School of the Air
Annual School Report
2011
Our school at a glance

Students
The school enrolment consists primarily of distance isolated students, with a small number of travelling students enrolled in the school for periods of between three and nine months. The school’s enrolments are governed by the Distance Education Guidelines for Enrolment. The school integrates students with moderate intellectual disabilities within its classes.

Staff
The school employs 16 teaching staff and 7 non-teaching staff.
Two of the school’s non-teaching staff hold relevant certificate qualifications.
All teaching staff meet the professional requirements for teaching in NSW public schools.
All teaching staff also meet the requirements for a DET Teacher’s Certificate.

Significant programs and initiatives
School of the Air operates a satellite education program to provide face to face instruction to students undertaking their education from home at isolated rural properties. The satellite education program is supported by a Field Service Program, which includes home visits to all students as well as the provision of mini-schools. Mini-Schools are face to face teaching opportunities, usually conducted at an isolated property whereby all students and home supervisors travel to the location to participate in a range of activities across all key learning areas.

The school is supported by the Country Areas Program (CAP). This program allows the school to cater for the needs of students from isolated locations. Cap programs in 2010 included the provision of a Home Tutors Conference to support home supervisors, as well as the provision of music education, both via satellite and during field services, and the establishment of a recording studio to provide supplementary visual lessons and feedback.

The school continued with a pre-school program in 2010, enrolling 18 isolated students.

Student achievement in 2011

Literacy – NAPLAN Year 3
The school was under represented in the top two bands. 58% of our students scored in the middle two bands.

Numeracy – NAPLAN Year 3
In 2010 the percentage of students achieving in the lower two skill bands was 10% lower than the state average.

Literacy – NAPLAN Year 5
The school was under represented in the top two bands. 52.5% of our students scored in the lower two bands. Growth from Year 3 to Year 5 exceeded the state average in both treading and Spelling.

Numeracy – NAPLAN Year 5
The school was under represented in the top two bands of year five Numeracy. 42% of our students scored in bands 3 and 4.

Messages

Principal’s message

[Enter text here.]

I certify that the information in this report is the result of a rigorous school self-evaluation process and is a balanced and genuine account of the school’s achievements and areas for development.

[Insert name of principal.]

P & C message

As I sit here thinking about what I should be including in my first report for P&C my mind is filled with all the events that have occurred within the school over the past 12 months. Home Tutors Conference, excursions, mini schools, classrooms, sports day, swimming lessons just to name a few. It certainly has been a very busy year, but then again what year isn’t a busy one!

There have been a few changes at SOTA this year. We saw the new classroom in use for the first
time. It is great to see the hard work that was put in for the BER funding pay off. It is proving to be a great asset to the school and I know the children enjoy working in there. We have also seen the erection of a Flag Pole and I can’t wait until we see the Australian Flag flying in our school yard for the first time and bring out the Aussie pride in all of us.

We have also welcomed 4 new staff members; Bridget Burke, Jodie Hartwig, Sally Whittle and Julie Lavis. I hope you have all enjoyed your first year at SOTA and finally we saw the introduction of stage classes which was probably the most discussed and biggest change for the school.

P&C have again been active this year. Our meetings have been well supported by the community and we continue to work at what is important to all of us – the best education for our children. Thank you to those that have found the time in your busy schedules to attend meetings. Funds raised through the hard work of the community and our fundraising committee, have again been used to subsidize students excursions, sports day, and our end of year celebration. A big thanks to all those who have been involved in fundraising. You have worked very hard to keep the monies rolling in and had some great ideas in the process. Keep them coming.

We were also very fortunate to see the introduction of the Margaret Palmer Fund which has also helped subsidize excursion costs this year, of which we are all very grateful for. Here is where I add my personal thanks. I will start by thanking those on the P&C Executive. Sanchia, you have done a great job keeping on top of the books and Sara your efforts are much appreciated, a job well done to you both.

Zanna and Nicci, your efforts are to be congratulated too. The new ideas you have both brought to the table have been awesome. Hot soup on a cold Sports Day went down well!

Finally I would like to thank Jenny Lacey for her support she has provided to me over the past year. Without her guidance I am not sure I would have survived in this position so thank you all.

