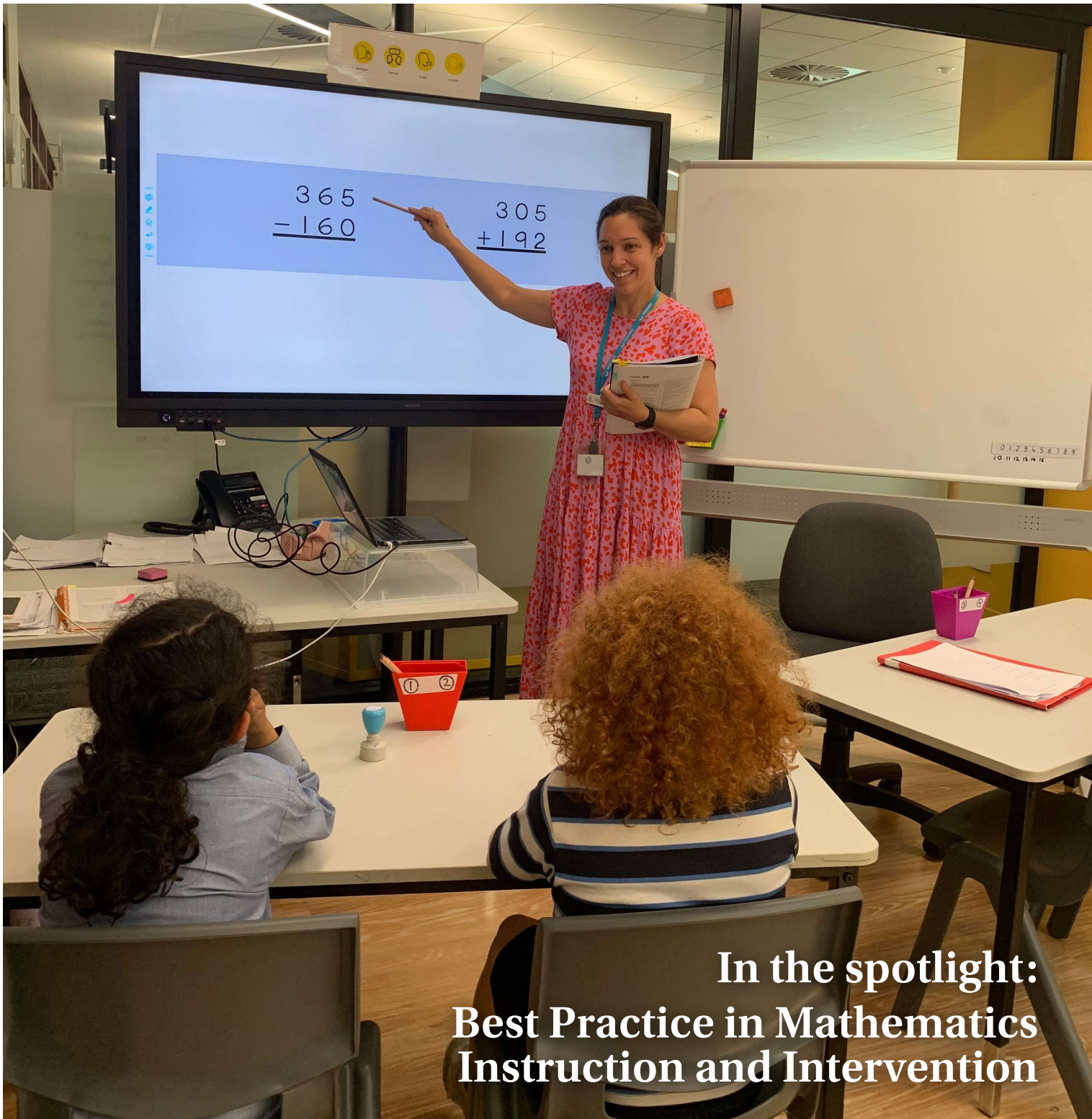


Bulletin



**In the spotlight:
Best Practice in Mathematics
Instruction and Intervention**

LDA Council 2022-2023

(As at March 2023)

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LDA MISSION

Learning Difficulties Australia is an association of teachers and other professionals dedicated to assisting students with learning difficulties through effective teaching practices based on scientific research, both in the classroom and through individualised instruction.

THE BULLETIN

The Bulletin is published three times a year. For information about submitting articles, and for requests to reprint articles, please contact the Editor: bulletin.editor@ldaaustralia.org.

The Bulletin is designed by Andrew Faith (www.littledesignstudio.com) and printed by DTS Communicate.

The views expressed in this publication are not necessarily the views of, or endorsed by, Learning Difficulties Australia.

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Special thanks to the staff and students of Docklands Primary School, Victoria for being featured on our Bulletin cover for this issue.

From the President

Geoffrey Ongley

As the newly elected president of our organisation, I would firstly like to extend my heartfelt gratitude and thanks to our members for entrusting me with this honourable position. Although my career has been rooted in technology and business, one way or another, I have found it has always intersected with education and in taking this role, the trend continues!

Before we look forward, I would like us to briefly look back at what a resounding success our Annual General Meeting was, which was a testament to the passion and dedication that exists within LDA's council, executive and members. The event was filled with inspiring presentations from our recent award winners, as well as discussion on the financial performance of the organisation from our treasurer Iain Rothwell, and where we are headed from here from our new General Manager, Sherree Halliwell.

