Coonalpyn Primary School
Annual Report 2014

Coonalpyn Primary School visit Raukkan Aboriginal School
1. CONTEXT

School Name: Coonalpyn Primary  
School Number: 0730

Principal: Margret Elvey  
Partnership: Coorong Mallee

Coonalpyn is situated an hour south of Murray Bridge on the Duke’s Highway. It is isolated in the sense that we have very few local services.

There is no general store, only a BP service station, a Bakery and Post Office hence families need to go to Meningie, Tailem Bend or Murray Bridge for groceries. There is a Medical Centre with a visiting doctor 1.5 days a week, an ambulance service, two farm supplies businesses and a silo complex.

In 2014 our highest enrolment was 37, but after two families left the district we settled at 32 students R to 7. We have one indigenous student and one family with English as a second language with two children attending our school.

We currently have 5 students with disabilities: 1 level A, 1 level H and three level Ds.

2. REPORT FROM GOVERNING COUNCIL

As Chairperson for Coonalpyn Primary School Governing Council for 2014 we have had another busy year working collaboratively with Marg Elvey our Principal on policies, finances and future direction for our school and students.

2014 saw Marg Elvey come in as our new Principal and Upper Primary School Teacher for 2 days a week. The students, parents and existing staff welcomed Marg with open minds and expectations and it is fair to say that Marg has made her mark at our school with her confidence, charisma, approachability and her dedication to both her students and the school environment, and encouraging all to strive to their full potential.

As one of the small school in our cluster Marg worked closely with both Geranium and Raukkan Primary Schools and involved them and welcomed them to join our school for swimming carnival, book week excursions and a 3 day camp. This benefitted the students with interaction with other children in their year levels, team building and friendships.

To watch the attitudes change of many of our schools student’s throughout the year was a credit to Marg and her teaching staff. The whole schools spirits lifted throughout the year as students achieved goals and tasks with many good results.

2014 also saw the celebrations of the school turning 125 years, and it was good to see some past teachers, principals and students attend this milestone occasion, celebrating alongside our current staff and students in period costumes, with old style lessons and some outdoor games. A tree was planted by Mr Merv Freund to mark this day for future years.

Governing Council held a few fundraising events during the year and saw some good returns on those efforts to go towards buying new laptops for our computer suite for 2015.

2015 sees the schools numbers stay relatively the same as 2014 with 3 leaving and gaining 7 new reception students.

The end of 2014 saw the departure of our well liked Junior Primary Teacher Tracy Williams, this was a sad occasion for our school as she was a great asset to our younger children and the whole school environment. I wish Tracy well at her new school and I hope they appreciate her as much as we did. We welcome Penny McArdle to the junior primary class this year sharing the time with Jo McKenzie and we also welcome back Emily Schulz to Upper Primary being shared with Marg Elvey.
I thank you all for your time attending meetings, volunteering for working bees and maintenance work, cooperation and guidance throughout 2014 and I look forward to working with you all again for another busy and successful year on Governing Council.

I would also like to thank Marg and her staff for a very busy but successful year in 2014 and their ongoing dedication to our school, students and their lifelong learning and I look forward to working with her and her staff to achieve great results in 2015.

Terecia Page

Chairperson Coonalpyn Primary School Governing Council

3. 2014 HIGHLIGHTS

Reflecting on the year, my first as principal here, the standout feature has been the comments we have received about the improvement noted in the academic achievements for most children, the marked improvement in attitude and effort as well as the huge decrease in behaviour incidents. These will be discussed later in this report.

Our close (and still) developing connections with the two other small Primary schools in our Partnership (Geranium and Raukkan) with combined Book Week activities, a shared camp and a visit to Raukkan Aboriginal School are the main highlights the children talk about.

Other highlights over the year in brief were:

- Swimming Carnival with Geranium Primary
- Footsteps Dance Week
- Easy Moves for Active Aging combined fitness morning
- Combined Athletics carnival with Coomandook Area School
- Choir Concerts
- Junior Primary French Café
- 125th Birthday Celebrations
- USE Athletics Carnival

The Upper Primary Choir events were highlights with the SA Music Festival’s concert at the Festival Theatre participated in by all of our Year 5, 6 & 7 students. The Murray Mallee Festival at Murray Bridge in which all Year 4 to 7 students were invited to participate, was a great concert, but it was disappointing that only 7 of our students took part in the concert.