Several families depart SOTA this year and we say farewell and all the best to you all but it would be wrong of me not to mention the Lacey family. I would like to thank Jenny for her time she has selflessly given to SOTA over many (18) years and her enthusiasm, knowledge and ongoing involvement will be greatly missed. I am sure I speak on behalf of everyone by saying we wish you all the best in your adventures post SOTA.

A huge thanks also to the ladies in the office, they are always so supportive of us and a lot of what they do is behind the scenes. You really do make our jobs a lot easier. (Next year I will try and remember the coffee money!!)

Last but not least, thank you all for the opportunity to represent you as your P&C President. Thank you for your patience as I learnt to adjust to my new role. This was my first year and while it was challenging and nerve wracking at times, I have thoroughly enjoyed it. I would like to encourage the whole community to be active members of the P&C; it is your P&C and will only continue to be as effective as you all make it.

Vicki Dowling, P&C President

School Council Message

Student representative’s message

Being the 2011 girl school captain has been great. I’ve had some awesome experiences here at SOTA on PE camps, excursions, minischools, sports days, classrooms and presentation nights.

I’ve been SRC twice and that’s been a great lot of fun too! I’ve had experiences here that I’ll never forgot and I’m sure that the next school captains will have just as much fun.

The last year flies by so fast, but there isn’t a thing I regret doing, well maybe that one time when the teachers said ‘lights out now’ and we kept talking but I think that’s where you have the most fun. Hopefully Heffron will continue to be a
It’s been a wonderful 4 years at school of the air, especially being the leader of our school along with Max Lacey. I’m proud of being a part of SOTA and I’m sure the skills I’ve learnt here will help me throughout my high school years.

So I wish farewell for the teachers that are leaving the school and all the year 6s going into High school. But mostly I wish good luck to the upcoming 2012 school captains and make sure you have fun because before you know it you’ll be writing the captains report!

Emily Molloy, School Captain

Student representative’s message
I have enjoyed my year as your school captain in 2011. At the end of last year, when I found out I had been elected as school captain, I was really excited; it felt good.

As those of us in Year Six leave SOTA I think we are all pleased that we have been part of School of the Air and will always remember our time on SOTA and the friends we made while we were here.

As School Captain I liked being able to say the opening and closing for the Anzac Day Remembrance Service over air. Anzac Day is a very important day for Australia and I was proud to be able to do this as captain. I also liked thanking the other schools for joining in at Sports Day. Even though I wasn’t able to run or do activities, as I had just broken my arm, it was fun to still be part of what has been one of my favourite days on SOTA.

Thank you to all the kids in Year Six; some of us have been here since kindergarten and some have gone and come back. It has been fun to have done my primary schooling with you all and I hope we will all remain friends. Good luck to everyone for next year.

I would like to say good luck to the school captains of 2012 and to the rest of the school leavers for next year. Enjoy your last year on SOTA.

Lastly, thank you to all the teachers and staff of SOTA, especially Ms Nitschke this year for teaching me. I hope I remember some of it as I move on to high school next year. I will miss SOTA. It has, after all, been part of our family for my whole life, but it is time for us all to leave.

Max Lacey, School Captain

School context

Student information
It is a requirement that the reporting of information for all students must be consistent with privacy and personal information policies.

Student enrolment profile
Student enrolments have remained consistent over a five-year period, with the exception of adding a pre-school cohort from the beginning of 2007. Enrolment figures represent enrolments at both the Broken Hill and Hay campuses.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>2007</th>
<th>2008</th>
<th>2009</th>
<th>2010</th>
<th>2011</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>69</td>
<td>74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>65</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Student attendance profile
Currently schools of distance education do not report on student attendance.
Class sizes
Primary class sizes are included in the annual school report in order to provide parents with as much local information as possible.

Structure of classes
All but one of the school’s classes did not exceed fourteen students. At the Broken Hill campus all classes were stage based classes. At the Hay campus classes are of mixed year levels and incorporate students who are travelling, both within Australia and overseas.

Staff information
It is a requirement that the reporting of information for all staff must be consistent with privacy and personal information policies.

Staff establishment

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Position</th>
<th>Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Principal</td>
<td>1.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deputy Principal(s)</td>
<td>1.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assistant Principal(s)</td>
<td>2.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Head Teachers</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Classroom Teachers</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher of Emotional Disabilities</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher of Mild Intellectual Disabilities</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher of Reading Recovery</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Support Teacher Learning Assistance</td>
<td>0.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher Librarian</td>
<td>0.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher of ESL</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Counsellor</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School Administrative &amp; Support Staff</td>
<td>4.596</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>23.496</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Staff retention
[Enter text here.]

