
Annual Report for 2005

This report of school performance is part of Government requirements for all state and non-state schools. It represents very much a facts and figures approach without much acknowledgement of what The School of Total Education would see as the more important dimensions of school achievement and should be read with that in mind.

System Affiliation

Independent, non-systemic, non-denominational.

Member, Independent Schools of Queensland.

Address

2 Freestone Road,
Warwick, Qld 4370

Telephone: 4661 2666

Facsimile: 4661 4894

Email: admin@sote.qld.edu.au

Website: www.sote.qld.edu.au

Enrolments

138 students

72 primary and

66 secondary students

92% average attendance

Year Levels Offered

Grade 1 to Year 12.

Single stream at each level.

Gender

Co-Educational at all levels.

71 girls and 67 boys

Distinctive Curriculum

The school curriculum is designed around the Total Education philosophy devised by Vijayadev Yogendra which gives equal status to character, academic and physical development.

Time Out Year is an additional year of schooling between Year 7 and Year 8. Students attend school each day and (apart from one hour per day of set academic work) are able to negotiate how they will spend their time. The purpose is to activate the students' self-motivation and allow time to explore their interests. There is a weekly excursion and two camps each year.

Quiet Time is held twice each week for primary students and emphasises the value of spending time each day developing a sense of quietude. Stories involving positive values are used to settle the children.

The School has developed an integrated program of Peace Studies which involves curriculum approaches in Humanities, Sciences and the Creative Arts; Conflict Resolution and Peer Mediation skilling; and developing a capacity for Inner Peace using techniques derived

from Classical Yoga. Students from Years 4 to 12 are taught a simple meditative practice involving listening to sounds and a breathing exercise that is aimed at improving circulation and settling the body's nervous system.

Guest Speakers are also selected with this program in mind. For example, the Graduation speaker for 2005 was Gary Hills, Director of Peace Partners.

Yoga Classes were introduced this year as an option for secondary students.

New Media classes are compulsory for Year 8 and 9. These aim at student proficiency in information and communication technologies and the software they will need to use at secondary level. Film and Television is offered at Years 10, 11 and 12 and involves students in designing, shooting and editing their own digital productions and learning to critique all screen media.

All students from Grade 1 to Year 12 participate in a Daily Physical Education Program. For students in Grades 1 to 3 this focuses on the Movement for Learning Program which includes cross-patterning exercises and co-ordination activities which stimulate brain development.



The Junior Music Program received a boost with a \$4,000 Country Areas Grant which Primary Music Teacher, Bernadine Bradshaw used to develop a class-based instrumental Music Program with the purchase of a range of guitars, keyboards and percussion instruments.

Extra-Curricular Activities

A Musical Production of Les Misérables involved much out of school rehearsal and other preparation for Year 8 to Year 12 students. The production, directed by Bronwyn Clark, received rapturous reviews by school audiences.

The Senior Play, The Insect Play, required a great deal of commitment from Year 11 and 12 Drama students and was well received by audiences.

Both primary and secondary students were represented at

the Warwick Art Gallery Schools' Exhibitions.

Year 10 students had a week's Work Experience in a variety of settings in Warwick, Toowoomba and Brisbane. Student-Run Businesses were also a great success.

Year 11 students spent a week in India speaking at the World Water Congress in Varanasi and included a train trip from there to New Delhi and stopovers in Mumbai. This was a life-changing experience allowing them to witness some of the worst water pollution in the world in the Ganges River around Varanasi. The students produced a short film based on their journey entitled "One drop at a Time." Sponsors included The Myer Foundation, The India-Australia Foundation, Cotton Australia and the Bank of Queensland who dubbed them 'The Riverolutionists'.

Students in Year 9 took part in the My River Project focusing on testing water quality in the Condamine River along with other local students.

In 2005 the school conducted a comprehensive Outdoor Education Program from Years 5 to 12 ranging from canoeing the Cooloola River (Year 8) to an Outward Bound expedition in North Queensland (Year 11).

All secondary students participated in the Storm King Challenge, a full day of physical activities based around the Storm King Dam near Stanthorpe.

Year 9 students took over Running the School for a Day as classroom, music and physical education teachers, office staff and even co-principals.

A successful Science Expo was held in July. Highlights included a Chemistry demonstration and a parent-teacher-student Science Quiz.