We had our 125th Birthday Celebrations where the visitors enjoyed watching students and parents participate in old fashioned lessons, including handwriting with nib pen and ink and Maths with money problems prior to decimal currency, old fashioned games such as: races (sack, egg and spoon, three
legged) quoits and knuckle bones. Mr Merv Freund planted a tree to commemorate the occasion and the oldest and youngest student cut the cake together.

The two night camp to El Shaddai in Wellington was a major highlight, as many of the students had not experienced a camp before. Despite it being quite expensive, due to the extensive program or outdoor activities provided and the amazing facilities, we managed to subsidize the cost so it was accessible for all students. 2 students did not go as their parents felt they were too young. However all of the children and attending staff and parents were enthusiastic and positive about the experience. It was fantastic the way the children from the three schools mixed and socialized together.

The children met and completed activities together here at Coonalpyn for Book week before the camp, but that was in a more formal setting. After the camp, we visited Raukkan and were given a tour of the community by Auntie Verna, which truly opened our children’s eyes to lots of historical facts. Some of our children were really reflective after that experience on indigenous issues.

We continue to build on our connections with the two schools and although we have all decided the combined camp with be a biannual event, we will continue Book Week activities together and are planning a combined Swimming carnival and an Athletics Fun Day here at Coonalpyn in 2015.

We have moved forward with KidsMatter and a formal, agreed, whole school plan to teach Social and Emotional Learning is in place using Program Achieve as a base.

In order to have the school community more involved in the decision making process Governing Council gave approval for the formation of a ‘Policy and Planning’ group. This group met with the Principal twice a term to review and form the most important policies, which required updating. The drafts were taken to Kids Council, the Staff and parents and when all stakeholders were happy Governing Council ratified them.

The Behaviour Management Procedure changed and students were internally suspended for more serious issues (rather than being given take homes). This had a positive effect, as students were more careful, as they did not find spending time in the principal’s office, being made to work, with no other contact, pleasant! The ripple effect was that teachers could begin teaching and other students were generally being able to concentrate on their learning.

Although we did some training in KidsMatter towards the end of the year and planned for specific Emotional and Social Learning skills to be taught in 2015, as a staff we felt that our general approach (ie: being positive, recognizing and rewarding students who followed the school values by Half Term Awards) and the new response to poor behaviour had a very positive effect on the general well-being of both staff and students and parents were also positive with their voiced comments

Kids Council held a ‘Movie Night’, dress up days, casual days and a disco to raise funds. They put the money raised towards the pole protectors for the oval and new computers which will be purchased in 2015.

4. SITE IMPROVEMENT PLANNING AND TARGETS

Site Improvement Plan Key Priorities:
WELL BEING

Our SIP Targets were:
- Students and parents recognise their involvement in decision making
  We have formed a Policy and Planning committee which has reviewed and developed new policies, after seeking feedback from staff, students and parents which have been then ratified by Governing Council
- Class Meetings and Kids Council become more proactive in the decision making process
  Regular class meetings have occurred in both classes and representatives from these meet regularly with the Principal to plan student run events such as the Movie Night, the Disco and several Casual Days which have assisted us to raise money for a new computer system to be purchased next year.
• Increase in positive social skills and a reduced number of behaviour incidents as a result of our participation in KidsMatter.

The Student Opinion Surveys and Well Being Surveys conducted this year indicate that most students are very happy, as are the parents. Our behaviour data attests to this with a reduced number of incident reports, no Suspensions or Take Homes and Internal Suspensions having reduced significantly since Term 1.

• Students recognise success and demonstrate resilience

Twice a term we have recognized students with Awards aligned with our school Values (Responsibility, Resilience, Honesty, Respect and Excellence.

We have anecdotal evidence that several of our students have really increased their levels of resilience and parents are recognizing this too.

• Student attendance is 93% or higher in 2014

Our attendance rates have deteriorated badly. This is discussed later in this report.

• Student achievement data improves in all learning areas

We have noted improvement in all areas of the curriculum and these are detailed later in this document.

Behaviour Management data improves:

Our behaviour data attests to this with a reduced number of incident reports, no Suspensions or Take Homes and Internal Suspensions having reduced significantly since Term 1.