Teacher qualifications
All teaching staff meet the professional requirements for teaching in NSW public schools.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Qualifications</th>
<th>% of staff</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Degree or Diploma</td>
<td>87.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Postgraduate</td>
<td>12.5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Financial summary
This summary covers funds for operating costs and does not involve expenditure areas such as permanent salaries, building and major maintenance.

Date of financial summary: 30/11/2011

Income

- Balance brought forward 495,752.78
- Global Funds 182,687.71
- Tied funds 65,628.00
- School & community sources 60,909.45
- Interest 23,992.04
- Trust receipts 9,368.25
- Total income 802,333.23

Expenditure

- Teaching & Learning
  - Key learning areas 38,843.70
  - Excursions 30,317.26
  - Extracurricular dissection 38,117.36
- Library 6,539.42
- Training & Development 602.94
- Tied funds 92,485.46
- Casual relief teachers 3,597.78
- Administration & Office 83,198.17
- Utilities 8,966.71
- Maintenance 3,517.10
- Trust Accounts 6,153.75
- Capital programs 9,325.67
- Total expenditure 321,665.32

Balance carried forward 516,672.91

A full copy of the school’s 2011 financial statement is tabled at the annual general meetings of the School Council and/or the parent body. Further details concerning the statement can be obtained by contacting the school.

School performance 2011

Achievements

Arts
A range of activities were covered in the Arts at SOTA during 2011. At mini-schools and classroom
experiences, students have the opportunity to prepare and perform acts for their fellow students and families. Toward the end of the year students had the honour of singing for Princess Mary of Denmark at a function for the Royal Flying Doctor Service.

Weekly music lessons for all stages were well attended.

### Sport

A range of activities were completed by SOTA students in 2010. The Mini-school students were taught by a specialist teacher from Active After Schools Community (AASC). This was to compliment the AASC program run weekly via satellite for the students. A high percentage of students attended the Annual Sports day with Emma Cullen and Will Bennett achieving Champion Girl and Boy at Presentation Night. Events organised by the Barrier PSSA provided the opportunity for some of our students to take part. The School also held its annual Athletics Carnival with a large number of children competing in events. Fred McLure and Jack Ashby were recognized this year at the Broken Hill PSSA ‘Blues’ Dinner with the Opal Shield for their excellent sportsmanship.

### Field Services

As is customary, a home visit was provided for each child enrolled in the school from pre-school to year six. Home Visits provide an ideal opportunity for students to work face to face and one to one with their class teacher. Anecdotal comments suggest that Home Visits are very much enjoyed by students, staff and families.

### Classroom Experiences

A classroom experience is offered for all students. Attendance at classrooms in 2011 exceeded 90%. Classrooms ranged in duration from two days for kindergarten students and five days for senior students. Two classroom experiences were offered for pre-school students in 2011.

### Mini-Schools

In 2011, the school held two mini-schools. In 2010 the mini-schools were held at Nundooka, and Pine View. The school is enormously appreciative of the assistance offered by host families in providing such a range of opportunities for students.

Mini-Schools provide students with an opportunity to work face to face with their peers and their teachers. The mini-schools were well attended in 2011.

### Other

- Emily Molloy was awarded the Phillis Gibb Scholarship Award.
- Tom and Ben Langford received the Margaret Palmer Estate Award.
- Abigail Jarrett received the Caitlin Treloar Infants Memorial Award.
- P & C Creative Arts Encouragement Award was won by Mitchell
- SRC Acts of Kindness Award was presented to Wayde Girdler

### Academic

In the National Assessment Program, the results across the Years 3, 5, 7 and 9 literacy and numeracy assessments are reported on a scale from Band 1 to Band 10.

The achievement scale represents increasing levels of skills and understandings demonstrated in these assessments.

