

Statutory Annual Report 2007

Once again we have to write one of these as a requirement of the Australian Government Programmes for Schools Quadrennial Administrative Guidelines 2005 to 2008.

Staff Retention and Attendance

In 2007, Candlebark had 5 full time teachers including the Principal, 5 part time teachers, 3 visiting instrumental teachers, and 1 learning support teacher. The learning support teacher continued the tradition of learning-support-teachers-not-staying-long, and resigned a week before the end of the academic year. That caused a little flurry of excitement, especially for people with too much time on their hands. A part-time music teacher left during the year, and a full-time teacher left at the end of the year. The staff attendance rate was 97%.

Student Attendance

The student attendance rate for 2007 was 93.5%

Staff Professional Development

Among external courses attended by staff in 2007 were ones in special education, first aid, and the teaching of phonics. Additional to this is school initiated professional development, which included the teaching of Maths, and workshops and symposia in various other subject areas. This year we're also required to report the amount we spend on professional learning. This is meaningless for us, as we take full advantage of our contacts, the network of nice people who wish the school well, and our own experience and expertise to put together an active programme at minimal cost. But anyway, we spent \$2009 on this item in 2007.

Value Added

Candlebark adds value in many different ways, for example by offering a weekly programme of activities which has included sewing, knitting, drama, pottery, weaving, cooking, Italian, basketball skills, soccer skills, animation, rugby skills, writing, and many others. We also have many camps, excursions and sleepovers, which in 2007 included trips to the Immigration Museum, Scienceworks at Bendigo, the Guggenheim exhibition, the Pixar animation exhibition, Cirque du Soleil, the Cathedral Ranges, Rye Beach, the Human Body Exhibition at Docklands, the Incomplete World Exhibition, the Melbourne Comedy Festival, the Holocaust Museum, the Melbourne Writers' Festival, the Chinese Museum at Bendigo, as well as bush camping, performances by the Australian Ballet, a performance by the Melbourne Symphony Orchestra, and many more. Values and character development are important to us. Who would have thought?

Values

We expect students to show kindness and courtesy towards others, and we encourage them to take on many responsibilities. A great deal of staff time and energy goes into creating a climate which is positive and benevolent. We encourage students to think in empathetic and creative ways and we didactically teach communication skills and resilience.

Music

Many students learned a musical instrument (piano, guitar, voice, cello) in one-on-one lessons. Dance featured strongly in the school program; every student at Candlebark is a dancer. There were many opportunities for students to have extra dance instruction during their free time. We had a number of concerts and soirees throughout the year, culminating in a production of *A Midsummer Night's Dream*.

Sport

Formal competitive sport against other schools is not currently part of the school's program, but students played a wide variety of sports during PE, during free time, and during activity sessions. The sports included basketball, soccer, rugby, cricket and tennis. Bike riding, bushwalking, cross country running and orienteering are also featured at the school. In 2007 a school triathlon was held for the first time – it included all students, from Prep to Year eight. We also participated for the first time in a touch rugby competition, entering two teams of students, and a mixed team of adults and students.

Other activities

The school put on a major musical production of *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, blending Shakespeare with Gilbert and Sullivan and a variety of dance numbers in a show which involved all students and was probably the greatest theatrical event ever staged at the Romsey Mechanics' Hall. Chess is an activity that is particularly encouraged. It is part of the school timetable, and a popular activity during free time, with much support from staff.

Academic Outcomes

Candlebark is a non-selective school attracting a wide variety of students. AIM Tests Of our students who sat for the AIM tests in 2007, all Year 7 students exceeded the national benchmarks, except for two who were below the national benchmarks in numeracy. (This assessment comprises reading, writing, and numeracy). In Grade 5, all students exceeded all national benchmarks. In Grade 3, all students exceeded all national benchmarks.

Annual Parental Survey

As required, a parental survey was distributed to all families in mid-2008. The response rate was about 17%. The results were extremely positive, even if not very statistically significant. The school receives many unsolicited e-mails and other messages from parents, expressing their delight with the school. Parents frequently refer other families looking for a school to Candlebark, but we have so many students seeking places at the school that waiting lists are effectively closed.

Annual Teacher Survey

As required, a survey of teachers was delivered to all teaching staff in mid-2008. None responded. No intimidation or blandishments were employed to bring about this result. They possibly felt they had better things to do with their time. The staff at Candlebark consistently express an idealistic and dedicated

commitment to the school and are thoroughly engaged in curricular and extra-curricular activities.

Candlebark's Academic Staff 2007

At the highest level of attainment, as specified by the reporting conditions, the following degrees and diplomas were held by the eight academic staff: one doctorate, one Masters' degree, six Bachelors' degrees.