



# Modbury Special School

## ANNUAL REPORT 2011

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Principal: Julie Aschberger

“MAKING THE DIFFERENCE”

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**December '11**

All students at Modbury Special School have an intellectual disability. All students have a Negotiated Education Plan. A significant number of the students have physical and sensory impairments in association with intellectual impairments. Many students have Autism Spectrum Disorders and some have very challenging behaviours. Several students are supported by Department for Child and Youth Services Health Care Plans. A number of students have Health Support Plans to manage medication and low/moderate level health risks *eg* asthma that do not require accredited staff.

### A Year of Progression & Change

Modbury Special School's mission is the provision of the highest quality education for students with disabilities from Reception to Year 12 focusing on strong values, quality learning and rigorous teaching.

Our commitment to this mission in 2011 was evidenced by:

- Continuous development of a school culture committed to Positive Programming as the core behaviour management approach.
- Successful transitions of students to senior secondary and post school options including supported employment and Higher Education study.

### Highlights

**Some of the many highlights of 2011 include:**

#### **Curriculum/Student Learning:**

- Sensory Integration Program developed and implemented across the campus
- Premier's Reading Challenge
- New faculty focus groups developed (Science, Comprehension, Sensory Integration, SACE)
- Successful continuation of SACE canteen
- Fitness First Initiative Teams (FFIT) for Pathways students
- Secondary School Sport for SA carnivals for Pathways students
- Funding for Maths focus
- Festival of Music
- Whole school understanding of

comprehension

- Mentoring projects with students from Modbury High School
- Aquatics program for Pathways students
- Grevillea garden & vegetable patch

#### **Working As Teams:**

- 4 staff attended International Symposium on Sensory Integration at Penrith, N.S.W.
- T&D with Dino Menillo (Occupational Therapist)
- CLDD research with Professor Barry Carpenter
- Whole school training from Barry Carpenter
- Staff member trained in delivering T&D for Crisis Prevention: Response Process
- Whole school trained in Crisis Prevention
- Staff member delivering training on Engagement Profiles and Scales to other school sites and agencies
- SERU grant written by 2 staff for ICT equipment
- Staff presented iPad seminar at Disability Expo
- Winning SERU grants for iPad, iPods and software
- Purchase of iPads for use across site
- North Eastern District Learners Network
- Communication group
- Technology group
- SACE workshops
- SACE moderation
- TAFE & Uni SA students working with students in engagement and health & P.E.

**Facilities:**

- New sensory room opened and equipment purchased
- New sensory equipment purchased for the gym (SI program)
- New “heavy” (medicine balls, punching bags etc.) equipment purchased for the gym for use by senior students
- New Playground equipment in Grevillea Yard (Geodome)
- Shaded play areas established in Casuarina Yard

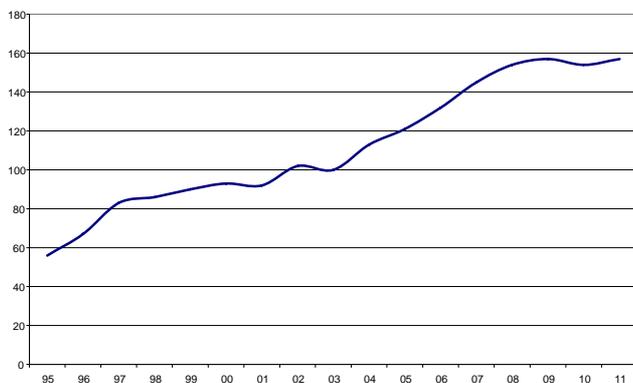
**Other:**

- Principal Julie Aschberger seconded to position as Director of Special Education at DECD
- Acting Principal and Senior Leader positions filled by existing staff members
- 4 new permanent teacher positions filled (3 by existing contract teachers)
- Teacher successfully won a position at SERU
- 2 successful discos organised by the Governing Council
- Successful art exhibition/auction

**Enrolments Continue to Climb**

Following the rapid increase of student numbers from the middle period of the last decade student numbers have continued to rise reaching record levels at the conclusion of 2011. This level is likely to be maintained into the foreseeable future due to student accommodation being fully subscribed and demand for places remaining high. Pressure on class space was further exacerbated by the need to accommodate 4 extremely behaviourally challenging students over the course of 2011. Several of these students will again require special class space and/or program arrangements in 2012.