Yr 3: from Band 1 (lowest) to Band 6 (highest for Year 3)
Yr 5: from Band 3 (lowest) to Band 8 (highest for Year 5)
Yr 7: from Band 4 (lowest) to Band 9 (highest for Year 7)
Yr 9: from Band 5 (lowest) to Band 10 (highest for Year 9)

and/or

In the School Certificate the performance of students is reported in performance bands ranging from Performance Band 1 (lowest) to Performance Band 6 (highest).
Literacy – NAPLAN Year 3

Percentage in bands:
Year 3 Reading

Percentage of students

Bands
- Percentage in Band
- School Average 2008-2011
- SSG % in Band 2011
- State DEC % in Band 2011

Percentage in bands:
Year 3 Spelling

Percentage of students

Bands
- Percentage in Band
- School Average 2008-2011
- SSG % in Band 2011
- State DEC % in Band 2011

Percentage in bands:
Year 3 Writing

Percentage of students

Bands
- Percentage in Band
- SSG % in Band 2011
- State DEC % in Band 2011

Percentage in bands:
Year 3 Grammar & Punctuation

Percentage of students

Bands
- Percentage in Band
- School Average 2008-2011
- SSG % in Band 2011
- State DEC % in Band 2011
Numeracy – NAPLAN Year 3

Literacy – NAPLAN Year 5
The Commonwealth Government sets minimum standards for reading, writing, grammar and punctuation, spelling and numeracy for Years 3, 5, 7 and 9.
The performance of the students in our school in the National Assessment Program – Literacy and Numeracy is compared to these minimum standards. The percentages of our students achieving at or above these standards are reported below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Percentage of Year 3 students achieving at or above minimum standard (exempt students included)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reading</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Writing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spelling</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grammar &amp; Punctuation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Numeracy</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Percentage of Year 5 students achieving at or above minimum standard (exempt students included)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reading</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Writing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spelling</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grammar &amp; Punctuation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Numeracy</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Significant programs and initiatives**

The school is committed to improving outcomes for all students. The provision of education via satellite to geographically isolated students presents both challenges and opportunities. The school works closely with its community to shape programs to best meet the needs of our students.

**Aboriginal education**

The school incorporates an aboriginal perspective into a number of key learning areas throughout the school year.

**Multicultural education**

The school maintains a focus on multicultural education in all areas of the curriculum and promotes the skills, attitudes and understandings required for a culturally diverse society.

**Other programs**

**Pre-School**

The school continued with a pre-school program in 2011, enrolling 17 isolated students. The class has now been allocated a full time permanent teacher.

**Country Areas Program (CAP)**

The school is supported by the Country Areas Program. This program allows the school to cater for the needs of students from isolated locations. CAP programs in 2011 included the provision of a Home Tutors Conference to support home supervisors, as well as the provision of music education, both via satellite and during field services, and the establishment of a recording studio to provide supplementary visual lessons and feedback.

Funds were allocated to the following programs:

The coordination and implementation of an intensive program focusing on Number and Problem Solving across the whole school.

Implementation of a Gifted and Talented program across the stages with a emphasis on utilising technology, moodle and other blended learning tools.

Home Tutors Conference; A three day conference aimed at supporting home supervisors in their provision of the learning program as set by the classroom teacher. A focus on writing with the utilization of the author Jane Carroll to conduct workshops with Children, Teachers and Home Supervisors.

Introduce technology into the Preschool environment through the use of digital cameras and an Ipad for inclusion in Project Based Learning and Field Services provision and subsequent sharing of the project.

**Progress on 2011 targets**

**Target 1**

**Literacy - Increased levels of achievement for all students.**

Strategies to achieve this target include:

- Revise Scope and Sequence for Writing to provide a more fair distribution of text types across all stages.
• Invite authors/illustrators to speak to children and teachers
• Introduction and inclusion of Speech Pathology through the Broken Hill UDRH
• Produce a published book of children’s writing.

Our achievements include:
• Continued fine tuning of Scope and Sequence to ensure adequate content being covered in each stage.
• Three children targeted and included in speech pathology program.
• Samples of children’s writing collected to be compiled into a book.
• The profile of writing has been increased across the school as a priority for improvement.

Target 2
Numeracy - Increased levels of achievement for all students.

Strategies to achieve this target include:
• Provide all students with opportunity to participate in ‘Mathletics’ program.
• Introduce Standardized testing of Numeracy K-6 in order to track student data and trends over time.
• Investigate better delivery of lessons dealing with hands-on material.
• Recording of students’ session with hands-on mathematics activities at home site.

Our achievements include:
• A greater number of students regularly accessing ‘Mathletics’.
• Supervisor Sessions conducted via satellite on the importance of ‘hands-on’ learning.
• Standardised testing to be conducted early 2012 and results placed on database.

