In the beginning...

At Hillcrest Primary School, we began our PBS journey in 2013. It came at the perfect time for our school. The Hillcrest Behaviour Management Team was investigating commercial behaviour programs such as Bounce Back/ Mind Matter etc to address behavioural issues at the school. After closely examining many programs, we discovered that no individual program was a perfect fit for our school and we decided that we needed a custom designed program to suit the particular needs at Hillcrest. With the support of our external coaches, we embarked on the process of introducing PBS to our school.

What is our program?

The program was met with varying levels of interest and enthusiasm at the start. We began by forming a team of teachers and administrators who were interested in the program, and over a period of time we developed a matrix of expected behaviours by consulting with teachers, students, and interested parents. The expected behaviours fall under the headings of Safety, Teamwork, Achievement, Respect and Responsibility (STARR). We then proceeded to design lessons to teach these expected behaviours to all of our students and designed a reward system to encourage students to demonstrate the behaviours on the matrix. Students designed a poster and school STARR mascot and STARR cards were introduced to reinforce correct behaviours.
Positives:

It has been a rewarding, outcomes driven process. Although time consuming and interesting, reaching consensus on behaviours we wanted to encourage at school was worthwhile. The decisions formed an important part of defining what we all agreed were the behaviours we wanted to see at the school. Having these behaviours clearly displayed in all classrooms and outdoor areas makes it easy for visitors, parents and relief teachers to know what is expected of our students. By actively teaching the behaviours, it is easier for the students to know what is expected of them.

We have developed a whole school reward system to reinforce appropriate behaviours using STARR cards. Students are given stamps with an explanation as to what area of the Matrix they are demonstrating. Individual teachers then negotiate rewards with their students when they have reached certain milestones.

At a whole school level, students are publicly recognised at assemblies when achieving the 100 and 200 club.

Staff, as well as visitors to the school have commented on the positive environment the PBS program has established.

Challenges:

Time is an important part of the process: time to share, discuss our beliefs and reach common understanding. The process involves a major shift in philosophy for many teachers and being part of this process over time has allowed this to occur.