A special acknowledgment also goes out to our award recipients. Their remarkable contributions have considerably improved educational practices for students facing various learning difficulties. I would also like to express my deepest thanks to the staff and volunteers who were part of organising the AGM. Their tireless efforts and meticulous planning resulted in an event that was both informative and enjoyable.

In the end, it was great to have so many of our members come together both in person and online, united by a common goal: to make a meaningful difference in the lives of children and individuals with learning difficulties. Our esteemed colleague and Secretary of

the organisation, Stephanie Murphy, has also put together a wonderful 'AGM Round Up' covering the event on page 6.

Now, going forward, our vision is clear. We are here to make sure that supporting students with learning difficulties is the business of every teacher. In light of this, I am interested in spending more time listening to teaching practitioners about challenges they face or have overcome, and looking at how LDA can further serve its members; in practical ways that are going to really make a difference in children's lives.

As part of this effort, I would like to aim at broadening the scope of what it means to be a member of LDA, and what it is that such a membership delivers. Be it tools, professional learning, or other things we can do to support our members in practical and meaningful ways, the goal is simple: deliver more value for LDA members.

Part of how we will get there is by listening to you, our members, and I am truly interested to learn from you, which will help us to plan and prioritise things that are going to offer the most value to you. I believe it is essential that we connect with more educators, both to understand challenges and spread awareness of what LDA can offer and achieve.

Once again, I thank you for entrusting this role to me, and I am committed to leading our organisation towards new heights of success and impact. I am confident that with your support, we will achieve our ambitious goals.

Geoffrey Ongley
President, LDA
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Geoffrey Ongley is the Co-founder, Director and CEO of Training 24/7, as well as the CEO of Get Reading Right. Educationally, he has completed a Bachelor of Computer Science, Master of Business Administration (Finance), and a Graduate Certificate in Professional Legal Studies.



In this issue of the Bulletin...

Julie Scali, Editor, LDA Bulletin

I am pleased to share with you the *Best Practice in Mathematics Instruction and Intervention* edition of the LDA Bulletin. In comparison to literacy, mathematics has traditionally taken a backseat in terms of research and professional learning, however, mathematics should play an equally important role in education as getting mathematics right in the primary years has a significant knock-on effect into general society. Jayanthi, 2019, describes its importance: “Mathematics is the foundation for nation building, since the level of mathematics skills and competences go a long way to determine the level of science and technological components of any nation, which is a basic requirement for its development. Mathematics today has an enormous impact on science and society, (and) though the influence is silent and hidden, it is shaping our world in many ways.”

Often a forgotten aspect of mathematics teaching and learning is the added complexity of the language of mathematics which we explore in the feature article of this edition. Karen Tzanetopoulos is a speech and language pathologist with an expertise in the language and cognitive processes of learning maths. She outlines the complexities of the mathematics language of English and points out that students with dyslexia, students from EALD backgrounds and students with specific language impairments are at a double disadvantage when it comes

to mathematics due to the complexity of the mathematics language of English. Her article is on recommended approaches in the language of mathematics, outlining seven high impact adjustments to maths instruction that can improve student achievement.

Our second piece of the edition is one from the chalk face of an inner Melbourne school. Brydon O’Neill-Guy, the mathematics leader of Docklands Primary School outlines how a multi-tiered system of support model (MTSS) is utilised to ensure best practice and is embedded in all tiers of mathematics instruction across the school. O’Neill-Guy explains how tier 2 intervention occurs at Docklands Primary providing many useful recommendations for school leaders and teachers in terms of mathematics curriculum, assessments and instructional routines.

In the article, Counting really counts, Peter Westwood cites the importance of effective counting instruction as this skill is “highly predictive of a child’s later development of functional numeracy and achievement in mathematics”. Westwood recommends that counting skills are taught through direct instruction with clear objectives for what knowledge and skills children will learn. He outlines how this contrasts with how many early childhood educators go about teaching this crucial skill. He outlines how teachers can move from effective finger counting approaches to concepts beyond rote counting and finishes with a range of simple evidence based tips for teaching counting in primary classrooms.

Following on from this article, Brendan Lee is an experienced school leaders from NSW who outlines ‘what you need to know about teaching primary mathematics’ explaining evidence-based research on high impact mathematics instruction. He outlines three key principles of teaching primary mathematics including the hierarchical

nature of mathematics, conceptual and procedural understandings and the link between thinking like a mathematician and maths teaching perse.



Of equal interest in a tier 2 context, is a piece on diagnostic maths assessments entitled, ‘The Power of Qualitative Diagnostic Assessments in Mathematics Intervention’ This piece by Karen Wedderburn draws on her experience as a mathematics interventionist and a step-by-step approach to gathering qualitative data on students to ease students into the assessment process. Her focus is also about being mindful about mathematics anxiety.

This edition’s book review is on Peter Westwood’s ‘Teaching for numeracy across the age range’ and was reviewed by Diane Pursell, an experienced teacher in WA. Westwood combines decades of scientific research about how children learn mathematics in the primary and secondary years and also explores mathematics in adulthood. Pursell cites that Westwood “provides a firm foundation to inspire teachers to reconsider how they teach mathematics within their classroom”. Westwood’s text also provides a range of useful, relevant print and online resources at the end of each chapter, which is beneficial for both new and experienced educators on how to plan and implement high quality numeracy lessons. It is a short, practical read for teachers and learning support specialists wanting to refine their numeracy understandings and practice.

Finally, we wrap up the issue with a reflection and celebration of the highly

Continued on p6...