

South Australia

Mypolonga Primary School

Supplementary Information

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In 1994, the Mypolonga Post Office building became vacant when it was relocated to the General Store.

The owners, the Vogt Family, put the Post Office on the market. A student, Stephanie Fulwood, suggested that the school convert the building into a shop. The Principal, Mr John Hackett, contacted the Vogt family who agreed that the school use the post office until they were able to sell the building.

Initially, the vision for the Shop was as a venue to sell student made crafts. A grant was successfully accessed and local craftspeople came in to teach upper primary students how to make them. Local people taught students to make crafts. Craftspeople were also invited to place their crafts for sale on consignment.¹ They would also nominate how much they would like to charge for each item and a sticker with the initials of the consignor², and the price was attached to each item. The school would take 20% commission.³

The shop opened after school 4 nights per week for approximately 20 minutes. Sales were slow, but even so, word spread. Kate and Lauren Nolan's auntie worked on the Proud Mary Paddle Steamer and when she heard that the Proud Mary was looking for tourist attractions to add to their itinerary, she suggested the School Shop.

Glenys Elliott, (mother of Shannon) and Coral Oborn, (mother of Rebecca), both made goods for the Shop and managed stock control and payment to consignors. At this stage in the shop's evolution, it would not be overstating the mark to say that the shop would have never got off the ground if it weren't for Glenys and Coral. They came each Friday and supervised students working, maintained the shop and balanced the money collected with the goods sold.

The Proud Mary Paddle Steamer berthed every Friday at Mannum, and the passengers disembarked and took a bus tour around Mannum, especially the Mannum Waterfalls. The bus continued on to Mypolonga and the School Shop. The boat sailed on down to Mypolonga where the bus took the passengers back to Wood Lane Reserve, where they continued on their journey. In the intervening 14 years, some tourists returned 3 and 4 times to relive the experience of the School Shop.

Initially, the Shop operated on a very ad-hoc⁴ basis, but as people learned from this new experience, processes evolved to ensure that the Shop ran more effectively. Student involvement consisted of manning the counter inside the shop, recording sales, taking money and giving change. Students volunteered (so some students were involved to a very minor degree, while others had a significant involvement), and there was little accountability. The financial management and record keeping rested in the hands of volunteer parents. They kept a record of goods placed in the shop for sale and also calculated payments to consignors each term. They presented this information to the Finance Officer, who then paid the consignors.

¹ The person selling the crafts will only be paid when the goods are sold, unlike a shop where goods are purchased up front.

² The person selling their goods on consignment.

³ The School takes 20% with the craftsperson receiving 80% of the ticket price.

⁴ Unplanned

Enterprise Education: Making Things Happen

In 1996, changes in personnel saw John Hackett become Principal of Tailem Bend Primary School and Rita O'Brien became the new upper primary teacher. The focus initially shifted from students making the crafts to students making items that they could make quickly and efficiently.

A process of trial-and-error saw students experimenting with different items for sale.

1. Chocolate – coated apricots – as Mypolonga is a fruit growing region, dried apricots epitomise⁵ the Mypolonga community. Cellophane was cut into squares and 5 apricots placed inside and tied with ribbon. Eventually, there were enough profits to buy ready made cellophane bags which streamlined the apricot process.
2. Oranges were trialled by dehydrating sliced oranges and chocolate coating them. This was time consuming and they were not very popular. So it was decided not to continue.
3. Dried apricot jam – this required supervision, was difficult to bottle, and when Murray Bridge High School started selling jams and relishes on consignment it was felt that there was a conflict of interest⁶.
4. Herb Vinegar - bottles were purchased in which herbs were placed and vinegar added. In order to make a profit, the price became prohibitive⁷ so the trial was not continued.
5. Post Cards – a photograph was taken of the passengers alighting⁸ the Proud Mary. Backing stickers, which turned photos into a postcards were placed on the back of the photographs. The stickers were difficult for students to place on the back of the photograph evenly. If the sticker was uneven, the postcard had to be thrown away.
6. Lemonade – an old fashioned lemon cordial recipe was made each week to sell in the shop. This was highly successful and has continued to this day.

A sense that all students needed to achieve certain outcomes, and that all students needed to contribute equitably⁹, was beginning to develop. At around this time the Enterprise Education was being recognised nationally and state wide as a way of preparing students not only for the workforce but also for life. The Key Competencies¹⁰ were developed which were helpful in identifying and assessing the key outcomes of the shop program

⁵ characterise, are representative of

⁶ we were selling what they were selling, which was not very fair

⁷ too expensive

⁸ getting off

⁹ fairly, everyone had to be able to have try at everything

¹⁰ skills that enable people to be able to enter the work force

The Key Competencies are:

KC1	Collecting, organising and analysing information
KC2	Communicating ideas
KC3	Planning and organising activities
KC4	Working with others and in teams
KC5	Using mathematical ideas and techniques
KC6	Solving problems
KC7	Using technology

By 1997, the Shop program had evolved to the point where it won second prize in the Advertiser 'Excellence in Education' Awards, which recognised innovation in education programs.

The Shop Moves On

The Shop continued to evolve, using the Key Competencies as the framework to plan, implement and assess the program. However, there were still a number of issues.

They were:

1. How could all the students in the upper primary class be engaged in meaningful learning while the tour was at the school?
2. The Shop is only one part of a very wide curriculum. The Shop program needed to be organised efficiently, so that preparation for the tour did not impact too greatly on students' ability to access the curriculum. (In other words, the program needed to be efficient.)
3. Which SACSA outcomes were being addressed? What evidence was there?
4. How could a process be developed to ensure that assessment of, for and as learning occurred?
5. How could a culture of improvement be an integral part of the program?
6. How could students be empowered to take over the financial management of the program?

In other words how could the program move from being about creating a product, to managing a business and developing an entrepreneurial culture?

The Partnership

The partnership between Proud Australia Holidays and Mypolonga Primary School was very informal (until 2009) and was very much a word of mouth agreement between the bus tour operator and the school.

One thing that became clear was that if the Shop was to be sustainable as an educational program, it needed to become an indispensable part of the tour. It was quickly realised that if the bus tour came each Friday, the school needed to open – even if it meant public holidays and school holidays. This replicated a real – life business scenario, where demand determines the availability of a service. The only time the Shop did not open was during the Christmas vacation, when students and some staff members were busy picking, cutting and drying apricots.

The Shop Rotations

Each week upper primary students rotate through a number of tasks in pairs. Tasks depend on the number of students in the upper primary class in any given year. All organisational tasks occur while the tour is at school. Experienced students mentor younger students.

Up until 2004 one of the rotations was to clean the public telephone booth outside of the school. The school was contracted by TELSTRA to do this. After 2004, TELSTRA outsourced this contract, so other rotations were devised.

Rotations Include:

Rotation	Purpose
Inside Counter	Selling goods made by consignors. An SSO supervises transactions. Middle Primary trainee
Outside Counter	Selling student made goods. An SSO supervises transactions. Middle Primary trainee
Lemonade	Selling lemon cordial to the tourists.
Door	Greet customers, photocopy brochures, lead school tours Junior Primary trainee
Visitors' Book	Welcome people on the microphone when they arrive. Ask them to sign the Visitors' Book. Lead school tours. Lower Middle Primary trainee.
Map	Ask people to show where they come from on a map of the world. Ask them to send a post card when they return home.
Reconciliation Board	Explain to customers how the books are balanced. Explain mathematical processes.
Photography	Take photos to be used for publicity and reporting.
Chocolate Coating	Students chocolate coat apricots for sale in the Shop. (4 varieties – milk, dark, white and assorted). Supervised by parent volunteer.
Bagging	Students bag apricots for sale in the Shop, plus 40 bags, which are supplied to the boat. School Counsellor supervises.
Garden	Students work in the school garden (Groundsman supervises)

This was all documented in the Shop Assessment Book, which identified:

1. What students must do before, during and after the bus tour.
2. Which SACSA outcomes were achieved (and later IBMYP¹¹ Areas of Interaction)
3. Assessment criteria

for each rotation.

¹¹ IBMYP – International Baccalaureate Middle Years' Program

Balancing the Books

The process of reconciliation involves:

1. Determining what each consignor has sold each week
2. Keeping a record of each consignor's sales for a term
3. Calculating 20% commission
4. Calculating total sales and profit each term.

Assessment

Each rotation has assessment criteria to determine achievement. Assessment is cumulative¹² and results in the achievement of badges. The only assessment that accumulates is an excellent one, and the Shop motto is '**OK Isn't Excellent**'.

Students move through a series of coloured badges until they reach gold. After gold, students attain 'Quality Assurance' which enables them to assess others.

A recent innovation has been the introduction of a 'Certificate of Retail' and a 'Certificate of Business Leadership' for those students who demonstrate exceptional entrepreneurial skills.

Whole school Enterprise

Originally the shop was the domain of the upper Primary class, and to a large extent this has remained the case. However, gradually each of the other classes has become involve in the enterprise program by producing goods for sale.

The Middle Primary class originally made a themed class - recipe book, which they gave to their families. It was then decided to sell the book in the Shop as a class fundraiser. From there the class produces a recipe book every two years on a specific theme. Each book is launched when the bus tour visits the school and the students cook recipes from each book to share with the tourists.

¹² Each assessment adds on to the one before it

So far books produced are:

Year	Book Title
1998	Nothin' but Muffins
1999	Biscuits and Slices
2000	Favourite Christmas Recipes
2001	Walnut Recipes
2002	Lunchbox Ideas
2003	Apricot Recipes
2004	Let's Party
2005	Get Your Just Desserts
2006	Winter Warmers
2008	Food From Around the World
2010	BBQ Salads and Starters

Originally, the school had 3 classes but in 2005, due to increasing enrolments the school moved to 4 classes. The junior primary class historically made bookmarks, which they continued to do and the new lower middle primary class made fridge magnets. Students from the 2 younger classes

2002: Action Research to Identify Innovative Approaches to and Best Practice In, Enterprise Education

In 2002 the Federal Government conducted a study of 20 schools across Australia to determine what made them successful and leaders of enterprise. Dr John Manefield, on behalf of Erebus Consulting Partners conducted research over a 12 month period. He interviewed staff, students, parents and partners. The report was published and sent to all schools in Australia.

The report found:

- The School represents a beacon to demonstrate local commercial viability and the attributes of small town living. Community members, teachers and students tend to stand along side one another in contributing to all of these.
- There is observable evidence that the great majority of students are confident, responsible and articulate, showing attributes of initiative and drive, community orientation and with a 'can do' approach that sees them taking mature organisational decisions and applying their learning in their daily lives. They show great personal and social pride in their achievements, have an anthem of 'excellence' and strive to achieve this not only in the Shop but also in other aspects of their learning.
- Teachers appear to exhibit leadership as 'first among equals' among the children with a focus on setting and maintaining expectations as coaches rather than giving authoritarian directions.
- Many students demonstrated a strong enthusiasm to break outside their comfort zones and dependence limitations, taking learning risks that exposed them to real situations, knowing they were supported by a collaborative safety net that valued the striving more than the success but didn't allow excessive personal exposure to potential failure.

2003 – Improving Sales Using a Captive Audience

In conversation with tourists it became clear that they had little or no idea about how dried apricots were produced and how hard people, particularly students' work during the apricot season. This was also reflected in the sales of dried apricots.

In 2003, it was decided to produce a DVD showing the process of producing dried apricots. This was played on the bus before it arrived at the school. Sales of apricots trebled and have remained high ever since.

2005: Building the new Shop on School Grounds

In 2005 leadership of the School Shop was taken over by Anne Martin, the new upper primary teacher. The generosity of the Vogt family had continued for many years. The building had been on the market since the Shop opened. There was no electricity in the building, which limited how the building could be used. Unfortunately the building was out of the school's financial reach and after much thought and discussion; it was decided to convert the lunch shed on the school site into a new School Shop. The advantage of this was that the Shop was on school grounds, which improved supervision, it brought customers on to school grounds and allowed the building to adapt to the program, rather than the program adapt to the building. Having a purpose built shop on school grounds has increased the flexibility of the program and has allowed the school garden to now be a part of the shop experience.

Donna Williams and Ian Oxborrow managed the refurbishment process, and the new School Shop was opened on 15th May 2005 by Rita O'Brien.

In 2006 the Proud Mary bus tour changed its name to the Murray Expedition. The Shop Program continues to be recognised.