School Overview

Established in 1874, Specimen Hill Primary School is located in Inglewood Street (Golden Square) in the provincial city of Bendigo. Situated on a hill in a quiet, pleasant locality our spacious grounds and pleasant, landscaped gardens provide a country atmosphere in a city locality.

Specimen Hill Primary School has a current student population of 286. Our enrolment has doubled in the past twelve years and further growth is anticipated over the next few years.

Our school emphasises the safety and wellbeing of every child by providing an environment which is safe, secure and supportive. We actively encourage children to develop to their full potential by recognising, encouraging and rewarding achievement. Specimen Hill promotes self-image, respect for others, self discipline and life skills such as responsibility, independence, communication skills, inquiring minds, problem solving and creativity. We have a commitment to assertive discipline procedures – with an emphasis on positive recognition.

We are currently occupying a new school which has recently been built on the existing site. The final Stage achieved practical completion on 30th January 2006. The school now has outstanding facilities to match the outstanding teaching & learning taking place. Our motto is: “Our children’s future in the very best of hands”.

VISION:
- To create a school which provides a safe and caring environment where students are happy, responsible and motivated.
- This will be a school which is community orientated, where parent participation is valued and both teachers and parents agree that they have a shared responsibility for student learning, growth and development.
- In this environment a climate will be established which values excellence (achievement and effort), resilience and creativity, and promotes life-long learning.
- In addition a professional culture will prevail where collegiate support (through professional development, coaching and mentoring) is the norm and where professional growth is supported through the delegation of responsibility (and the judicious provision of authority).
- Shared decision making will be the preferred management style at Specimen Hill, while succession planning will remain a serious consideration when responsibilities are delegated and/or new staffing appointments are made.
- Success in the above will result in students, staff and parents achieving a feeling of satisfaction in their school/workplace, and a sense of pride at being part of the Specimen Hill school community.

VALUES:
- Our caring and supportive environment actively encourages children to be cooperative, self-reliant, and to develop a respect for themselves and others.
- Our school acts as a focus for the school community and we seek to forge strong links between students, parents and staff.
- We believe the success of each child depends upon a cooperative partnership between students, staff and parents.
- We have a whole school approach to all aspects of decision-making.
- Our school policies are progressively reviewed and revised, with our aim being to reflect the expectations of our community by providing traditional values whilst keeping abreast of the latest educational developments.
- Staff maintain high expectations for themselves, their colleagues and their students.
- This school respects and appreciates the contribution that diversity can bring to our school community.
Core School Performance Indicators

- Parent opinion of the school environment – general environment, customer responsiveness and general satisfaction variables
- Total school enrolments and total Prep enrolments.

**Demographics**

Interpretation

- Enrolments have continued to gradually increase from 244 (2000) to 287 (2005).
- The number of girls is still more than boys (Boys – 136 & Girls 151).

**General Information**

Interpretation

- Parent satisfaction with the school remains at high levels in 2005.
Principal's Report

This year has been a year of change and pleasing developments at Specimen Hill Primary School - No. 1316. Staff implemented the final year of the Charter by refining their teaching methods with a focus on Numeracy, while increasing our concentration on Literacy (particularly writing). Staff also increased the use of ICT applications to enhance student learning.

Student, parents and staff have spent many hours learning, supporting learning and/or teaching. The 2005 Annual Report celebrates the collaborative work between staff, parents and community to achieve better outcomes for all students in each learning area. Our school’s success stems from a dedicated and caring Staff, School Council and Parents’ Club. We also acknowledge the wonderful contributions of individual parents and community members. Students can be grateful for the hard work and the many hours these people devote in planning, leading and supporting their education.

High points of the year were; 1. The fact that our buildings upgrade was completed, providing us with a new school buildings. 2. Receiving the news (on the last day of school) that we had achieved accreditation as a school with a ‘Performance & Development Culture’. This was achieved after passing a number of Department of Education guidelines and then having our application independently verified.