Student Population Growth 1995 - 2011



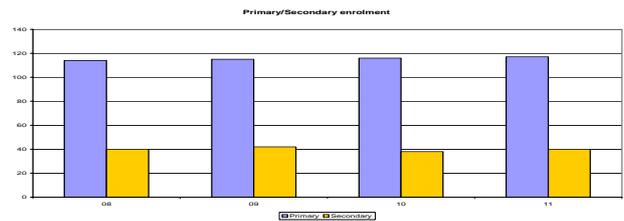
Enrolments remained robust in the Reception and Junior Primary age groups reflecting the continued effectiveness of established transition

processes with feeder pre-school programs. The population ‘bubble’ caused by the rapid growth in junior enrolments from ’03 to ’07 will begin to have an effect on accommodation arrangements in 2012 with the Grevillea side of the school in particular feeling the effect of capacity.

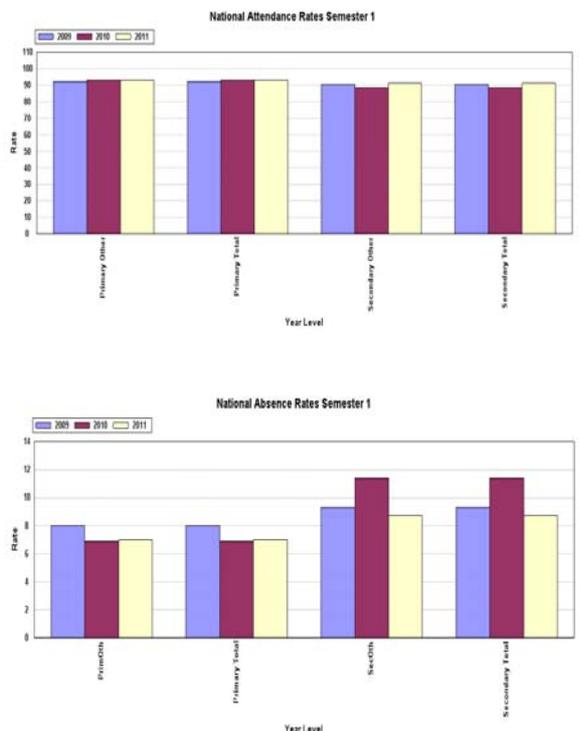
An area of continuing concern for the school is the small but significant number of students (5) with extreme behavioural issues who require 1:1 teaching support and, for a couple, separate accommodation. Although one said student is moving on to a different site in 2012, Modbury Special School will gain another from one of our feeder schools in 2012.

2011 commenced with close to maximum capacity enrolment. The ratio of primary to secondary aged students has remained fairly static for several years however the number of secondary aged students will begin to increase in the coming years as the population “bubble” previously mentioned moves into secondary schooling.

**Below: Enrolments 2011**



**Below: Attendance 2011**



### Recommendations:

- **Negotiations with Regional and Central Offices to establish funding requirements for 1:1 students to begin early term 3.**
- **Review of accommodation arrangements for students in middle, upper primary and lower secondary age groups.**

## Families Have High Regard for the Supportive Learning Culture at MSS

For the 2011 Parent Survey we participated in the centrally coordinated process again. We negotiated with the Educational Measurement Section and with our sampled families (all 100 of them) to ensure a good rate of return. The resultant return rate was over 50% which is among the best in DECD. In terms of actual numbers this translates to approximately 35% of all our families completing a survey meaning the validity of our results is very high.

