

BURT 2019 Report

BMNAC Goal December 2021:

All (100%) Regular Goori Learning Centre Students to Read at the Level Expected of Their Age.

Progress:

2019 – 67% of Students Achieved this Level of Proficiency.

Introduction

In partnership with Southern Cross University (SCU), we implemented the BURT Word Reading Test in 2016. This program allows us to conduct annual tracking of the reading progress of our students. We prioritise the reading ability of our students because when a student reads well, they do well at school. We are grateful to SCU for supporting us to implement this important program.

The Goori Learning Centre students have participated annually in the BURT Word Reading Test since 2016. And students engaged only in the Nyanggan Tutoring Program (NTP) have been tested since 2018. The BURT Word Reading Test is comprised of 110 words, each graded in order of easy to hard. The test is designed to track and monitor students reading age. The test provides results of the student's reading age and aligns this to the student's actual age.

Grading Results

Following the compilation of the results, students are graded into four categories:

1. Achieving Above their Expected Reading Age (Above Reading Level). This category highlights children whose 'reading age' ability exceeds their actual age.
E.g. Jane Smith | age: 8 | reading age: 11 | Above Reading Level
When students achieve at this level, our focus is to continually engage them in practicing reading so as to maintain this ability.
2. Reading At Their Age (At Reading Level). This category highlights the students who are reading at a level expected of their reading age.
E.g. Jane Smith | age: 8 | reading age: 8 | At Reading Level
Similar to above, when students achieve at this level, our focus is to continually engage them in the practice of reading with the goal of moving them into excellent readers who achieve above what is expected of their age.
3. Reading Behind Expected Reading Age by Less Than One Year (Behind). This category highlights the children who aren't quite reading at the level expected of their age.
E.g. Jane Smith | age: 8 | reading age: 7.5 | Behind Reading Level

Our approach with these students is to implement ways to make reading enjoyable and relevant as a means to see improvement and move them into the *At Reading Age* category. With focused effort, these students should move into the *At Reading Age* category by next year's assessment.

4. Reading Behind More Than One Year (Behind >1). This category highlights the students who are reading at a level more than one year behind what is expected of their age.

E.g. Jane Smith | age: 8 | reading age: 5 | Behind Reading Level >1

It is highly concerning when a student is reading more than one year behind their expected age. Students need focused support in order to improve their reading, and we'll continue to support our children to improve their reading so that school becomes enjoyable.

The Role of Goori Learning Centres (GLC) and Nyanggan Tutoring Program (NTP)

As described in the core of the 2019 Annual Report, BMNAC facilitates Goori Learning Centres (GLC) and the Nyanggan Tutoring Program (NTP).

Goori Learning Centres (GLC). Since 2010 we have facilitated a series of three after school Goori Learning Centres at Wongala Estate Aboriginal Reserve, Yarrawarra Aboriginal Cultural Centre and Boambee East Community Centre. The purpose of the GLCs is to engage children in after school learning.

Nyanggan Tutoring Program (NTP). The NTP is an in-school tutoring service for Aboriginal students that was developed and implemented in 2018. We partner with local schools in order to deliver NTP. In 2019 we partnered with three local schools – Narranga Public School; Coffs Harbour Public School; and the Learning Centre School.

BMNAC's Experience in Engaging Students with a Wide Range of Reading Ability

Since 2010 it has been common for us to engage children with varying levels of reading ability. We've engaged children whose reading is excellent, some who are fairly proficient readers and some who are well behind their expected level. The challenge for us at BMNAC is to make reading enjoyable and relevant in order to cater for all levels of ability.

We make a concerted effort to develop a real love for reading among our students by introducing them to culturally engaging material and developing activities (word games, sight words etc) that enrich the learning experience.

Our goal is to ensure that all (100%) of the students who regularly engage in our Goori Learning Centres (GLCs) achieve the reading capacity expected of their age by the end of 2021. Although, our students are still not achieving to maximum potential we have seen some improvements over the last decade.

In 2016 thirty two percent (32%) of tested students achieved a reading ability expected of their age. In 2019, sixty seven percent (67%) of tested students achieved an ability expected of their age. Hence highlighting a marked improvement.

Key Notes Pertaining to the 2019 Results

Bush Fires – The bush fire crisis that engulfed much of the country in November 2019 had a direct impact on our programs. Coffs Harbour was placed in emergency lockdown and schools were closed. We were therefore unable to conduct our GLC or NTP. This meant that we did not test all of the students in our programs. Notably, we did not test some students who had regularly participated in previous years and therefore missed gaining some valuable tracking information of these students.