I was proud to start the year as the new principal of Specimen Hill P.S. All other staffing was unchanged from 2004, although we did welcome back Ms Joanne Bergin to our staff at the end of Term four. Mrs Jenni Hillman, Mrs Lorraine Campbell & Mr Julian Regan continued to provide strong leadership in curriculum & welfare with the support of staff from each Professional Learning Team (PLT). The ‘Middle Years’ of schooling was again supported by the ‘Innovations & Excellence’ (Kangaroo Flat cluster) of schools who also provided learning programs around the introduction of the Victorian Essential Learning framework. This new framework was explored by staff in this transition year and audits of units of work were completed in preparation for the 2006 school year. We decided to ‘opt in’ for the new report card system announced by the Department for 2006.

The school has continued to provide quality teaching and learning, giving students a wide range of experiences. Staff discussions and professional development during the year helped to further develop common beliefs & understandings to strengthen our approaches to teaching, learning & assessment. Our Annual Implementation Plan developed in 2005 for 2006 has come directly from staff goals which have been regularly shared in Performance & Development groups as was school data. This has put us in a strong position for further learning and advances in 2006. Our school’s commitment to Wellbeing was again a feature the way we care for our community with the support of EASE and the wellbeing staff who work so closely with us. Ms Robyn Grubb & Ms Bernadette Wright provide strong support for our students, parents & staff with classroom programs to teach our students skills and counselling groups as well as individual students and parents. Ms Jenni Hillman coordinated the entire school wellbeing program. The success of all programs is testament to her outstanding skills and the support she has received from staff. The high scores in the area of student connectedness to school is directly related to her passion and the hard work of all staff to support students using the philosophy we have adopted. The Seasons program is yet another successful program in this area. A highlight of the year was our wellbeing month coordinated by Mrs Di Craig which provided a range of outstanding activities culminating in a ‘Peace Day’ in the final week. All staff are to be congratulated on the enormous amount of time and energy they have put into our students to foster the developments of many skills and interests during the year.

Indonesian & German has provided enrichment to children’s ability to use language. Mrs. Helen Turpie, Mrs. Teresa Smart & Ms Lee MacDonald are to be congratulated for their commitment to teaching & learning programs. We continued to offer choir (coordinators Ms Lee MacDonald & Ms Lauren Hateley) and circus pursuits (Mr Craig Barker). Sporting activities were well organized by Mr. Josh Hunt and students have represented the school at district, zone and state levels. Mrs Di Craig, Mr Corey Warne & Mrs Sally Brown supported students in leadership positions – Junior Council, House Captains & School Captains.

Sincere & warm thanks to our teaching and support staff for their valuable and valued contribution to the school throughout the year. Thanks to our Bursar, Mrs Kaye Blackley who has done an excellent job managing the day-to-day demands of the office and achieved a ‘clear audit’ for the 2004 year. This truly is an amazing feat. Mrs Val Quinlan has ably supported her in the daily running of the office. We were all extremely saddened when Ms Jenni Hillman announced her retirement & Mr Josh Hunt gained a position in Melbourne. They have both been long serving staff members who have contributed much to making ‘Speci’ a better place. Jenni has provided exceptional leadership, especially in the area of wellbeing. We wish them all the best for the new phases of their lives.

The Parent Opinion Survey results indicate that parents are aware of how hard staff work to support children at Specimen Hill P.S.

The first stage of our buildings upgrade was completed at the end of January. Thanks to Morey & Hurford for their construction work. Special thanks to Nick Marino (BGA architects) for his work in supporting our school to get the best result. Our association with BGA has continued as we moved into the final stage of building works and the completion of
our new school. The tender was allocated to A.W. Nicholson builders and work commenced on Stage 2 at the end of Term 2 and completed on the 30th January 2006. We are now proudly occupying all the new facilities which have provided the school community with excellent teaching & learning spaces. I would like to thank staff, parents & students for being so patient while construction was taking place and enduring the inconveniences along the way. Staff professionalism during this period ensured that quality programs for students were not diminished despite the obstacles.

Early in the year we were successful in an application to gain the services of the Gould League to assist us with Master planning our grounds. A representative group of parents, students & staff worked closely with a member of the Gould League to formulate a plan. We surveyed the school community to help us prioritise the direction our school should take and the plans were documented. These are now being put into action. Our school took advantage of the forward planning and made two applications to the Federal Government’s ‘Investing in our School’ program. We have been successful with one ($38 000) and are still awaiting the outcome of the other.

Thanks to our cleaners MPH (Greg Drewett & Greg McAllan) & to Max Dewar (handy person). These people have enhanced and maintained our buildings and grounds.