Across all four areas reported in the surveys:

- *Quality of Teaching & Learning*
- *Support of Learning*
- *Relationships & Communication*
- *Leadership & Decision Making*

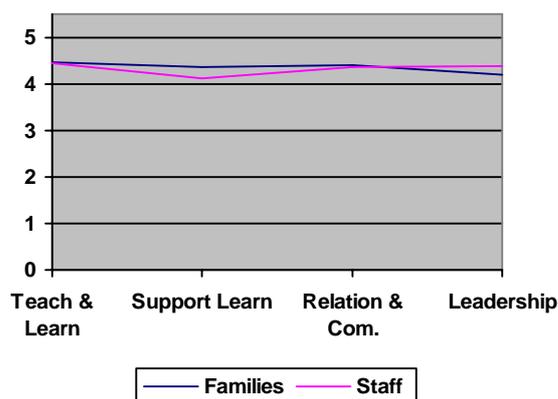
Families rated the school on average at 4.4 out of a possible 5 (the same result as 2010) with the highest average score of 4.47 for the "Quality of Teaching and Learning" criterion. This indicates an increasingly high level of confidence by parents and carers in the education provided to their children at our school. It also indicates the school's ongoing want to better the outcomes for our students and their families.

The lowest average score was for the "Leadership and Decision Making" criterion (4.20). Interestingly this being the lowest ranked category for MSS, yet of the 10 questions posed to families in this category, in 6 of them the school was ranked higher than the state average and the other 4 on par with the state average.

The staff average score across all criteria showed a similar pattern to that of the parents (av. 4.32 out of 5) with "Quality of Teaching and Learning" also rating the highest (4.44).

The Modbury Special School leadership team recognises the need to continually improve and will strive to further better ourselves in 2012.

Parent and Staff Opinion Survey



### Recommendation:

**In the 2011 survey, parents indicated an overwhelmingly positive response to the teaching and learning delivered at Modbury Special School. Of the 44 questions posed to families in the survey MSS was well above the state average in over 50% of them. Of all the feedback from families Modbury Special School was not below the state average in any question. The staff will continue to strive for positive outcomes for students and their families in 2012 and beyond.**

## Record Amount of Learning Goals Set for 2011

2011 saw a record number of learning goals set through the Negotiated Education Plan process between teachers and students' families. Over 9000 goals were set this year, well over last year's total of 6200.

The achievement level for the goals set was a very impressive 91%, surpassing the school goal objective of 90% achieved.

Our senior students had extremely positive outcomes in regard to SACE. 17 different Learning and Assessment Plans were taught across 9 subjects including English Pathways, Mathematics Pathways, Personal Learning Plan, Scientific Studies and the Research Project.

Of the 92 different units enrolled in, all 92 were completed, a 100% completion rate.

## New Facilities

2011 saw a new sensory room being developed in a room attached to the Waratah and Sheoak units. Staff used fundraising money to purchase items from Wilkins including a bubble tube, fibre optic shower, a vibro-acoustic bed, vibro-acoustic chair, an LED tunnel and UV lights amongst other things. 2012 will see the

completion of this room that will deliver a vital ingredient in the students' sensory diet.

## Strategic Directions:

### Literacy & Numeracy:

**Objective 1: Develop a common understanding of 'comprehension' across the site and a method for assessing students' comprehension.**

*Comprehension is not easily defined nor measured in a special school setting.*

In 2010 staff engaged in a process to create a definition for 'comprehension' at MSS. This work continued in 2011 with the formation of a comprehension group. The group reported back to the whole staff in regards to some of their t&d and research.

#### Recommendations:

- **Comprehension a continued priority target for staff meetings in 2012**

**Objective 2: Identify and develop a strategy for mathematics teaching to support the implementation of the National Curriculum.**

*Students at MSS encompass a very wide range of intellectual ability. Maths practices must be appropriate to their ability and responsive to their wider NEP goals.*

Modbury Special School was provided funding through DECD to identify different strategies, resources, and ideas to help the site ready itself for the new national curriculum. A small working party accessed this training and will continue to report back to the whole staff throughout 2012.

#### Recommendations:

- **Maths a priority target for staff meetings in 2012.**
- **Plan specific goals related to the National Curriculum that are relative to Modbury Special School students**
- **Obtain resources and online information and tools to ensure positive outcomes for staff and students**

**Objective: Ongoing Development of appropriate units to meet Modified SACE requirements:**

*There are a number of SACE eligible students placed both in the Pathways Program and in the Grevillea Unit.*

DECD funding was available for the co-ordinator of the Pathways Program and

teachers of SACE eligible students to attend a number of meetings and workshops to assist in the development of SACE units. Several of the sites SACE programs were used by the SACE Board as exemplars for the rest of the state to utilise.

