CELTIC SPECIAL DAY

Special Day becomes focus for studies from Year 1 to Year 12

Gavin Leslie (Grade 6) and Ian Rowling (Health & Physical Education) at the bonfire.

Special Days have become something of a tradition at The School of Total Education. Held biennially, the special days highlight a particular area of study with either a Science or Social Studies focus. Examples in recent years have been Chindia Day (2008), Europe Day (2006) and We Can Do It Day: An Ocean of Possibilities (2004).

Lead-up studies create interest and develop knowledge about a particular part of the world or focus area. Senior classes devise activities for the junior students for the day which everyone looks forward to.

Parents join in evening activities which often involve a shared meal along with music and dancing. This year a Celtic Feast was topped off by a performance by the entire groups of male parents and female parents singing a special song they had rehearsed after the Parent Programs. It was indeed ‘special’.

Sustainability

Last year a number of senior teachers retired after many years of dedicated service to the School. They will be fondly remembered by their past students and I am sure they will have great memories of their involvement with the School.

Some parents and others have said, “How will you ever replace these wonderful teachers? The School will never be the same again!” The answer is we can’t replace these individuals as they are unique in what they gave in their teaching.

However, SOTE is about an idea and that is Total Education and that idea can inspire a younger generation of teachers who believe in a form of education which focuses on the spirit of each child and that is sustainable over the long term.

Richard Waters, Principal

BALANCING ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT WITH CHARACTER DEVELOPMENT

To achieve a good balance between academic achievement and student’s character development is certainly one of the hallmarks of the Total Education program. 2010 was an outstanding year of academic achievement with 5 out of 8 of students achieving an Overall Position (OP) of between 1 and 5 (see back cover). However, some real learning also took place as difficult lessons had to be learned by experience rather than guidance. If students can look back on Year 12 and say I learned to be a better person as well as doing well academically, we can say we have done our job properly. 2010 graduate, Alex Darton (pictured), received a well deserved OPI and a Vice Chancellor’s scholarship from USQ.
Five Key Features of Total Education

Nurturing the Spirit of the Child

The School’s founder, Vijayadev Yogendra, believed that happiness is derived from the life of the spirit — from love and service. This continues to be a central goal of Total Education.

You can see the spirit of a child when they spontaneously help someone else or when they express their joy in living through their laughter. You see it when they bring themselves into their learning and their interactions or when they discover insights into how the world works. The teachers emphasise these things with the students in their everyday experience at school.

Each child needs to experience love and to feel “loveable”. Many children lose this when they join an education system which evaluates their personal worth only on the basis of measurable academic achievement.

Bringing Out a Child’s Innateness

This is a place where everyone is important. Small class sizes (one teacher to 13 children) mean that no one misses out on attention. Valuing everyone means that no matter what a child’s apparent academic or other abilities, they are considered in the school program.

The challenge for teachers and parents is to observe each child, trying to understand what it is that speaks to their individual self-expression. It may be something in the academic field like writing, science, history or mathematics. Or, it could be a creative pursuit such as art, drama, dance or music. This gift, whatever it is, is what we mean by “innateness”, and the teachers will try to cultivate this, to give it a chance to grow and be expressed.

Balancing Academic and Character Development

At SOTE we believe that a person’s success in life, whether it be work, family or community, will largely depend on what kind of person they are, on their character. The Total Education program therefore aims for a balance of academic and character development.

Although all children need the key skills of literacy, numeracy and much else in the way of academic knowledge, academic achievement can be over-emphasised.

Character development is not treated as a separate subject. It involves every aspect of school life. Students are given an experience of service and a practical understanding of values such as patience, consistency and responsibility. The most important part of this is the idea of the good example or what we would now call ‘positive role models’. Both teachers and parents have a crucial part to play in this.

Modeling a Co-operative Ethos

Our experience over many years has shown that students can achieve excellence without the motivation of competition. Instead the School emphasises cooperation, and intrinsic motivation.

Co-operation is modelled by the teachers working together for the good of the children. Students experience co-operation through being given tasks to work on together, whether it be helping around the school, activities at the Outdoor Education Centre, cross-grade projects or school camps.