New Students – The introduction and expansion of the NTP meant that many of the students were tested for the first time. This therefore does not provide any tracking data, but rather baseline information of these students.

Due to this, we have broken this report into four elements, as follows.

The report consists of following components;

- BURT GLC Regular Attendees;
 - Nyanggan Tutoring Program (NTP) attendees;
 - BURT 2016-2019 All Students;
 - 2016-19 Tracking of Ten Regular Students
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- Chart 3 provides the results of students who regularly attend the Goori Learning Centres -Boambee East Community Centre, Wongala Estate and Yarrowarra Cultural Centre. These students are tracking at a steady rate. In 2019 67% of our regular GLC students achieved a reading level that is *at or above* what is expected of their age.
 - Tracking of students who have regularly attended GLCs over the last four years highlights that 64% are reading 'Above Reading Level' or 'At Reading Level'. For students who were new to being tested the majority of students scored 'Behind Reading Level (>1)' or 'Behind Reading Level'.
 - Chart 5 highlights the students who have been tested more than once during the years 2016-2019. 57% of students who have been tested more than once during this period achieved *At Reading Level or Above Their Expected Age*. This demonstrates a higher achievement among students tested more than once as opposed to students who were tested for the first time.
 - Chart 6 provides the results of students who undertook the BURT Test for the first time. The majority (51%) recorded a reading ability *Behind* their expected reading age.

Learning centres provide a safe and supportive out-of-school learning environment where primary or secondary students can participate in activities that develop their academic skills, such as homework, numeracy and literacy. Research strongly supports the benefits of after-

school learning centre to enhance students' social skills, encouraging the development of fine motor and sensory skills.

BMNAC is almost on track to reaching our 2021 goal of ensuring that all regular GLC students achieve a reading proficiency expected of their age. 67% of our regular GLC attendees who participated in the BURT-19 scored *above* or *at* reading level. Thus highlighting that, although incredibly bold, our goal is achievable. With dedication of our staff, tutors, parents, students and partner schools our students will achieve.

The significant improvement since 2016, provides confidence in the ability to achieve our goal. Tracking results as follows:

Percentage of Students Achieving a Level of Reading Proficiency Expected of Their Age

2016 – 32%
2017 – 49%
2018 – 51%
2019 – 67%

BURT 2019 -GLC Regular ATTENDEES

- 21 regular GLC students tested
- 55 new students tested

Total 76 students tested

Chart 3 (GLC regular students) highlights that 48% of GLC regular participants are reading *Above Reading Level* and 19% reading *At Reading Level*. Therefore 67% of our Goori Learning Centre regular students are currently reading *above* or *at* their expected reading age.

Chart 4 (new students) explains that the majority (51%) of students reading age is *Behind Reading Level*.

Evidently, these results highlight that a holistic, focused effort that combines students, parents, teachers and tutors is required in order to improve the reading proficiency of all participating students.

Percentage Chart 3. -Regularly attend the GLC – (Wongala, Boambee, Yarrowarra).

GLC Regular Attendees 2019



Percentage chart 4. -New students.

NTP -local primary schools 2019



Students Tested More Than Once 2016-2019

The below chart is based on students who have been tested more than once during 2016-2019. These students must have been tested more than once to qualify in this testing. Chart 5 demonstrates that just over half (57%) of students who were tested between 2016-2019 (more than once) are reading *at* or *Above* Reading Level.

On the flip side, Chart 6 describes the majority of students (52%) tested for the first time as being *Behind* their expected reading age.

- 97 students were tested more than once.
- 158 Students were tested for the first time.

Total 255 students.

Chart 5 – All students tested more than once during 16-19.