#### Recommendations:

- **Release staff as required to attend SACE Training & Development meetings, moderation etc**

### Science:

**Objective: Develop a strategy for science teaching and acquire appropriate knowledge and resources to support the incoming National Curriculum.**

*Science, along with maths and comprehension is a priority area for DECD. This year a science curriculum group was formed which met two-three times a term. T&D was undertaken to assist staff for the implication of the Science National Curriculum.*

*A working blueprint is to be developed in 2012 to better incorporate science across the curriculum.*

#### Recommendations:

- **Science a priority target for staff meetings in 2012**
- **Release staff for development of school science strategy (ie work with consultant)**

### Information Technology:

**Objective 1: Initial rollout of iPads across Modbury Special School site.**

*13 new iPads were purchased by the school to enhance student learning across the curriculum. The school also purchased an Apple Mac computer to better synch the iPads and their applications.*

Initially the Pathways Program will have 3 iPads in the High School and the remainder placed throughout learning units to ensure all students have an opportunity to access these learning tools.

#### Recommendation:

- **iPad technology to be utilised across the site to reinforce literacy and numeracy goals.**
- **T&D for use of iPads in the classroom and for worthwhile applications to install.**

## Student Wellbeing:

**Objective: Confirm the use of the student wellbeing measuring tool and an intervention process for identified students.**

Several staff from Modbury Special School worked in a study undertaken by Barry Carpenter in 2010. This year teachers used the outcomes of the research in particular "engagement profiles" (a tool to determine students' engagement at a deeper critical level) to assist student wellbeing.

6 students were identified, observed and through professional discussion, staff made many positive breakthroughs for the students.

### Recommendation:

**Apply engagement profiles to identified students in the school and develop and support class teachers to develop individualised intervention.**

## Other Priority Planning Areas:

Another priority area identified for development in 2011 and beyond was:

**Sensory Integration:** During 2010 two staff members started developing a sensory integration program for Modbury Special School. Over the course of 2011 MSS staff has undergone much training around the subject.

A sensory integration group was formed headed by the two said teachers. Dino Minello a highly regarded paediatric occupational therapist was invited to the site to deliver ideas and strategies using our gym equipment. Dino also hosted 3 SSO's who observed a sensory integration program and were advised on adapting programs for the school.

In collaboration with outside OT's the staff put in place a sensory integration program supported by the 3 School Support Officers whom undertook earlier observations with Dino Menillo. Sensory kits were also rolled out to identified units across the site to ensure S.I. could continue in the classrooms.

Results have been extremely positive both in student engagement and well being.

4 teachers also travelled to Penrith, N.S.W. to attend a sensory integration symposium, the first of its kind in Australia. They also visited other highly regarded sensory gyms for students living with Autism.

Staff training and development of the sensory integration program will continue into the future.

## Staff Balance & Composition

The 2011 teaching staff of our school comprised 21 class teachers, 2 Assistant Principals with up to 50% class contact, 1 coordinator with 80% class contact, 5 NIT (non instruction time) teachers, 4 teachers employed for 1:1 supervision and a non-teaching principal.

Workforce Composition	Teaching Staff		Non-Teaching Staff	
	Indigenous	Non Indigenous	Indigenous	Non Indigenous
Full-time Equivalents	0.00	29.00	0.00	22.06
Persons	0	30	0	32

Qualification Level	Number of Qualifications
Graduate Degrees or Diplomas	64
Post Graduate Qualifications	20

Julie Aschberger was seconded to a new role as Director of Special Education for South Australia. Cameron Wright has filled the principal role upon Julie's departure.

Four permanent teaching positions were advertised for 2011. Three current contract teachers won positions and the other position was filled by a teacher from outside Modbury Special School. One long serving teacher won a role at SERU for 2012.