Intrinsic motivation is motivation that comes from within a person such as: interest, enjoyment, curiosity, challenge and a desire for excellence. All of these are within the individual’s control. At SOTE we encourage intrinsic motivation rather than external motivation from prizes, awards and other artefacts of the competitive approach.

The School as a Living Community

They say it takes a village to raise a child. SOTE invites parents, teachers and children to be part of a living and evolving community in which they all play a vital role. A community requires a level of cohesion, a sense of shared values, open communication and a level of interdependence.

Parents are welcome in the school and have the opportunity to interact with the teachers each day when dropping their children off at school and walking them into the classroom.

Parents are involved in regular discussion groups on parenting where they can raise any issues of concern and share their parenting experiences with others.

Parents assist in caring for the grounds and buildings through working bees. They also participate in preparing cooked meals which are served to the children twice each week.
Distinctive Curriculum

Total Education

The School's curriculum is based on the program of Total Education, devised and implemented by School Founder Vijayadev Yogendra. This provides for a balance between Academic, Health & Physical and Character Development, as well as a focus on the key relationships in the School between students, parents and teachers.

Yoga Classes

Yoga Classes are taken on a voluntary basis for secondary students. There was a high level of participation in these classes by students in Years 10, 11 and 12. Classes are taken by Debbie Lane at the Centre For Healthy Living adjacent to the School.

School Meals

The School provides a hot lunch twice a week. The teachers and students sit together and share a meal and this creates a positive family atmosphere in the School. This year the menu was changed in relation to current nutritional standards which created some controversy. Parents assist with the running of the kitchen and the preparation of hot meals. Children help by laying the tables.

Film, Television and New Media

Film and Television is offered at Years 10-12. InHee McGrath, who has had an extensive career in the industry, led the instruction in this area with Michael Funder assisting on the academic side.

Students learn the fundamentals of video production including use of cameras, lighting, sound and editing. Students also learn different forms of production design as well as analysis and critique of commercial and documentary films.

Quiet Time

Quiet Time is for primary children and emphasises the value of finding a sense of quietude. Storytelling with a focus on positive values is used to settle the children. They spend a few minutes with their eyes closed listening to music or ambient sounds.

Two Hours of Physical Education

Students in Grades 1 to 3 take part in the Movement for Learning Program, which includes cross-patterning exercises and co-ordination activities which stimulate brain development. All students take part in 15 minutes of physical education on four days a week as well as a weekly sport class with a duration varying from 45 minutes at junior primary to 90 minutes at secondary level.

Interest Groups

Twice each term, primary students have the choice of a number of activities offered by teachers through the Interest Groups Program. It is a chance for students to follow a passion, to mix with students from other classes and to connect up with a teacher who shares their interests.
DISTINCTIVE CURRICULUM (CONT’D)

**Listening and Breathing**
All secondary students spend 15 minutes each day on two meditative exercises. One involves observing the inward and outward breath and the other requires students to listen to sounds in the environment. These exercises promote quietude and stress relief and can be used to prepare for high intellectual demand activities such as examinations.

**Time Out Program**
The Time Out Program is conducted in the second semester of Year 7 and the first semester of Year 8. Students cover their core academic program on Mondays and Tuesdays. Thursdays and Fridays are spent on student-directed activities. A weekly excursion gives students a broad-based outdoor experience.

**Outdoor Education Centre**
The School continued its Outdoor Education Centre (OEC) program on the bush property at Upper Freestone. Each class spends half a day over four weeks at the Centre. Colin Alley, conducted the program. This year, a beautiful mural (pictured) for the OEC Library was completed by indigenous artist, Sharman Parsons.

**Vegetable Garden**
Year 10 Home Economics students looked after the vegetable garden this year which produced fresh vegetables for use in the school meals. The students plant, tend and harvest the vegetables in their Home Group time.

**Camps Program**
The School has an extensive camps program starting at Year 4 with a Sleepover at School and progressing through to an Outward Bound Program for Year 11 students. This program aims at giving the students skills in teamwork, self-sufficiency and practical challenge. Students report a great deal of positive learning occurs in these outdoor situations. The students also get to see some of the most beautiful national parks in South-East Queensland and Northern New South Wales.
Extra-Curricular Activities

**Celtic Day**
This special day consisted of lead up studies on Celtic themes, a costume parade and a variety of activities organised by the senior students and teachers with a Celtic connection. In the evening at St Mary's Hall there was a delicious Celtic Feast, wonderful music including the entire parent body in a male and female choir.