Parents have contributed a great deal towards supporting students at Specimen Hill P.S. They have been involved with various sporting events, as parent helpers in classrooms, camps and excursions and also through Parent Club and School Council.

Fundraising activities were co-ordinated by: Mrs Wendy Jackson, Mrs Teresa Smart and the Parent Club, School Fair committee and School Council. These activities have generated funds used for educational programs and school grounds projects identified in the Gould League Master Plan.

Thanks to School Council President, Mrs Tracy Plathe who has again done an outstanding job in this role. She has continued to provide robust leadership for our School Council. It was sad to say farewell to Tracy after ten fantastic years of service to our school community.

Mrs Janine Nicholls has provided strong leadership for our Parent Club. She kept busy especially with school uniform and fundraising events. Parental support through school council sub committees and various fundraising events has been great.

Our students can be grateful for the many contributions by parents to support their education and improve the school environment.

It is clearly evident that in the year 2005, many developments took place to make “Speci” a better place. This is reflected in our results, which show a steady trend of improvement. The staff, parents and community can be proud of these achievements in curriculum, welfare and facilities, which have been put in place to support our students. We will continue to build on this excellent basis challenging our common beliefs to improve outcomes for our children. We look forward to these challenges with enthusiasm in 2006.

Doug Jones
Principal

Official presentation of Accreditation certificate. Pictured: Minister of Education Ms Lynne Kosky & Mr Doug Jones

Construction of Stage 2
School Council President's Report

As in 2004, 2005 followed on with many changes happening. The upgrade of our building and grounds continued and is looking fabulous.

Doug Jones took over the reigns from Ross Thomson bringing with him many new and positive ideas.

We have seen the reintroduction of school and house captains. The school has received several grants towards equipment and grounds works.

Josh Hunt has taken 12 months leave to pursue a position in Melbourne. We wish him every success.

Jenni Hillman, a wonderful positive teacher and Assistant Principal has been a huge influence in the lives of students, parents and staff. We wish Jenni and Brian a long and happy retirement.

I have had the privilege of being involved at Specimen Hill P.S. for the past 10 years. I have learnt many life lessons here and take with me wonderful memories of this school.

Finally many thanks to the wonderful parents that contribute in many ways to making ‘Speci’ the great community it is.

To the staff of Speci, as teachers you make such a difference in the lives of our children and this school has the best staff anywhere.

Thank you to the community of ‘Speci’ for providing 10 years of education and friendship to the Plathe family.

Tracy Plathe
School Council President
Student Progress and Achievements

Student Learning

**PRIORITY: Math Mathematics**
Improve student achievement in Mathematics through effective teaching and learning strategies that cater for individual learning needs (Prep – 6).

**Intended Outcomes**
That student achievement in Mathematics strands at all levels will be consistently better than like schools and the state benchmarks and that a significantly higher percentage of students will be better than established.

**PRIORITY: Information Technology**
Information Communication Technologies to be used widely as a tool to enhance student learning across key learning areas.

*Note: Information Communication Technology (ICT) refers to the use of any digital technology which includes computer hardware and software.*

**Intended Outcomes are:**
- Provide a range of learning experiences through the progressive adoption of ICT in all CSF areas.
- Enhanced student and teacher competence and confidence in the use of Information Technology.
- Use of internet to provide experiences in global information and communication.
- Provision of sufficient resources of appropriate quality (hardware and software) to enable ICT skill development to take place.

**School Goals**

1. To maintain and build on the positive outcomes currently achieved in Mathematics and English and to further develop The Arts and ICT.
2. To ensure that student progress in all KLAs is monitored, recorded and reported to parents.
3. To provide feedback to the school community on the effectiveness of school programs.

**Improvement Areas**

- Continue to review and modify curriculum programs for each KLA.
- Continue to enhance & support programs for students i.e. Intervention/ Extension.
- Provision of professional development to support the further development of moderation.
- Review and revise the student report format (mid-year and end-of-year) to meet current DE&T expectations.
- To progressively review student progress, taking into account CSF II requirements.

The school has progressively worked towards the priorities & goals of the previous Charter and has been successful in achieving the goals set for this term. The percentage of students achieving at or above their CSF level has increased each year in both literacy & numeracy. Our school’s data indicates that in most cases we are above the Like School Group (LSG) and State mean scores. This has been due to the professional development, professional interaction and hard work of staff during the life of the Charter.