LITERACY

• Our Aims were:

• To improve literacy outcomes with Reading Comprehension, Spelling, Grammar, Punctuation, Written and Oral language

As a staff we are happy with the growth of most students in all of the above areas, despite not reaching our specified DECD targets. The general work ethic of the students is visibly improved and the improved results will be discussed later in this report.

• Whole School Approach to the teaching of Spelling and Genre writing

This was not a huge priority this year as we were all focused on improving behaviour and attitude. However, the results were generally positive.

• Australian Curriculum fully implemented and used for planning, monitoring and assessment

Most teachers are feeling comfortable using the required curriculum documents for English but are finding it difficult to cater for 4 year levels across the curriculum.

Our SIP Targets were:

100% of students participate in the Premier’s Reading Challenge

One Year 6 student refused to cooperate with Staff and parents and so our percentage was lowered to 97%.

• Students will improve their knowledge of Oxford reading Lists

100% students in Reception will recognise 50 sight words* - 50% did. (One Hearing impaired student is counted here and the other two students are the chronic non-attenders.)

100% of students in year 1 will recognise100 sight words* - 66.6% reached this goal

100% of students in year 2 will recognise 200 sight words – Target Achieved

100% of students in year 3 will recognise 307 sight words* - 100% achieved – the other student (NEP) almost reached it.

90% of students reach the following DECD Reading Recovery levels:*

Reception level 9 – 11 None of our students reached this standard. It may be because we test using unseen texts.

Yr 1 level 17 – 20 One student (33%0 achieved this.)

Yr 2 level 21 – 24 All students achieved this standard.

• 90% of students achieve PATR Reading levels appropriate to their year

88% of students reached the target. The others we recognize at risk, however all are improving, albeit slowly.
• 95% Students will achieve a Spelling Age that corresponds +/- their chronological age within 6 months. 72% managed to score a Spelling Age within the acceptable range from their Chronological age.

• 95% of students will reach the following Oxford Writing Targets:
  - Reception 30 words – 66.6% Achieved
  - Year 1 50 words – 33.3% Achieved
  - Year 2 100 words – 100% Achieved
  - Year 3 200 words – 100% Achieved
  - Year 4+ 307 words - 22% achieved this, but most had improved on their last score and the others were almost there.

• Year 3/5/7 students achieve proficiency or higher in writing in NAPLAN.

  * All teachers are using the Australian Curriculum for planning, monitoring and assessment.

  NAPLAN results:
  - Year 3 – 2 Band 3 and 1 Band 4
  - Year 5 – 1 Band 3, 1 Band 4 and the other 4 Band 5
  - Year 7 – 1 Band 4 (He has left) 1 Band 7 and 1 Band 8

Across the school a phonic approach was taken for both Spelling and Reading. (Jolly Phonics R to 3). A whole school approach was agreed to for the explicit teaching of specific text type writing, although I noticed that it was not always strictly adhered to! Students at Risk were given extra support from an SSO and the NEP students were allocated support time in Literacy blocks as well.

NUMERACY

Our Targets were:
• Staff utilising the Australian Curriculum Students improving on school data and NAPLAN data.
• Students begin to construct their own knowledge and become effective learners through fluency, problem solving, reasoning and understanding
• All staff use the Natural Maths (Ann Baker) principles of teaching Mathematics
• Students construct their own knowledge and become effective learners through fluency, reasoning, understanding and problem solving

All students, across the whole school (except one) improved their Mathematics PATM standardized test scores and stanines. (The child who did not improve is an NEP student, who may have interpreted the questions incorrectly as in Term 4 the questions were not read to him.) We were very pleased with this result.
As you can see from the tables above our results were outstanding and credit must go to the dedicated efforts of the Staff and students.

We all used the Australian Curriculum for planning and found this quite stressful in complex vertically grouped classes. We were all also very conscious of explicitly teaching problem solving skills and included a lot of open ended problem solving. One staff member was fully trained in the Ann Baker methodology and all staff members attended a voluntary Saturday morning session run by Ann Baker on Number. All teachers used similar methods and there was a consolidated effort across the school to teach the tables to automaticity.

NEP students were given special attention in Numeracy lessons and an SSO was usually present to support these students.

We also use the ‘New Wave Mental’ Maths books, which contain continuous revision of all mathematical concept across the curriculum. Students were given these work books at a level we felt they would be able to achieve in, not necessarily the grade level.