**Anzac Day**
A number of senior students expressed an interest in marching in the annual Anzac Day event. They acquitted themselves in a respectful and sincere way.

**Senior Drama Production**
This year’s Senior production was *A Comedy of Errors*, an adaptation of Shakespeare’s play. The production was staged in the SOTE Auditorium in May. Directed by Colin Alley the students put in strong performances.

**Students Running the School**
On Tuesday 25th May, the Years 9 students took over the running of the the school for the day. The students tasks ranged from being Principal and Secretary to Primary Grades and Physical Education and Music Classes. The Year 9 students really enjoyed the role reversal.

**Work Experience**
The Year 10’s undertook work experience at a very wide variety of work places from Monday 24th to Friday 28th May. Some of these included: WIRAC, music stores, the University of Queensland Antiquities Museum, computer stores and Warwick Community Kindergarten.

**Junior Drama Festival**
Year 9 and 10 Drama students staged a number of plays for the Junior Drama Festival on August 20th and 21st. These included Hairball, The Crickets Sing & Murder Malodorous.

**Year 12 Presentation**
At the Combined Parents Meeting on the 16th April, Year 12 students gave a very thoughtful presentation on the topic of Bullying and Peer Pressure.

**Primary Musical**
The primary musical, *Seussical*, was directed by a team of primary teachers and choreographed by Lisa Notley. Performances were held in the School Auditorium on 10th and 11th September. It was a well produced piece of theatre with every primary student involved.

**Science Expo**
The Science Expo on October 15th was an evening of engaging activities highlighting the School’s Science Program. Senior students took the lead in explaining their projects to parents and other students. A Science Quiz hosted by Gavin Lesley & Michael Funder proved an exciting climax to the evening.
Use of Computers to Enhance Learning

**Computer Access**

The aim is to provide 1:1 access for secondary students to computers by the end of 2011.

Currently, there are primary and secondary computer labs for general use and specialist labs for Film and Television and New Media.

The secondary school library has been equipped with computers for student use and Computers are also available for specialist areas such as science, music and art. There is a small lab for Time Out use.

The New Media Lab was upgraded this year as part of the DER program and now has software for technical graphics (CAD), creative graphics, graphic design (Illustrator, Photoshop), video editing (iMovie), stop animation and the creation of simple games.

**Student Laptop Program**

Students in Years 10, 11 and 12 who have their own laptop found this a very helpful aid to learning in the senior years. However, it has also brought up various issues to do with security of the network and the need for a content filtering program. These are being addressed.

**Teacher Laptop Program**

Every teacher has an MacBook laptop. These are used for class preparation, research on the internet and reporting to parents. Teachers have access to data projectors and are also able to use digital video cameras to record oral presentations and edit these on their computer.

Students are quick to adopt new technologies and often it seems they are more comfortable with it than their teachers. However, the teachers provide the important aspect of the discerning use of technology.

**School Network**

Teachers and students can now access the school network from anywhere in the school by means of wireless or ethernet.

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**New Media** students in Year 8 and 9 learn word processing, spreadsheet, presentation skills and web page design as well as to use vector based graphic design programs.

**Graphics** students in Year 8 and 9 use 3D modeling software to visualise simple models that are created out of wood.

**Art** students access artwork and research artists on the internet. Paintings or photographs created in the classroom are converted to digital format where they are further refined and manipulated.

**Drama** students use the internet to access information about playwrights and texts in their assignments as well as for poster design.

**Primary** students work on projects with their teachers through supervised internet access on their classroom computers and the primary lab.

**Film & TV** students create short films and documentaries using digital video equipment and video editing software with the final products being burnt to DVD.

**Mathematics**:

Spreadsheets are used extensively for statistical and financial analysis including graphical representation of the results.

**Science**: Internet research is conducted on projects and Word or Power Point are used to present the results. Virtual dissections are conducted on-line for Biology.

**Humanities** subjects such as English, History and Study of Society use computers for word processing, internet research and oral presentations.