Target 3
Assessment and Reporting

Strategies to achieve this target include:
• Review and modify existing reporting practices to reflect NSWDET guidelines and school context.
• Use ‘thumb-drives’ as a mean of returning feedback that is visual and will aid the teacher in gaining a greater understanding of the students learning styles.
• Investigate more time efficient means of providing marked work and feedback.
• Trial end-of-term phone interviews with parents highlighting children’s progress and areas of development.

Our achievements include:
• High level of satisfaction from parents and teachers with end-of-term interviews.
• Thumb drives are being utilized by all teachers for the provision of feedback.
• Class schedules of assessment developed across all stages. School schedule to be developed further.

Key evaluations

It is a requirement for all NSW public schools to conduct at least two annual evaluations – one related to educational and management practice and the other related to curriculum. In 2011 our school carried out evaluations of [Enter text here.]

Parent, student, and teacher satisfaction

In 2011 the school sought the opinions of parents, students and teachers about the school.

Their responses are presented below.

[Enter text here.]

Professional learning

During 2011 staff were involved in the following Professional Learning;

One teacher was trained in the delivery the Reading to Learn strategies.

One New Scheme Teachers was involved in seeking accreditation with the Institute of Teachers. One has received her accreditation and Teaching Certificate.
Staff participated in the Team Leadership for School Improvement program.

Staff meetings were dedicated to further developing teachers understanding of the Quality Teaching Framework with emphasis on the delivery of quality satellite lessons.

**School planning 2012—2014**

The school planning policy provides direction for the preparation and implementation of school plans including the identification of priority areas, intended outcomes and targets that are consistent with the NSW State Plan and the Department’s planning documents.

**School priority 1**

**Outcome for 2012–2014**

Decrease the percentage of Year 3 and 5 students in bottom 2 bands of NAPLAN Literacy Tests by 50%.

**2012 Targets to achieve this outcome include:**

- Increase the percentage of Year 3 students in NAPLAN Writing Band 5 and 6 from 8% to 30%.
- Increase the percentage of Year 5 students in Band 8 Writing from 0% to 30%.
- Improve the growth rate of Year 5 students in NAPLAN Grammar and Punctuation from 40% to 80%.

**Strategies to achieve these targets include:**

- Expose students to a variety of authors/illustrators and writing styles.
- Investigate the implementation of the MultiLit program for targeted stage 2 students.
- Revise scope and sequence of Grammar and Punctuation content k-6.

**School priority 2**

**Outcome for 2012–2014**

Decrease the percentage of Year 3 and 5 students in bottom 2 bands of NAPLAN Numeracy Tests by 50%.

**2012 Targets to achieve this outcome include:**

- Decrease the percentage of Year 3 students in bottom 2 bands of NAPLAN Numeracy Tests from 17% to 8%.
- Increase the percentage of Year 5 students in top 2 bands of NAPLAN Numeracy Tests from 27% to 40%.
- To improve the level of proficiency of all students in Problem Solving

**Strategies to achieve these targets include:**

- Provide all students with opportunity to participate in ‘Mathletics’ program.
- Coordinate and produce intensive mathematics program focusing on Number and Problem Solving.
- Recording of students’ session with problem solving maths activities at home site.

**School priority 3**

**Outcome for 2012–2014**

A whole school approach to students individual needs.

**2012 Targets to achieve this outcome include:**

- Increase the number of students accessing quality G&T activities from 10% to 20% in 2012.

**Strategies to achieve these targets include:**

- Children participating in ixten Program
- Lessons prepared and delivered in line with children’s needs in each stage.
- Stage 2 teachers utilizing notebook computers to initiate a Project Based Learning Unit.
**About this report**

In preparing this report, the self-evaluation committee has gathered information from evaluations conducted during the year and analysed other information about the school’s practices and student learning outcomes. The self-evaluation committee and school planning committee have determined targets for the school’s future development.

Michael Fisher – Principal  
Peter Farquhar – Deputy Principal  
Christine Warhurst – Assistant Principal  
Patricia Jarratt – Assistant Principal  
Jenny Lacey – School Council President  
Vicki Dowling – P and C President

**School contact information**

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Web: www.schoolair-p.schools.nsw.edu.au  
School Code: 5302

Parents can find out more information about Annual School Reports, how to interpret information in the reports and have the opportunity to provide feedback about these reports at: