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## Principal's Foreword

### Introduction

Welcome to the School Annual Report for 2008. This was another good year in which enrolments grew considerably and School Opinion Surveys continued to show extremely high satisfaction levels amongst parents, students and staff. School resources were enhanced in a variety of ways to accommodate increased enrolments and to achieve our intention of providing innovative, exciting and effective programs.

### Future Outlook

The runaway population growth experienced in Hervey Bay and the perceived attraction of an alternative placement has led to a large increase in enrolments which is expected to accelerate in coming years. The addition of four new classrooms was instituted at the start of the 2008 school year. The number of classes increased from 9 to 11 with an expectation that 13 classes would be required in 2009.

The trial of a School/Health Interface, where Paediatric appointments are held at the school, moved from the trial phase in 2006 and was judged to be an outstanding success. It subsequently became an integral part of the school program in 2007 and in 2008 was awarded a Showcase Award for Excellence.

### School Profile

Hervey Bay Special School is a state-run government, co-educational school that provides alternative programs for the learning and development of students who have high support needs. The school offers a functional curriculum for 79 students within an age range of 6-18 years. Curriculum focuses on providing Individualised Education Programs (IEP's) that are prioritised to meet the needs and potential of each student as determined by parents, teachers and support staff.

Staffing at the school is made up of a Principal, Head of Curriculum, 14 teachers, 16 teacher aides and 2 nurses, one of whom provides an outreach service. Support staff consists of 2 Speech Pathologists, Occupational Therapist, Physiotherapist and an Advisory Visiting Teacher (Autism). Ancillary staff consists of a Registrar, Administration Officer, Janitor/groundsman and 3 Cleaners.

### Curriculum Offerings

The school curriculum is organised around everyday living skills and needs of the students, set within Key Learning Areas (KLA's), such as English, Maths, Science, H.P.E., etc.

At the start of each semester an IEP is prepared for each student. This is reported on at the end of each semester. An end of year report supplements this. The IEP report focuses on outcomes whilst the annual report speaks to such things as student attitudes and achievements.

A school transition officer provides advice on the transition process in moving from school to post-school options. A Senior Education and Training Plan (SETP) for all students over 15 years of age assists in the realization of educational goals and provides options showing the variety of choices available for when the student leaves school. Vocational and Educational Training (VET) programs offered include Certificate 1 in Work Readiness.

Over the last six years the school has developed several innovative programs, four of which have won Showcase Awards for Excellence – one also winning a National Award for Outstanding National Achievement. An additional program in 2006 which highlighted the use of Interactive White Boards in all classrooms was highly commended.

The four programs, which have been integrated into class programs are:

A Multi-Sensory Environment which is available to stimulate students' individual senses through the use of lighting effects, music, tactile experiences, aromas etc.

The Virtual Literature Program which involves the production of individualized books on CD's offering voice-overs, musical background, video clips and pictures to support print. Students using special switches can access these books.

Neurofeedback, an innovative program that uses computers and EEG amplifiers to enhance student's ability to concentrate. Its present focus is on students with autism.

Wonder Boards are the programs based around the Interactive White Boards which enable students to use white boards as an interactive surface linked to a computer.

A fifth initiative, where paediatric clinic information is shared at school, has led to increased insights and support for a variety of medical conditions.

## Social climate

Responses to the School Opinion Survey 2008 showed that parents, students and staff were very satisfied with the social climate that exists at Hervey Bay Special School. These results were well above the state benchmarks. The school has a positive, caring and supportive environment, which promotes students taking responsibility for their actions. A family culture exists within the school where all students mix with each other and have the opportunity to form a close relationship with all staff members. The school's Responsible Behaviour Plan has been developed through a collaborative process between staff, parents and students. This policy ensures positive behaviours are recognized and reinforced while undesirable behaviours are dealt with consistently and fairly.

School Climate	Parents		Students		Staff	
	HBSS	State	HBSS	State	HBSS	State
	3.63	2.86	3.78	2.85	3.64	2.85

## Involving parents in their child's education

Hervey Bay Special School recognises that a child's academic and social development are best served when the school and family work together in positive partnerships.

Results from the 2008 School Opinion Survey show we are successful at achieving this, as parents are very satisfied with all areas of school operations.

Parents are actively encouraged to become involved in their child's education in a number of ways.

- Parents are an essential part of the IEP process in outlining their intimate knowledge of their children's abilities and their aspirations for their future.
- Parents are encouraged to work as classroom helpers and complete volunteer duties around the school
- Staff encourage parents to discuss their child's progress with them and make themselves readily available to do so
- Parents are actively involved in the formulation of school policy and processes
- Regular systemic and internal scans are conducted to ascertain parent's views on issues within the school
- Our active P&C Association welcome parent and community members to their monthly meetings where many disability specific issues are discussed. Stories and accumulated wisdom are shared with newer parents.

### Parent Opinion Survey Results

That you have opportunities to participate in school decision making?	100%
That you have opportunities to participate in the life of the school?	100%

## Our staff profile

### Qualifications of all teachers

Of the 14 teachers at Hervey Bay Special School in 2008, the following qualifications were recorded:

2 teachers had gained a Masters level in Education

14 teachers had gained a Bachelor level

14 teachers had gained additional diplomas or certificates

### Expenditure on and teacher participation in professional development

The total funds expended on staff professional development in 2008 was \$9,836. The major professional development initiatives were as follows:

- Literacy, Numeracy, First Aid, Technology, Safe Lifting, Human Relationships Education, Use of Interactive White Boards and Alternative Communication.
- The involvement of staff in professional development activities during 2008 was 100%.

### Average staff attendance

For permanent and temporary staff and school leaders the staff attendance rate was 95% in 2008.

### Proportion of staff retained from the previous school year

From the end of the 2007 school year, 100% of staff were retained by the school for the entire 2008, school year.

## Performance of our students

### Student attendance

The average attendance rate as a percentage in 2008 was 92%.

### Student Destinations

In 2008 four students exited the school:

2 entered employment

2 gained Lifestyle Packages

### Parent, student and teacher satisfaction with the school

From the School Surveys conducted in 2008 it is clear that students, parents and staff are highly satisfied with the school. Their responses were very positive and results showed Hervey Bay Special School achieved well above the state average in all areas.

Staff indicated that they were satisfied with the Professional Development opportunities offered to them.

## School Opinion Survey – Parents and Students

### Curriculum

HBSS parents	State Mean	HBSS students	State Mean
3.68	3.00	3.80	3.02

### Pedagogy

HBSS parents	State Mean	HBSS students	State Mean
3.65	2.83	3.77	2.94

### Resources

HBSS parents	State Mean	HBSS students	State Mean
3.55	2.81	3.68	2.90

## Overall Rating for Parents, Students and Staff

# 2008 School Annual Report

## Performance of our students

HBSS parents	State Mean	HBSS students	State Mean	HBSS staff	State Mean
3.61	2.90	3.74	2.98	3.64	2.85

School funds and donations were utilised to purchase an additional 2 Interactive White Boards at the end of 2007 ensuring that this technology was available in every classroom. During 2008, 100% of students achieved competency in the use of these amazing interactive touch screens.

In the course of 2008 nine senior students attended regular work experience in the community three as structured work placements. Six gained work experience in the school setting.

A very successful Sports Day was organised in August incorporating traditional events together with some innovative events tailored to students' abilities.

### Resources

The Janitor/Groundsman progressed the plan to extend the sports oval, regrass the surface and extend the irrigation system. This was completed at the start of the year.

Additional play equipment and bicycles were purchased for use at break times to involve students in a range of activities.