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SOTE would like to acknowledge the support of the Commonwealth Government through the Digital Education Revolution (DER) program which provided grants to bring the School’s Year 9 to 12 student-to-computer ratio up to 1:1. This has been supported by ‘On-Cost Grants’ to support the installation and maintenance of this equipment.
Social Climate

Student Well-Being

Class teachers in primary school pay particular attention to the well being of each child and connect regularly with parents if there is any cause for concern.

The Home Group system at secondary level ensures one teacher maintains an overview of each student's progress and well-being. The Home Group program looks after study skills, sex education, values education and welfare issues.

Primary and Secondary teachers assist each other with student welfare with support from the Deputy Principal and Principal.

Special meetings are held with parents of particular grade levels where issues arise.

Confidential counseling is available to students, parents and teachers by psychologists at The Centre For Healthy Living adjacent to the School.

Teachers Well-Being

Measures are actively taken to support teachers in their well-being:

- Social get togethers especially at the end of term.
- Regular mentoring meetings for new teachers.
- Weekly teachers meetings provide a forum for any problems to be aired.
- Support with stress is provided by counseling through the Centre for Healthy Living.
- Generous leave is provided for sickness and family or bereavement issues.

Student Attendance

Student attendance is monitored by roll marking twice each day and extended absences are followed up by teachers and then if necessary by the Deputy Principal. The close relationship between parents and the School ensures that extended non-attendance is very rare.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Average Student Attendance by Year Level</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Prep Year</td>
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<tr>
<td>Grade 1</td>
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<td>Grade 2</td>
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<td>Grade 5</td>
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<td>Grade 6</td>
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<td>Grade 7</td>
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The School of Total Education: Teachers and Students 2010
Parent Communication & Involvement

Parents’ Program

Parents at SOTE attend a weekly discussion group on parenting issues. Groups are facilitated by parents with longer experience at the School. Training and support for parent facilitators is provided through Group Leaders’ Meetings.

Combined Parent Meetings involving all the parents are held twice each term. The most highly rated presentation this year was *How Much Attention Do Children Need?* by Principal, Richard Waters. Other highly rated presentations included the Year 12 students’ talk on *Bullying and Peer Pressure, Cyberspace and Your Children* by Deputy Principal Judy Currie and Emotional Intelligence and Resilience by Parenting Trainer, Jo Yuile and Psychologist, Mark Carey. A session on Communication with Teachers was also appreciated.

Grade Meetings

Grade Meetings were held at the start of Term 3 for all levels. Parents met with the Class or Home Group Teacher to discuss the group’s progress and exchange views on how issues might be tackled jointly between home and school.

Reporting to Parents

At the end of Term 2 and Term 4 parents receive a Report of Student Progress which covers academic, character and physical development as well as subject reports with an A to E grading at secondary level. All primary parents have agreed not to be included in A to E reporting. Primary reports include comments on each child’s achievement in each Key Learning Area. Prep Reports are issued based on a combination of the Education Queensland template and the SOTE Reports framework.

Feedback from Parents

Parents rated the Primary Musical, *Seussical* (92%) and the Junior Secondary Drama Festival (88%) as the school activities they most enjoyed in 2010. Also highly rated were Celtic Day (86%), the Science Expo (86%) and the Christmas Party at Warwick Pool (86%). These were closely followed by the Senior Play, *Comedy of Errors* (84%).
Progress on the School’s Strategic Goals

THE SUSTAINING OF THE SCHOOL PRINCIPLES HAS BEEN AN IMPORTANT FOCUS

School Governing Council

The School Governing Council meets bi-monthly and considers issues of policy and strategy, especially the sustaining of the School’s core principles and values.

Planning Discussions

At the conclusion of the year, progress towards the goals set for the 2008-2011 Planning Cycle was reviewed and it was encouraging to see the development that had occurred.

Development of Teachers

Provision for one teacher each year to have Long Service Leave was built into the budget. There has been focus on the core principles of the School in Teacher Development discussions.

Development of Parents

There was a strong focus on support for Group Leaders with input on Group Dynamics and Involving Men in Discussion in the bi-monthly meetings. New Group Leaders were inducted.

Succession Planning

There was considerable work done on succession planning as several very experienced teachers announced their plans for retirement at the conclusion of the year. Grooming new leadership so that the School is sustainable into the future was also given specific focus.