In 2005 we kept our focus on our priorities but also worked towards accreditation as a “Performance & Development” school. Staff were given data and school goals and asked to plan their own goals for improvement. Then we met in groups each term to share our plans/goals, professional development needs and to build the capacity of all members. Accreditation was achieved by the end of 2005, (see picture insert after Principal’s report). This has lead to a greater knowledge of each other and supported the development of each staff member thus improved teaching & learning. It also supported our application for accreditation. Our Annual Implementation Plan has come directly from this process as we endeavour to provide the best learning environment for our children.

The Reading Recovery program was maintained, as were the literacy support groups in Years Prep to 2. The Professional Learning Teams (PLT) met regularly with a focal point to discuss each meeting. This helped to
improve our moderation processes. The Prep to Year 2 PLT identified the area of writing for extra attention and all members attended Professional Development (PD) sessions conducted by Kerrie McMillin. We were also fortunate to have Regional support to enable Kerrie to model best practice to our staff with a Prep & a Year 1/2 class. This was done on a weekly basis with time allocated to discuss then trial these new ideas. The Year 3 – 6 PLT spent time on the administration and interpretation of the PAT maths program as well as initiatives instigated by the Innovations & Excellence cluster. Mrs Lorraine Campbell led our school in becoming familiar with the new Victorian Essential Learning (VELs) framework. Staff in each PLT completed audits of our school units of work in relation to the new VELs.
Staff continued to support students ‘at risk’ by withdrawing them from LOTE lessons for extra tuition in Literacy & Numeracy.

**ASSESSMENT OF ENGLISH**

**Reading**
- The percentage of students beginning or below their CSF level was in the range 7% to 2%.

**Writing**
- The percentage of students beginning or below their CSF level was in the range 7% to 2%.

**Speaking & Listening (Sp&Listen)**
- The percentage of students beginning or below their CSF level was in the range 5% to 0%.

![chart showing percentage of students achieving at or above expected standards]

**ASSESSMENT OF MATHEMATICS**

**Number**
- The percentage of students beginning or below their CSF level was in the range 8% to 2%.

**Measurement**
- The percentage of students beginning or below their CSF level was in the range 8% to 2%.
Student Engagement and Wellbeing

Our school’s commitment to Wellbeing was again a feature the way we care and support our community. Ms Jenni Hillman coordinated the entire school wellbeing program. The success of all programs is testament to her outstanding skills and the support she has received from staff. Staff work together and follow up with all issues to ensure a resolution is reached. The high scores in the area of student connectedness to school are directly related to the passion and hard work of all staff to support students using the philosophy we have adopted.

The contribution of EASE and the wellbeing staff who work so closely with us, provides our school with another means of supporting our community. Ms Robyn Grubb & Ms Bernadette Wright provide an extra level of care and direction for our students, parents & staff within and outside classroom programs. This program teaches our students skills and understanding. They provide counselling for groups as well as individual students and parents. The Seasons program has been yet another successful program in this area for students experiencing grief & loss.

A highlight of the year was our wellbeing month coordinated by Mrs Di Craig which provided a range of outstanding activities culminating in a ‘Peace Day’ in the final week.

All staff are to be congratulated on the enormous amount of time and energy they have put into the wellbeing of our students to foster the developments of many skills, understandings and interests during the year.
STUDENT ENGAGEMENT AND WELLBEING

Interpretation

- The range in each year level was an average of between 10.3 (Year 1) to 14.5 (Year Prep) days absent per student.

- Our average absence 12.7 days per student, was above the State mean (2004) of 12.4 days per student. Year 1 & Year 3 were below the State mean scores.

- With the exception of Grade 2 all grade averages are below the 75th percentile. This was most likely due to one child at each grade level who didn’t attend for an extended period of time.