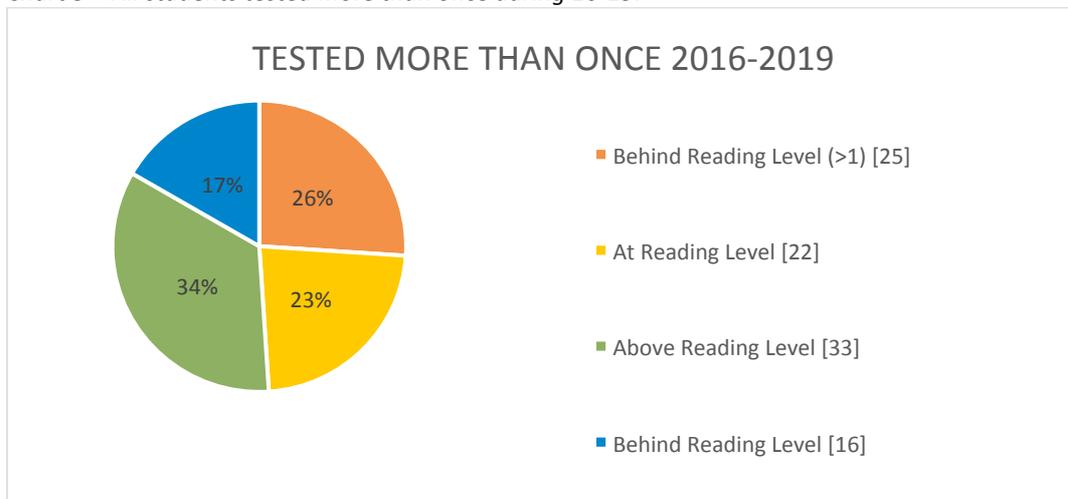
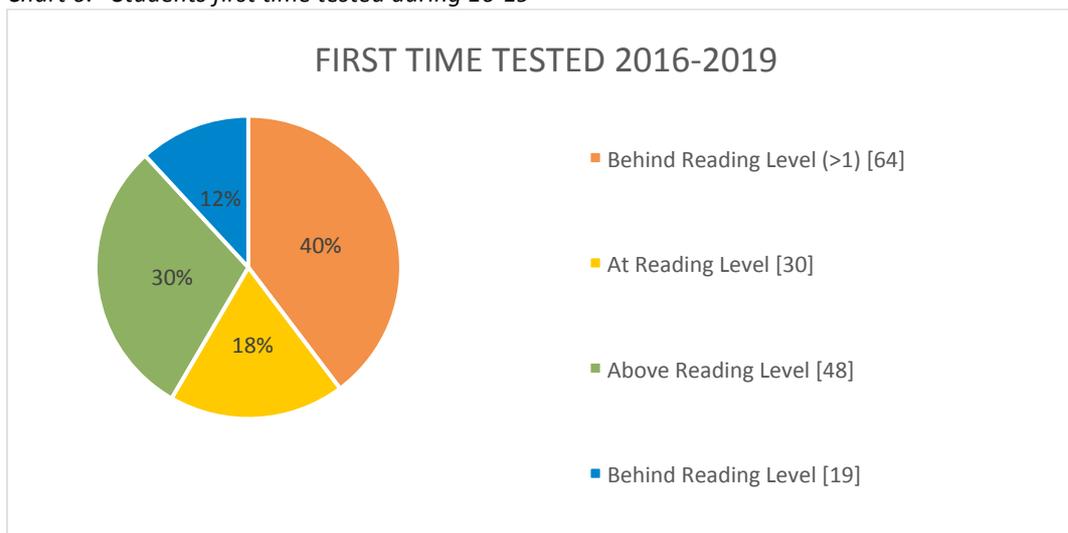


Chart 6. –Students first time tested during 16-19



CONCLUSION

2019 marked the fourth consecutive year in which BMNAC conducted the BURT Reading Test. Over this time, the numbers of participating students has grown exponentially due to the introduction of the Nyanggan Tutoring Program (NTP).

Throughout this report, we have provided the results of all students who undertook the 2019 test and included tracking information of students who regularly attend Goori Learning Centres (GLC) and who have undertaken the BURT Test previously.

By analyzing the results of students, the following conclusions can be made:

- The results suggest that the children who regularly participate in GLCs are more proficient readers;
- Students who have been tested more than once recorded better BURT Test Scores than those tested for the first time. This again suggests that consistency with BMNAC's programs leads to better reading proficiency;
- By contrasting the results of 2016 with the results of 2019 it is obvious that significant reading improvements have been made among participating students (2016 only 32% of students were reading at a level expected of their age. In 2019 this increased dramatically to 67%);
- Given that 67% of BMNAC's regular GLC students achieved reading proficiency expected of their age it could be argued that we are on track to achieve the goal of ensuring 100% of regular GLC students achieve the level of reading proficiency expected of their age by 2021. However, significant focus is required to achieve this goal;
- It is imperative that BMNAC identifies the students who recorded a reading level *behind* especially those who score *Behind >1*. A concerted effort is required in order to improve the reading ability among these students;
- Continual reading practice is important. In the tracking case study on the following page, one can identify that *student two* achieved a reading proficiency expected of their age in 2016 but dropped significantly in 2017 to a level more than one year behind.
- Among students who are not achieving a reading proficiency expected of their age, it is important to identify and rectify the situation early. If the situation is not rectified early the student continues to fall further behind. An example of this trend is highlighted in the case study over-page whereby *student 8* actually scored lower in 2019 than they did in 2018.
- However, great care and caution is needed when aiming to improve the reading ability of students. The BMNAC team often identify students who have a deep sense of 'shame' in their reading ability. In many instances this feeling of shame leads to the student further disengaging in reading. Therefore, creating a safe environment that is free of distraction and humiliation is important.
- Despite the improvements highlighted throughout this report, significant effort is required to ensure the educational excellence of our children. A holistic approach that encourages a love for reading through culturally relevant reading resources; parental support; up-skilling of parents as reading tutors; effective communication between parents, BMNAC tutors and teachers; and school 'buy in' to GLCs and NTP are required to achieve the goals BMNAC has identified for Aboriginal children of the Coffs Coast.