Building & Maintenance

Construction of a Multi-purpose Hall under the BER Program was commenced in July. Regular meetings ensured that this project achieved the best possible outcome and value for money. This significantly advanced progress towards the School’s Master Plan.

An application was submitted for a State Capital Grant for a new Science Block was made to the ISQ Block Grant Authority and a grant of $220,000 out of a total of $740,000 required was approved.

David Bishop, former Maintenance Manager for Suncorp Stadium and before that QPAC took over the School’s Maintenance Co-ordination after Robbie Quinton retired due to illness.

The Institute of Total Education

Richard Waters spent one day each week on the development of the Institute this year.

In March, Richard hosted a meeting of the Alternative Schools Network at SOTE attended by representatives of about six alternative schools.

Richard renewed contact with the main teacher training universities to let their students know about the School and to encourage trainees to undertake professional experience at SOTE.

Richard presented a seminar for University of Southern Queensland (USQ) early childhood students on Critical Reflection in Teacher Development hosted by lecturer Debbie Geoghan.

Richard presented a workshop attended by around 100 graduates on the topic of Consider the Alternatives at the Queensland University of Technology’s (QUT) Stepping Out Conference for final year education students. He also joined a forum discussion with principals from Education Queensland on School-Community Relations which included a short slide show on how SOTE relates to and involves parents. One student who was in the audience is now employed at the School.

Philippa Linton, a SOTE graduate and now honours student in education at QUT conducted a research project on moral development in education at Early Childhood Level. Anne Casley continued her research on SOTE as part of her PhD studies at USQ.

Programs for SOTE teachers included quarterly seminars on principles of Total Education, the Teacher Development Program and Mentoring on Total Education for new teachers.
Teacher Development

Staff Stability
The School has a high level of staff stability with 96% of the teaching staff being retained from the previous year.

Staff Composition
- Full-time Teachers: 59%
- Part-time Teachers: 22%
- Full-time Non-Teaching: 12%
- Part-time Non-Teaching: 7%
- Indigenous Staff: 1%

Teacher’s Seminars
Teachers started the year with a retreat at Happy Valley in Stanthorpe on Towards a Deeper Understanding of Total Education. There was a mixture of large and small group discussion and social interaction including a visit to Girraween National Park.

The focus at the Easter seminar was on Revisiting Innateness based on Robin Grille’s address at the 2009 Graduation, The Voice of the Heart.

In July the topic was Building Emotional Resilience and in September the teachers reflected on Key Elements of SOTE Culture.

Curriculum Afternoons
Teachers spend two afternoons each term on curriculum issues. This year the focus was on writing up SOTE existing curriculum, the First Steps Approach to Teaching Spelling, Towards a National Curriculum, Scaffolding Students, IT Support, Epilepsy Support, and the new Continuing Professional Development Framework which comes into effect in 2010.

Other curriculum afternoons were held on planning for Celtic Day and Science Expo Day planning and a review of SOTE students’ performances on the NAPLAN Tests.

Continuing Professional Development
SOTE Teachers (26) attended a variety of Professional Development Programs both internal and external. These programs are often subsidised by either Independent Schools Queensland (ISQ) or the Queensland Studies Authority (QSA). The amount expended per teacher on professional development was $370 p.a. excluding the cost of teacher replacement.

Activities attended by SOTE teachers this year included Syllabus workshops in Senior English, History, German, Chemistry, Physics, HPE and Biology. Other workshops attended included: Music, Fine Arts, Film & TV, Using Technology in English, Science, Asthma, Autism Spectrum Disorder, Cystic Fibrosis, First Steps in Reading, Engaging 21st Century Learners, Student Well-Being and National Curriculum.

SOTE teachers mentored several pre-service teachers from USQ and QUT.

Teacher Development
A Teacher Development Program on the principles of Total Education are held fortnightly. This ensures there is a regular forum for teachers to reflect on their teaching in relation to personal and school goals. These programs are conducted by SOTE personnel and in 2010 included: Creativity, Intrinsic Motivation, Focus on Individual Children and Teacher Well-Being.

Teachers’ Qualifications
Leadership
Richard Waters
BA, Dip. Ed., M.Ed (Leadership)
Judy Currie
BSc., Dip. Ed.

