



# Gumeracha Primary School R-7

*'TOGETHER WE ACHIEVE'*

1857-2010

**Principal: David Hankinson Phone: 8389 1183**

**Governing Council Chairperson: Simon Trollope**



Government of South Australia  
Department of Education and Children's Services

## 2010 ANNUAL REPORT

### Context

Gumeracha Primary School is a small school located in a semi-rural environment approx 40km from Adelaide. As such, the school has a strong environmental education focus with many programs such as recycling, revegetation and local projects being supported within the school and local community.

The school motto, 'Together We Achieve', reflects the highly valued parent and community involvement in school programs and the school's involvement in community programs. The school's values build on a commitment to achieve and include confidence, persistence, organisation, resilience, getting along and creativity. Curriculum priorities are literacy and numeracy, along with the integration of Information and Communication Technology.

Furthermore, we develop higher-order thinking strategies with students R - 7. Global and multicultural education was introduced as a specialist subject in 2008 with a focus on Asia. Interactive whiteboards are located in each classroom and in our well-resourced computer suite. The school has a Christian Pastoral Support Worker who encourages the wellbeing of students and is a resource for staff and families.



*Student Engagement – 'Primary Connections' Science*

### 2010 Highlights

#### Facilities

The year began with the opening of the renovated resource centre and front office, funded through the Federal Government's National School Pride program – part of the Building the Education Revolution (BER) stimulus package. In addition, the School Pride funding allowed the construction of extra shade areas in the

school's grounds. The BER funding also saw the new hall taking shape but, unfortunately, not reaching completion.



*Year 4/5 Students in Global Education*

#### Student Successes

There was 100% participation in both the Premier's Reading Challenge and the Premier's Be Active Challenge. Two student leaders, Rori Eglinton and Thomas Milham, attended the Premier's Reception in recognition of the school's achievement in the Reading Challenge. Thomas was also called upon to give a presentation to the Premier's Climate Change Council, whilst the school's Safety Ambassadors went to Government House to receive a Highly Commended Award for their work.



*Whole School Effort Earns TV Win*

#### Parents & Community

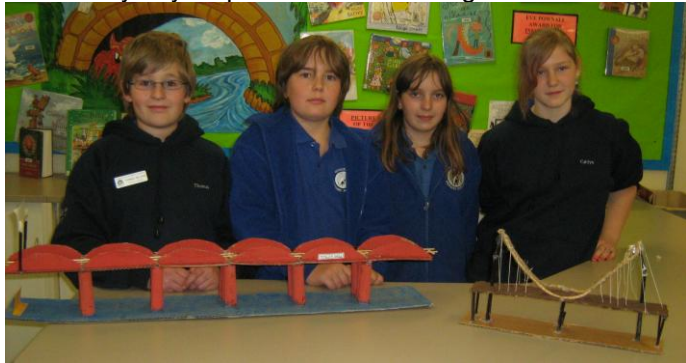
The school farewelled one principal at the end of 2009, appointed a temporary principal for Term 1, 2010, and a permanent principal from Term 2, 2010. In such a situation, the support of the parent community was bound to be of vital importance and a dedicated group of parents rallied round to offer that support. Amongst their many contributions was input in the planning stages of the new hall and the preparation of a new promotional leaflet for the school. Working Bees were very well attended, with the one held in Term 4 achieving a re-vamp of the School Garden. Magnificent support from students and their parents earned

the school a 50-inch plasma TV from winning the Money Tree competition as part of the school's recycling program

A Community Links Program saw the school establishing renewed contacts with the local Aged Care Day Centre: students were involved in presenting a concert and a mutual learning program was developed with Year 6/7 students visiting the Day Centre and Day Centre members coming into school to work alongside students in the computer suite. Year 6/7 students were also involved in a project with the Community Green Shed where they were given the opportunity to learn new skills and offer community service.

### Special Events & Enrichment Programs

A wide range of special events and enrichment activities were offered through the year. 'Across the Story Bridge' was the theme for Bookweek, and this provided a great opportunity for students to engage in a whole range of learning activities. Magnificent displays were mounted in the resource centre and the school hosted a successful community day as part of the week-long celebrations.



**Bookweek and Students' Bridges**

The end-of-year concert provided an opportunity to let all of our students shine, with the open-air amphitheatre acting as an excellent venue. Year 7 students, meanwhile, really rose to the occasion during their graduation ceremony, each of them giving an excellent presentation.



**End of Year Concert**

Enrichment activities included camps, excursions and visiting presentations such as *Lab on Legs* and the *Footsteps* Dance Program each of which was a great success.

### Self Review

Early in Term 2, staff were involved in a review of the school's priorities, and it was agreed to narrow the scope

of the 'Site Learning Plan, 2009-2011' (SLP). In Term 4, staff completed a Level 2 Scan as part of the *DECS Improvement and Accountability Framework* (DiAF). Reviews of where we had reached and the directions we hoped to follow were a regular feature of staff meetings.

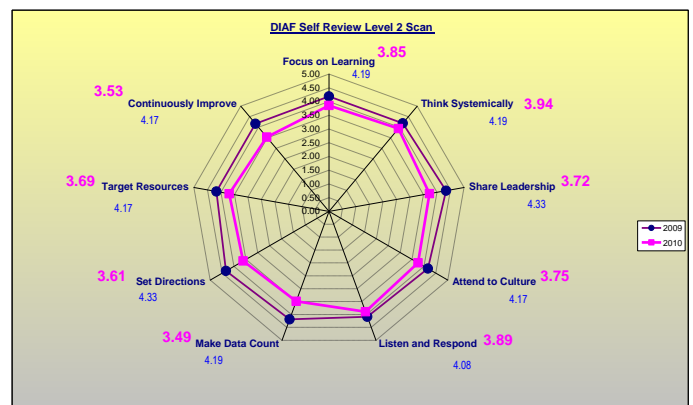


**Concert Capers**

The decision to narrow the scope of the SLP led to a revised focus. An examination of student performance data in the form of NAPLAN results, Running Records, and the Waddington Diagnostic Spelling and Reading assessments had revealed a significant number of students performing below their chronological age in literacy. As a result, it was agreed that for the remainder of the year approaches to learning and teaching in literacy should be a major focus.

When reviewing the school's priorities with staff and during the first Governing Council meeting of Term 2, other issues surfaced. In particular, anecdotal evidence indicated concerns over community perceptions, especially with regard to the behaviour of students. An examination of EDSAS behaviour management reports indicated that a small minority of students featured in the vast majority of these reports. Meanwhile, an analysis of student enrolment figures between 2006 and the start of 2010 indicated a very real cause for concern: a drop from 166 to 80.

In October, all teachers and SSOs completed the DiAF Level 2 Scan so we could consider those areas that, as a group, we felt needed attention. The results, and those for 2009, are shown on the graph below. As a result, it was agreed that the two items that needed attention and which should, therefore, underpin our planning for 2011 would be *Make Data Count* and *Continuously Improve*.



**[NB: Comparisons between 2009 and 2010 are misleading – in 2009 only 4 staff completed the scan, in 2010 twelve staff were involved.]**

Other data which shaped our thinking included the opinion surveys, conducted by DECS, of parents, students and staff. However, the low response rates amongst parents and staff mean that meaningful analysis of those data is limited.



*Reception/Year 1 Students Visit the Central Market...*



*...and then use their purchases to make some tasty snacks*

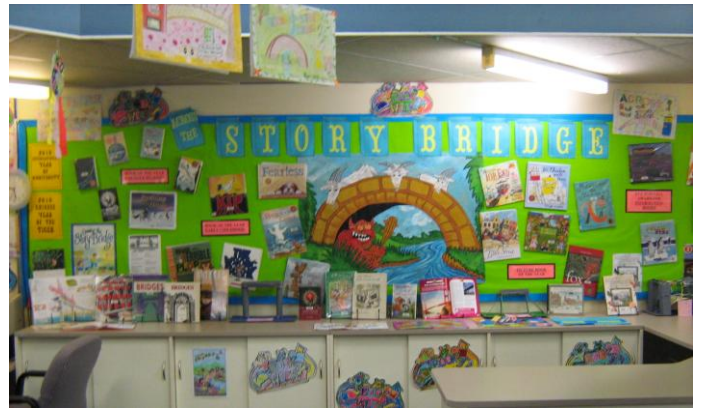
## What We Have Achieved

### Enrolments and Community Perceptions

Through an examination of enrolment data and through the use of conversations to gather anecdotal evidence, it was apparent that the decline in student numbers was not merely an outcome of demographic change, but was also related to community perceptions. It was decided, therefore, that there should be a concerted effort to begin the long process of attempting to change those perceptions.

Steps were taken to upgrade the school's communications media including the purchase of a colour copier/printer to facilitate this. A colour promotional leaflet was prepared by a group of parents for distribution around the community; the school newsletter, parent information folder and website were all reviewed and significantly altered.

Parents and staff worked together to ensure that the school's profile was lifted through regular news items in local newspapers; and a series of advertisements inviting prospective parents to visit the school were also placed in the local press.



*Bookweek Display*

A community links program, as outlined on page 1, was set up, and the school made a determined effort to establish closer links with the local kindy, with the Torrens Valley Community Centre and the community worker based there, and with the Day Centre for the Aged. Students went out into the community and members of the community came into the school as a part of this community links program.



*Community Day visitors*

Whilst it is hoped that many of these activities will continue into 2011, timetabling constraints may affect the availability of teachers to accompany students. In view of this, the school will look making grant submissions in the hope of finding a way to pay for additional teacher time to support the community links program.

### Literacy

Following on from the Student Free Day early in Term 2 when the decision was taken to have improved outcomes in literacy as our major focus for the remainder of 2010, the following actions were taken:-

- The Jolly Phonics reading program was introduced in the Reception/Year 1 class at the start of the year.
- A meeting was set up with regional support staff to explore the best ways forward. An early exploration of NAPLAN data was then used with staff.
- All teachers attended literacy training with Stephen Graham with a view to focusing on a common theme and generating a common language for approaching the issue.
- Follow-up included mutual classroom observations by each teacher in the school, setting the scene for a new way of learning from each other. Two of the teachers, who had attended flip-camera training, also used this

equipment as a means of incorporating assessment through filming as a part of the learning process.

- Kerry Gehling, from Regional Office, provided high level professional development in literacy strategies (especially those for improving students' skills in reading comprehension) for teachers and SSOs at staff meetings and as a part of the Student Free Day in Term 4.
- By the end of the year, it was agreed that this focus should continue into 2011, with an emphasis on improving the dialogue and cooperation between teachers and SSOs in relation to strategies for improving literacy outcomes.

## How our Students Performed

In this section, the aim is to provide a series of snapshots which provide a context and an indication of how our students performed in 2010.



Year 6/7 Aquatics Camp

## Student Enrolments & Attendance

The start of 2010 saw a significant decline in student numbers compared to the enrolment in January 2009: 101 students down to 81 (see graphs below). Of particular concern is the fact that as classes progress through the school, there is a greater migration out of the school than into the school. This is coupled with the fact that Reception intakes have been in decline. The aim is to establish a more stable enrolment pattern over the next year or so. An Early Years Network has been established with the Torrens Valley Children's Centre with a view to exploring common approaches and enhancing even further the excellent transition program that already exists for children who transfer to this school.

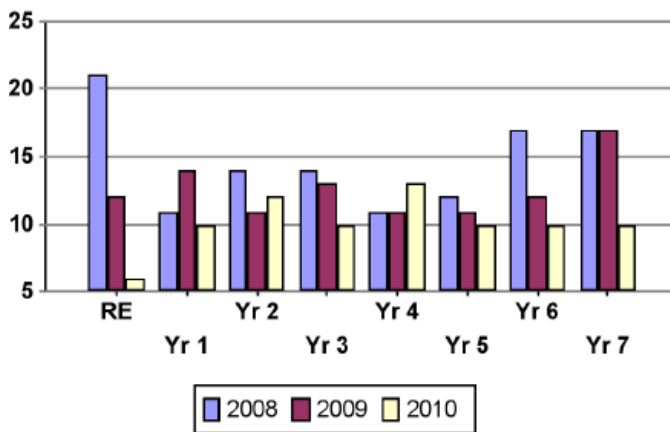


Skipathon Demo by School Leaders, Rori and Thomas

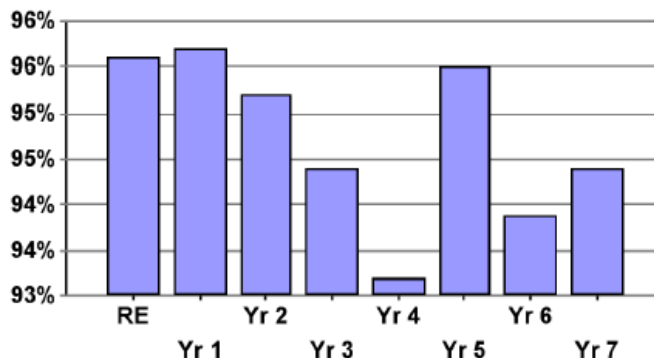
The aim will be to work towards Gumeracha Primary School being the school of choice for families living in its catchment area through the joint efforts of staff and parents in raising the school's profile and broadcasting the excellent programs on offer.

Enrolment 2008 - 2010			
	2008	2009	2010
Enrolment (FTE)	117.0	101.0	81.0

### Enrolment 2008 - 2010



### Attendance Rate 2010



When compared to 2009, student attendance rates showed an improvement with the exception of the figures for Year 4 students.

### Recommendations for 2011:

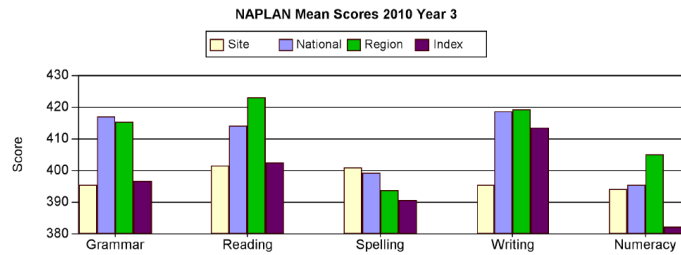
- The school will continue to build relationships and working connections with the Torrens Valley Children's Centre with a view to enhancing communications and common approaches at the transition stage.
- The school will continue to build relationships with local community groups with a view to promoting the school as a community hub to which community members are welcome and from which students will go out into the community on a range of community links programs.
- The school will continue to monitor and follow up unexplained student absences. In 2011 parents of students with regular absences will be contacted for follow-up discussions.

## Student Outcomes in Literacy & Numeracy

### NAPLAN

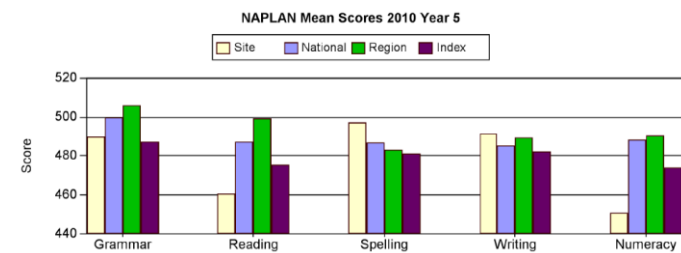
In 2010 the National Assessment Program Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN) test was conducted. This test provides an overview of student achievement at Years 3, 5, 7 and 9 in

various aspects of Literacy & Numeracy. Whilst the Year 7 results were disappointing, the Year 3 and Year 5 results indicate that a gradual improvement is underway.



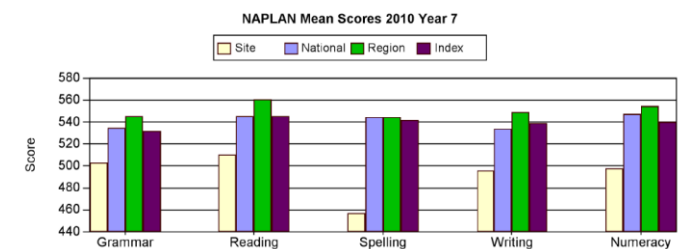
	2008	2009	2010
Numeracy	349.0	388.7	394.3
Reading	369.6	382.9	401.5
Writing	395.9	392.5	395.5

In 2010, ten Year 3 students sat the NAPLAN tests. 90% achieved the National Minimum Standard in Grammar and Spelling, whilst 100% of Year 3 students achieved the National Minimum Standard in Reading, Writing and Numeracy.



	2008	2009	2010
Numeracy	447.1	456.4	451.0
Reading	440.2	468.7	460.7
Writing	440.8	482.3	491.4

In 2010, ten Year 5 students sat the NAPLAN tests. 80% achieved the National Minimum Standard in Reading. 90% achieved the National Minimum Standard in Writing, and 100% achieved the National Minimum Standard in Grammar, spelling and Numeracy.



	2008	2009	2010
Numeracy	530.6	544.8	497.9
Reading	559.6	559.7	510.4
Writing	542.0	532.9	495.7

In 2010, ten Year 7 students sat the NAPLAN tests. 60% achieved the National Minimum Standard in Spelling, 70% in Writing, 80% in Grammar, and 90% in Reading and Numeracy.

**Recommendations for 2011:-**

- Continue with a focus on raising literacy performance.
- Investigate and trial an assessment tool to monitor student numeracy progress and achievements.
- Review Numeracy programs in R-7



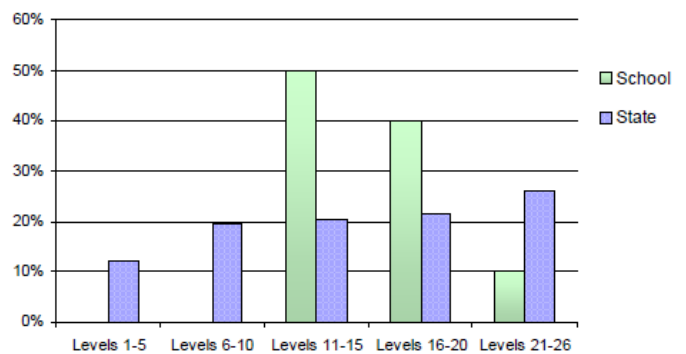
Some of our Volunteers join Staff for a Special Morning Tea

**Other Literacy Tests**

All students in Year 1 and in Year 2 had Running Records collected and centrally recorded during the year as a requirement of DECS. The school Running Record data provided teachers and parents with ongoing information about their child's reading progress. This data was also used to identify students requiring additional support and specific reading programs throughout the year.

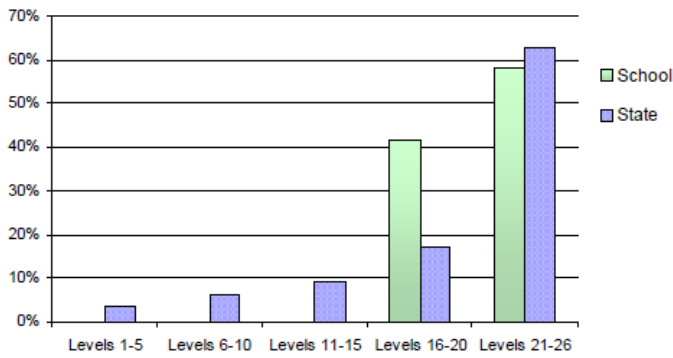
**Year 1 – Term 3**

School Reading Levels compared to State



**Year 2 – Term 3**

School Reading Levels compared to State



Our reading level data shows that while we have no students in levels 1-10, we still have a lower number of students than the state in the higher levels, 21-26. In 2010, the Jolly Phonics program was introduced in the Reception/Year 1 class to ensure a solid foundation in student reading skills. Alongside the use of SSO classroom support

Students with Disabilities were provided with learning plans as part of their Negotiated Education Plan (NEP). Meetings were held with parents and related professionals to monitor outcomes. Individual Learning Plans (ILP) were developed for students with learning difficulties and students with challenging behaviours.

**Recommendations for 2011:**

- Running Record data to continue being used in ongoing ways to identify students who require additional reading support.
- SSO support to be used mainly in the classroom, with a focus on assisting those students identified as needing support in literacy and/or numeracy.
- Jolly Phonics to be extended as a means of raising literacy levels at Junior Primary level, thus providing a platform for success in the future.



Working Bee in Action

**Member Name**

- S Trollope
- J Linke
- A Schmied
- G Parker
- A Tanner
- N Parker
- T Mardle
- D Hankinson
- R Lloyd

**Position**

- Parent, Chairperson
- Parent, Secretary
- Parent, Treasurer
- Parent
- Parent
- Parent
- Elected Staff Rep
- Principal, ex officio
- Former Principal, ex officio

**Major Decisions**

A major issue that confronted the in-coming Governing Council at the start of the year concerned the viability of running four classes for the year. It was decided to maintain the four classes, but members were alerted to the pressures this would exert on the budget.

The Bushfire Policy was approved early in the year and reviewed, with minor amendments, in Term 4. Other policies that came under review were: Uniform & Dress Code, Anti-Bullying, and the Student Behaviour Policy

The purchase of a colour copier/printer was approved, using part budget and part fundraising committee savings. The aim is for the school to upgrade the quality of its publications and promotional material. Members supported the creation of a promotions committee whose purpose would be to raise the profile of the school with the local community and to report on the range of positive activities taking place.

After receiving a number of quotations for the installation of a sound system and the infrastructure for upgrading to an audio-visual system in the new Hall, it was decided that funds would only allow the installation of the sound system. Meanwhile, members agreed to the purchase of a new administration server

Governing Council appointed Mary Vivian as the new director of OSHC.

It was agreed to book Family Life for Term 1 of 2011, with Governing Council seeking support from a PIE grant to support the evening.

**Work of Sub-committees**

The school is supported by a core of very hardworking parents who sit on a range of sub-committees: the OSHC and Finance sub-committees, and the Fundraising, Canteen and Facilities Committees. A group of parents was also active in trying to raise support for a Parents & Friends Group which has met occasionally.

These sub-committees are vital to the well-being of the school and the aim will be to keep them vibrant through the recruitment of new volunteers.

**Governing Council**

**Members**



**Buddy Activities – Caring for Each Other**

## What People Think of Us

In 2010, DECS conducted and collated responses to student, parent and staff opinion through an online survey process. Forty students across Years 4-7 participated in the survey; there were 11 parent respondents; but only 3 staff completed the survey.

### Student Opinion

The graph below shows student responses compared to responses across the state. In this graph and the one which follows the diamond shape indicates where our average opinion data rated against the state averages shown with the circle.

### Student Opinion – State Comparison



A more detailed analysis of the students' responses revealed the following:-

Quality of teaching & learning – 74% of the 40 students who completed the survey agreed that class activities are interesting and help them learn, and 75% agreed with the statement that they know how they are doing and how they can improve.

Support of Learning – 90% of students agreed that teachers expect them to do as well as possible, and 87% agreed that students are encouraged to achieve at the best of their ability. Meanwhile, whilst 71% agreed to feeling safe at school, a significant percentage – 24% – disagreed with this statement, and this is something that will need to be addressed in 2011 and into the future as long as there are any students who do not feel safe at the school.

Relationships and Communication – 92% agreed that they learn about different cultures, 88% agreed that they like doing new things, 96% like to help others, and 87% agreed they are encouraged to participate in school events. However 40% disagreed with the statement: 'I really like to

go to school each day' and only 39% agreed to the notion that they get excited about the work they do in class.

Leadership and Decision making – Whilst 74% of the students agreed that the school is well organised, only 55% felt they were involved in making decisions about school rules and student activities.



**Year 7s in Canberra**

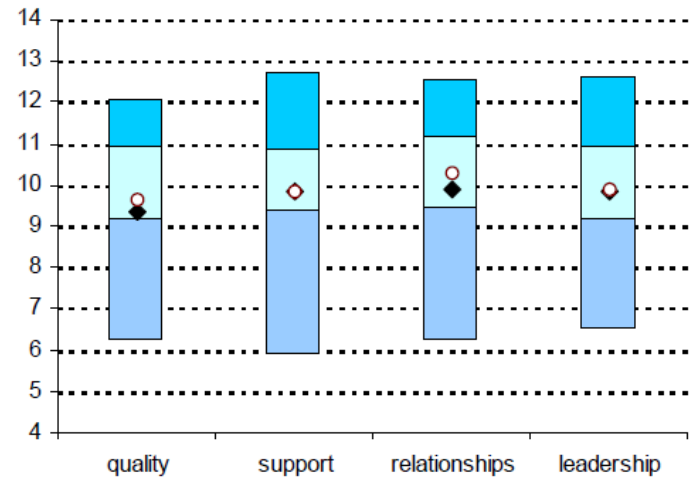
### Staff Opinion

The very low response rate from staff at the school makes an analysis of those data meaningless. The aim will be to ensure that all staff participate in the survey in 2011.

### Parent Opinion

Only eleven parents participated in the survey, with the following results:-

### Parent Opinion – State Comparison



More detailed data responses to the parents' survey questions include:

Quality of teaching & learning – 80% of the 11 respondents agreed that the teachers make learning interesting and enjoyable, 70% agreed that the teachers really want to help the children to learn and 70% agreed that the school has an excellent learning environment.



**Former Principal Bob Brooksby leads a re-enactment with his model ships**

Support of Learning – 90% agreed that students know how they are expected to behave at school, 90% agreed that their child was happy at school, and 70% agreed their child was motivated to learn at this school. All responses in this section showed 70% or more agreement apart from only 50% agreeing that the school changes its programs and activities to improve student achievement.

Relationships and Communication –100% of those surveyed agreed that they were encouraged to be involved in the school in all kinds of ways, whilst 89% agreed that they were given opportunities to have a say in matters about this school, and 80% agreed that the school assists the development of personal and social skills. However, only 60% agreed that teachers let them know how well their child is doing

Leadership and Decision making – 89% of parents agreed that they were given opportunities to be involved in the development of school plans, 83% agreed that the school included parents and community in decision making, and 80% agreed they were satisfied with the school's planning, and 80% had confidence in how the school is managed.

**Recommendations for 2011**

*In 2011 the school will rigorously explore ways to improve the quality of teaching and learning. The aim will be to use professional learning opportunities, team meetings and performance management processes to ensure a focus on the quality of teaching and learning.*



**Bridges to Success**

**Additional Government Reporting Requirements**

**Workforce Composition**

In 2010 the school staff, including SSOs and grounds-person, comprised 11 females and 2 males. There were

six teachers, including the principal, and seven support staff.



**Teamwork**

**Teacher Qualifications**

All teachers hold required teacher registrations in South Australia. The following is a breakdown of the percentage of teacher qualifications held by teachers at the school: Masters Degree 17%, Bachelors Degree 34%, Diplomas 83%, Graduate Certificate 34%. Some teachers have multiple qualifications and certificates.

**Financial Data**

Financial Reports of the school will be available at the Governing Council AGM or on request from the front office.

**Closing Comment**

2010 was a successful year for Gumeracha Primary School at a time when there was uncertainty about staff changes and concerns about future enrolments. The school and its community proved sufficiently resilient to take these challenges in its stride. I would like to sincerely thank all staff, parents and members of the Governing Council and all those people who volunteer their services for their efforts and contributions in 2010. I would also like to acknowledge the help of Russell Lloyd who stood in as stop-gap principal in Term 1 and helped to smooth my transition into the post.

I look forward to working with staff parents, Governing Council members and the various sub-committees and volunteers in 2011. Together, the aim will be to grasp the opportunities and face the challenges that come our way with a constant focus on improving outcomes for the students who attend the school.

**David Hankinson**  
**Principal**