

ARKANA COLLEGE

Annual Report

2008



Can be viewed on the School's Website at <http://www.arkana.nsw.edu.au>

Reporting Area:

Governance

The governance of the school is in the hands of a School Board, who are elected to the position. The Board has twelve members (11 at present since one Board member recently resigned) who come from various backgrounds, i.e. engineers, school teachers, doctors and people from the business world.

The School's mission as an Islamic School is to provide quality education from Kindergarten to Year 6 that will equip them in all aspects of their life this includes knowledge which preserves the teachings of the Islamic faith and the legacy of the Prophet Muhammad PBUH and knowledge of the Arabic language.

CHAIRMANS MESSAGE

Assalamu Alaikum

It is a great pleasure to write this message on behalf of the Board of Directors for the 2008 school annual report.

The year 2008 has been a time of great change at Arkana College. We bid farewell to our long serving Principal Mrs. Madenia Abdurahman. Mrs. Madenia Abdurahman joined Arkana College back in 1986 and was appointed Principal in 1990. Mrs. Abdurahman resigned in March 2008 after a distinguished career at Arkana College where she steered the school through the good and difficult times. She certainly can take much of the credit in the evolution of Arkana College from a small enterprise with 30 students working out of a single house to an established school with 8 K-6 classes, 160 students and 16 staff. Mrs. Abdurahman is an integral part of the history of Arkana and will be sorely missed.

We welcomed in a new principal, Mr. Osman Karolia in March and he has done a commendable job in his first year by introducing new ideas and initiatives to develop the school's academic status and infrastructure which include plans to redevelop the current school site.

Our literacy/numeracy results from NAPLAN 2008 exceeded all expectations and were a great endorsement for the quality of teaching and learning experiences at Arkana College. I would like to convey my heartfelt thanks to all staff, students and parents. Our excellent results are a product of their collective effort. It has been most rewarding to see our students so active with academic competitions, sports including winning the girls' soccer grand final, SRC visit to other schools, art competitions and many other incursions and excursions which all further promoted the learning process for children at Arkana College.

By Allah's Will the Board of the school has decided to embark on a large redevelopment of the current site. This will allow our staff and students to enjoy modern contemporary facilities which are a fundamental right that all Australian schools should be able to enjoy. We look forward to your support and that of the wider community for the new development which will be a tremendous resource for the general Islamic community of Sydney's southern suburbs.

In conclusion I hope that with our experiences and lessons learnt over the last 23 years, we will be able to further advance our school and achieve our goals Insha'Allah.

Wasslamu Alaikum

Mohammed A Helal

Chairman

Arkana College Board

Statement from the Principal

Assalamu Alaikum

On behalf of the College Board, I would like to congratulate all Arkana staff, students and parents on a wonderfully productive 2008 year. It was the collective effort of the staff, students and parents that made it possible for me to make a relatively trouble free transition to this wonderful school and its community. It has been a thoroughly rewarding journey and one which I have enjoyed immensely.

There have been numerous highlights that stand out for me in 2008, this includes our sporting victories, SRC exchanges to other schools, success at creative writing/public speaking competitions, celebrating Islamic festivals and significant days, our first ever in school ANZAC ceremony, excursions and camps (including the Gold Coast and Lake Macquarie) , book week character parade, Harmony day, creating a new website, upgrades to facilities including new computers and of course preparing the end of year Yearbook. The school also held it's first formal Yr. 6 graduation ceremony in 2008.

The highlight for me however was our outstanding NAPLAN results which exceeded all expectations and I am certain would be amongst the best in the district if not the state. I am excited at our plans to redevelop the entire campus with modern contemporary buildings which have state of the art facilities. Our children deserve the best and I ask you to stand shoulder to shoulder with me during the various phases of the new development.

As Arkana College grows and its students graduate to the next exciting phase of their lives, Insha'Allah, my earnest hope is that the college will continuously improve it's delivery of quality education for the social, academic and spiritual advancement of our children.

Arkana College continued it's association with St. Ives Public school via a number of interschool activities including a joint excursion. Arkana College also initiated a number of visits to other Islamic schools. Many of these visits included soccer matches and Arkana College with the assistance of Mr. Wassim Zoabi of the AIA established an inter school sporting zone for Islamic schools. Arkana College also hosted 36 children from 9 other Islamic schools who participated in an inter school public speaking competition.

The Principal and admin staff also aggressively pursued fees in arrears and by the end of the 2008 school year there was an extremely small amount of bad debt owed to the school.

I would again like to thank the hard working staff, students and families of our college community for their ongoing care and tremendous dedication. I'd also like to thank the Board of Directors in supporting my initiatives and for their significant contribution during 2008.

Much of 2009 and I dare say 2010 will be focused on the school building project. I will however make a commitment to all parents that the education of their children will not be compromised during this period.

The reconstruction will include

- Installation of solar panels on existing buildings we plan to keep
- Major refurbishments on buildings we plan to keep (new carpet, pant, resurfacing of undercroft and play gym area and other general maintenance work)
- School hall
- Fixed canteen
- New toilet block
- Four new classrooms
- New admin wing (2010/2011)

During the 2008 school year Arkana College was proud to have supported the following charities

- Muslim Aid (we paid for the building of a well for a village), sadaqa jariyah for our parents.
- Heart Foundation
- Cancer Council

- Circus Quirkus (circus for disabled children)
- SIDS
- MS Foundation
- Shepherd Centre for Deaf children (Loud Shirt Day)
- Fred Hollows Foundation
- Australian Relief Aid (clothing bin placed in school for disabled persons in Lebanon/Palestine/Kenya)
- Mahboba's Promise (we adopted an Afghan school and supplied them with stationary)

The Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) said: "Blessed is the wealth of a Muslim from which he gives to the poor, to orphans and to needy travelers." - *Sahih Al-Bukhari*

Arkana College also hosted two Principals from Indonesia in a program sponsored by the Australian Federal government.

I would like to thank the Board of Directors for their strong support in the last year and of course the students, staff and parents of Arkana College. I would also like to make specific mention of the support of the Parent Council for all their support during 2008
Principal
Arkana College

Reporting Area - ASSESSMENTS

NAPLAN 2008

YEAR THREE

BAND	1	2	3	4	5
LITERACY	0	0	3	7	13
NUMERACY	0	0	4	9	10

The Australian average for literacy was a low Band 4

The Australian average for numeracy was a high Band 3

The students from Arkana College by far exceeded the national average in both literacy and numeracy.

YEAR FIVE

BAND	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Literacy	0	0	0	2	4	7	6	1
Numeracy	0	0	0	3	5	6	5	1

The Australian average for literacy was a mid Band 5

The Australian average for numeracy was a high Band 4

The students from Arkana College by far exceeded the national average in both literacy and numeracy.

UNSW ICAS EXAMS

These are optional papers which Arkana Colleges enters all students in Yr. 3-6. It is only the very good government and independent schools which enter these exams and in the majority of schools only the very best students are encouraged to enter. For these reasons these exams are extremely competitive and far more challenging than other national exams

SCIENCE

	Australian Average	School Average
Yr. 3	21 (40)	23
Yr. 4	22 (40)	17
Yr. 5	24 (45)	22
Yr. 6	26 (45)	24

With the exception of Yr. 3 all other years performed below the Australian average, though the gap was not large.

ENGLISH

	Australian Average	School Average
Yr. 3	22 (40)	24
Yr. 4	23 (40)	21
Yr. 5	26 (45)	24
Yr. 6	27 (45)	29

With the exception of Yr. 4 and Yr. 5 all other years performed on or above the Australian average.

MATHEMATICS

	Australian Average	School Average
Yr. 3	21 (40)	25
Yr. 4	22 (40)	20
Yr. 5	24 (45)	30
Yr. 6	25 (45)	28

With the exception of Yr. 4 all other years performed above the Australian average.

Reporting Area – Professional Learning and Teacher Standards

Description of the Professional learning of Staff participating

- 1 Supporting new scheme learning -Association of Independent Schools (AIS) 4
- 2 Supervising new scheme teachers -AIS 2
- 3 ESL (2 sessions) – delivered by AIS consultant in house 13
4. Assessing grades for reports – in-house 13
5. Disciplinary & Playground procedures – in house 13
6. Blooms Taxonomy – in house 13
7. Literacy/Numeracy for new staff – AIS (3 sessions) 5
8. Electronic Whiteboards - 2

Teacher Standards

In 2008 Arkana College had eight mainstream teachers and one literacy & numeracy support teacher. One Principal and two Arabic teachers, a Quran teacher an Islamic Studies teacher (who also provided Arabic support, a school Chaplain and two admin staff.

Below are the details of the qualifications of teaching staff who are responsible for delivering the curriculum.

- a) *Teachers who have teaching qualifications from a higher institution within Australia or as recognised within the National Office of Overseas Skills Recognition (AEINOOSR) guidelines*

10 (all our classroom teachers including the literacy support teacher and one Arabic teacher have teaching degrees from Australia)

- b) *Teachers who have qualifications as a graduate from a higher education institution within Australia or one recognised within the AEINOOSR guidelines but lack formal teacher education qualifications*
3 (Arabic/Islamic Studies and Quran teacher)

- c) *Teachers who do not have qualifications as described in (a) or (b) but have relevant successful teaching experience or appropriate knowledge relevant to the teaching context.*

1 (Islamic Studies and Chaplain)

At the end of term three a teacher resigned after attempts to redress serious concerns for lack of competency. Another two staff members did not have teaching contracts renewed for 2009.

The two year one classes were merged into a single class at the end of term three for financial reasons. Parents were also informed that the two Kindergarten classes would be merged into a single Yr. 1 class in 2009 for financial reasons.

In term two one teacher resigned to pursue a career overseas and two staff members went on maternity leave.

A staff member from Arkana College was also awarded for Excellence in Teaching for work at Arkana College over the previous 5 years.

Teacher Attendance and Retention Rate

The average daily staff attendance rate was 98.7 percent. The proportion of staff retained from 2007 is 98 percent.

Student Attendance & Retention Rates

Ninety seven(97%) percent of students attended school on average each school day in 2007. There was a slight increase in the student retention rate in 2008.

School waiting lists for new Kindergarten enrolments also increased dramatically.

Enrolment Policies and Profiles

Arkana College is co-educational Independent Primary K-6 School, providing an education that upholds Islamic values and is operating within the policies of the NSW Board of Studies. All applications will be processed in order of receipt and consideration is given to the siblings already attending the school and other criteria determined by the school from time to time. Once enrolled the children are expected to support the school's ethos and to participate in a full school life, and comply with the school rules to maintain the enrolment. Failure to pay school fees can lead to termination of enrolment.

All children enrolling at our school deserve a smooth transition that enables them to become part of our school with a minimum of disruption and maximum support.

Procedures

1. All applications should be processed within the school's enrolment policy.
2. Consider each applicant's educational needs to do this the school will need to gather information and consult with parent/family or other relevant persons.
3. Identify any strategies which may need to be put into place to accommodate applicant before a decision regarding enrolment is made.
4. Inform the applicant of the outcome.

Student Population

The school has 151 students. As an Independent School, the students come from a diverse range of backgrounds, including cultural and language background other than English. The diverse range of experiences afforded by this policy leads the children to a better understanding and a greater tolerance of others.

A survey of the school population at the end of 2008 revealed that thirty two (32) different nationalities are represented in the school community.

2008 Class Sizes (as reported at end of 2008 school year)

Year	Number
KY	15
KR	13
1P	29
2B	17
3P	24
4A	24
5/6 G	29
TOTAL	151

At the start of term four the two Yr. 1 classes were amalgamated into a single Yr. 1 class.

2009 Class Sizes (as reported at end of May 2009)

Year	Number
KY	29
1P	26
2P	26
3R	17
4R	26
5B	21
6A	20
TOTAL	165

Policies

Arkana College is committed to providing and maintaining a safe and just environment for staff and students.

The staff handbook contains a description of all policies that schools are required to follow as well as a number of others specific to Arkana College.

Child Protection Policy is regularly discussed through staff meetings and staff notices including any change to legislation.

In 2008 an incident was reported to the NSW Ombudsman who investigated the matter based on written submissions from those involved. The Ombudsman was satisfied at the actions taken by the school and no further action was recommended other than to inform staff to show greater judgment when disciplining children

Risk /OH&S is also regularly discussed through staff notices and staff meetings including any change to legislation.

Discipline Policy

encompassing

- *Classroom behaviour*
- *Playground behaviour*
- *Detention Code Rules*
- *Good Behaviour – Merit*

Award (employment)

Other policies include:

Pastoral Care Policy

Health and well being

Homework Policy

Security Policy –

Staff changes for – emergency procedure. Copy in Office and all classrooms. Available on 'Share

Risk Assessment (for all activities)

Code of conduct for staff (Islamic ethos/dress/punctuality etc)

Behaviour management

Student leadership

Student Discipline

At Arkana, we at all times, prohibit the use of corporal punishment, and clearly and exhaustively exclude corporal punishment in any of the school's discipline methods. This applies to all teaching staff as well as non-school persons (parents, visitors, volunteers, maintenance staff etc).

Discipline includes meetings with the child and teachers and occasionally with the Head Teacher, Principal and Chaplain.

Repeated poor behavior may result in detention at recess/lunch. The school also has a reward system that includes awards, privileges and prizes.

No children were suspended/expelled during the 2008 school year. There was no serious breach of the discipline policy other than general discipline issues.

Complaints and Grievances

At Arkana the policy for dealing with such complaints and grievances include processes for raising and responding to matters of concern, as identified by the parents and/or students. At all times these processes incorporate, as appropriate, principles of procedural fairness.

Complaints and grievances may be brought up with the teacher and if necessary the Head Teacher. If still unsatisfied or in sensitive/special circumstances students/parents may bring their complaint/grievance to the Principal. The Principal also makes his email address public so that matters can be raised with him. In general all queries are answered within three days.

If still unsatisfied after meeting with the Principal the matter can be raised with the school Board.

If still unsatisfied the parent is directed to the relevant authorities.

In 2008 there was one incident where the parent was unsatisfied with a matter and subsequently the Principal referred that matter to the school Board and a satisfactory outcome was reached.

School Determined Improvement targets

At Arkana, comprehensive and ongoing assessment procedures and policies are in place and are followed by all teachers from K-6, these are discussed at curriculum meetings in week 2,6,10 of each term.

All teachers have incorporated Blooms Taxonomy (different levels of learning) ie application, reflection. Other initiatives implemented/enhanced include:

- Grading, marking by producing and implementing text type rubric style proformas. Grading procedures were also reviewed so that grades allocated are reflective of Board of Studies expectations rather than those determined by the school or teacher.
- LIEN Mathematics
- Whole School Diagnostic Assessment Plan
- Scope & Sequences for each KLA (adhering to Foundation Statements)

The school is determined to continue it's strong focus on Literacy/numeracy but would like to implement more of an emphasis on science by allocating more time/resources toward science in the second half of 2009.

Parent teacher and teacher Satisfaction

The school has a strong parent grievance policy where parents have a forum and an opportunity to air levels of satisfaction as well as dissatisfaction. Parents are encouraged to correspond by email directly with the teacher, Head Teacher and/or Principal.

The Principal is always readily available for interviews and in most cases will follow up with the parents concern within three days, preferably by email.

Grievances can also be conveyed via the Parent Council (PC)

A survey is also sent home (see below) to gain feedback on parental thoughts/concerns and regular school notices/newsletters are distributed so that parents are kept informed.

Staff meet usually once a week in formal meetings where they may express their thoughts. Staff are also welcome to email or see the Principal in person for any matters that are causing them concern. Staff are also welcome to express their thoughts to the school Board.

Staff who are unsatisfied with the schools policies may take their grievance to the Principal and if necessary to the Board of Directors. If still unsatisfied the matter may be referred to an external agency (union, Industrial Relations tribunal). Those external agencies will then deal directly with the schools legal representatives (appointed by AIS) rather than with the school directly.

SURVEY RESULTS

Surveys were anonymous and distributed to all parents of the school in 2008. In total 38 surveys were received

QUESTION	satisfactory	average	unsatisfactory
1. Satisfaction with school	30	8	0
2. Satisfaction with standard of education	27	11	0
3. Standard of school facilities	8	17	13
4. Standard of service at front office	20	16	2
5. Satisfaction with Principal	36	2	0
6. Extra curricular program (incursions/excursions/sport/drama/choir etc)	27	11	0
7. Standard of teaching (mainstream)	29	8	1
8. Standard of teaching (Arabic/Islamic Studies/Quran)	10	23	5
9. Communication between parents and staff	16	21	1
10. Satisfaction with yearbook	34	4	0
11. Standard of presentation night	29	9	0
12. Communication with home and school for non classroom matters	19	18	1
13. Would recommend Arkana to family/friends	38 (yes)	0 (no)	
14. Support to establish a high school campus	37 (yes)	1(no)	
15. Support for a family camp	29(yes)	9 (no)	

EXTRA CURRICULAR

The school has a very large number of extra curricular activities including

- Excursions/incursions
- Camp
- Academic competitions
- Sport (including inter school and after school sport program)
- Gala Days
- Whole school events
- Inter school activities
- Choir
- Drama Club
- Parent Council. The PC have numerous activities which involve students/parents/staff. They also raise funds to assist school projects.

Reporting Area – Financial Information

Financial Statements December 2009 – attached