

# Cassilis Public School Annual Report



2016



1527

## Introduction

The Annual Report for **2016** is provided to the community of **Cassilis Public School** as an account of the school's operations and achievements throughout the year.

It provides a detailed account of the progress the school has made to provide high quality educational opportunities for all students, as set out in the school plan. It outlines the findings from self-assessment that reflect the impact of key school strategies for improved learning and the benefit to all students from the expenditure of resources, including equity funding.

Katie Burgess

Principal

Katrina Hodgson

Reliving Principal (Term 1 and 2)

### School contact details

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6376 1009

### Message from the Principal

Cassilis Public School is a wonderful school. I am proud of the achievements of all our students and the ongoing success of the various strategies being implemented to ensure high quality learning experiences and an enjoyable, positive, creative and challenging learning culture.

In a vibrant learning environment, set within picturesque and well-resourced school grounds, students endeavour to develop the full potential of their intellectual, physical and social capabilities and the skills necessary for the world beyond school life.

The school caters for individual needs through its diverse variety of teaching and learning programs which are explicitly targeted to address identified learning difficulties. Exceptional educational opportunities are provided to the students to enrich their learning and provide exposure to new experiences.

The dedication, skills and professionalism of staff is a highly valued aspect of the school. Building and utilising friendships and talents within our community is strongly benefiting the students growth and development.

School targets of 2016 built the capacity of our staff, students and the community and provided excellent learning opportunities. 2017 will see the strengthening of professional learning, student wellbeing and individual learning plans and the partnerships between the school and the community.

I am excited about leading such a dynamic and future focused school.

I certify that the information in this report is the result of rigorous self-assessment and review process undertaken with staff, student leaders, families, and the community and provides a genuine account of the school's achievements and areas of development.

### Message from the students

I've only been here at this school for three years and it's gone from a twenty four student school right down to thirteen or fourteen students. We've all had our ups and downs but my two highlights since I've been here are being awarded School Captain because it was amazing to have the privilege to do a big role at school and my second highlight was going to the Aquatic Center back in 2014. I never knew that's were some Olympic swimmers practiced.

My two highlights from this year was seeing Mr Gant come back for one day of science and the second highlight for this year was going to the Men's Shed in Merriwa to receive a cheque for the school because I hadn't seen, held or touched one before.

My main achievement as School Captain has been learning more and more leadership skills. Being organised has been one skill that has improved. If you're not Captain or Vice-Captain you can still show leadership by setting an example for other students and following school rules.

What I'm looking forward to in high school next year is doing hands on science lessons like experiments and meeting new people.

What I've got to say for next year's Captain and Vice-Captain is to never let go, never give up and you'll hopefully reach your end goals.

I would like to thank Mrs Nairne, Mrs Burgess, Miss Hodgson, Mrs Hunt, Miss Storrier, Mrs Cornish and Miss Frazer for all their support during the years I've been here.

Tobias Bowler

School Captain

I have been at this school since Kindergarten. I have had lots of great times at school and one of my highlight was my first day in kindergarten. This was a great day because of a nice teacher called Mrs Leman.

Another highlight was going to Canberra for an excursion this year. The best part of it was the snow and going down the hill on a board. I was also breaking off chunks of ice and watching them float down the river. I broke one large chunk which would have been as big as a classroom table and then my leg fell in!

I love reading and reading Georges Marvelous Medicine with the class was another highlight. It was fun to read altogether and to see what happens in the book.

Having Mr Gant visiting Cassilis for science was fantastic as he taught us how to clean coins with a special mixture.

As Vice-Captain, my achievements have included ordering swimming equipment and T ball equipment for the school and playing touch football in the school team. I showed good leadership through great sportsmanship.

I am really looking forward to high school. I want to make as many friends as I can and I can't wait for science and cooking lessons.

Advice that I have for next years school leaders is to be respectful, be safe, try your best, never give up and learn from mistakes.

I want to thank the teachers and my parents for their help and support while I have been at school.

I am going to miss Cassilis but I can't wait for high school.

James Bibby

School Vice-Captain

## School background

### School vision statement

To prepare every student to be successful lifelong learners who are confident and creative individuals; and active informed citizens through a commitment to equity and excellence in education.

We believe it is important for students to be self-aware, build resilience and positive relationships and actively contribute to the school, the community and the society in which they live.

We value and support strong partnerships with the broader community to maximise student engagement and achievement in a nurturing environment.

### School context

Cassilis Public School is a small school with 17 students, located in the Upper Hunter Tablelands, 42 kms west of Merriwa. Whilst our school is in a rural area the majority of families live within the village of Cassilis.

The school is committed to providing an environment that is friendly, safe and nurturing. Cassilis Public School is positive and supportive, through effective learning programs and a positive approach to behaviour and learning.

The school provides a well-rounded curriculum that caters for the broad socio-economic variance across the community. Cassilis Public School provides a variety of opportunities for students to develop talents in all curriculum areas. Learning programs are designed to give students opportunities to learn and succeed to their potential and beyond.

The school is a focal point of learning for the community and supports the learning of staff, parents and students.

Our school is part of the Invermein Community of Schools.

## Self-assessment and school achievement

### Self-assessment using the School Excellence Framework

This year, our school undertook self-assessment using the School Excellence Framework. The Framework supports public schools throughout NSW in the pursuit of excellence by providing a clear description of high quality practice across the three domains of Learning, Teaching and Leading.

During 2016 teaching and non-teaching staff at Cassilis Public School continued to explore the School Excellence Framework to develop a deeper understanding of the implications for informing, monitoring and validating. During professional discussions, staff reflected on progress at a whole school level using evidence-based observations and data. This demonstrated greater knowledge of the need to ensure improvement efforts aligned with these high level expectations.

The school strengthened partnerships with the Invermein Small Schools Group by working collaboratively with other schools in the Wollemi Education District to ensure continuity of learning and building the capacity of school leaders.

In the domain of **Learning**, our school has primarily focused on the elements of Learning Culture and Assessment and Reporting. During 2016 the school sought to strengthen the school-wide, collective responsibility for student learning and success, with high levels of student, staff and community engagement. Positive and respectful relationships across the school community underpin a productive learning environment, and support students' development of educational aspirations and taking responsibility for their ongoing learning.

Individual Learning Programs were well-developed to address and monitor student learning needs. Conversations between staff, students, families and support agencies strengthened the school's ability to identify and successfully cater for a variation of needs.

Assessment data was regularly updated and used to monitor achievements and gaps in student learning including plotting progress on the learning continuums in Literacy and Numeracy. This data was used to inform planning for particular student groups and individual student needs. Through the active and consistent collection and analyses of assessment data, a clear understanding of a student's progress was shown to families and strategies for improvement

were discussed. This resulted in an increased value and better idea of how families could support their child's learning.

In the domain of **Teaching**, our school has primarily focused on the element of Learning and Development.

In a focus to improve teaching methods in literacy and numeracy and to understand and utilise the power of reflection and feedback, teaching staff participated in Quality Teaching Rounds with colleagues from both small and large school settings. Staff increased their knowledge of the Quality Teaching Elements and how to successfully provide rich learning experiences within a lesson and how to provide explicit feedback on an observed lesson. The increased knowledge and use of personal reflections on their teaching practices, allowed the teaching staff to better evaluate the effectiveness of their teaching on student learning. Improved connections within our professional community led to refining best practice and strengthening consistent judgement of effective teaching.

Staff were actively engaged in planning their own professional development to improve their performance through Professional Development Plans which reflected the standards of the Professional Development Framework. By teachers actively sharing learning from targeted professional development with others, all staff valued and benefited from ideas of best practice to guide them towards school excellence.

In the domain of **Leading**, our school has primarily focused on the elements of Leadership and School Resources. Cassilis Public School is committed to the development of leadership skills in staff and students. The school's leadership strategy promotes succession planning, distributed leadership and organisational best practice. The Teaching Principal actively engaged in professional development to build leadership capacity. The school's strong commitment to the development of leadership skills in staff and students resulted in various professional learning opportunities for staff, and the student leadership team developing their skills through workshops.

The valuable links with our communities of schools, educational providers and other organisations, including The Wollemi Network, Invermeil Small Schools, The Upper Hunter Community of Schools, New England/Hunter Health, and the Merriwa Family Support Network have supported the school's program and led to increased student welfare, engagement and the progression towards learning outcomes. This has resulted in high expectations for learning for each student and an ability to be responsive to emerging needs.

Our self-assessment process will assist the school to refine the strategic priorities in our School Plan, leading to further improvements in the delivery of education to our students.

For more information about the School Excellence Framework:

<http://www.dec.nsw.gov.au/about-the-department/our-reforms/school-excellence-framework>



## Strategic Direction 1

### Student Learning and Engagement

#### Purpose

To develop the intellectual, emotional and behavioural intelligences of students by building a learning environment where well-being is central and students develop their capacity to learn and play an active role in their own learning.

Students are creative, innovative and resourceful and are able to solve problems in ways that draw upon a range of learning areas and disciplines.

This is consistent with the goals of the Melbourne Declaration.

#### Overall summary of progress

In 2016 teacher knowledge and understanding was deepened through focused professional development. This resulted in higher quality teaching strategies and improved student outcomes. Professional learning in improving the identification and quality of professional learning goals has led to more specific and achievable goals aligned with the School Plan.

Students and all members of staff have a deeper understanding of the use of learning intentions, success criteria, and feedback based on the 'Visible Learning' research of Professor John Hattie. These elements are having a positive impact on student learning, particularly in determining if a student has met the success criteria of the lesson.

Positive Behaviour for Learning is used consistently across the school and is beginning to be implemented in the community to strengthen its value.

#### Progress towards achieving improvement measures

Improvement measures (to be achieved over 3 years)	Progress achieved this year	Funds Expended (Resources)
All students are self-directed learners. They are active participants in their learning, know what they are learning and why and can articulate where to next. This will be evidenced within each child's personal learning plans.	All teaching staff demonstrated an appreciation and increased knowledge and understanding of newly implemented Syllabus.  Most students can better articulate their learning goals and will participate in learning to develop their understanding of plotting against the continuum in 2017.  Some students understand and are able to provide constructive feedback to others and their teaching using a variety of strategies.	Integration \$39,040.00  Low level adjustment for disability \$1254.87  LAST allocation 0.2  QTSS staffing resource allocation
All students have improved skills to care for themselves and contribute to the wellbeing of others. This will be evidenced within school wellbeing data.	Student, staff and families understanding of the PBL system was increased. Additional resources and activities in 2017 will deepen the knowledge and increase use throughout the Cassilis community	NIL
All students improve and value their learning by actively engaging in the curriculum and extra curricula activities.	All students indicated improved connections to their learning and benefited from a wide-range of learning opportunities.	Excursions \$6,741.28  Extra curricular resources \$7,557.32

#### Next Steps

- Continuing professional development for teaching staff in all areas of Literacy and Numeracy.
- Continued professional development in 'Visible Learning' with emphasis on student learning goals and quality feedback related to the Literacy and Numeracy continuum.

- Ongoing evaluation of the Bounce Back program. Professional development for staff in positive education, emotional wellbeing and the Wellbeing Framework. Increased involvement in the Merriwa Family Support Network and Upper Hunter Schools Wellbeing Network.
- Increased opportunities for leadership development for school captains

## Strategic Direction 2

### Excellence in Professional Practice

#### Purpose

To achieve excellence through high quality teaching and leadership. The leadership team demonstrates instructional leadership, promoting and modelling effective, evidence based practice.

Advocate for, participate in and lead strategies to support high quality professional learning opportunities for colleagues that focus on improved student learning.

Engage all stakeholders in the process of developing professional knowledge of leadership that enables engagement in a collegial community of learners founded in quality teaching and leadership which brings about inspired learning.

#### Overall summary of progress

Staff members continued to deepen their understanding of best practice to develop their own Personal Development Plans and actively sought feedback and mentoring as an important part of their ongoing growth.

All teachers reported that professional development in The Australian Professional Standards for Teachers improved their understanding of student learning and effective classroom practice and how to increase their capacity as an educator.

The Quality Teaching Rounds included lesson observations, lesson coding, professional learning in the Quality Teaching Elements and reflection. Both teachers indicated their strengthening of classroom practice and relationships with colleagues from other schools within our network.

Through increased confidence and knowledge, all staff actively contribute to the school planning and milestone evaluation.

#### Progress towards achieving improvement measures

Improvement measures (to be achieved over 3 years)	Progress achieved this year	Funds Expended (Resources)
All teachers will develop an explicit Performance and Development Plan where goals are linked to the Australian Professional Teaching Standards and the Cassilis School Plan. Staff will achieve goals each year as measured against the Performance and Development Framework	All teaching staff were able to articulate how successfully their goals have been achieved throughout the year. Professional discussions were strengthened and allowed for critical reflection and the celebration of achievements.	NIL
A culture of collaborative and explicit professional learning builds the capacity of all staff and allows for effective whole school planning and evaluation	Two classroom teachers indicated the QTR project was extremely beneficial in developing their knowledge of best practice in the classroom and the power of coding, feedback and reflection.  The school evaluation cycle was strengthened as a result of increased professional learning, confidence and capacity of all staff members.	Professional learning \$2,895.00

#### Next Steps

- Continued participation in Quality Teaching Rounds within the Invermein Small Schools Network to ensure that all teachers are engaged in the reflective practice. All professional learning is linked to the goals identified in the



PDP's.

- Develop and maintain knowledge, understanding and application of whole school scope and sequences for Literacy, Numeracy, History and Geography.
- Professional learning in the TENS program to develop numeracy skills in early learners.
- Appointment of an Instructional leader one day a week through phase two of the Early Action for Success Reform.
- A staff member participating in L3– Stage 1 Training.
- Engage a teacher mentor to support a teacher with their attainment of accreditation.
- Staff engaged in professional readings and discussions with colleagues on Evidence Based Practice.

## Strategic Direction 3

### Building Community Partnerships

#### Purpose

To identify, initiate and build on opportunities that engage families in both the progress of their children's learning and the educational priorities of the school.

To build productive links with the wider community to improve teaching and learning.

To investigate and utilise people's passions and skill sets and provide opportunities where they can have the greatest impact on community learning.

Student learning is enhanced through an engaged approach which is connected with their local community.

#### Overall summary of progress

As the school is committed to building partnerships and common goals with parents and the broader community and to utilise their skills and interest to enhance student engagement and learning, a range of strategies have been incorporated to improve planning and communication. This resulted in an increased numbers of community members attending and participating in school events. All students benefited from being involved in activities within the community including visits to the town library and learning with the Cassilis Craft Group.

Working in consultation with the P and C to develop a policy for classroom volunteers including strategies for effective training.

#### Progress towards achieving improvement measures

Improvement measures (to be achieved over 3 years)	Progress achieved this year	Funds Expended (Resources)
Families assist their children at home with their education.	Through student-led conferences, all families indicated an increased understanding of how they can assist their child's academic and social education.	NIL
Community members feel valued in their partnership with the school which enhances student learning	<p>The policy for volunteers in the classroom is in draft form and will continue to be developed in 2017. School volunteers, who have worked at the school for a number of years, developed their capacity to engage with students and improving their learning outcomes.</p> <p>The community program will be a priority in 2017. The planning and implementation was delayed in 2016 to better determine the direction. Consultation undertaken between staff, students, families and the community has provided some ideas.</p>	NIL
Every student will feel connected with their local community and engaged in learning activities. Their background knowledge of their community provides a foundation for deeper learning to occur.	The history unit of work, which had QTF embedded, focused on the Cassilis community and allowed for opportunities for the community to be involved and enhance student learning through utilising local knowledge of the area and historic places and events.	NIL

#### Next Steps

- The school will seek to better identify and form links with members of the community, through a school flyer, surveys and focus groups, who are able to improve student learning by utilising their skills and interests.
- Increased participation of families and community members on committees and for school events

- Increase family and community members attending information workshops by more effectively identifying areas of relevance, need and interest within the groups.

Key Initiatives	Impact achieved this year	Resources (annual)
<b>Low level adjustment for disability</b>	<p>All Year 6 students felt more confident about entering high school and were well–equipped with resources, including photo social stories and copies of High School Handbooks, to refer to. Staff at the high schools developed a good understanding of the individual needs of each student and how best support them and their families.</p> <p>Through Professional Learning, the LAST and SLSO indicated a deeper understanding and knowledge of how to best identify, program and support students with low level disabilities.</p>	<p>LAST allocation 0.2</p> <p>Integration \$39,040.00</p>
<b>Quality Teaching, Successful Students (QTSS)</b>	<p>Weekly meetings between the Teaching Principal and two classroom teachers provided additional support and mentoring which resulted in teachers achieving a deeper understanding of best practice.</p>	<p>QTSS allocation 0.011</p>
<b>Socio–economic background</b>	<p>Staff guided all students in developing their awareness of how to identify and set goals both academically and socially. All students had the opportunity to plan and work towards these goals both in the classroom and in individual learning times.</p>	<p>Equity \$20,611.38</p>

## Student information

### Student enrolment profile

Students	Enrolments			
	2013	2014	2015	2016
Boys	8	10	6	8
Girls	8	11	7	8

### Student attendance profile

School				
Year	2013	2014	2015	2016
K	87.9	84.8	90.7	89.2
1	89.9	92.4	83.5	91.4
2	90.4	87	97.8	91.4
3	92.7	86.5	87.9	94.1
4	99	87.7	92.6	83.9
5	93.5		94.1	90.5
6	96.6	93.2		83.3
All Years	92.2	89	91.1	89.2
State DoE				
Year	2013	2014	2015	2016
K	95	95.2	94.4	94.4
1	94.5	94.7	93.8	93.9
2	94.7	94.9	94	94.1
3	94.8	95	94.1	94.2
4	94.7	94.9	94	93.9
5	94.5		94	93.9
6	94.1	94.2		93.4
All Years	94.7	94.8	94	94

### Management of non-attendance

Cassilis Public School staff are continuing to implement proactive strategies to encourage high levels of student attendance. An update to the school attendance policy has provided explanations of what constitutes acceptable leave from school and clear procedures for families to provide a written explanation for unexplained absences.

### Class sizes

Class	Total
STUDENTS	15

## Workforce information

### Workforce composition

Position	FTE*
Principal	1
Classroom Teacher(s)	0.13
Learning and Support Teacher(s)	0.2
Teacher Librarian	0.08
School Administration & Support Staff	1
Other Positions	0

\*Full Time Equivalent

There is one Aboriginal staff member at Cassilis Public School.

### Teacher qualifications

All teaching staff meet the professional requirements for teaching in NSW public schools.

### Teacher qualifications

Qualifications	% of staff
Undergraduate degree or diploma	100
Postgraduate degree	

### Professional learning and teacher accreditation

Significant amounts of professional learning were undertaken by Cassilis Public School staff in 2016. All professional learning supported the Strategic Directions and goals articulated in the Cassilis School Plan and goals written in individual Professional Development Plans from staff.

- NSW English Syllabus
- NSW Mathematical Syllabus
- Teaching Standards and Professional Development Plans
- NSW Science and Technology Syllabus
- NSW Geography Syllabus
- The Quality Teaching Framework and Quality Teaching Rounds
- Visible Learning
- School Excellence Framework
- Centre for Effective Reading
- Child Protection
- CPR and e-Emergency

## Financial information (for schools using OASIS for the whole year)

### Financial information

This summary financial information covers funds for operating costs to 30th November and does not involve expenditure areas such as permanent salaries, building and major maintenance.

Income	\$
<b>Balance brought forward</b>	<b>66 430.40</b>
Global funds	65 720.84
Tied funds	82 134.85
School & community sources	16 143.62
Interest	1 818.34
Trust receipts	276.50
Canteen	0.00
Total income	232 524.55
<b>Expenditure</b>	
Teaching & learning	
Key learning areas	4 215.12
Excursions	6 741.28
Extracurricular dissections	7 557.32
Library	0.00
Training & development	650.00
Tied funds	81 489.56
Short term relief	1 793.29
Administration & office	14 254.84
School-operated canteen	0.00
Utilities	13 733.42
Maintenance	2 174.51
Trust accounts	246.50
Capital programs	79.09
Total expenditure	132 934.93
<b>Balance carried forward</b>	<b>99 589.62</b>

A full copy of the school's financial statement is tabled at the annual general meetings of the parent and/or community groups. Further details concerning the statement can be obtained by contacting the school.

## School performance

### NAPLAN

In the National Assessment Program, the results across the Years 3, 5, 7 and 9 literacy and numeracy assessments are reported on a scale from Band 1 to Band 10. The achievement scale represents increasing levels of skills and understandings demonstrated in these assessments.

Due to the small cohort of students in Years 3 and 5, we are unable to report on this area to protect anonymity of the students. In 2016 two Year 3 students and three Year 5 students undertook NAPLAN testing.

## Parent/caregiver, student, teacher satisfaction

In 2016, the school sought the opinions of students, teachers and families about the school.

Students responded positively to the wide range of programs and opportunities on offer, as well as the dedicated teaching staff.

- The majority of students agreed the school encourages everyone to learn and do their best
- All students felt that their Individual Learning Programs helped them to learn and was a positive addition to the schools programs

Staff were confident that their teaching practice was engaging and school programming procedures addressed all aspects of the New South Wales curriculum.

- All staff increased their understanding of school policies and procedures during 2016
- All staff were satisfied with professional learning opportunities provided to assist in the achievement of personal learning goals
- All staff felt supported to achieve their goals and felt confident in their ability to effectively evaluate and plan for the future direction of the school

Families indicated high levels of satisfaction in most aspects of the school. Highlights included:

- Increased communication about and interaction with school events
- Multiple opportunities for students to interact with student from other small schools through sport, cultural and learning days
- A better understanding of what their child is learning at school and strategies they can utilise to support their child's learning

## Policy requirements

### Aboriginal education

Although there were no students in 2016 that identified as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander, inclusion of



Aboriginal history, culture and contemporary Aboriginal Australian perspectives incorporated into all Key Learning Areas ensured students education opportunities were well–rounded.

### **Multicultural and anti-racism education**

Teachers place significant emphasis on the delivery of programs, which promote racial tolerance and harmony. Multicultural perspectives are promoted across all aspects of the curriculum. All students celebrated Australia's cultural diversity during Harmony Day by participating in researching and cooking a variety of dishes to serve to their families and community members.