school priorities as outlined in the 2011 School Operational Plan.

The School Annual Report fulfills three functions:

- It provides the school community, through the School Council and the Parents and Citizens Association, with information on the school's progress towards achieving the goals and priorities outlined in the school's Annual Operational Plan.

- It provides the Assistant Regional Director with information to guide discussions about both the school’s progress towards achieving organisational goals and the priorities of the school.

- It provides a base on which the school develops its next Annual Implementation Plan.

Dr. Randall Pointing
Principal

**School progress towards its goals in 2011**

Ongoing review undertaken of the school’s Responsible Behaviour Plan.

Embedded whole school Curriculum Framework in relation to QCARF (based on essential learnings and standards).

Prepared for the implementation of the Australian Curriculum in 2012.

Implemented the Reciprocal Reading and consistent comprehension strategies across the school. In addition to these focus areas, attention was applied to developing a consistent approach to teaching fluency and questioning from P – 7.

Embedded the practices of explicitly teaching textual structure and language demands in writing.

Developed the practices of explicitly teaching mathematical concepts using an enquiry model with a particular emphasis placed on the pedagogy of teaching number.

Focused on differentiated learning.
Initiated whole school identification and programming for Gifted and Talented students
Consolidated the Early Years Curriculum
Continued to implement Closing the Gap initiatives
Implemented Smart Classrooms ICT initiatives
Involvement in eSmart pilot project with Alannah Madeline Foundation
Enhanced facilities and grounds
Cluster and Community of Schools involvement
Consolidation of Smart Choices initiatives
Undertook professional development for all staff in Literacy, Numeracy, Science, Australian Curriculum, Higher Order Thinking, Assessment, ICT and Social Moderation
Continued implementation of the Developing Performance Framework

Future outlook

Review of the whole school Curriculum Framework to align with the Queensland Curriculum Assessment and Reporting Framework and the Australian Curriculum
Focus on differentiated learning
Continued focus on the enquiry based approach to learning and higher order thinking
Continued Literacy and Numeracy focus for all year levels
Focus on Assessment, Moderation and Reporting
Continued implementation of the Smart Classrooms ICT initiatives
Enhancement of school facilities
Involvement of staff in the implementation of the Performance Development Framework.
Professional Development for all staff – Literacy, Numeracy, Science, Differentiation, Goal Setting and Feedback, ICTs, Planning, Assessment, Moderation and Reporting and Australian Curriculum.
Our school at a glance

School Profile

Coeducational or single sex: Coeducational
Year levels offered: Prep - Year 7
Total student enrolments for this school:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Total Enrolment</th>
<th>Girls</th>
<th>Boys</th>
<th>Enrolment Continuity (Feb 2011 – Nov 2011)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>835</td>
<td>429</td>
<td>406</td>
<td>95%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Characteristics of the student body:

Merrimac State School is a state primary school located on Queensland’s Gold Coast between Surfers Paradise and the Hinterland. The school was established in 1917 as a one-teacher school and has grown over the years to a school with an enrolment of 835 students covering Prep to Year 7. Merrimac is a coeducational school.

The student clientele is characterised largely by a mix of middle class and/or sole supporting families. The majority of the school population is stable with many families passing local schools to attend Merrimac. The school services a wide area including the communities of Merrimac, Merridow, Carrara, Worongary, Broadbeach, Nerang, Clear Island Waters, Robina, Mermaid Waters and Mudgeeraba. There is an increasing number of students from southern states and overseas, in particular, New Zealand, attending Merrimac SS. In addition, our school caters for a growing number of International Fee Paying students from such countries as Japan, Korea, China and Taiwan.

The school has ample physical resources and a very well equipped School Resource Centre. All classes are air conditioned and fitted with Interactive White Boards. The school has a Computer Lab with videoconferencing facilities, a Multi Purpose Centre, a Performance Hall and Science Centre.

Class sizes – Proportion of school classes achieving class size targets in 2011

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Phase</th>
<th>Average Class Size</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Prep – Year 3</td>
<td>22.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year 4 – Year 10</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All Classes</td>
<td>24.6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

School Disciplinary Absences

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Disciplinary Absences</th>
<th>Count of Incidents</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Short Suspensions - 1 to 5 days</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Long Suspensions - 6 to 20 days</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exclusions</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cancellations of Enrolment</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Curriculum offerings

Curriculum:
Curriculum offerings include English, Mathematics, Science, Studies of Society and Environment, The Arts and Health and Physical Education. Icts are embedded across the curriculum. LOTE (Japanese) is taught to all students in Years 4, 5, 6 and 7. Swimming is offered to all year levels and interschool sport is available for students in Years 5-7. Instrumental Music (Strings and Multi) is available to students from years 3 - 7. Children are also able to participate in Band and Choir. The school is continuing to develop its Curriculum Framework in line with the Queensland Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Framework. The Australian Curriculum in English, Maths and Science will be introduced in 2012.

Extra curricula activities:
During 2011 children were able to take part in a wide range of extra curricula activities. The major events and activities available to our students during this period included:

- Year level excursions to complement class units of study;
- Year 4 Camp to Currumbin Valley Farm School;
- Year 6 Camp to Runaway Bay Sports Super Centre;
- Athletics, Cross Country and Swimming Carnivals;
- Breakfast and Fitness Club;
- Student leadership activities;
- Under Eights Day;
- Education Week Activities;
- Arts Council;
- Participation in the Australian English, Computer and Maths Competitions;
- Interschool Sports for Years 5 to 7;
- Cluster Lightening Carnivals;
- Band and Choir participation;
- Eisteddfods;
- Coordinated activities with Hillview House (neighbouring aged care facility);
- School discos and talent quests;
- Life Education Program;
- Wipe Out Waste Program;
- Environmental activities;
- Out of school hours activities such as tennis, chess, Fit Kids and Auskick;
- Cluster Gifted and Talented days;
- Year level social activities and
- Canberra and Japan Trips (alternate years).

These events and activities characterise the commitment by administration and staff at Merrimac State School to develop a supportive school environment and offer a broad range of learning opportunities.

How Information and Communication Technologies are used to assist learning
Merrimac continued to build on its successes with ICT. Classrooms continue to have shared banks of computers and in addition, students have access to a specialised lab with video conferencing capabilities. All school buildings are equipped with Internet access.

In summary the major achievements in 2011 included:
Continued implementation of the Managed Operating Environment throughout the school and One School Lap Top Computers for Teachers Program.
Our school at a glance

The ongoing integration of ICTs across the curriculum.
Full utilisation by all classes of our ICT Centre.
Ongoing video conferences, primarily with Katsuragi Elementary School in Japan.
Interactive Whiteboards installed in all classrooms.
Involvement in the National Cyber Safety Program – eSmart Pilot with Ailannah Madeline Foundation

One School reporting
With the range of new technologies introduced in 2011 and the rapid uptake of ICTs, Merrimac continues to be a pace setter and lighthouse within the Queensland educational community.

Social climate

Supportive School Environment:
The school’s behaviour management program focuses on the provision of a safe and supportive environment. It encourages students to strive to improve their behaviour through acknowledgement and reward for positive behaviour.

Behaviour management procedures are consistent through all classrooms and play areas with a level system based on responsible thinking and reflective practices. Individual Behaviour Management Plans are implemented for children requiring additional support.

Major priority areas include a focus on developmental learning, the development of student self esteem, the provision of recreational programs, the enhancement of the physical environment and the ongoing review of our school’s Behaviour Management Program.

At Merrimac State School we place a great deal of emphasis on developing student leadership. Whether it is at a class level, in the playground, at sporting activities or at a whole school level, we try to develop leadership skills and responsibility in all our students.

Our student leader positions consist of four school captains, eight sports captains, student council representatives in Years 6 and 7, class captains in Years 4 - 7, choir and band leaders and playground pals.

In the 2011 Parent Opinion Survey, Merrimac State School parents rated our school higher than the Queensland State average in regards to school climate.

Parent, student and teacher satisfaction with the school

In the School Opinion Survey, parents rated Merrimac State School above the State average in overall satisfaction, as well as in curriculum, school climate, learning climate, pedagogy and available resources for students.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Performance measure</th>
<th>Result 2011</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Percentage of parents/caregivers satisfied that their child is getting a good education at school</td>
<td>84%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percentage of students satisfied that they are getting a good education at school</td>
<td>83%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percentage of parents/caregivers satisfied with their child’s school</td>
<td>92%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percentage of school workforce satisfied with access to professional development opportunities that relate to school and systemic initiatives</td>
<td>73%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percentage of staff members satisfied with morale in the school</td>
<td>80%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Our school at a glance

Involving parents in their child’s education

Parent Involvement:

Overall, parent support at Merrimac State School is very good. We believe strongly in family involvement and parents are invited to develop close links with the school. Good communication between home and school is essential. Communication is promoted through weekly newsletters, school website, class newsletters each term, formal and informal parent/teacher interviews, parent/teacher nights, student folios and report cards, open days and special school activities.

It is the practice at Merrimac to invite parents and other interested community members to help as voluntary aides within the classroom. This is outlined at the parent/teacher evening early in the school year. Parents are also invited to be actively involved in the different parent bodies: P and C Association, Tuckshop Committee, Bookshop and Uniform Shop Committee, International Committee, Grounds Committee and the Outside School Hours Care Committee. Meetings of these committees are held on a regular basis.

Reducing the school’s environmental footprint

With increasing student numbers, growing school infrastructure, including new buildings, ICT resources and air conditioning, systems to support resource management are imperative. There are procedures for managing classroom electricity and air conditioner use. Solar panels have been installed on the Year 7 teaching block and many water tanks have been installed in the school grounds.

Merrimac State School is continuing to look at ways to reduce the school’s environmental impact. In 2011 the school developed a School Environment Management Plan aimed at reducing the school’s environmental footprint.