When we carried out the Self Review Process using the DIAf in Term 2, we scored highly in all areas, hence we did not feel the need to concentrate on any of these aspects.

4.1 Junior Primary and Early Years Scheme Funding

This money has assisted us to fully fund the staff for the R to 3 class and to help increase the level of SSO support. Some money has also been used to allow the teacher to access extra training in Mathematics and Literacy beyond the normal staff allocation (Eg: The teacher attended at least 4 days training as opposed to only 2 allocated to each full time teacher.)

4.2 Better Schools Funding

We allocated our funding for two new laptop computers for the use of the students at risk and the aboriginal student. Some money was also used to fund extra SSO time (a little over an hour a week), so that these students could access extra support.

5. STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT

All students achieved huge improvements in Mathematics as noted above (SIP and target section) in the PAT Maths standardized test, with all Junior Primary students achieving an Average or Above Average stanine by the end of Term 4. Most Upper Primary students achieved improved Stanine levels although two NEP students and one identified At Risk student did not. However, we were
excited to see the marked improvement in some of our students who have markedly improved their behaviour and attention levels in class.

All students across the whole school improved the number of Oxford Sight words they could spell from Term 1 to term 4. All Upper Primary students achieved higher Spelling Ages against the SA Spelling Test in Term 4 than they did in Term 1 with one exception. (This was using the two different tests.) Most students achieved Stanine 4 (Average or above) in PAT R Comprehension testing. Those who did not were our ‘NEP’ or our identified ‘At Risk’ students.

Australian Curriculum grades, applied to their relative year levels –
For English in the R to 3 class, two students received Partial grades and one a Developing grade. (Two of these were chronic attenders).
In the Upper Primary class, in Year 4, one student received Minimal because he can’t read. We are taking steps to address this with parent support.
In Year 5 three students received Partial grades, mainly due to behaviour, a lack of concentration and non-completion of tasks therefore we do not have the required evidence to pass them.
In Year 6 one student received a Partial, as she has great difficulty comprehending more than just literal information.
In Mathematics the R to 3 class had two students who received Partial grades and one with a Minimal – again the two chronic non-attenders scored these.
In Year 4 one student scored a Minimal as he is unable to work independently to solve problems as he is unable to read questions.
In Years 5 & 6 three students scored partial as they find problem solving extremely difficult. However, we are pleased with the work ethic being displayed by our students, since the beginning of Term 2.

5.1 NAPLAN

Our Year 3 and year 7 cohort is too small to report on. In the Year 5 class we have one NEP student and we were amazed to find her reaching standard in all but Writing and Numeracy.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>% Proficiency Band by Test Aspect</th>
<th>Year 5</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Exempt</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Numeracy</td>
<td>16.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reading</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Writing</td>
<td>16.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spelling</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grammar</td>
<td>16.7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 3: Year 7 Proficiency Bands by Aspect
Overall, our students’ NAPLAN scores were higher than our expected scores.

6. STUDENT DATA

6.1 Attendance

Our attendance rates have deteriorated badly.
For the first term and a half we had a family of two children who were chronic attenders and added to that, two Reception students who have had frequent absences of F or I. All of these families have been reported to our Attendance Officer.
Several families took holidays during the year and applied for short exemptions. We have also had some students absent due to medical treatment required by other family members.
We have entered the attendance data on to the student reports which go home along with a statement explaining how important attendance is.
We have written articles in our newsletter and followed DECD procedures to the letter. (Note that we have no ‘Unexplained’ absences for the whole year.)
We are very frustrated and disappointed by the attendance rate, despite doing everything possible to improve them. We do not know how we can improve this as we are unable to control parental decisions.
However, we did have an exceptional amount of illness this year with one student requiring a several days in hospital, and several needing to be in Adelaide while other family members had treatment.