Full-Time Secondary Teachers
Colin Alley
Dip Teach., M.Ed Admin
Matthew Bradshaw
BA, B Ed.
Roy Fox
BSc, Dip Ed
Michael Funder
B Mus Ed
Ronda Mattarollo
BA, BEd (Secondary)
Nigel Sullivan
BEng, (Hons), Dip Ed

Full-Time Primary Teachers
Wanda Brett
BMus BEd
Stephen Clark
Grad. Dip Ed (Early Childhood)
John Cosgrove
BED (Primary)
Ann Gengos
BED (Primary)
Patrice Jubb
Dip Teaching Early Childhood
Karen Leech
Dip Teaching
Gavin Leslie
BA Grad Dip Learn & Teach
Ian Rowling
BED (Health & Phys Ed)

Part-Time Teachers
Bernadine Bradshaw
BA (Hons), Dip Ed
Anna Gengos
BED (Primary)
Jane House
BED (Primary)
Lua Johnson
BA Drama (Secondary), Dip Ed
Cathy Petrasiunas
BA, BEd Grad Dip Hum (French)
Neil Rasmussen
Dip Fine Arts, TSSTC
Claire Waters
BA, T.S.T.C.
Required Statistics

System Affiliation
Independent, non-systemic, non-denominational.
Member, Independent Schools of Queensland.

Address
2 Freestone Road, Warwick, Queensland 4370
Telephone: 61 7 4661 2666
Facsimile: 61 7 4661 4894
Email: admin@sote.qld.edu.au
Website: www.sote.qld.edu.au

Enrollments
149 students
83 primary (56%) and 66 secondary students (44%)
1 indigenous students (1%)
90.64% Average attendance P-12

Year Levels Offered
Prep to Year 12.
Single stream at each level except Year 10 (2 streams).

Gender
Co-Educational at all levels.
59 girls and 90 boys.

Retention Rates
90 % Apparent Retention Rate

Staff Statistics
96% Staff Retention from 2009.
98% Staff Attendance Rate.
$570 Staff Development costs (per teacher per annum)
$12,407 Total funds expended on Teacher Prof. Dev.
100% Teachers attending staff development activities in 2010.

Teachers and Students
Ratio of 1 teacher to 13 students

School Comment
These statistics and the adjacent tables are part of Government requirements and need to be read with some caution given the small student numbers at SOTE.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade 3 NAPLAN Test 2010 (10 students)</th>
<th>Reading</th>
<th>Writing</th>
<th>Spelling</th>
<th>Grammar</th>
<th>Punctuation</th>
<th>Numeracy</th>
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<tr>
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<td>361</td>
<td>317</td>
<td>345</td>
<td>381</td>
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<tr>
<td>Average Score (National)</td>
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<td>419</td>
<td>399</td>
<td>417</td>
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<tr>
<td>% at or above National Minimum</td>
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<td>71%</td>
<td>86%</td>
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<tr>
<td>% at or above National Minimum</td>
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<td>92%</td>
<td>92%</td>
<td>100%</td>
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<td>92%</td>
<td>92%</td>
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<th>Year 9 Test NAPLAN 2010 (21 students)</th>
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<th>Reading</th>
<th>Writing</th>
<th>Spelling</th>
<th>Grammar</th>
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<td>Average Score (School)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Average Score (National)</td>
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<tr>
<td>% at or above National Minimum</td>
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<td>83%</td>
<td>83%</td>
<td>75%</td>
<td>92%</td>
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| Year 12 Outcomes 2010                  | Students who received an Overall Position (OP) | 8 |
|                                      | Students who received a Queensland Certificate of Individual Achievement | 0 |
|                                      | Students who received a Queensland Certificate of Education (QCE) at end of Year 12 | 8 |
| Students who received an OP1-15 or IBD | 89% |
| Students who received an OP1-5 | 62% |
| Students awarded an International Baccalaureate Diploma (IBD) | 0 |
| % of Q12 students completed/completing SAT or were awarded QCE, IBD, VET | 89% |
| % of Q12 students awarded a Senior Statement | 8 |
| % of QTAC applicants receiving an offer | 83% |

2010 OP Scores

QCE Grades 2010