CASE STUDY: TRACKING DATA. A SAMPLE OF 10 STUDENTS

| NAME: | AGE: | SCORE: | READING AGE: | RESULTS: | YEAR: |
|------------|------|--------|--------------|----------------------|-------|
| STUDENT 1 | 9 | 70 | 10.2 | Above Reading Level | 2016 |
| STUDENT 2 | 7 | 37 | 7.3 | At Reading Level | 2016 |
| STUDENT 3 | 8 | 74 | 10.7 | Above Reading Level | 2016 |
| STUDENT 4 | 8 | 67 | 9.10 | Above Reading Level | 2016 |
| STUDENT 5 | 10 | 65 | 9.8 | At Reading Level | 2016 |
| STUDENT 6 | 6 | 12 | 5.9 | At Reading Level | 2016 |
| STUDENT 7 | 6 | 2 | 5.3 | Behind Reading (>1) | 2016 |
| STUDENT 8 | 5 | 2 | 5.3 | Behind Reading Level | 2016 |
| STUDENT 9 | 8 | 60 | 9.2 | Above Reading Level | 2016 |
| STUDENT 10 | 8 | 60 | 9.2 | Above Reading Level | 2016 |
| | | | | | |
| STUDENT 1 | 10 | 92 | 12.5 | Above Reading Level | 2017 |
| STUDENT 2 | 9 | 44 | 7.9 | Behind Reading (>1) | 2017 |
| STUDENT 3 | 10 | 92 | 12.5 | Above Reading Level | 2017 |
| STUDENT 4 | 9 | 74 | 10.7 | Above Reading Level | 2017 |
| STUDENT 5 | 11 | 71 | 10.3 | Behind Reading Level | 2017 |
| STUDENT 6 | 7 | 32 | 6.1 | Behind Reading Level | 2017 |
| STUDENT 7 | | | | | |
| STUDENT 8 | | | | | |
| STUDENT 9 | 9 | 67 | 9.10 | At Reading Level | 2017 |
| STUDENT 10 | 9 | 78 | 11 | Above Reading Level | 2017 |
| | | | | | |
| STUDENT 1 | 11 | 101 | 13.4 | Above Reading Level | 2018 |
| STUDENT 2 | 10 | 62 | 9.4 | Behind Reading Level | 2018 |
| STUDENT 3 | | | | | |
| STUDENT 4 | | | | | |
| STUDENT 5 | 12 | 90 | 12.3 | At READING LEVEL | 2018 |
| STUDENT 6 | | | | | |
| STUDENT 7 | 8 | 26 | 6.6 | Behind Reading (>1) | 2018 |
| STUDENT 8 | 8 | 41 | 7.6 | Behind Reading Level | 2018 |
| STUDENT 9 | 10 | 90 | 12.3 | Above Reading Level | 2018 |
| STUDENT 10 | 10 | 88 | 12 | Above Reading Level | 2018 |
| | | | | | |
| STUDENT 1 | | | | | |
| STUDENT 2 | | | | | |
| STUDENT 3 | | | | | |
| STUDENT 4 | | | | | |
| STUDENT 5 | | | | | |
| STUDENT 6 | | | | | |
| STUDENT 7 | | | | | |
| STUDENT 8 | 9 | 28 | 6.8 | Behind Reading (>1) | |

| | | | | | |
|------------|----|----|-------|---------------------|------|
| STUDENT 9 | 11 | 93 | 12.6 | Above Reading Level | 2019 |
| STUDENT 10 | 11 | 87 | 11.11 | Above Reading Level | 2019 |