Environmental footprint indicators, 2010-2011

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Electricity</th>
<th>Water</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>KwH</td>
<td>KL</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011</td>
<td>188,412</td>
<td>3,547</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010</td>
<td>183,472</td>
<td>2,332</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% change</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>52%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

% change 10 - 11
Our staff profile

Staff composition, including Indigenous staff

The staff figures below are based on Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) 2011 census.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Workforce Composition</th>
<th>Teaching Staff</th>
<th>Non-teaching Staff</th>
<th>Indigenous Staff</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Headcounts</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Full-time equivalents</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Qualifications of all teachers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Highest level of attainment</th>
<th>Number of classroom teachers and school leaders at the school</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Doctorate</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Masters</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bachelor degree</td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Diploma</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Certificate</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Our staff profile

Expenditure on and teacher participation in professional development

The total funds expended on teacher professional development in 2011 was $27,945.

The major professional development initiatives were as follows:
- Integration of ICT’s including Interactive Whiteboards
- First Steps in Maths
- Mathletics Implementation
- Reciprocal Reading
- Reading Assessment
- Higher Order Thinking
- Australian Curriculum
- Differentiated Learning
- Assessment and Reporting
- Seven Steps to Writing
- Gifted and Talented student identification
- Cyber Safety
- Developing Performance Framework

The proportion of the teaching staff involved in professional development activities during 2011 was 100%.

Average staff attendance

For permanent and temporary staff and school leaders, the staff attendance rate was 96% in 2011.

Proportion of staff retained from the previous school year

From the end of the previous school year, 96% of staff was retained by the school for the entire 2011 school year.

School income broken down by funding source

School income broken down by funding source is available via the My School website at [http://www.myschool.edu.au/](http://www.myschool.edu.au/).

To access our income details, click on the My School link above. You will then be taken to the My School website with the following ‘Find a school’ text box.
Where it says ‘Search by school name’, type in the name of the school you wish to view, and select <GO>. Read and follow the instructions on the next screen; you will be asked to accept the Terms of Use and Privacy Policy before being given access to the school’s My School entry web page.

School financial information is available by selecting ‘School finances’ in the menu box in the top left corner of the school’s entry web page. If you are unable to access the internet, please contact the school for a paper copy of income by funding source.
Performance of our students

Key student outcomes

Student attendance - 2011

The overall attendance rate for the students at this school (shown as a percentage) in 2011 was 94%.
The overall attendance rate for all Queensland state Primary schools over the same period was 92%.

Student attendance rate for each year level

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year 1</th>
<th>Year 2</th>
<th>Year 3</th>
<th>Year 4</th>
<th>Year 5</th>
<th>Year 6</th>
<th>Year 7</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>94%</td>
<td>94%</td>
<td>95%</td>
<td>94%</td>
<td>93%</td>
<td>95%</td>
<td>92%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Student Attendance Distribution

The proportions of students by attendance range.

![Attendance Distribution Chart]

Description of how non-attendance is managed by the school

Non-attendance is managed in state schools in line with the DET policies, SMS-PR-029: Managing Student Absences and SMS-PR-036: Roll Marking in State Schools, which outline processes for managing and recording student attendance and absenteeism.

At Merrimac State School parents/caregivers are required to notify the school for any student absence. An Absence Notification Letter is sent home by the class teacher whenever there is an unexplained absence. Teachers are to inform the school office when a student is absent from school for three or more days without an explanation. This absence is then followed up by a member of the school’s administration.

Children arriving late to school must report to the school office for a late slip. Teachers are required to mark the class roll twice a day (at approximately 9.30am and straight after the main lunch break). Class rolls are collected weekly by the school’s administration and attendance data entered on to the school’s data base. Student attendance is monitored through this process. Student absence is reported each semester on the student’s report card.

In 2012, electronic roll marking will be introduced through One School.
Performance of our students

National Assessment Program – Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN) results – our reading, writing, spelling, grammar and punctuation, and numeracy results for the Years 3, 5, and 7. (The School results are available within OneSchool).

Our reading, writing, spelling, grammar and punctuation, and numeracy results for the Years 3, 5, and 7 are available via the My School website at [http://www.myschool.edu.au/](http://www.myschool.edu.au/).

To access our NAPLAN results, click on the My School link above. You will then be taken to the My School website with the following ‘Find a school’ text box.

Where it says ‘Search by school name’, type in the name of the school whose NAPLAN results you wish to view, and select <GO>.

Read and follow the instructions on the next screen; you will be asked to accept the Terms of Use and Privacy Policy before being able to access NAPLAN data.

If you are unable to access the internet, please contact the school for a paper copy of our school’s NAPLAN results.
Performance of our students

Achievement – Closing the Gap

Twenty-three students identified as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islanders. Attendance data was similar to our whole school cohort. Retention rates and numbers of our indigenous students were stable. Each indigenous child had an individual learning plan regardless of achievement, so teachers could monitor students’ progress against school and systemic data. Through data analysis, individual goals in literacy and numeracy were identified and monitored each school term for each student.