Interpretation

- The graph illustrates that our students (in Years 5 & 6) are increasingly connected to school and this has also been evident in our survey of Years Prep to 4 students who we surveyed using the Early Years Principles of Teaching & Learning (PoLT) questionnaire.
Future Directions for the School

In 2006 the following areas have been identified in our Annual Implementation Plan:

- Continue to embed a culture of continuous improvement.
- Strengthen our professional learning and interaction in relation to literacy (writing). Also provide an additional Reading Recovery teacher to support Year 1 students and the Junior PLT.
- Increase support for staff to complete and analyse diagnostic testing (PAT maths – Years 3 to 6 & the Numeracy interviews Years Prep to 2).
- Whole school involvement in the exploration of developing a “Thinking curriculum” continuum from prep to Year 6.
- Whole school implementation of ‘School Innovation in Teaching’ (Science & Technology) incorporating developing staff understanding & skills in PoLT.
- Whole school approach to the further implementation of ICT through the ‘Sound house’ project and ‘Intel’ program using existing hardware & software as well as electronic white boards, miniature cameras & animation & movie making software.
- The introduction of the DE&T’s new report card.
- Review & start planning for the official review of our previous charter and development of our new Strategic Plan.
- Linking to our community via land adjoining the school and working with Parks Victoria to develop the area using local native plants grown & planted by students.
- The Official Opening of our new school and the implementation of our grounds master plan.
Summary of School’s Financial Performance

Current expenditure matches the predicted allocations in the School Charter & resources have effectively targeted the Charter goals & priorities. Programs have been conducted within budgets allocated by School Council with some variations noted by Council during the year.

Comments

- The 2005 closing balance is just lower than previous year (2004 – $239,528; 2005 - $212,319). Items to be funded in relation to our Master Plan & school priorities such as ICT, the ‘Thinking Curriculum & Literacy improvements will require the use of these school funds to achieve our goals.
- We were able to fund our Charter goals & priority areas to satisfactory levels.
- The outstanding fundraising efforts of the Fundraising committee, Fair committee & Parents Club allowed us to raise extra funds for the improvement of school facilities and programs.
- The school has a strong commitment to remain in surplus each year and has remained in a surplus position by careful monitoring and budget planning.
- The figures below include taxes, non profit trading and Out of School Hour Care (OSHC)

The School's Receipts in 2005.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Government provided funds:</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cash grant</td>
<td>$171,699</td>
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<tr>
<td>Other government</td>
<td>$54,580</td>
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<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>$226,279</strong></td>
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<table>
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<tr>
<th>Locally raised funds:</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Subject contributions</td>
<td>$19,034</td>
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<tr>
<td>Fund raising and excursions</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>$94,840</strong></td>
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<table>
<thead>
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<th>Other funds:</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>$85,328</strong></td>
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</table>

**Grand total**                   **406,447**
## The School's Expenditure in 2005.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Amount</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fund raising and excursion costs</td>
<td>$36,773</td>
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<tr>
<td>School requisites</td>
<td>$3,493</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Building maintenance &amp; cleaning</td>
<td>$107,026</td>
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<td>Locally employed staff</td>
<td>$34,853</td>
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<tr>
<td>Other costs</td>
<td>$123,610</td>
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<tr>
<td>Communications and utilities</td>
<td>$26,627</td>
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<td>Classroom materials</td>
<td>$36,672</td>
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<td>Books and publications</td>
<td>$22,810</td>
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<tr>
<td>Capital expenditure</td>
<td>$41,731</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Grand total</strong></td>
<td><strong>$433,595</strong></td>
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</table>

### Breakdown of Expenditure Percentages

- **Books and publications**: $22,810 (5%)
- **Books and publications**: $36,672 (8%)
- **Communications and utilities**: $26,627 (6%)
- **Other costs**: $123,610 (29%)
- **Locally employed staff**: $34,853 (8%)
- **Building maintenance & cleaning**: $107,026 (25%)
- **School requisites**: $3,493 (1%)
- **Capital expenditure**: $41,731 (10%)
- **Fund raising and excursion costs**: $36,773 (8%)

Please Note: ‘Other costs’ include; OSHC
Mathematics in action – Year 1/2

July 2005
Safety Day – Year 3/4                                          October 2005

Demolition and removal of buildings ....

...... for construction of New classrooms (Stage 2) – Term 3 2005
School Contact Information

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Address:</th>
<th>Inglewood St. Golden Square 3555</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Principal:</td>
<td>Doug Jones</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Telephone:</td>
<td>03 54 435 353</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Email:</td>
<td><a href="mailto:specimen.hill.ps@edumail.vic.gov.au">specimen.hill.ps@edumail.vic.gov.au</a></td>
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