School Culture

Staff Development

There was a high level of staff stability with 88% of the teaching staff being retained from the previous year and a staff attendance rate of 98%. Deputy Principal, Michael Funder decided to have a change by accepting a position at the International School in Brunei. Colin Alley was appointed as Senior Music Teacher, Stephen Clark as Primary Co-ordinator and Judy Currie was appointed Curriculum Co-ordinator. Anne Casley retired as a classroom teacher and took up study for a Masters degree in Education.

Curriculum Afternoons were held to focus on The new Eng-

lish Syllabus, Information and Communication Technologies, Assessment and Reporting Policies and Peer Mediation.

Teachers (18 of 21) attended a variety of Professional Development Programs at an average cost of \$60 per teacher. The low figure per head indicates the high level of subsidy provided by both the AISQ and the Queensland Studies Authority (QSA) for professional development.

Professional Development activities attended by SOTE teachers this year included: Biology Syllabus, Music Syllabus, Year 1 to 10 English, Prep Year, Junior Music, Peer Mediation, Primary Literacy, Child Protec-

tion and Digital Video Recording and Editing.

Activities organised by the School included four half-day Teacher Development Programs on SOTE principles held in the school holidays. These included: Dispersal of Responsibility, Innovative Schools, The School's Values and Character Development.

Principal, Richard Waters, made a trip to India to visit two innovative schools, the International Centre for Education (founded by Aurobindo) at Pondicherry south of Madras and Patha Bhavan (part of the University founded by Rabin-dranath Tagore) at Santiniketan north-east of Kolkata.

A number of pre-service teachers were mentored by SOTE teachers 2005.

As part of the Peace Festival Warwick, the School hosted a Peace Educators' Seminar which explained highlighted different approaches to Peace Education in Warwick and had keynote speakers from Brisbane. Principal Richard Waters spoke on SOTE's whole-school approach to Peace Studies.

Principal Richard Waters presented workshops at: The Australian Council for Educational Leadership Conference, The Harvesting Peace Conference run by the Multi-Faith Centre at Griffith University and The Schools with Particular Philosophies Seminar at AISQ.

Social Climate

The low Student-Teacher Ratio of 1 teacher to 12 students throughout primary and secondary levels facilitates a personal relationship between students and teachers. The Home Group system at secondary level means that each year level has at least one teacher who maintains an overview of each student's progress and well being. Primary and Secondary teachers meet weekly

as a group and assist each other with student welfare issues.

Teacher Development was catered for with a weekly meeting which encourage open-ended discussion on practical issues of teachers' experiences.

A Family Counsellor visits the school twice each term to provide support for students, teachers and families. The Counsellor also meets with the teachers as a group to assist with stress and adjustment issues. More regular support, if required, is available from the psychologists at the nearby Centre For Healthy Living

Parent Involvement

All parents attend weekly small group discussions on parenting issues. Groups are facilitated by parents with extended experience of these programs. Training and support is provided through Group Leader's Meetings held twice each term.

Parents are encouraged to have regular contact and interaction with teachers, and appointments with class teachers, the Primary Co-Ordinator and/or the Principal are available on request. Parents and teachers have a high degree of contact.

Grade Meetings were held at the start of Term 3 for all class levels. In these meetings, teachers reviewed class issues including interpersonal and intrapersonal concerns.

At the end of Terms 2 and 4 parents received a Report which covered student progress in academic, character and physical development as well as subject reports with an A to E grading at secondary level.

In November, parents write reports on their children's progress over the year which are given to primary class and secondary Home Group teachers.

Parents also provide feedback on the Parents Program. Of the five Combined Parent Meetings held in 2005, Richard Waters' presentation on Innovative Schools in India (April) and the Year 12 Showcase (September) were rated highest followed by sessions on Service, Parenting for Everyone Revisited and SOTE's Philosophy.

Parents ranked the School Musical the aspect of school involvement most enjoyed, followed by the Parents Program, and helping with school meals. Parents expressed a high level of interest in more family social events on the school calendar.

Academic Results

Retention Rates

Schools are asked to calculate a "retention rate" as the ratio of student numbers in Year 12 compared to the same group (four years earlier) at Year 8 level.

The 2005 Year 12 group at SOTE had 11 students. In 2001 in Year 8, this same group had 12 students. Hence the apparent retention rate is 10:11 or 91.7%.