Table 9: Attendance by Year Level

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Attendance by Year Level</th>
<th>% Attendance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2012</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reception</td>
<td>91.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year 1</td>
<td>96.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year 2</td>
<td>94.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year 3</td>
<td>91.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year 4</td>
<td>94.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year 5</td>
<td>90.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year 6</td>
<td>93.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year 7</td>
<td>94.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total All Year Levels</td>
<td>93.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total ACARA 1 TO 10</td>
<td>93.4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
6.2 Destination

Table 10: Intended Destination

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Leave Reason</th>
<th>2013 School</th>
<th>2013 Index</th>
<th>2013 DECD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Employment</td>
<td></td>
<td>3.5%</td>
<td>3.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interstate/Overseas</td>
<td></td>
<td>10.5%</td>
<td>10.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td></td>
<td>0.5%</td>
<td>1.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seeking Employment</td>
<td></td>
<td>3.2%</td>
<td>3.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tertiary/TAFE/Training</td>
<td></td>
<td>5.5%</td>
<td>4.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transfer to Non-Govt Schl</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>42.9%</td>
<td>10.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transfer to SA Govt Schl</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>57.1%</td>
<td>46.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unknown</td>
<td></td>
<td>20.3%</td>
<td>20.1%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

We started the year with 37 students. During 2014 we had two children from one family move schools as parents relocated to give their children ‘better social opportunities’. Another child relocated to a new area for parents’ work and two children from the same family left to join their father in Western Australia where he worked, but have since returned to Murray Bridge.

We ended the year with 32 students and expect to have 35 in 2015, as our two year 7s move to high school (one to Coomandook Area and one to St Peter’s College) and another student to Stirling East, as his mother is moving to support the older lad.

7. CLIENT OPINION

Parent, Staff and Student Surveys

This year I chose to do a paper copy version and we were rewarded with 16 responses from 22 families and all staff. We also gave the survey to all of the Year 4 to 7s which was perhaps a mistake as some of the Year 4 students are challenged with complex comprehension, although the questions were read to them. We were quite pleased with the results and will use these to improve our practice.

An example of required improvement is that we communicate to parents more often about the achievement levels of the students and the topics of work the children are completing. We also need to ensure that our feedback to students is authentic and that they understand why they received the marks they were given.
Parents seem to be overall pleased with the work we have been doing.
As a staff we were very happy with the results printed above. One can never please all, but the general response from parents has been very positive and all staff reported they had had a “happy year”. Students also seem content and have responded positively to the changes made this year.

My School website
http://www.myschool.edu.au/
8. ACCOUNTABILITY

8.1 Behaviour Management

We have not recorded any External Suspensions or Take Homes this year. Internal Suspension has been used for rudeness to adults, inappropriate behaviour and other infringements but there are less behaviour issues reported across the school this year than seemingly in previous years. As not all behaviour incidents were reported on EDSAS in 2013, it is difficult to make an accurate count, but there were 9 Suspensions and 2 Take Homes recorded on EDSAS in 2013 with 75 behaviour incidents recorded on the school’s Excel Program file. The incidents in 2013 involved 15 students in total.

In 2014 a total of 52 incidents were reported. Of these 11 were Internal Suspensions, 10 were Time Out Admin and the rest were minor.

Overall, all staff are very pleased with the decrease in the number of incidents, particularly in the latter three terms.

8.2 Criminal History Screening

We are totally compliant with this requirement. All SSO staff, Governing Council members and Volunteers (either at school or who went on camp) have been compliant with the DECD Criminal History Screenings and we were audited earlier in the year. This is a very expensive process for a small school.

8.3 HUMAN RESOURCES - Workforce Data

8.3.1 Teacher Qualifications

All teachers at this school are qualified and registered with the SA Teachers Registration Board.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Qualification Level</th>
<th>Number of Qualifications</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bachelor Degrees or Diplomas</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Post Graduate Qualifications</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

8.3.2 Workforce Composition including Indigenous staff

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Workforce Composition</th>
<th>Teaching Staff</th>
<th>Non-Teaching Staff</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Indigenous</td>
<td>Non Indigenous</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Full-time Equivalents</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>3.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Persons</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

I copied this from SPeRS, as requested, but we only have 4 teachers part or full time.
## 9. FINANCIAL STATEMENT

### Income by Funding Source

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Funding Source</th>
<th>Amount</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Grants: State</td>
<td>582,027.23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grants: Commonwealth</td>
<td>398.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parent Contributions</td>
<td>15,168.80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>19,209.97</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

---

**PRINCIPAL – MARGRET ELVEY**  
**GOVERNING COUNCIL CHAIRPERSON – TERECIA PAGE**

____________________  18/02/2015  
____________________  18/02/2015