It should be noted that SOTE generally does not enrol students at secondary level. Therefore if families move away from the area or leave the school for any reason they are not replaced and this can have a dramatic effect on the apparent retention rate. This policy is due to both the long-term nature of the Total Education Program and the fact that, due to the Time Out Year being an addi-

tional year of schooling, SOTE's secondary students are a year older than their counterparts at other schools.

In fact, all students at Year 8 level at SOTE in 2001 went on to complete Year 12 in 2005 — either at SOTE or at other schools. Hence the actual retention rate for SOTE is for this group is 100%.

Grade 3, 5 & 7 Tests

The School of Total Education participates in the state-wide testing of literacy and numeracy for Grades 3, 5 and 7 in September each year.

These figures need to be read with some qualification. With the small class sizes at SOTE, percentages can be affected a great deal by one or two students falling below the National Benchmarks. That being said, any reduction in the % of students above the National Benchmarks especially in Grade 3 Writing is a concern and an intensive Literacy Support Program this year is already showing good results.

SOTE often enrolls students at mid-primary from other schools and these students have often have Literacy issues. It takes a little while to build their confidence and subsequently their achievement, but as the Year 7 scores show, by end of primary, SOTE scores above the Average for Queensland.

Senior Secondary

There were 11 students in Year 12 in 2005. Six students had attended SOTE since Time Out and five since Grade 1. One student opted to return to school in 2006 to complete an alternative course to the one she studied in 2005 and hence 10 students appear on the charts.

In 2005, the OP's achieved by SOTE students ranged from OP1 to OP11 (see graph). SOTE was one of only two schools on the Darling Downs who had 100% of students achieve OP's between 1 and 15. The median OP for 2005 was OP6. All students achieved a C or above on the Core Skills Test. The median QCS Score for 2005 was B.

Test	Aspects of Literacy			Aspects of Numeracy			
	Spelling	Writing	Reading Viewing	Number	Space	M'ment & Data	Overall
Average Score for the School	446	407	540	437	492	433	457
Average Score for Queensland	544	509	548	540	543	544	534
% above National Benchmark (2005)		43%	86%				71%
% above National Benchmark (2004)		83%	67%				1

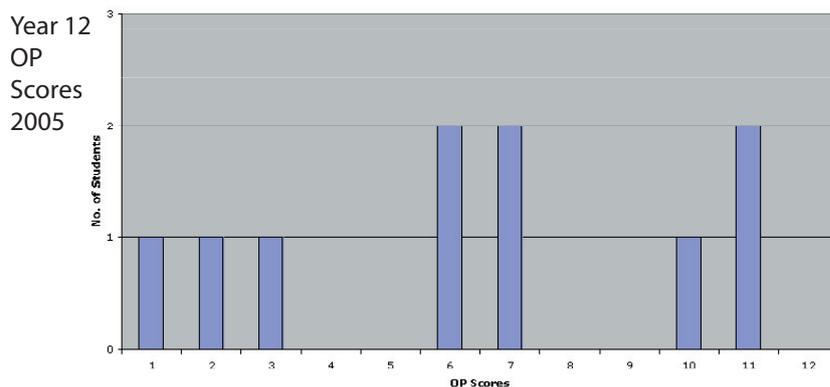
The School of Total Education Grade 3 Test 2005 (8 students)

Test	Aspects of Literacy			Aspects of Numeracy			
	Spelling	Writing	Reading Viewing	Number	Space	M'ment & Data	Overall
Average Score for the School	552	597	616	615	615	631	619
Average Score for Queensland	599	606	614	610	612	612	605
% above National Benchmark (2005)		88%	75%				88%
% above the National Benchmark (2004)		1	91%				80%

The School of Total Education Grade 5 Test 2005 (9 students)

Test	Aspects of Literacy			Aspects of Numeracy			
	Spelling	Writing	Reading Viewing	Number	Space	M'ment & Data	Overall
Average Score for the School	731	768	709	718	712	697	703
Average Score for Queensland	687	746	689	665	670	668	663
% above National Benchmark (2005)		1	92%				92%
% above National Benchmark (2004)		1	1				1

The School of Total Education Grade 7 Test 2005 (13 students)



Year 12 Outcomes 2005	
Total number of students completing Year 12	10
Senior Certificates awarded	10
Percentage of OP-eligible students with OP 1 to 15	100%
Percentage of students awarded a Senior Certificate and awarded a VET qualification	10%
Percentage of students awarded Senior Certificate with OP-eligibility or a VET qualification	100%
Percentage of QTAC applicants receiving an offer	100%